

BOOK REVIEWS

What Are They Saying about Ancient Israelite Religion? By John L. McLaughlin. New York: Paulist, 2016, xv + 167 pp., \$17.95 paper.

Since the end of the eighteenth century, attempts to probe the development of Israelite religion have taken center stage in OT research. Studies of this nature proceed from the premise that when the various alleged strata of the OT are properly extracted, subsequently (re)dated, and compared with other texts from the ANE, the evolutionary growth of Israelite religion emerges. The present study continues in this mold, providing a survey and analysis of diachronic research related to Israelite religion.

Surveying the El-epithet passages in Genesis, along with Gen 33:20, 46:3, 49:24–26, John McLaughlin contends in chapter 1 that the deity described in such passages “was not a nameless deity, but rather the god El” (p. 8). He posits that through a syncretistic process, El and YHWH “came to be identified early in Israel’s history and that ’ēl was subsequently taken as the common noun ‘god’ designating Yahweh rather than the name of another god” (p. 6). Although he maintains that “it is impossible to establish exactly when this happened” (p. 6), McLaughlin argues for the monarchical period as the most likely scenario for such a transformation to have taken place.

In chapter 2, beginning with F. M. Cross’s proposal that the name “YHWH” is derived from a shortened version of an El epithet, McLaughlin surveys recent scholarship that has attempted to identify YHWH as El, or another deity altogether. McLaughlin summarizes the work of Joseph Blenkinsopp, Nissim Amzallag, Justin Kelley, and Jacob Dunn, whose views are in accord with the “Midianite-Kenite Hypothesis,” which regards YHWH as a deity other than El, deriving from southern origins. In opposition to F. M. Cross, Nicolas Wyatt, Scott Chalmers, and others, McLaughlin concludes that YHWH was a separate deity that later replaced El in Israelite religion largely due to YHWH’s connection to the Exodus, which offered a new aspect to Israelite worship.

Chapter 3 surveys the alleged points of correspondence between the OT and male Canaanite deities: Ba’al, Mot, Molek, Shemesh, Yariḥ, and Reshep. Since McLaughlin regards Ba’al as the “male deity found most extensively in the First Testament” (p. 48) among those he surveys, he devotes the majority of the chapter to issues related to Ba’al, overviewing the biblical data regarding personal and place names, the similarities between YHWH and Ba’al epithets, and general parallels to Ba’al literature. McLaughlin contends that Ba’al worship was initially an accepted part of Israelite worship in connection with YHWH before later being rejected after Elijah’s opposition to Jezebel’s promotion of the Ba’al cult.

In chapter 4, McLaughlin surveys Asherah, Ashtart, Anat, the Queen of Heaven (which he identifies as Ashtart), and summarizes views related to female

deities referenced in the OT. The author deals with Asherah most extensively, taking stock of scholarly arguments for allusions to the goddess in the OT (e.g. Gen 49:25; Deut 33:2; Isa 6:13; Hos 14:9; Lady Wisdom in Proverbs 1–9), along with the three inscriptions from Kuntillet 'Ajrud and Khirbet el-Qom that link YHWH and Asherah. Regarding 1 Kgs 18:19 as a late addition, McLaughlin contends that “the Deuteronomistic History reflects a lack of opposition to Asherah prior to the rise of the Deuteronomists” (p. 54), arguing that “Asherah was accepted as Yahweh’s consort prior to the Deuteronomists” (p. 67).

In chapter 5, McLaughlin summarizes the work of four key scholars related to the “divine council” in ancient Israelite religion—Theodore Mullen, Lowell Handy, Mark Smith, and Ellen White. Regarding Mullen’s work from 1980 as “the first full-length treatment of the divine council” (p. 68), McLaughlin details the OT parallels to the Ugaritic divine council observed by Mullen (e.g. 1 Kgs 22:19–23 and Isaiah 6; Psalm 82) and Mullen’s contention that the prophets eventually filled the role of council messengers. He also traces Mullen’s postulation that the *sātān* developed from initially being regarded as a member of the divine council to eventually becoming the source of all evil (i.e. Satan) in connection with the development of monotheism. Addressing the studies of Lowell Handy and Mark Smith, McLaughlin articulates their differing arguments for a four-tiered structure of the divine council (or a four-tiered Ugaritic pantheon in general [Handy]). McLaughlin concludes the chapter with a detailed discussion of Ellen White’s work, who identifies five “Council of Yahweh” texts in the OT (1 Kings 22; Isaiah 6; Job 1–2; Zechariah 3; Daniel 7), maintaining that a diachronic analysis of these texts argues against a clear-cut development toward monotheism.

McLaughlin concludes the book (chap. 6) with a summary of scholarship related to the alleged transformation in Israelite religion from polytheism to monolatry and eventually to monotheism. McLaughlin highlights Robert Gnuse’s punctuated-equilibrium model and Mark Smith’s convergence-and-divergence approach as “two different but complementary perspectives” (p. 87), which both attempt to account for the alleged movement from one form of worship to another. McLaughlin also discusses the work of scholars who have posited alternative dates to the rise of monolatry and monotheism respectively.

The strength of McLaughlin’s work is seen in his impressive ability to summarize succinctly a large corpus of scholarship related to the topic. McLaughlin is unlikely to find much support among evangelical readers for his own approach due to his methodology and conclusions. While at many points throughout the work he highlights certain forms of argumentation as “suggestive,” McLaughlin does little to detail the degree of speculation involved in attempting to reconstruct the development of Israelite religion, given the data at hand. The development of Israelite religion and the methods by which it is studied will continue to be hotly debated topics for years to come. McLaughlin provides a succinct entryway into the discussion

from a decidedly diachronic methodology, which essentially leaves pre-exilic Israelite religion without a distinctive voice among its polytheistic neighbors.

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The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction. By Richard S. Hess. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016, xiv + 801 pp., \$49.99.

Richard S. Hess, Earl S. Kalland Professor of OT and Semitic Languages at Denver Seminary, has provided the academic community a truly impressive synthesis of scholarship in his *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction*. This volume is written “to meet the needs of the broad variety of students who come to study the Old Testament at a seminary or at a graduate level” (p. viii), including students with no prior knowledge of the OT, and Hess masterfully accomplishes this goal.

Hess begins the volume with an opening chapter that treats several introductory matters, including the canonical status of the OT and the composition and manuscript evidence for the OT. Hess argues against the current widespread assumption that the OT text and canon were in flux during the first century CE. He refers to early testimony regarding the structure of the canon (e.g. Philo, *Contempl.* 25; Luke 24:44) and points to the many proto-Masoretic texts attested at Qumran. Based on this and other evidence, Hess argues that as the OT was written, it was collected and preserved in the Jerusalem temple (cf. Deut 31:26) until 586 BCE, at which point the exiles took copies out of the land and later brought them back under the leadership of Ezra. Hess further contends that despite the emergence of other textual traditions (e.g. the Septuagint) and even other non-Masoretic books (e.g. the Apocrypha), the Masoretic Text preserves the most uniform and reliable text type.

The bulk of the volume considers each OT book individually chapter by chapter, following the division and order of the Christian canon. Each of the four major canonical divisions begins with a general introduction to that portion of the canon. Then, Hess investigates each biblical book within that canonical division. Each chapter begins with a short paragraph that captures the reader's attention and skillfully summarizes the biblical book's message. Next, each chapter structures its discussion according to four sections: (1) “Name, Text, and Outline”; (2) “Overview”; (3) “Reading”; and (4) “Theological Perspectives.”

The first section, “Name, Text, and Outline,” examines the significance of the biblical book's name, its different manuscript traditions, and its canonical status. For most biblical books, this discussion is relatively short, but Hess appropriately expands his discussion for biblical books that exhibit significant differences between the Masoretic Text and Septuagint (e.g. Samuel) or whose canonical status was debated in antiquity (e.g. Ecclesiastes). Following this information, Hess provides an alphanumeric outline of the biblical book's structure that typically includes two or three levels of headings.

The second section, “Overview,” fills in the broad strokes of the previous section’s outline with a prose summary of the biblical book’s contents. Hess thereby enables the reader to trace the biblical book’s flow of thought. In most cases this section offers an extremely useful synthesis of each biblical book, helping the reader to see how the book’s parts fit within its overall structure, although for only a few biblical books (e.g. Psalms) the summaries are less than helpful due to lack of genuine synthesis.

In the third section, “Reading,” Hess surveys different methods of interpretation according to six major categories: premodern readings, higher criticism (divided into two subcategories, source criticism and tradition criticism, for the five books of the Pentateuch), literary readings, gender and ideological criticism, ANE context, and canonical context. This section presents one of the most unique and outstanding features of the volume in that no other OT introduction contains analysis of such diverse types of readings. As one might expect given the author’s expertise, Hess exhibits particular insight in his examination of higher criticism and the text’s ANE context. However, Hess also excels in his analysis of the other categories. He is especially to be commended for his inclusion of premodern readings and gender and ideological criticism, which situate each biblical book within a broad, global context.

The fourth section, “Theological Perspectives,” synthesizes the key themes of the biblical book and connects those themes with the rest of the canon. This section often seeks to connect the meaning of the original text with its modern audience by examining its possible application. Naturally, the discussion varies depending on the biblical book. For example, Hess discusses the theological significance of the new covenant in his analysis of the book of Jeremiah, but devotes much space to examining the ethics of God’s command to kill the Canaanites when synthesizing the book of Joshua. The theological analyses of this section are quite insightful in most instances, although for some biblical books (e.g. Genesis) the analysis is framed so broadly that it does not adequately capture the book’s theological message.

The final component to each chapter is a short, annotated bibliography of key works on the biblical book—primarily commentaries—that are briefly evaluated in terms of their unique strengths, scholarly contribution, and theological perspective.

The chapter-by-chapter presentation of each biblical book is followed by a short postscript entitled “Transition.” Here Hess reminds the reader that the OT serves as the foundational background for the NT, encouraging us to avoid formulating doctrine in light of the NT and then read that doctrine back into the OT. Hess also captures the basic unifying doctrine of the OT as loving God and loving one another, and he encourages the reader to participate in God’s mission of redeeming the world, a mission that Hess notes has its foundations in the OT.

Throughout the book, many sidebars, maps, and photos—including sixteen full-color plates—serve as helpful learning resources for the reader. A lengthy bibliography and several indexes (Ancient Writings, Scripture, and Subjects) bring the volume to a close.

OT introductions abound, but Hess's *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical* introduction clearly stands out as one of the best in terms of its scope and synthesis. Many OT introductions tend to present some, but not all, of the different categories of topics covered by Hess's volume. To my knowledge at least, no modern OT introduction covers as much ground and synthesizes as much material as Hess does in this volume. This alone makes Hess's volume truly unique.

In spite of its vast scope, this book is a joy to read. Hess writes clearly and engagingly and avoids technical jargon, making this an accessible textbook for students regardless of whether or not they have prior knowledge of the OT. Framing each biblical book according to the same four basic categories creates a well-structured presentation of the OT that is easy for students to follow.

Another obvious strength of this volume, indicated above, is Hess's attention to the many different ways in which the OT has been read. The sections on pre-modern readings as well as gender and ideological criticism are especially helpful in that they offer an evangelical assessment of approaches to reading the OT that are probably unfamiliar to most readers. Such an approach situates the OT within a context much broader than the typical OT introduction, which instead tends to frame its presentation of the OT from a Western perspective. Accordingly, Hess's volume is especially appropriate for seminaries that wish to highlight Christianity's global context and rich, diverse heritage.

Thus, Hess's *The Old Testament* would serve well as the primary textbook for a graduate-level introduction to the Hebrew Bible. My only potential concern is that despite its great accessibility otherwise, this volume's length of approximately 700 pages (without bibliography) could be overwhelming for some audiences, particularly students at seminaries that tend to be less academically minded. However, if this is the case, the instructor can simply have the students skim or even skip over sections that may pose difficulty; thus, this potential concern is ultimately of little consequence.

In sum, Hess's *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction* is a truly remarkable introduction to the OT. It surpasses other OT introductions by virtue of its vast scope, and yet it remains accessible and easy to read. I highly recommend it as an introductory textbook for graduate-level study of the OT.

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How to Understand and Apply the Old Testament: Twelve Steps from Exegesis to Theology. By Jason S. DeRouchie. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2017, xxxv + 583 pp., \$30.00.

Jason DeRouchie's masterful guidebook equips the reader for the interpretation and application of the OT. DeRouchie serves as professor of OT and biblical theology at Bethlehem College and Seminary. His colleague, Andrew Naselli, wrote the NT companion volume, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament: Twelve Steps from Exegesis to Theology* (P&R, 2017). Portions of DeRouchie's volume were adapted from his journal articles and books, which include his coauthored volume,

A Modern Grammar for Biblical Hebrew (Broadman & Holman, 2009), and a volume he edited, *What the Old Testament Authors Really Cared About: A Survey of Jesus' Bible* (Kregel, 2013).

The front matter includes fifty-five glowing blurbs from Christian leaders. The book divides into five main parts: Text: "What Is the Makeup of the Passage?" (Part 1); Observation: "How Is the Passage Communicated?" (Part 2); Context: "Where Does the Passage Fit?" (Part 3); Meaning: "What Does the Passage Mean?" (Part 4); Application: "Why Does the Passage Matter?" (Part 5).

Each chapter commences with an overview of the contents and a partially-expanded outline of the interpretive process. The chapters discuss the significance of the topic at hand, procedures to follow, and pitfalls to avoid. An array of graphics and wisely-chosen examples, such as Exod 19:4–6, enhance the discussions. In order to accommodate everyone, the discussions are rated according to their level of difficulty: *easy*, for all readers; *moderate*, for intermediate interpreters with or without a knowledge of Hebrew; and *challenging*, for advanced interpreters with some knowledge of Hebrew. Each chapter concludes with a set of lists: key words and concepts, questions for further reflection, and resources for further study. The best resources are marked by a star. The back matter contains an appendix ("The Kingdom Bible Reading Plan"), a glossary, a substantial bibliography (thirty-seven pages), an index of Scripture, and an index of subjects and names.

DeRouchie proposes a twelve-step process for doing exegesis and theology: (1) genre; (2) literary units and text hierarchy; (3) text criticism; (4) translation; (5) clause and text grammar; (6) argument-tracing; (7) word and concept studies; (8) historical context; (9) literary context; (10) biblical theology; (11) systematic theology; and (12) practical theology. As the reader can see, DeRouchie places textual criticism early in the process (Step 3). By comparison, many interpreters postpone textual criticism until near the end of the exegetical process because textual critical decisions depend upon the evaluation of internal evidence (e.g. syntax, rhetorical factors, and lexical data). Early in the process, the practitioner is not yet acquainted with the passage well enough to make an informed textual decision. Moreover, step twelve is labeled "practical theology." We probably ought to retire that term from our Christian curriculum and vocabulary because it gives the impression that biblical theology and systematic theology are not practical. Nowadays, many people roll their eyes when they hear the word *theology* because they perceive it to be impractical and irrelevant. As Christian educators, we are not helping our cause by creating a false distinction. All theology is practical.

To motivate his audience, the author offers ten reasons why the OT is important for Christians (pp. 6–11). He even makes a case that the OT has more relevance for Christians than it did for OT saints (pp. 416–22). In addition, DeRouchie expounds four benefits of original-language study (pp. 11–14). However, he not only affirms that a knowledge of Hebrew benefits interpretation but demonstrates it time and again by providing numerous exegetically significant examples throughout the book. Such examples include the following: (1) a word study of *הַבָּל* ("vanity") in Ecclesiastes (pp. 286–91); (2) a text-critical analysis of Amos 6:12 (pp. 131–33); (3) a grammatical study of the verbless clauses in Deut 6:4 (pp. 214–18); (4) a

study of genre in relation to the interpretation of Prov 22:6 (pp. 89–92); and (5) a study of text blocks in relation to the fivefold (not tenfold) תולדות structure of Genesis (pp. 107–9).

DeRouchie anticipates resistance from his readership on key points, so he provides argumentation that supports his approach to an issue. For instance, he gives seven reasons why the Masoretic Text should be emended cautiously (pp. 147–48), three problems with the threefold division of the law (pp. 436–39), three mistakes to avoid when engaging extrabiblical historical texts (pp. 306–7), and three constraints of published English translations that should prompt exegetes to produce their own translations (p. 165).

Regarding Hebrew verbs, the author emphasizes that context determines the tense of a verb (pp. 192–94). Furthermore, *qatal* verbs portray the action as a whole, whereas *yiqtol* verbs express the action in terms of process (p. 191). In the production of expository outlines, DeRouchie encourages his readers to create message-driven outlines (rather than content-driven outlines) because they better reflect the argument of the passage (p. 267).

Special attention goes to the discovery of the Messiah in the OT: “We want to find Christ, but only where God intends him to be found” (p. 58). In one example, DeRouchie explains how the NT apostles viewed the individual of Psalm 16 as Jesus himself rather than as King David. Concerning the typological reading of the psalm, one must ask, “Is it appropriate to use the term ‘typological’ of a statement that was not true of the ‘type’ itself?” (pp. 72–73 n. 42). The bibliography omits Hengstenberg’s classic, *Christology of the Old Testament* (repr. Kregel, 1956).

Theologically, DeRouchie’s interpretations coincide with progressive covenantalism, a mixture of covenant theology and dispensational theology (cf. pp. 367–68). For him, the first coming of Christ looms large in the fulfillment of OT prophecies: “We must read the Old Testament as Christians and not as though Christ had not come” (p. 366). He believes that some OT prophecies anticipate the church age: “The Prophets in part predict the present age of the church” (p. 60). Concerning Zeph 3:9–10, he states, “I believe that we can see Zephaniah’s prophetic prediction already being fulfilled today in the church of Jesus, even as we the saints await its full realization” (p. 409).

DeRouchie summarizes the message of the Bible in one sentence: “God reigns, saves, and satisfies through covenant for his glory in Christ” (pp. 351–52). He summarizes the Psalter this way: “The Psalms supplanted messianic music to the saints of old—music designed to nurture hope for the coming kingdom” (p. 75).

The author maintains a high view of Scripture. Commendably, he upholds the historicity of Scripture and its uniqueness among other ANE documents (pp. 27, 34–38). He also advocates a “submissive and constructive approach” to Scripture rather than a “critical and destructive approach” (p. 348).

Concerning the dual authorship of Scripture, DeRouchie embraces *sensus plenior* (God’s intent > the human author’s intent) rather than *confluence* (God’s intent = the human author’s intent). As he puts it, “The ultimate divine intent of Old Testament texts (with respect to both sense and referent) may legitimately transcend any given human author’s immediate written speech, while organically

growing out of it and never contradicting it” (p. 362). Further, he states, “The divine authorship of Scripture allows for later texts to clarify, enhance, or deepen the meaning of earlier texts” (p. 367). One’s view on dual authorship carries tremendous implications for how one perceives the relationship of the OT and NT.

A few statements regarding the composition of Scripture could be improved. DeRouchie refers to “the divinely inspired Old Testament authors” (p. 10; cf. p. 417). Technically speaking, God inspired the *writings*, not the *writers*. The writings possess the quality of inspiration (2 Tim 3:16), whereas the writers were moved (superintended) by the Spirit (2 Pet 1:21). Moreover, DeRouchie indicates that the OT was composed within a span of one thousand years, and that the Bible was composed within a span of fifteen hundred years (p. 349). These numbers imply that DeRouchie denies a patriarchal date for the composition of the book of Job.

In DeRouchie’s opinion, the Masoretes placed *superior* readings in the margins of the codices (*qere*) (p. 139). According to other scholars, however, the Masoretes put *spurious* readings in the margins in order to warn future copyists of past errors in transmission. DeRouchie claims that the *ketiv* is pointed with the vowels of the *qere* (p. 139). He also affirms that the Masoretes favored non-messianic readings (pp. 130, 147–48).

Whether or not one agrees with DeRouchie’s interpretive conclusions, this work stands out as the finest book available for instruction in the exegetical methodology of the OT. His guidance is thorough, clear, sophisticated, pedagogically excellent, and worship oriented. DeRouchie’s contribution will no doubt help popularize the study of macrosyntax, a neglected topic in the traditional Hebrew grammars. I enthusiastically recommend the book.

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Biblical Theology: The God of Christian Scriptures. By John Goldingay. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2016, 608 pp., \$60.00.

John Goldingay is known for many of his writings, particularly for his three-volume work entitled *Old Testament Theology*. In *Biblical Theology: The God of Christian Scriptures*, John Goldingay continues his good work from *Old Testament Theology*, broadening his focus to biblical theology. What he produces is a compelling one-volume biblical theology that covers the overarching picture of Scripture.

From the outset of the work, Goldingay defines clearly what he means by biblical theology. He declares this to be “the understanding of God and the world and life that emerges from these two Testaments” (p. 13). Throughout his volume, Goldingay faithfully develops this definition. His work contains eight chapters all beginning from the perspective of who God is. They are entitled “God’s Person,” “God’s Insight,” “God’s Creation,” “God’s Reign,” “God’s Anointed,” “God’s Children,” “God’s Expectation,” and “God’s Triumph.” He also devotes attention to both the OT and NT through each of the chapters.

In his approach to biblical theology, Goldingay does not assume that the writings of the OT and NT are a coherent tradition. He rather declares them to be “a canonical bundle of overlapping testimonies from radically different contexts to the one history of God with humanity which culminates in Christ’s death and resurrection.” (p. 14). Instead, he finds the different contents of Scripture as providing materials for building a cathedral.

For those less familiar with books on biblical theology, Goldingay’s approach differs from that of many other biblical theological works. In comparison with Gerhard Ebeling, *Word and Faith* or Brevard Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, Goldingay aims for a place between both viewpoints. Rather than focusing on the theology found within the Bible like Gerhard Ebeling or the theology that accords with the Bible like Brevard Childs, Goldingay aims for a target between these two approaches.

Goldingay’s approach is also distinct from other works about biblical theology. For example, I. H. Marshall in his *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel*, presents NT theology from the perspective of different sources. While Synoptic, Pauline, Johannine, Petrine, and other traditions are examined, they are not examined separately as Marshall does. Goldingay’s approach also does not aim to have the Bible understood in light of one central theme as J. M. Hamilton Jr. aims for in his book, *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology*. Goldingay’s method also differs from biblical theology books that approach the subject from a metanarrative approach. This would include G. K. Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology: Unfolding the Old Testament in the New*, and G. Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Foundations and Principles*. These propose an overarching theme or narrative in which biblical ideas fit. Goldingay is able to examine both OT and NT but also allow some ambiguity. Not every biblical text needs to fit with his paradigm.

Goldingay’s approach does have similarity to other multi-theme related approaches to biblical theology. Works by C. H. Scobie (*The Ways of Our God: An Approach to Biblical Theology*) and S. J. Hafemann and P. R. House (*Central Themes in Biblical Theology: Mapping Unity in Diversity*) trace a limited number of themes through the Bible. Goldingay’s method, however, does not aim for as much cohesion among passages.

In writing his *Biblical Theology*, Goldingay chooses not to identify a “common core” or an “underlying unity” that can be found within the writings. Instead, he attempts to identify the building that can be made from these materials, representing both OT and NT together. In his words, he presents a “digest of the Scriptures” condensing the message of the Scriptures within this one volume.

The author has effectively created a resource that is accessible to students, educated lay people, and pastors. The book reads easily without becoming embroiled with questions that only academics address. It is not, however, improperly simple. Goldingay does provide references to scholarly works along the way and addresses complicated theological issues.

The sequence of chapters is laid out in a good order. After beginning with God’s attributes, Goldingay addresses the understanding of the Scripture and crea-

tion. He then moves to God's reign as seen in the nation of Israel and the kingdom of God. In the chapter on God's Anointed, Goldingay focuses on Jesus and his life, death, and resurrection. Following this, he speaks about God's children and the expectations God has of them in this world. He concludes with a chapter on God's triumph, culminating in Jesus's appearing and then the judgment.

Several aspects of this volume make it unique. Goldingay provides his own translation for biblical passages. He also bypasses much of the technical theological vocabulary that could make a volume like this difficult to read. This includes discussions about the Trinity, various terms about eschatology such as the millennium or tribulation, limited omniscience, or postbiblical discussions about the atonement.

From the first chapter, Goldingay presents the discussion about the person of God in an accessible way. He divides the chapter into four parts: God's moral character, his metaphysical nature, his ways of expressing himself in the world, and his mind, which is embodied in Jesus. A chapter on the nature of God that addresses the Trinity and limited omniscience might appropriately yield much technical jargon, but Goldingay does not go there. Instead of getting entangled in the discussions about the Trinity, he speaks about God being one and having fluidity. Instead of becoming involved in the open theism debate, he speaks instead of the flexibility of God.

Many may be surprised at the number of references to the OT that are found within Goldingay's work. Several of the chapters contain more references to the OT than to the NT. The chapter on God's creation, for example, begins with OT references to creation such as Genesis 1; Job 38; Psalms 24; 89:11–12; and Isaiah 40. The OT influence is particularly prominent in several of the opening chapters, but the NT becomes more prominent as *Biblical Theology* continues, particularly in the fifth chapter when he writes about God's Anointed. In his discussion about the atonement and justification, there is a balance between both Testaments.

Several chapters stand out as especially noteworthy. Goldingay's discussion of God's children addresses several tensions within the OT and NT well. His discussion about the church brings out the individual and corporate nature of being God's people. For those who come from a Western background that emphasizes individuality, the author's discussion brings out the corporate nature well. He highlights aspects of being God's children; they are a household, a temple, a kingdom, a school, a priesthood, and a people of service. Goldingay also highlights a number of the tensions in being God's people: the body of Christ is both worldwide and local, one in essence but also different, selected but outreaching, and inclusive but holy.

The author's discussion on ethics was also cleverly constructed in the chapter entitled "God's Expectation." The chapter is organized around the principles of walking and worship. Many approaches to ethics make the discussion of this subject complex, but Goldingay's discussion helps to simplify the main thrust of Christian ethics. He rightly grounds God's expectations in the Torah and then Christ as the goal of the Torah. Besides walking in God's way, Goldingay also advances the ideas of worship and mutual commitment. It would have been interesting if Goldingay would have inserted more on the idea of following Jesus or imitation.

A point of vulnerability in Goldingay's study is his discussion about justification, a subject addressed in his chapter on God's Anointed. Instead of following the traditional Protestant viewpoint about justification (considered by many the Lutheran viewpoint), Goldingay adopts N. T. Wright's perspective. Goldingay writes about the word *dikaiōsis* that it "does not involve a legal fiction. It does not mean treating someone as in the right when they are not. It means treating them as within the covenant people" (p. 313). While Goldingay uses a number of words that speak about salvation such as expiation, purification, emancipation, restitution, and subjugation, he minimizes propitiation. Those from a more traditional perspective will likely want more from this discussion than what is found in this book.

Goldingay's *Biblical Theology* provides an accessible digest of the OT and NT. It will be a benefit to any seminary's library, and also will benefit a pastor who wants to preach biblical theology well to an audience with modern sensitivities. It is particularly helpful in placing more complex theological ideas into an accessible format for pastors and teachers.

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Canonical Theology: The Biblical Canon, Sola Scriptura, and Theological Method. By John C. Peckham. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016, xiii + 295 pp., \$35.00.

In Chapter 1, John Peckham introduces his readers to the main issues he will be addressing, organized around two recurring and interrelated questions. First, who determines the canon of Scripture—a community of faith (the extrinsic model) or God himself (the intrinsic model)? For Peckham, only God through divine commission *determines* the canon, while the community *recognizes* that canon. Indeed, he avers the books of the canon were canonical at the time of their composition. The community's *recognition* of their canonicity has an important role in the function of the canon in the life of the community, but such recognition has no bearing on the canon *qua* canon. A deeper discussion of this question with a number of helpful nuances occurs in chapters 2–3, addressing respectively how the canon has been divinely commissioned and divinely determined and on what basis the scope of that canon can be recognized.

The second question is more concerned with theological method and can be asked as follows: What is the relationship between the canon of Scripture and what constitutes correct interpretation of that Scripture, especially as it relates to theology? This part of Chapter 1 lays the groundwork for a discussion of the "ongoing debate relative to *sola Scriptura* about whether (and to what extent) an extracanonical interpretive arbiter should be adopted as a 'rule' for Christian theology" (p. 15). The majority of the book, starting in chapter 4, attends to Peckham's approach to these issues and his method for doing canonical theology. These are demonstrated clearly in the final chapters of the book where he addresses the topics of divine (im)passibility (chap. 9) and divine love (chap. 10).

I have had a difficult time deciding whether Peckham has been successful in this endeavor. The success of previous publications, combined with glowing blurbs on the back cover and in the foreword, make it hard to disagree with such important names in the evangelical academy. At the same time, however, I regularly found myself frustrated at the arguments being made in the book and especially at one critical inconsistency in Peckham's defense for a "canonical *sola scriptura*" approach to theological inquiry. I will describe these in the following two points.

First, while Peckham's discussion of the role and canonicity of the NT was done well, his explanation of the same for the OT was not as helpful (chap. 2). In particular, he does not make a sufficient distinction between the contemporaneous instructive function of prophetic utterances historically within a community of faith and the "inspired" nature of prophetic books that have been recognized by both Judaism and Christianity as part of divine Scripture. In other words, one needs to be able to distinguish between prophetic utterances recounted as part of the narrative and the nature of the books themselves as being prophetic. For instance, there is an important exegetical distinction between the temple speech of Jeremiah (ca. 609 BC) and the inspired writing that includes that speech in the book of Jeremiah: the former is not binding on contemporary readers while the latter is. It is not prophetic utterances *per se* that are canonical (Jesus included, p. 63) but the shape given those utterances in the final form of the text. These are basic distinctions, and if one wishes to put forward a canonical theological method, a better foundation for the composition of the books of the canon must be provided.

Second, I found Peckham's treatment of the Rule of Faith in chapters 5–7 problematic. His insistence that Irenaeus did not argue from an extrabiblical faith passed down through apostolic succession is countered by the quotes he supplies (even if they are fluid), and this significantly undermines his approach. For Irenaeus and other early Christian theologians/interpreters, there did seem to be a canon and a tradition that went hand in hand: the canon (OT, and eventually NT) and the faith once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3), which at its core articulated Jesus according to the OT (Luke 24; John 6; 1 Corinthians 15). On analogy, since this interpretive tradition of reading the OT existed in the preaching of the apostolic age (before the NT was written), would not the same interpretive tradition accompany the ongoing preaching and teaching in the post-apostolic age? While the overall point he makes in these chapters is fine enough—namely, that traditional Christian teaching should be respected and appreciated, though none of it is authoritative in the same way the canon of Scripture is authoritative—to dismiss out of hand the summative guide to correct interpretation of Scripture in the early church (the Rule), not to mention the close exegetical arguments from Scripture that gave rise to it, overplays his hand. Indeed, he contradicts his claims at the end of chapter 7: "Evangelicals ... typically accept the claim, which I believe to be true, that the Trinity doctrine is grounded in Scripture, at least in its essentials. The suggestion of this canonical approach is that such minimal grounding is sufficient for a canonical systematic theology" (p. 190; cf. pp. 130, 191). Without articulating how the content of the "essentials" of a Trinitarian doctrine are sufficiently different than, for example, Irenaeus's "canon of faith" or the Apostle's Creed, this "minimal ground-

ing,” as far as I can tell, is nothing other than an interpretive arbiter, communally accepted by Peckham’s evangelical audience, and this is so whether he wants to recognize it as such or not.

While the above comments are critical of certain aspects of the book, Peckham does make a strong case for an intrinsic model of canon, which has important contributions in setting forth a canonical approach to systematic theology (chap. 8), as well as how to apply such an approach (chaps. 9–10). This is bound to be an important book moving forward, and it will help clarify how to approach the current Trinitarian debates in the ETS. Even so, for his version of a canonical theological method to work, a better foundation must be laid.

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Created and Creating: A Biblical Theology of Culture. By William Edgar. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017, x + 262 pp., \$24.00 paper.

Created and Creating is a new work from William Edgar, professor of apologetics at Westminster Theological Seminary (Philadelphia). Edgar’s previous books include *A Transforming Vision: The Lord’s Prayer as a Lens for Life*, *Schaeffer on the Christian Life*, and *Truth in all Its Glory: Commending the Reformed Faith*. Making a case for Christian cultural engagement, Edgar’s stated thesis is that “the cultural mandate, declared at the dawn of human history, and reiterated throughout the different episodes of redemptive history, culminating in Jesus’ Great Commission, is the central calling for humanity” (p. 233). With this focus, Edgar’s project bears resemblance to some other recent works, including Andy Crouch’s *Culture Making* (2008), which invites Christians to be constructive contributors to culture; Rod Dreher’s new work, *The Benedict Option* (2017), which actually urges believers to disengage from politics and to take shelter from the secular world; and Richard Niebuhr’s older theological work, *Christ and Culture* (1951), which discusses the various means through which Christ relates to a given culture. Cultural engagement has also been a key theme in James K. A. Smith’s works, including his recent book *You are What You Love* (2016). What makes Edgar’s work distinct is his primary emphasis on a biblical theology of culture.

In the first of three parts (“Parameters of Culture,” chaps. 1–2), Edgar surveys nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholarship, showing the development of cultural studies in general. Next, he summarizes the thought of key twentieth-century theologians (including Lewis, Kuiper, Schaeffer, Conn) who have written about culture from a biblical perspective. In part 2 (“Challenges from Scripture,” chaps. 3–7), the author carefully works through Scripture to explore the tension between not being conformed to the world (*contra mundum*), while also being a winsome participant in and shaper of culture. Finally, in part 3 (“The Cultural Mandate,” chaps. 8–12), Edgar fleshes out his thesis to show the cultural mandate at work throughout biblical redemptive history from the Garden of Eden to the eternal state.

There are many things to commend about this work but I will focus on three areas. First, since the author grew up in France and later served as a missionary there, he demonstrates a good grasp of the products of Western culture (e.g. art, music), upon which he draws freely to make illustrations in the book. Also, particularly in the first section, he emulates his mentor Francis Schaeffer in being able to understand European philosophy and converse with these ideas from a biblical perspective.

Second, Edgar succeeds in accomplishing his aims of presenting a biblical theology of culture by doing excellent exegetical work throughout the book. His study is rich with reflection on particular passages, including biblical terms and themes, all within the context of biblical redemptive history. This thorough and sober study of Scripture might provide the best response to date to the claims of cultural disengagement laid out in Dreher's *Benedict Option*, even though that is not Edgar's specific aim. Finally, the author's discussion on the image of God in man certainly critiques the historic social sins of slavery and racism, though again, that is not his deliberate purpose.

A third strength is Edgar's discussion in chapter 12 on "Culture in the After-life." Most reflections on Christian cultural engagement focus on the here and now, so it was thought-provoking and even inspiring to think about culture-making in heaven. Edgar accomplishes the goals of his study by exploring the cultural mandate even in the eternal state.

To these affirmations, I add three areas of constructive critique. First, though Edgar deeply engages Scripture and Western philosophy, the Christian voices that inform much of his thought are almost entirely white, Western, male, and Reformed. While no disrespect is meant for the likes of Murray, Kuyper, Vos, Frame, Conn, Schaeffer, Keller, and others, if Edgar had engaged other diverse global theological voices, his book would have been strengthened.

Second, I was hoping the third part of the book would do more to unpack a theology of work. Although the title of chapter 8 ("First Vocation") hints at such a discussion, and a paragraph in chapter 12 (p. 218) only briefly raises the issue of work, I would have appreciated more biblical and theological reflection on vocation.

Finally, in chapter 12, Edgar's assessment of Augustine's thought on cultural engagement from *City of God* appears incomplete. Edgar writes: "Yet [Augustine's] dichotomy between the two cities, based on the two loves, leaves the reader to believe the present world is a confinement, a place of captivity, as we await immortality" (p. 221). While Augustine regarded believers as temporary pilgrims in the earthly city who yearn for the heavenly city, he also affirmed that actively living in the earthly city prepares the believer for heaven. Also, Augustine encouraged believers to participate actively in society in order to influence the earthly city with heavenly values. Augustine applied these values in his own ministry by serving as a monk-bishop and living in a monastery (in the bishop's house) near Hippo's center. There he and the brothers regularly opened their doors to visitors and demonstrated hospitality. Further, under the Theodosian code, Augustine functioned as a judge and mediator in the Roman courts, so he could influence local society with biblical val-

ues (cf. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* 1.4.4; *Sermon* 88.15; *City of God* 22.21.16; 21.15; *Letter* 133; Possidius, *Life of Augustine* 19).

In summary, William Edgar has written a thoughtful introductory work on a biblical theology of culture. This would function as a good supplementary text to an Introduction to Mission or Biblical Theology of Mission course at the seminary level, especially if it is read alongside other works from diverse global theologians.

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Sinai and the Saints: Reading Old Covenant Laws for the New Covenant Community. By James M. Todd III. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017, 205 pp., \$24.00 paper.

One of the first questions early Christianity had to face was its relationship with the OT Law. The exact nature of this relationship continues to be a source of debate and confusion in the church today. In this slender volume, James M. Todd III, assistant professor of biblical and theological studies at College of the Ozarks, seeks to address this question at a popular level in accessible and non-technical language. One of Todd's driving concerns is the way in which evangelical Christians use the law to defend a biblical view of homosexuality. He introduces and concludes his book with a discussion of this topic. He highlights the fact that most Christians defend their position by reference to Lev 18:22 and 20:13. However, he avers, this opens them up to the charge of inconsistency since they do not apply many of the Levitical laws in the same way and do not have a rationale for why this law applies while many others do not (p. 4). What is needed, Todd suggests, is a clearer understanding of the function of the Law in the Sinai covenant and its relationship to the new covenant. He accomplishes this with an introduction, nine chapters, a conclusion, and three appendices.

In the first two chapters, Todd frames his discussion by defining what he means by "law" and by distinguishing his approach toward the Law with other common approaches. After a helpful overview of the breadth of the term *torah*, Todd clarifies that he is specifically dealing with the *torah* defined as the old covenant, or the Sinai covenant found in Exodus 20–Deuteronomy (p. 14). These were not laws given to all humanity but rather to a "specific group of people at a specific time in a specific place for a specific purpose" (pp. 14–15). In this way, he distinguishes the Law from the Pentateuch and the old covenant from the Hebrew Bible. In distinguishing his approach toward the Law with other approaches, Todd does not use traditional terms (e.g. Lutheran, dispensational, Reformed, SDA); rather, he uses more generic descriptors (e.g. Moral Law Christians, Ten Commandment Christians, No-Old-Law Christians). His own approach is a variant of the "No-Old-Law Christians" situated within a neo-covenantal or progressive covenantal framework (p. 42). He argues that the old covenant was a temporary arrangement to set Israel apart. With the coming of the Messiah, a new covenant is inaugurated

and the old covenant is no longer active. Thus, believers are not under the law of the covenant but under the law of Christ (p. 43).

Todd emphasizes continually that the Law was not given as an end in itself but rather as part of a larger narrative (Genesis–Deuteronomy). Chapters 4–5 set the Law in the context of the narrative of the Pentateuch. This is really the heart of Todd’s book. Building on the work of John Sailhamer, he argues that in the old covenant Yahweh “promised to fulfill his promises to Abraham” contingent on the people’s obedience to Yahweh’s commands (p. 59). However, from the way in which Moses narrates the Pentateuch, it is clear that he did not expect the people to obey. Todd points out a pattern in the giving of the Law. Embedded within the giving of the Law are narratives describing Israel’s rebellion (p. 63). These are strategically placed to highlight Israel’s unfaithfulness. In particular, the author focuses on the placement and function of the golden calf incident (Exodus 32–34), Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10), the blaspheming son (Leviticus 24), and narratives concerning Israel’s complaining and rebellion in the wilderness. Throughout, “Moses emphasizes the people’s (and their leaders) constant violation of the Lord’s commands” (p. 82). Todd also notes that after the Sinai covenant, God’s response to Israel’s sin is harsher than before Sinai, indicating their increased culpability as covenant partners. In summary, the old covenant was given specifically to Israel and highlights that instead of enabling the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises, it increased the people’s sin and God’s wrath and judgment on them (pp. 87–88). The Pentateuch indicates that the Israelites did not have within them the resources to obey the covenant. This message, Todd argues, is part of the narrative intent of the Pentateuch.

In the following three chapters, Todd deftly engages with three questions that naturally arise with his view that none of the old covenant laws directly applies to the believer today. First, what about the Ten Commandments as an ethical norm (chap. 7)? Second, does this view lead to antinomianism (chap. 8)? Third, why should Christians read the old covenant at all if it does not apply to them (chap. 9)? Regarding the Ten Commandments, Todd points out that most of these are reaffirmed in the NT and reflect the natural law, not just God’s specific covenant with Israel. The author spends most of his time in this section discussing the Sabbath and ultimately argues that it does not apply to believers today. Believers are instead under the law of Christ. While there is naturally some overlap between new and old covenant obligations, in Todd’s view, this does not mean that parts of the old covenant are still applicable. However, the old covenant is still Christian Scripture. Rather than directly applying it, Christians can discern the theological principle that underlies the old covenant laws and apply the principle. For example, sacrifice teaches us about the importance of and need for atonement (p. 134). In the final chapter, Todd describes the hope of the Pentateuch as a coming Messianic king “who will deal a defeating crush to the serpent who introduced sin into God’s perfect creation” (p. 182).

This book has much to recommend it. It is engagingly written and informative for a diverse readership. It would be appropriate for everything from a small group Bible study to supplemental reading in an OT introduction or hermeneutics

class. Todd has raised questions that most Christians have wrestled with at some point and has provided answers to them from within a consistent theological framework. He also provides wisdom in how to and how not to use the old covenant laws in contemporary ethical debates. There are certainly places where many will disagree with his understanding of the relationship between Israel and the church and of his position that none of the old covenant laws are directly applicable to the church today. Nevertheless, the value of his work does not depend on one's position regarding these long-standing debates. Todd has provided the church with a wonderful introduction on how to appropriate and engage with this vital portion of Scripture.

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The Historical Writings: Introducing Israel's Historical Literature. By Mark A. Leuchter and David T. Lamb. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016, xx + 585 pp., \$49.00.

While Jewish and Christian scholars have long independently written about Israel's historical writings, Leuchter (Jewish) and Lamb (Christian) make history of their own by their joint contribution on the historical writings. Despite the volume's joint authorship, Leuchter and Lamb write only the short introduction together and presumably the glossary at the back. Otherwise, they divide up the chapters according to the historical books (Lamb: Joshua, Judges, Kings; Leuchter: Samuel, Ezra–Nehemiah, Chronicles). It makes perfect sense to allocate books according to areas of scholarly expertise or preference.

Yet, alternating chapter authors also puts a spotlight on competing styles unless smoothed out by a vigilant editor, as the authors themselves opine (p. 12). Lamb includes numerous humorous parenthetical asides. Jael supplies a blanket for Sisera, and Lamb adds in parenthesis at this point “but apparently no bedtime story” (pp. 128–29). Lamb further displays a literary flair with his phraseology such as when he describes Samson's use of a donkey's jawbone as displaying “MacGyveresque resourcefulness” (p. 150). He freely uses contractions throughout. Lamb's breezy informality contrasts with Leuchter's more traditional scholarly diction.

Writing preferences aside, both authors follow the same organizational format. The structural components of each chapter include the following: (1) General Introduction to book; (2) Literary Concerns; (3) Historical Issues; (4) Theological Themes; (5) Commentary; (6) Bibliography. Conceptual categories bleed together and this contributes to repetitive writing in places. By the time Lamb reaches the commentary section of Judges, he recognizes the need “to avoid repeating observations already made above” (p. 143). However, the repeating cow is already out of the barn. For instance, Lamb reiterates the comparison of Shamgar's slaughter of six hundred Philistines with an ox goad with Samson's massive Philistine retribution with a donkey's jawbone (pp. 110, 136). Leuchter offers a more economical

approach, but both authors would have benefitted from a more streamlined set of headings within each chapter.

Aside from the usual front and back materials, the volume includes a wide array of elements designed with a college-level audience in mind. It peppers its pages with an impressive number of 81 figures and maps, 85 sidebars, 30 tables, and 178 glossary entries. The figures, maps, and tables all key extremely well to the discussion and will appeal to visual learners. The figures and maps largely derive from Wikimedia Commons (commons.wikimedia.org) and many of these all-black-and-white images lack ideal resolution, though obviously color glossies would be cost prohibitive. The sidebars, too, find ideal placement in the discussion and aid as thoughtful follow-ups to the subjects introduced. As with any glossary, some entries need more explanation than others. Readers could do without fairly well-known vocabulary words like “Agrarian” or “Evil Spirit.” Also, if a glossary word occurs, some kind of cross-referencing system would better alert the reader to the highlighted word. Still, these additional items represent a relative strength of the volume.

After dealing with textual considerations, Lamb centers largely on controversies and ethical infelicities in the book of Joshua. He thumbnail sketches the standard arguments for early and late dates for the conquest (p. 25) and the standard models for Israel’s emergence in the land without reaching a definitive conclusion (pp. 35–38) due to the “complexity of the archaeological relative to Israel’s emergence” (p. 38). Next, Lamb details the arguments to ameliorate *cherem* but defers to readers “to decide for themselves which arguments are helpful in making sense of one of the most problematic aspects of Scripture” (p. 58). He also views Rahab’s positive portrayal as a prostitute a “shocking legacy” (p. 63) in the narrative. With all of these critical issues, Lamb presents rather than assesses the evidence. Other more contested elements of the narrative Lamb simply leaves hanging. For instance, he references Howard’s five solutions for the sun standing still but surprisingly never lists even one of them. He concludes his treatment of Joshua by detailing the tribal allotments (pp. 76–87) and leader speeches (pp. 88–91). Yet this more standard treatment of the narrative pales in comparison to the heightened attention Lamb devotes to the hot-button aspects in Joshua.

Lamb likewise profiles the shock value of Judges or what he dubs the “Book of Heroes,” set in the “Wild West period of Israel’s history” (p. 93). After detailing some of the darker sensationalism of the narrative, Lamb points to the end effect when he says, “Readers are left to ponder: how did a book like this make it into sacred Scripture?” (p. 94). Lamb acknowledges chronological emphases but argues it tells more of a theological story than history (p. 111). This theological story plays out in a 10-step cycle he outlines in the appendix (pp. 160–61). In brief, this cycle moves from an initial period of sin’s consequences to God’s use of a military hero to deliver Israel into rest for many years until the period of sin returns to restart the cycle. Rhetorically, this cycle functions to demonstrate “that it’s not the land of Israel, the people of Israel, the enemies of Israel, or the judge of Israel, but the God of Israel who controls the destiny of the characters in the narrative” (pp. 106–7).

Leuchter takes up the political pen, an apt instrument for his royal subject matter in Samuel. However, he takes the political intrigue to a whole new level, frequently diving underneath the narrative or even running cross-current to it. He maintains agendas drove the composition of Samuel into a “compendium of vastly different sources stemming from disparate social and religious groups” (p. 168). He singles out 2 Samuel 8 as a prime example that “exaggerated David’s conquests” (p. 177), eventuating in a “paragon fit for theological speculation against which subsequent kings could be judged” (p. 182).

While Leuchter roots Samuel generally in history, he argues “it does not mean that the narratives were ever geared to serve purposes other than apologetic, polemical or propagandistic” (p. 192). This opens a Pandora’s box of historical skepticism over such events as David’s armorless confrontation with Goliath (p. 221), Saul’s killing of the priests at Nob (p. 223), the official version of Nabal’s death (p. 224), Saul’s suicidal death (p. 226), the literalness of Ishbosheth’s name (p. 228), the actual arrival of the Ark of the Covenant in Jerusalem (p. 230), the time of origination of David’s prohibition to build a temple (p. 233–34), the humiliating shaving of David’s diplomats by the Ammonites (p. 237), the Hittite ethnicity of Uriah (p. 238), and the realness of Solomon’s daughter, Tamar (p. 244). Each of these narrative-negations answer to a larger political intrigue backstory advanced by Leuchter. Take the case of the name of Saul’s son, Ishbosheth: Leuchter believes the etymological meaning of “shame” for a birth name rather unlikely and serves instead as a rhetorical final dig at the Saulide line (p. 228).

Lamb’s study of Kings concentrates on the regnal formulas that reappear as a literary trope throughout the narrative. He focuses on the structure leading to each king’s final evaluation as “good” or “bad.” Lamb on a couple of occasions calls Solomon an “evil king/ruler” (pp. 258, 316). Even as the builder of the temple, Solomon is far from an altar boy. Still, Solomon does not deserve Lamb’s censure. For one thing, this moral declaration only first appears after Solomon during the divided monarchy. The narrator, when presenting the last word about Solomon, refers the reader to the Acts of Solomon and actually extols his wisdom rather than any prior misdeeds (1 Kgs 11:41). Aside from Lamb’s emphasis on kings, he devotes a large swath of the discussion (pp. 272–84) to prophetic personages and notes, “One could even argue that despite its title, prophets are the real heroes of the story of Kings” (p. 272).

Just as previously Leuchter framed political backstories around the rise of the Davidic dynasty in Samuel, he again looks at the governing politics during the time in exile described in Ezra-Nehemiah. In fact, he describes how the “*gola* community constitutes the sole heir to the legacy of pre-exilic Israel” (p. 370). Since he treats both books as a single entity, he weighs in on the debate of the proper chronological order before favoring the traditional view that Ezra preceded Nehemiah. Yet Leuchter contends the “privileged nature of *gola*-heritage” (p. 429) as the glue uniting these two works.

Leuchter keeps the final chapter on Chronicles short, in no small part due to its shared content with the earlier material found in Samuel–Kings. He suggests the “growing recognition that imperial fortunes could return” (p. 478) as a possible

impetus to its composition. Additionally, it explains some of its unique trajectories from Samuel–Kings such as the chronicle lists that bring its English name.

When viewed at a whole, Lamb and Leuchter cover a lot of general ground in their treatment of the historical literature. Strengths include user-friendly features, especially the sidebars that yield valuable information while seamlessly integrating with the discussion. Both Lamb and Leuchter introduce the reader especially well to the field of archaeology through a liberal use of pictures. Significant concerns emerge though with their subjection of the biblical text to further verification. Lamb implies that in places the narrative lacks ethical respectability, while Leuchter’s mantra “many scholars” or “most scholars” (pp. 167, 168, 170, 179 [2x], 181, 183, 191, 214, 241, 248) begs the question over whether a majority-decides position best settles biblical truth.

Lamb and Leuchter applaud the new “common ground in the academic approach to scripture” (p. 3), treating scholarly consensus as a virtue of the highest order. However, this textual unification goal undercuts the possible mutual benefit derived from Jewish and Christian authors writing together from different trajectories. In fact, without the mention of the theological orientation of the authors in the introduction, the reader would never detect any difference. The indices list only a few scattered references from the NT and the rabbinic texts never appear in the indices at all. A more distinct approach would have leveraged rather than blurred the differing theological perspectives of the authors. Nevertheless, this book admirably fills a great collaborative need for Jews and Christians to work together in studying portions of a shared Bible.

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1 Samuel. By Andrew E. Steinmann. Concordia Commentary. St. Louis: Concordia, 2016, 636 pp., \$54.97.

The latest installment in the Concordia Commentary series is consistent with the overall purpose of the series, which is “to assist pastors, missionaries, and teachers of the Scriptures to convey God’s Word with greater clarity, understanding, and faithfulness to the divine intent of the original Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek text” (p. xii). An editors’ preface (pp. xii–xv) enumerates the characteristics of the commentaries, which are essentially evangelical in nature.

Throughout the volume, at the beginning of the commentary on each text, a date is given for the historical events recorded in that particular narrative. These dates are based on Steinmann’s meticulous chronological study, *From Abraham to Paul: A Biblical Chronology* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2011). Like all the volumes in the Concordia series, fifteen distinct icons are used in the margins to highlight the following themes: Trinity; Temple, Tabernacle; Incarnation; Passion, Atonement; Death and Resurrection, Theology of the Cross, the Great Reversal; *Christus Victor*; Christology; Baptism; Catechesis, Instruction, Revelation; Lord’s Supper; Ministry of Word and Sacrament, Office of the Keys; The Church, Christian Marriage; Wor-

ship; Sin, Law Breaking, Death; Hope of Heaven, Eschatology; and Justification (pp. xxiii–xxiv). A substantial bibliography (pp. xxv–lviii) precedes the Introduction.

In the Introduction (pp. 1–38), Steinmann deals with the standard issues one expects to find in the introduction of a biblical commentary. He establishes a pre-exilic date for the book, sometime after the death of Rehoboam but before the Babylonian exile (pp. 1–3). He provides a cogent discussion of critical theories of Samuel’s composition, including source-critical and tradition-historical theories. He argues that the book of Samuel is a tightly integrated, inseparable whole and that, if this is the case, “then the attempt to isolate underlying sources becomes more a matter of how a particular scholar reads, understands, and ultimately divides the text of Samuel,” and that “this scholarly endeavor is not a reliable method for identifying predecessors that were combined to form the received text” (p. 5). He suggests that readers should have “a healthy skepticism about the ability of scholars to confidently differentiate various sources behind the now skillfully integrated narrative of the book of Samuel” (p. 5). After further discussion of redaction-critical theories, Steinmann proposes that “a holistic reading of a book such as Samuel without preconceived notions of redactional layers could lead one to see a multidimensional theology full of nuanced views of God and humans often portrayed with wonderful subtleties in style and substance” (p. 8).

In the remainder of the Introduction, Steinmann examines the literary features of Samuel, including biographical studies of Saul and David (pp. 8–9) and the account of David in Samuel and Chronicles (pp. 9–10). He provides a brief discussion of historical and archaeological issues and discusses the Tel Dan inscription, the Moabite stone, and the Khirbet Qeiyafa inscription (pp. 10–13). Steinmann’s discussion of chronological issues is quite detailed (pp. 13–22). He concludes his introduction with a treatment of Christ, Law and Gospel, and other themes in Samuel (pp. 23–30). The text of Samuel is also considered, including the MT, the LXX, and Samuel manuscripts from Qumran (pp. 33–36), after which Steinmann discusses his own translation technique (pp. 37–38). Interspersed throughout the body of the commentary, there are four excursuses, including “Polygamy in the Bible” (pp. 64–67); “The Prophet Samuel in Scripture” (pp. 116–17); “The Urim and Thummim” (pp. 272–75); and “Luther on the Prophet Samuel” (pp. 380–85). Following the body of the commentary, the volume concludes with indices of both subjects and passages (pp. 573–636).

In the body of the volume, Steinmann presents his own translation of each textual unit, includes detailed textual notes, and then provides commentary. Although any portion of the text of Samuel could be cited as an example, I will use 1 Sam 17:1–58 as an illustration. Steinmann’s translation of the text fulfills the goals outlined in the Introduction, in that it “attempts to bring the meaning of the Hebrew text . . . to readers in actual, living, contemporary English, while betraying the Hebrew as little as possible” (p. 37). It reads easily, flows well, and seeks to capture the real meaning of the Hebrew. For example, after David offers to fight Goliath, Steinmann’s translates David’s response as, “You aren’t able to go fight this Philistine, because you are an inexperienced young man, but he has been a man of war since his youth” (1 Sam 17:33; p. 322). Here, Steinmann translates נער as “inexperi-

enced young man,” departing from the traditional “boy” or “lad” in recognition that David was not a child when he went out to meet Goliath and that here נער must have to do with experience rather than age. In the Textual Notes section, Steinmann provides justification for such translation decisions and examines other textual issues, such as the differences in the length of 1 Samuel 17–18 in the MT and the LXX, the textual differences recounting the height of Goliath, as well as others. The Commentary on this well-known passage discusses numerous matters, including the question of who killed Goliath, David or Elhanan; whether the description of Goliath’s armor comports with what would have been used in early Iron Age Palestine; and Saul’s seeming unfamiliarity with David, even though David had been introduced to Saul before, had already been playing a lyre to calm him, and even served as his armor bearer (1 Sam 16:21–23). Toward the end of the section, the icon for the “*Christus Victor*, Christology” themes appears in the margin, and Steinmann relates Yahweh’s victory to NT discussions of the victorious Christian life.

While it is a minor detail, I would quibble with Steinmann’s use of the Millo as evidence of a post-Solomonic date for Samuel. He bases this on his interpretation of the relationship between 2 Sam 5:9, which states that David “built all around from the Millo and toward the house,” with 1 Kgs 9:15, 24 and 11:27, which recount that Solomon built the Millo. He concludes that the statement in Samuel must be an editorial statement that reflects post-Solomonic composition. This massive edifice of interlocking walls and terraces that is the Millo, however, was clearly an integral part of the city’s fortification system and likely supported a fortress or citadel that housed the pre-Davidic city’s administrative-religious complex in the Iron Age I (1200–1000 BC; cf. Amihai Mazar, “Archaeology and the Biblical Narrative: The Case of the United Monarchy,” *One God—One Cult—One Nation: Archaeological and Biblical Perspective* [ed. Reinhard G. Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann in collab. with Björn Corzilius and Tanja Pilger; BZAW 405; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter 2010], 35–46). The Millo already existed when David took Jerusalem, and the statements in 1 Kings must mean that Solomon *also* worked on, repaired, or fortified the Millo. Steinmann’s conclusions about the date of Samuel, however, do not hinge on this minor detail.

The character and portrayal of Saul in 1 Samuel have always been controversial, and Steinmann’s interpretation of Israel’s first king will certainly contribute to ongoing discussions about Israel’s first king. When Saul is first introduced in 1 Sam 9:2 as בחור וטוב, Steinmann understands this to represent “superficial features [that] are impressive to those who judge a person by his appearance” and suggests that “God is giving the people a king such as ‘all the nations’ might choose” (pp. 182–83). Readers may get the impression from Steinmann’s interpretation of this and other passages that God raised up Saul simply as a foil for David (see Ralph K. Hawkins, “The First Glimpse of Saul and His Subsequent Transformation,” *BBR* 22 [2012]: 353–62).

Steinmann’s commentary on 1 Samuel has many strengths that recommend its use to pastors, laypersons, teachers, and students alike. Its discussion of the Hebrew text, grammatical issues, and exegetical issues will be of special interest to

those working with the original language, while its translation, interpretation, and application will be of interest to general readers. One of the greatest strengths of the volume is its focus on the proclamation of the promise of the Son of David throughout the narrative of David's life. Steinmann understands David as a Christological type that foreshadows Jesus, and even interprets the stories of his sins as foreshadowing the forgiveness God grants through David's descendant Jesus. This approach will make Steinmann's commentary indispensable to all students of 1 Samuel who desire to deepen their understanding of this important biblical book by reading it through a Christological lens.

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Ezra & Nehemiah. By Derek W. H. Thomas. Reformed Expository Commentary 23. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2016, 464 pp., \$34.99.

My first serious commentary purchase following my Christian conversion in 1955 was *Matthew Henry's Commentary*, and sometimes I still resort to it to get my perspective corrected on a passage under examination. In an age when the public reading of Scripture is in danger in some churches, Derek W. H. Thomas has boldly attempted the formidable task of bringing the OT back to the pulpit.

The volume makes little pretense of engaging controversial technical issues. Instead, Thomas, by publishing this volume, reminds us that the Bible is inspired as a whole document, both OT and NT, and even the problem-fraught days of the Jews returning from the Babylonian exile have a message for Christians. Moreover, Thomas would insist that the study of Scripture not be seen as an end in itself. Rather, the Bible exists today with a purpose, and that purpose is fulfilled in its message of redemption to the church and not simply relegated to the scholar's study.

Drawing powerful parallels between the community of Jews returning from the Babylonian exile, Thomas illustrates how Paul's "body ministry" (Rom 12:4–5; 1 Cor 12:12–20) should function. And while he does not express it overtly, the underlying subtext suggests that often, like the Jews in the narrative, Christians are hindered by divisions over petty things, instead concentrating on those that are primary, such as worship and body ministry (parallels to sacrifice and building the temple). This is a book that deserves rereading, but the snippets below may serve as illustrations as to why I open a review with such praise. This is no fluffy book of devotions. It speaks the truth of Scripture and, at times, I can almost hear Matthew Henry saying "Amen."

In his commentary on Ezra, Thomas sees Ezra, 458 BC, as a model for the biblical scholar to emulate. Study is commendable, but it should not become an end in itself. Rather, study should lead to two primary ends: worship and body ministry. Parallels are drawn between the sufferings experienced by Christians and the returning Jews. Taking aim at the "prosperity gospel," Thomas points out reasons for suffering, some of which have no immediate causal connection either to sin or to lack of faith (pp. 61–63). Through the preaching of Zechariah and Haggai, Thomas

points out how the failure in the Jewish community to build the temple, instead building themselves “paneled houses” (p. 69, citing Hag 1:3), betrays a secularism that fails to put God first, a point that should not be lost on the Christian believer. The foundation for the temple is laid in Ezra 3:11 and was finished in 516 BC (Ezra 6:15).

Thomas overviews the stoppage of the wall and temple under Artaxerxes and the correspondence with the Persian authorities that got it moving again (see also the discussion of Nehemiah below). In celebrating the Passover, he notes that the welcome extended to “those who had no ethnic affiliation with the Jews” but had identified with them by separating themselves from their former religions and devoting themselves to God. In other words, distinctiveness that was exclusive but at the same time inclusive (pp. 98–109).

Ezra appears as a person in chapter 7, midway through the book. Thomas observes that Ezra is not only a priest whose genealogy reaches back to Aaron, but also a scribe who was “skilled in the Law of Moses,” and authorized by Artaxerxes himself (p. 115, citing Ezra 7:6). Thomas points out that the marriage ban mentioned in Ezra 10:18–44 is *not* a ban on interracial marriage, but a ban on interfaith marriage.

Turning to Nehemiah, Thomas dates the opening of the book of Nehemiah at the traditional date of 445 BC, with Nehemiah himself as cupbearer to King Artaxerxes. Chapter 1 records how Nehemiah learns the walls of Jerusalem are broken down. Then follows one of the Bible’s great prayers of intercession. In it, Nehemiah identifies himself with the sins of the Israelites that brought on the exile, even though he himself was not a party to them. The sin of the people was that they had not placed God first. Thomas points out that in the modern church “we are far more concerned with forgiveness than repentance” (p. 212), to which I might add, “And more with resurrection than with crucifixion.” Nehemiah’s sole hope is that the people are members of the redeemed community, his servants and people, and that God would show them mercy.

The next movement in the story comes when Nehemiah appears before Artaxerxes with a “sad” face and Nehemiah confesses the reason for his sadness: the walls of Jerusalem are broken down and the city is vulnerable to assault. The result is that Nehemiah is sent to Jerusalem to be governor (Neh. 5:14), bearing written authorizations to mollify the local leaders. But some, namely Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite, felt threatened (see below). Upon arriving in the city, Nehemiah immediately set about to determine what was needed. His well-known ride to inspect the city walls (Neh 2:9–20) was done at night to escape detection by those who opposed the rebuilding efforts.

But Sanballat and Tobiah, now joined by “Geshem the Arab,” no doubt feeling their long-held authority base threatened, set about to oppose the rebuilding effort (p. 234). Thomas includes a helpful “reconstructive sketch” (p. 239) to help the reader visualize where the work is to take place (Nehemiah 3). When Nehemiah heard of this, the builders armed themselves and posted armed guards while they worked. In a section entitled “Faith and Work,” Thomas helpfully ties faith to

works (Ps 127:1). Faith must come first, but works should follow. The wall of Jerusalem did not build itself.

At this point, hunger struck (Neh 5:1–13)! Food supplies had run out, and people had to mortgage their property, if they owned any, to buy food and to pay taxes to the Persian government. Nehemiah’s observation of the exploitation of the poor angered him and moved him to act. After seeking counsel from the leaders, Nehemiah convened a court and prosecuted those exacting interest from the needy.

At this point, Ezra brought out the scroll of the Torah given by Moses. At first Ezra read extensively to those who could understand (Neh 8:1–3; cf. 8:18). But the common people had forgotten Hebrew and had adopted the Aramaic language, the common tongue of the Persian Empire, instead (p. 325). Thus Ezra built a platform, and the Levites instructed the people and then read aloud, “making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read” (Neh 8:7 NIV).

Finally, after many obstacles had been overcome, the wall was completed (Neh 8:8) and the city was relatively secure. The Feast of Booths (Neh 8:13–18) was celebrated with great joy.

I can warmly recommend Thomas’s work as a first work for the lay scholar or for the scholar or layperson who wishes to bypass the bickering over technicalities that sometimes is found in more technical volumes, finding in the book food to nourish the soul.

To say that I recommend this volume is not to say that it is without eccentricities. Every written piece has nits that may be picked. For example, Thomas inserts Satan into the narrative of Ezra 4 and Nehemiah 2, when all that is needed to explain the Samaritan opposition is a human nature that is fallen. He explains that Ahasuerus is the Hebrew name for the king whom the Greeks called Xerxes (p. 36) and then uses that name thereafter in his comments. However, he fails to do this for other Persian kings, for example, curiously choosing to call Artaxerxes by his Greek name, rather than by the Hebrew Artachshasta. But these peculiarities in no way threaten the book as a whole or its message from the dark days of Ezra and Nehemiah to the present-day believer.

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Proverbs. By Ernest C. Lucas. Two Horizons OT Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015, 421 pp., \$28.00 paper.

Ernest C. Lucas has contributed the Proverbs volume to Eerdmans’s Two Horizon OT Commentary series. Consistent with the aim of the series editors to provide theological exegesis and theological reflection, Lucas offers both by way of a paragraph-by-paragraph treatment of the text of the book of Proverbs.

The book of Proverbs, considered within the OT literature known as part of the “wisdom books,” naturally calls for a definition of “wisdom.” Lucas offers his own brief and clear definition: “In its widest sense, ‘wisdom’ in the OT is *the ability*

to cope with life" (p. 1), and it is ultimately "rooted in commitment to Yahweh" (p. 2). Additional introductory matters—an explanation concerning the form and use of proverbs, an account of the structure of the book of Proverbs, and the consideration of other literary matters—provide the reader a helpful overview of the literary character of the book of Proverbs.

Interesting is Lucas's brief survey of biblical wisdom literature as compared with wisdom found in ancient Egypt and with proverbs from greater African and Arabic backgrounds. This material all forms part of Lucas's larger treatment of Proverbs, in which he looks for origins in and links with non-Solomonic sources. Rather than attributing the Proverbs to Solomon himself, Lucas argues, "The title (v. 1) locates the teaching of the book in the mainstream of Israel's wisdom tradition of which Solomon was seen as the patron" (p. 49). Solomon thus is not indicated as either sole or primary author of Proverbs but as one who lends his illustrious name to the work. Lucas dates the final collection of Proverbs to the sixth to fourth centuries BC.

A tendency in the reading of the proverbs is to isolate them, one from another, seeing each as stand-alone instruction or advice. The nature of the book of Proverbs, that is, its compilation of short pericopes and individual proverbs, challenges the reader who prefers narrative or structure. That is not to say that the book of Proverbs displays no structure. In fact, the book is not merely a random collation of individual and dissimilar proverbs and sayings; rather, the careful reader will discover system and order. Lucas assists the reader in recognizing and benefiting from the structure that is present. Rather than treating individual proverbs one after another, Lucas provides commentary paragraph by paragraph, an approach that is quite helpful.

A clear example (many others could be noted) of the structure Lucas discovers is found in the sections of chapter 11 and their corresponding headings: "11:1 Business Ethics ... 11:2–8 True and False Security ... 11:9–14 Speech and Community ... 11:15–21 Reaping What You Sow ... 11:22 Beauty without Wisdom ... 11:23–27 Generosity ... 11:28–31 Miscellaneous Proverbs." Throughout the volume, Lucas's ordering of the proverbs into paragraphs or sections, along with his insightful headings, provide the reader with a ready-made preaching or teaching outline.

Impossible in a review such as this is any sort of comprehensive consideration of the published work. Sufficient must be a glance at Lucas's consideration of one of the most well-known sections of the book. The call of Wisdom in 1:20–33 (see also 8:1–36 and 9:1–6) naturally raises the question, "Who is this 'Wisdom?'" Lucas considers a "variety of foreign deities and mythological figures [that] have been proposed as the prototypes for the figure of personified wisdom found in Proverbs" (pp. 250–67). This material is interesting, but much more helpful to this reviewer is Lucas's observations found early in the book: "A striking feature of this speech (1:20–33) by Wisdom is that she says things and makes claims that elsewhere are only said or made by God" (p. 58) and "Personified Wisdom is clearly presented as standing very close to God and sharing divine authority" (p. 59). The

obvious lesson? Pay attention to and adhere to the words and admonitions of Wisdom!

A helpful feature of Lucas's writing is discovered in his frequent references to various translations of the text in order to provide clear explanations of meaning. He writes, for example, "The Hebrew of the verse is awkward ... as reflected in the NIV ... (the ESV seems to be a paraphrase) ... The NRSV 'smooths' the sense by emending ..." (p. 112). Furthermore, his use of Hebrew should not be a challenge to the reader with little or no knowledge of Hebrew. Though frequent references to the Hebrew are found, Lucas employs this material well in helping the reader understand basic meanings.

The reader who picks up this volume expecting to have in his or her hands 421 pages of commentary on the book of Proverbs is likely to be disappointed. Almost exactly half of the volume is dedicated to a consideration of "Theological Horizons of Proverbs." Lucas reflects on a variety of topics, among them: Family, Friends and Neighbors in Proverbs; Wealth and Poverty in Proverbs; Wisdom and Christology; and Wisdom and Creation.

However, far from being merely an "add-on," the latter portion of the book is a helpful addition to the standard commentary. Having provided commentary on the biblical text, the author then expands his treatment of Proverbs through reflection on other ancient literature and wrestles with theological and ethical issues found in Proverbs, bringing the discussion into the contemporary context. Value is found in addressing the larger literary context in which the book of Proverbs was composed. I sensed, however, that the many references to extrabiblical ancient literature and to recent and contemporary authors and scholars offered more of an encyclopedic type of reference tool than a rich and satisfying look into the Proverbs.

As with many biblical commentaries, the reader will not pick up the volume and read it through as narrative. Further, as with most commentaries, the reader will not find agreement with every assertion or interpretation. The Proverbs are presented as real words spoken by real people to real people: a father speaking to his son, advice to people in all sorts of public settings, counsel for the king, and more. Ernest Lucas certainly helps us to understand more clearly these words and their meanings for our times, the very reason one might pick up and purchase his commentary.

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The Book of Isaiah and God's Kingdom: A Thematic-Theological Approach. By Andrew T. Abernethy. New Studies in Biblical Theology 40. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2016, xiii + 245 pp., \$25 paper.

Andrew Abernethy is Assistant Professor of OT at Wheaton College. *The Book of Isaiah and God's Kingdom* is a synchronic study of the theme of God as king and the dynamics of God's kingdom in Isaiah. Chapters 1–3 develop the presenta-

tion of God's kingship in the three major sections of Isaiah (1–39, 40–55, 56–66). Isaiah 6 orients the book around the kingship theme and conveys the foreboding message that the cosmic king is about to break forth in judgment. Other texts in chapters 1–39 anticipate the full realization of God's rule after a devastating judgment that overthrows the powers that oppose him (24:21–23; 25:6–8; 33:5–6, 17, 22). The historical narrative of the deliverance of Jerusalem in 701 BC (chaps. 36–37) rounds out the portrayal of God as king in the first half of Isaiah, demonstrating that even the mighty Assyrian ruler is no rival to Yahweh.

Chapters 40–55 portray God as the saving king in the context of the Babylonian exile. Isaiah 40:1–11 and 52:7–10 establish an arc that anchors this section around the promise of God as the coming king. Yahweh will display his righteousness and his superiority over the gods and will set things right for his people. The portrait of God as king in this section also highlights his roles as savior, creator, commander of destinies, and temple/city builder.

In Isaiah 56–66, the vision of Yahweh's glorious reign from Zion (chaps. 60–62) stands at the center of an elaborate chiasm. Three major themes and motifs concerning God's kingship are highlighted in this section: (1) the warrior king; (2) the glorious international king; and (3) the cosmic and compassionate king. Yahweh comes as a warrior king to judge the nations and save Israel, but only after also pouring out his fury on the sinners among his own people. The opening and concluding sections of chapters 56–66 promise that foreigners will gather at Zion to worship the Lord in the eschatological era.

In Chapter 4, Abernethy explores the role of three lead agents God will use in the establishment and maintenance of his kingdom—the Davidic ruler (chaps. 1–39), the servant of the Lord (chaps. 40–55), and God's messenger (chaps. 56–66). By keeping these three figures distinct, Abernethy explains that his intention is not to minimize Jesus as the fulfillment, but rather to demonstrate “the grandeur of Jesus and the surprise of recognizing how one person, Jesus Christ, can take on the role of all three figures, while also being the very God of these agent figures” (p. 169).

Isaiah 1–39 reveals that the future ideal Davidic ruler will play a vital role in establishing justice, righteousness, and equity in the kingdom of God (cf. 9:7[6]; 11:3–5; 16:5; 32:1). Because of the exilic context in Isaiah 40–55, the lead agent God uses to accomplish his purposes shifts to the suffering servant. Abernethy navigates the interpretive issues surrounding the identity of the servant, recognizing Israel both as the failed national servant in 40–48 and a distinct individual servant who brings atonement and transformation in 49–55. By suffering rejection, the servant takes on a priestly role and becomes like a Levitical “guilt offering” (53:10) by providing the reparation that enables Israel and the nations to return to God. This servant will establish a community of servants who will take up the role of bringing justice to the world (54:17; 56:6; 63:17; 65–66). The lead agent in Isaiah 56–66 becomes the prophetic messenger of Isaiah 61, whose distinct role is to announce the imminent eschatological coming of God as warrior king.

In Chapter 5, Abernethy develops the specifics concerning Isaiah's presentation of the realm and the people of God's kingdom. The author argues for a bifocal

view of the realm of the kingdom, with the cosmos providing the universal realm and Zion the particularized realm. Isaiah anticipates that Zion will become the capital city of God's international kingdom (2:2–4; 24:23; 25:6–8; 52:7–12; 60; 66:19–24). Zion's destiny is also important to the overall narrative of Isaiah, and God's ability to deliver Jerusalem from the Assyrians gives hope that God will do the same in the future.

In Isaiah, God acts in two ways to create a kingdom people that consists of both Jew and Gentile. First, he seeks to purify a people through present and future judgments and through the work of the suffering servant. Second, God will redeem his people from their sin and from all oppressive powers in order to produce an obedient people concerned with justice for the poor. This kingdom community will also become a people of trust, who look to God alone as their source of security, like the believing Hezekiah (chaps. 36–37) and unlike faithless Ahaz (chaps. 7–8).

Each chapter of this book explores the canonical development of key texts and themes in Isaiah. Abernethy clarifies that his methodology is not to look at how the NT views Jesus and then to reread Isaiah in that light to understand how it speaks of Christ but rather “to read the OT and NT in association with one another in the light of how each testament bears its own discrete witness to Christ” (p. 37). For example, John 12:37–41 is not asserting that Isaiah saw Jesus on the throne in the temple; rather, it is analogically relating the glory of Jesus as king to that of Yahweh's glory as king. Abernethy gives attention to how Isaianic promises concerning the coming kingdom of God, the future Davidic king, the suffering servant, and the formation of the people of God find fulfillment in the person and work of Jesus.

The Book of Isaiah and God's Kingdom is a model of how to synthesize the theological message of a biblical book. Abernethy presents a multifaceted central theme reflective of the whole of Isaiah and has effectively incorporated exegetical analysis, historical background materials, and structural features of Isaiah that are supportive of this theme. While tackling numerous interpretive issues, the book maintains its focus on the overarching message of Isaiah. Abernethy's attention to canonical issues and even the inclusion of suggested preaching outlines reflect his concern to demonstrate the prescriptive relevance of Isaiah for the church. I highly recommend this book for students, pastors, and those who teach Isaiah.

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Joel. By Christopher R. Seitz. The International Theological Commentary. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016, xii + 239 pp., \$94.00.

Christopher Seitz is a professor of biblical interpretation at Wycliffe College within the University of Toronto, Canada. Seitz's scholarship develops the canonical approach of Brevard Childs to whom Seitz is indebted. His interest and publication within the field of canonical interpretation make him uniquely suited to write a commentary on Joel in The International Theological Commentary (ITC) series.

The series editors Michael Allen and Scott Swain explain that the ITC series aims to study the “theological subject matter” of the Bible in conversation with early “commentary traditions” (p. ix). The ITC, then, contributes to the growing *ressourcement* movement, which seeks to bring early Christian theologians and creeds into conversation with contemporary theological study.

ITC volumes will, nevertheless, exegete whole biblical books, with exposition based “upon the original language(s)” (p. x). The ITC thus presents an exegetical series, which focuses on the Bible’s theology and uses the resources of the Christian tradition to assist in the dogmatic and exegetical interpretation of Scripture. Seitz’s volume on Joel is the first of the series, and the commentary accomplishes the aims of the ITC series, albeit with some problems.

One of the most refreshing aspects of Seitz’s commentary is that he makes a comprehensive argument that ties together the whole book of Joel. The dedication to uncover Joel’s argument already makes *Joel* (the commentary, not the biblical book) stand out from other commentaries, which merely explain paragraphs of a biblical book without relating that paragraph into the book’s argument.

Seitz argues that Joel accomplishes what Hosea requests in Hos 14:1–2: Israel is to take words and return (repent) to the Lord. Joel offers “a performance inside of that which Hosea has invited Israel to do—take words and repent,” which Israel might do and thus display “the wisdom achieved that chooses to walk ‘in the ways of the LORD’” (p. 57).

The day of the Lord, a prominent theme in Joel, serves as a summative day that speaks of God’s judgment at any time in Israel’s history (cf. p. 57). In Joel, the day of the Lord is already present yet has a future fulfilment (p. 73). In contemporary theological jargon, Joel’s day of the Lord is an already-not-yet event.

Within the day of the Lord, Israel can meet God as he revealed himself in Exodus 34:6–7 (Joel 2:12–14). The possibility of forgiveness, therefore, exists in the day of the Lord (pp. 80–81). Israel can and should return to the Lord because they can meet God on “his own Day” (p. 81) and receive forgiveness (Joel 2:13).

Two vices mar *Joel*. First, Seitz’s sentences are often difficult to understand. For example, consider this single sentence: “I have been concerned in my writing with a species of historical study of the Prophets which must create its own ‘canonical’ order and which has introduced the Prophets according to a sequential grid, whereby what is important is disentangling them, putting them in historical settings and isolating them by describing their particularities and long-term development, ending in time, so many argue, with Jonah’s curious presentation” (pp. 10–11). The ITC is a specifically academic series, and so perhaps difficult-to-understand sentences should be expected. Nevertheless, academic writing must be written clearly and must be understandable to a large audience.

Second, Seitz sometimes lacks clarity in his arguments. For example, he does not clearly outline how Joel (the author) and the editor of the Book of the Twelve work together to compose both Joel and the Book of the Twelve. Yet, he refers to Joel’s influence on the Book of the Twelve (cf. pp. 63, 65). Seitz sees these twelve prophets as having an “intentional association” (p. 213), which seems to be partly

intentional on the side of Joel and partly intentional on the side of the editor(s) of the Book of the Twelve.

Joel and Amos, for example, influence each other, and Seitz declares that “we have a mutual influencing of Amos and Joel, with an expectation that this is intended to have us attend to both contexts and their present association as well” (p. 212). Who intends what? Does Joel intend to work with Amos? Did Joel and Amos collaborate (cf. p. 65)? Did the editor place Joel and Amos alongside one another to create this association (p. 213 n. 39)? One must, however, grant that the interplay of author and editor is clouded in history, and so one cannot fault Seitz too strongly for his occasional lack of clarity.

In other places, he is much clearer. For example, Seitz argues that Joel is aware of Isaiah 13, Jeremiah 14, Exodus 10, and certain psalms. Joel thus draws on these passages for his day of the Lord theology (p. 63). In speaking of the day of the Lord within the Book of the Twelve, Seitz argues that Joel anticipates dedications of the day of the Lord in other books of the Twelve as well (p. 63). He then says, “His [Joel’s] intention is, in our view, to cooperate with them, so that the generations he anticipates as hearers of his testimony might hear him alongside them” (p. 63). Seitz sees Joel as self-consciously hoping his book would be read in the future with other prophetic books.

Lest my review seem overly negative, I would like to recount a number of virtues of the commentary. First, as mentioned, Seitz uniquely outlines Joel’s argument and the argument plays a strategic role throughout the commentary. Second, Seitz interacts with and knows well the academic literature discussing Joel. Third, Seitz skillfully outlines the theological subject matter found with Joel.

Even with its faults, Seitz’s contribution to the ITC series and to biblical commentary literature as a whole must be recognized. The ITC series, and Seitz’s Joel commentary in particular, breathe fresh air into the commentary genre because *Joel* focuses on the theological content of the book. Christian leaders, scholars, and pastors will benefit from reading Seitz’s volume in order to understand the theological import of Joel within the canon.

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The Language and Literature of the New Testament: Essays in Honor of Stanley E. Porter’s 60th Birthday. Edited by Lois Fuller Dow, Craig A. Evans, and Andrew W. Pitts. Biblical Interpretation Series 150. Leiden: Brill, 2016, xxv + 821 pp., \$271.00.

This *Festschrift* honoring Stanley Porter contains 32 essays organized in two parts, “The Texts and Language of the New Testament” (13 essays) and “The Literature and Theology of the New Testament” (19 essays). One essay is in German; all other essays are in English. The volume commences with a 60-page essay on “Interdisciplinary New Testament Scholarship: An Introduction to the Research of Professor Stanley E. Porter” by his former student, Andrew Pitts, who also served as one of the editors. As Pitts notes, while Porter is primarily known for his work

in Greek language and linguistics, he is a noted practitioner of interdisciplinary scholarship as evidenced by his numerous contributions to a large variety of fields. Pitts proceeds to discuss Porter's contribution as an editor; in papyrology, text criticism, and canon studies; NT Greek grammatical and linguistic study; translation theory and application; Pauline studies; historical Jesus research; Synoptic Gospels and Luke-Acts research; Johannine studies; hermeneutics, history of interpretation, and interpretive methodologies; rhetorical criticism; the social world of the NT; the use of the OT in the NT; and pedagogy and philosophy of education/scholarship.

"Part 1: The Texts and Language of the New Testament" contains the following essays: (1) "Setting Scholarship Back a Hundred Years? Method in the Septuagint Commentary Series" (Richard S. Hess; 6 pp.); (2) "The Past, Present, and Future of the OpenText.org Annotated Greek Corpus" (Christopher D. Land and Francis G. H. Pang; 37 pp.); (3) "Computer-Aided Linguistic Analysis for a Single Manuscript Witness: Preparing to Map the OpenText.org Annotation" (Catharine Smith and Matthew Brook O'Donnell; 32 pp.); (4) "Überlegungen zur angeblichen Textverderbnis von Apg 17,27 (Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis) und zu Joh 8,25" (Hans Förster; 20 pp.); (5) "Restoring a Vernacular Form of the Word for 'Glass' in the Text of Revelation" (John A. L. Lee; 12 pp.); (6) "Sense Units and Manuscript Families: A Test Proposal" (Sean A. Adams; 31 pp.); (7) "Christian Demographics and the Dates of Early New Testament Papyri" (Craig A. Evans; 17 pp.); (8) "The Use of Greek in First-Century Palestine: An Issue of Method in Dialogue with Scott D. Charlesworth" (Hughson T. Ong; 19 pp.); (9) "Grappling with Paul's Language: How a Greek Might Struggle" (R. Dean Anderson; 20 pp.); (10) "Exploring Linguistic Variation in an Ancient Greek Single-Author Corpus: A Register Design Analysis of Josephus and Pauline Pseudonymity" (Andrew W. Pitts and Joshua D. Tyra; 27 pp.); (11) "*Oum* in the New Testament: The Minimal Semantic Contribution of a Discourse Marker" (Cynthia Long Westfall; 19 pp.); (12) "The Telic Conjunctions of Isaiah 6:9–10 in Mark's Mythopoeia" (Thomas R. Hatina; 25 pp.); and (13) "Greek Tenses in John's Apocalypse: Issues in Verbal Aspect, Discourse Analysis, and Diachronic Change" (Buist M. Fanning; 26 pp.). Some of these studies contribute to a minor detail in biblical and/or linguistic research (e.g. Förster, Lee, Hatina), while others have broader relevance (e.g. Evans, Ong, Anderson).

"Part 2: The Literature and Theology of the New Testament" features the following essays: (14) "The Gospel according to Malachi" (Mark J. Boda; 14 pp.); (15) "*Sēmeia*, Signs, as a Hyperlink between the Fourth Gospel and the Greek Pentateuch" (Ronald D. Peters; 27 pp.); (16) "The Authentication of John: Self-Disclosure, Testimony, and Verification in John 21:24" (Charles E. Hill; 40 pp.); (17) "Getting Along: Politeness Theory and the Gospels" (Jonathan M. Watt; 17 pp.); (18) "The Structure and Content of Stephen's Speech compared to Old Testament Credos" (Thomas H. Olbricht; 16 pp.); (19) "Minding the Gap: Why Paul's Conversion Matters in Christology" (Darrell Bock; 11 pp.); (20) "Introducing Foreign Deities: The Documentary Evidence" (Eckhard J. Schnabel; 39 pp.); (21) "The Apostle of the Heretics?" (James D. G. Dunn; 15 pp.); (22) "Habakkuk, Paul, and the End of Empire: A Fresh Perspective on Romans 13:1–7" (Nicholas Perrin; 19 pp.); (23) "The Apostle and the Doctor: Lloyd-Jones on Romans" (Stephen

Westerholm; 19 pp.); (24) “A Comparison of the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22–23 with Ancient Thought on Ethics and Emotion” (Craig S. Keener; 25 pp.); (25) “To Incline Another’s Heart: The Role of Attitude in Reader Positioning” (James D. Dvorak; 26 pp.); (26) “‘Think’ and ‘Do’ Like the Role Models: Paul’s Teaching on the Christian Life in Philippians” (Jae Hyun Lee; 19 pp.); (27) “Post-colonial Perspectives on Paul’s ‘Jew-Gentile Problem’” (Christopher D. Stanley; 16 pp.); (28) “A Reexamination of Paul’s Opponents in Colossians” (David L. Mathewson; 20 pp.); (29) “First Timothy 5:18 and Early Canon Consciousness: Reconsidering a Problematic Text” (Michael J. Kruger; 21 pp.); (30) “The Epistle of James and the Maccabean Martyr Tradition: An Exploration of Sacred Tradition in the New Testament” (Bryan R. Dyer; 21 pp.); (31) “Common Exegetical Fallacies in New Testament Scholarship Rectifiable through External Evidence” (Craig L. Blomberg; 16 pp.); and (32) “Jesus is God with Us: Applying Porter’s Criteria for the Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament to the Theme of Divine Presence” (Beth M. Stovell; 26 pp.).

Due to my own previous research, I was particularly interested in Ronald Peters’s work on *sēmeia* (signs) as a hyperlink between John’s Gospel and the Greek Pentateuch. Peters discusses John’s use of “signs” within the framework of hypotext (the LXX) and hypertext (John’s Gospel), arguing, “John’s intention was that the observant reader would intuitively discern the hypertextual relationship, which would then influence his or her understanding of the hypertext. In this manner, the hypotext serves as a hermeneutical guide to the hypertext” (p. 395). Peters writes, “I am not aware of a study that considers John’s use of *signs*, among other terms, as part of a broad, comprehensive program of literary and theological production” (p. 385 n. 25). While this may be technically accurate, it is unfortunate that Peters is apparently unaware of studies such as my own that have sought to probe literary and theological connections between LXX references to *sēmeia* and the Fourth Gospel. This may reflect the frequent compartmentalization in biblical research that separates scholars working with a given methodology from others working from a different vantage point and shows the need for greater interdisciplinary work (something for which the honoree is commended in this volume). Peters’s study is also limited by the fact that he only considers the Greek Pentateuch but not the prophetic literature. However, consideration of Isaiah’s use of “signs” terminology, in particular, is vital for a full exploration of the subject (note that Peters himself in his conclusion stresses the need for a comprehensive reading; p. 396). The author also does not consider the temple cleansing as a possible Johannine sign but moves straight from John 2:1–11 to 2:23–25 even though the word *sēmeion* is found in John 2:18.

Another essay that caught my attention is Charles Hill’s fine study of John 21:24 in which the author shows that the “we” in the phrase “and we know that his testimony is true” is likely an authorial “we,” authenticating the contents of the entire Gospel. As Hill notes, this renders proponents of a form of the “Johannine community hypothesis” without a key text in support of their position. Hill’s work here stands in close harmony with my own work on the authorial “I” in the phrase “I suppose” in John 21:25.

Readers of this *Journal* may also be interested in Michael Kruger's conclusion in his article on the source of Paul's quotation in 1 Tim 5:18b: "While Luke seems to be the preferable option [to Q], ... the importance lies in the fact that 1 Tim 5:18b reveals that Christians, at least by the beginning of the second century, had already begun to conceive of a new corpus of writings—writings about Jesus—as bearing scriptural authority. This fact alone ought to reshape the way we think about the development of the New Testament canon" (p. 694).

This is not the place to discuss and critique each essay in detail (nor do I possess the technical expertise to do so for each article). Most students and scholars will skim the "Table of Contents" and identify one or several essays in their area(s) of interest and interact with those. The collection impresses with its vast scope of areas covered, reflecting the span of research interests of the honoree. Given Porter's relatively young age, the present volume is only a snapshot of his contributions to date with doubtless many more to follow. Yet this collection of essays reveals that already at the present time Porter clearly has made a considerable impact on his scholarly peers because of both the quality and the quantity of his work.

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Copying Early Christian Texts: A Study of Scribal Practice. By Alan Mugridge. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 362. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016, xx + 558 pp., €159.00.

Copying Early Christian Texts is the published version of Alan Mugridge's 2010 Ph.D. thesis from the University of New England (New South Wales). According to Mugridge, the research tests the common assumption "that most Christian texts were produced 'in house' by Christian copyists who were mostly unskilled" (p. vii). Mugridge has compiled and processed mountains of papyrological data to discover whether this assumption is true, resulting in a work that is highly technical but supremely informative.

The foundation of Mugridge's analysis consists of 548 manuscripts, or more specifically, 548 catalogue entries of manuscripts. These 548 entries are divided into two data sets, each of which is subdivided into groups. Of the "Christian papyri," there are: OT texts (Group A); NT texts (B); "apocryphal" texts (C); patristic texts (D); hagiographic texts (E); liturgical hymns, prayers, etc. (F); Gnostic and Manichaean texts (I); and unidentified Christian texts (J). For comparison, Mugridge also includes in his study five groups of "non-Christian papyri": amulets (Group G); magical texts (H); Jewish OT texts (K1); other Jewish texts (K2); and school texts (L). Mugridge frequently refers to collections of manuscripts by their group designation. Some individual manuscripts have multiple entries. Codex Sinaiticus, for example, is 12 in Group A (OT texts), 150 in Group B (NT texts), and because it contains the Epistle of Barnabas and Shepherd of Hermas, 302 in Group D (patristic texts).

Mugridge uses three criteria to classify the scribal hand of each manuscript. These are “irregularity in letter shape, size and placement,” whether a scribe can write in a straight line horizontally, and whether or not a scribe used a more formal “book hand” as opposed to a less formal documentary hand (p. 21). Depending on the degree to which the scribe succeeds or fails with respect to these criteria, Mugridge places the manuscript in one of three categories: Category 1 (and 1-), a professional, calligraphic hand; Category 2 (and 2-, 2+), a professional hand that is “secretarial” or “plain”; and Category 3 (and 3+), “non-professional, the hand of an occasional writer, not a trained scribe” (p. 22). To illustrate Mugridge’s system of classification, his description of the hand of \mathfrak{P}^{75} runs thus: “Well crafted, upright uncial, written with a fine pointed pen, without shading and in black ink; the regular bilinear script is highly readable, and the whole impression is of the hand of a trained scribe writing with skill, although not in calligraphic form. [2+]” (p. 242).

After classifying each manuscript and the hand in which it was written, Mugridge looks for patterns and correlating features. He admits that the fragmentary nature of many manuscripts does at times hinder this part of the study (p. 146). Mugridge concludes, “The vast majority of the Christian papyri were copied by trained scribes” (p. 147). He rejects the assumption that early Christian texts were copied by Christian scribes because features such as *nomina sacra* alone are not sufficient to identify a scribe as a Christian (p. 152). Based on these two conclusions, Mugridge proposes a “new model”: “it appears from this study that Christians employed the services of trained scribes to have the majority of their texts copied, and there is no evidence that the copyists were all Christians” (p. 153).

The largest part of the book is Mugridge’s catalogue of papyri (pp. 155–410). For each of the 548 entries, Mugridge provides information on provenance, date, publication details of the *editio princeps*, contents, present location (including multiple locations and library shelf marks for manuscripts housed in multiple locations), other catalogue numbers such as Leuven Database of Ancient Books (LDAB), Trismegistos (TM), Rahlfs or Gregory-Aland numbers, a brief bibliography of the manuscript, where plates or images can be found (including URLs for images available online), a description of the manuscript and Mugridge’s own assessment of the scribal hand. It would be difficult to overstate the usefulness of a single volume containing this much information on over five hundred early manuscripts.

Two aspects of *Copying Early Christian Texts* might render the book challenging to use to a reader who is unfamiliar with technical works on manuscripts or papyrology. First, Mugridge refers to all of the manuscripts as “papyri,” even when clearly discussing parchment manuscripts. His use of “papyrus” and “papyri” in this way is not a mistake on his part; rather, it accurately reflects the broader scope of papyrology, which includes Egyptian manuscripts on any medium. Second, Mugridge almost always refers to individual manuscripts by his own catalogue numbers. Instead of discussing \mathfrak{P}^{66} by name, Mugridge simply refers to 187. \mathfrak{P}^{46} is 219; the Egerton Gospel is 277. Without memorizing Mugridge’s numbers, one must turn to the relevant entry in the catalogue of papyri to discover which manuscript is being discussed, but copious helpful tables and indices allow readers to find Mugridge’s catalogue number for manuscripts by other (e.g. Gregory-Aland)

designations. Although a reader could find the need to flip constantly to the back to see which manuscript is being discussed, this practice is consistent with the way similar books are written (see, for example, A. H. R. E. Paap, *Nomina Sacra in the Greek Papyri of the First Five Centuries A.D.* [Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava 8; Leiden: Brill, 1959]).

Mugridge's reliance on previous editions of papyri affects his treatment of manuscripts at times. Some questions can only be answered by an autopsy examination of a papyrus, and Mugridge admits that he was unable to see all 548 entries (p. vii). Accuracy varies from edition to edition of papyri, and as a result, Mugridge occasionally gives uneven treatment to a phenomenon because the editions themselves are not equal in accuracy. One example is Mugridge's treatment of reconstructed *nomina sacra* occurring in lacunae. On page 127, he reports that 28 (Rahlfs 970) has an "uncertain" abbreviation of ἄνθρωπος but provides a footnote referencing a discussion that proposes what form was likely used based on the available spacing. However, on page 131, he takes the opposite approach for a similar situation. Mugridge reports that 205 (P⁹¹) abbreviates ἑσταυρώσατε as "[εσϜωσατε]"—an abbreviation with a staurogram, despite the fact that the entire word is missing in P⁹¹. In both cases, Mugridge reports only what previous editors have written, but because they reported readings in lacunae differently, Mugridge's discussions are uneven.

A more fundamental issue is whether the uncertainties with individual papyri are enough to invalidate Mugridge's general conclusions. Assuming previous editors were *generally* correct in their conclusions about date, content, and so forth, a few outliers should not negate Mugridge's findings. Nevertheless, there are still many unanswered questions about some manuscripts that could alter how they are classified or show that they should have been excluded from the work altogether. For example, Mugridge includes Codex Washingtonianus (W 032) as a 4th- or 5th-century manuscript (p. 226), but 032 could indeed date later than Mugridge's 4th-century cutoff. Mugridge rightly places P⁸⁰ in Group H (magical texts) rather than Group B (NT texts), but it, too, should be assigned a post-4th-century date. Mugridge lists P⁴ as part of the same manuscript as P⁶⁴ + P⁶⁷—a heavily disputed assertion, even if they were indeed written by the same scribe. P¹⁰ is placed in Group B (NT texts), though it is clearly not a manuscript of the NT in the usual sense. P¹⁰ is a writing exercise, in which Rom 1:1–7 occupies less than one half of one side of a mostly-blank sheet of papyrus, accompanied by some writing in a cursive hand (see AnneMarie Lujendijk, "A New Testament Papyrus and Its Documentary Context: An Early Christian Writing Exercise from the Archive of Leonides [P.Oxy. II 209/P¹⁰]," *JBL* 129 [2010]: 575–96).

It should be emphasized that these criticisms are not due to any fault in Mugridge's work or the superb quality of his writing. *Any* work with the scope of *Copying Early Christian Texts* will face the same issues. One who would produce such a resource has no choice but to rely on previous editions and to accept positions that may later be overturned. To write a book with this scope, Mugridge had two options: to reedit and redate each of the 548 catalogue entries himself or to trust

the previous editors. Because the first option is impossible for a human with a post-diluvian lifespan, problems inherited from previous editors are unavoidable.

Alan Mugridge has given scholars of the NT and early Christianity a tremendous gift by writing *Copying Early Christian Texts*. Those who study early Christian manuscripts will find it an invaluable and much-consulted resource. Even if one does not accept Mugridge's conclusions, the work is still worth owning. The catalogue of papyri alone is worth more than the price of the book, and Mugridge's analysis is sure to prompt further discussion of early Christian manuscripts and their transmission.

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Intermediate Greek Grammar: Syntax for Students of the New Testament. By David L. Mathewson and Elodie Ballantine Emig. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016, xxiii + 336 pp., \$32.99.

David Mathewson and Elodie Emig have produced a user-friendly, linguistically-informed grammar that joins a short list of outstanding resources for mid-level Greek instruction. *Intermediate Greek Grammar* is made up of thirteen chapters: Cases; Pronouns; Adjectives and Adverbs; The Article; Prepositions; The Greek Verb System; The Verb: Voice, Person, and Number; Mood; Infinitives; Participles; Clauses, Conditional Clauses, and Relative Clauses; Dependent Clauses and Conjunctions; and Discourse Considerations. Rather than considering each chapter individually, I will take a broad look at how effective this new resource is in terms of presentation, pedagogy, and accuracy.

Intermediate Greek Grammar is a model of succinctness and clarity. Mathewson and Emig combine clear explanations of complex grammatical phenomena with carefully chosen examples that show how Greek grammar plays out in the NT. Each major section concludes with extended practice texts that encourage students to do grammatical analysis in context, serve as stepping stones to reading large portions of the Greek NT, and support one of the major goals of the book: teaching Greek readers to move beyond the clause and sentence in doing grammatical analysis.

Mathewson and Emig take a minimalist approach, focusing on the most important and most common grammatical categories. They recognize that the extensive lists of grammatical labels found in many Greek textbooks often lead to "reading far more from the grammar than is justified" (p. xix). They keep student needs front and center throughout, regularly including brief commentary following their examples to supplement the explanations in the main body of this work or to walk readers through the process of grammatical analysis. Sprinkled throughout are helpful explanations of the interplay between grammatical analysis and theology and helpful discussions of how grammatical analysis relates to different English translations of particular passages. The authors consistently anticipate questions that will naturally arise in the minds of readers, for example, by including a subsection on

“other ways to express a command” (p. 189) in their discussion of the imperative mood. They are also adept at using real-life illustrations to explain complex grammatical issues, for example, by using monotone speeches to illustrate the notion of prominence (p. 277). These and many other features of this book make it an effective teaching tool.

In terms of accuracy, the authors demonstrate a strong grasp not only of how Greek works but also of how language works in general. They build on the strengths of traditional grammars and are careful to indicate when and why they diverge from them. While the old adage about Greek students “knowing just enough to be dangerous” could far too often be applied to Greek scholars’ knowledge of modern linguistics, Mathewson and Emig are an exception. They depend heavily on the work of Porter, Runge, and Levinsohn but also show broad familiarity with the field of linguistics. The minimalist approach that shapes their work is, in fact, driven more by linguistic concerns than pedagogical concerns. The authors rightly abandon typical verb tense labels like “progressive present” and “ingressive aorist,” recognizing that these notions rely on the broader context in which verbs occur rather than on the verb tenses themselves. Likewise, they avoid the common labels for participles, recognizing that participles are inherently ambiguous, and when an author “wanted unambiguously to indicate time, cause, manner, purpose, condition, or other ideas, there were very clear means of doing so: for example, a $\delta\tau\iota$ -clause (cause), a $\text{\textit{\nu}\alpha}$ -clause (purpose or result), or a clause beginning with $\delta\tau\epsilon$ (time) or $\text{\textit{\epsilon}\acute{\alpha}\nu}$ (condition)” (p. 211). They rightly note that Greek participles actually serve to communicate “background or prerequisite action to the main verb” (p. 211), particularly when they precede the verb and are in the aorist tense, or to “further explain or describe in some way what is entailed in the action of the main verb” (p. 213), particularly when the participle follows the verb and is in the present tense. They also point out that contrary to traditional thinking, which looked to the participle’s tense to determine its relative chronological relationship to the main verb, it is more accurate to maintain that when a participle “precedes the main verb, it tends to indicate action prior (antecedent) to the action of the main verb; when the participle follows the main verb, it tends to indicate action that is simultaneous or subsequent to the action of the main verb” (p. 217).

There are many other ways in which *Intermediate Greek Grammar* showcases the authors’ ability to draw effectively on linguistic approaches to Koine Greek. Building on Mathewson’s earlier work on verbal aspect, for example, the authors take a more cautious approach than some, recognizing that “variations in aspect can serve to indicate levels of prominence” (p. 278), rather than claiming that particular aspects consistently lend prominence. Mathewson and Emig regularly caution readers against letting English translation drive grammatical analysis. They rightly note that the passive voice allows authors to maintain topic continuity in a discourse (p. 145). They caution against putting too much interpretive weight on the middle voice when the biblical authors did not have other options to choose from (p. 152). In their treatment of conjunctions, they rightly note that $\text{\textit{\kappa}\alpha\iota}$ primarily tells us that “the author wants to associate clauses [or words or phrases] closely together” (p. 261); and “such notions as contrast, concession, purpose, and the like are conveyed by

the contexts in which *καί* occurs rather than belonging to the meaning of *καί* itself” (p. 261). The conjunction *δέ*, on the other hand, “represents a new step or development in the author’s story or argument” (p. 262). Thus, “While *καί* indicates continuity, *δέ* signals discontinuity” (p. 263). It is insights like these, which are well known to Greek scholars familiar with recent linguistic studies, that make this new intermediate grammar a major step forward for training the next generation of scholars and pastors. Actually understanding, for example, what motivates the choice of *δέ* versus *καί* has major implications for how we understand a given discourse in the Greek NT, and thus how we preach or teach that passage.

Throughout their work, Mathewson and Emig frequently offer appropriate correctives to more traditional grammars, some of which have been noted above. Their linguistically grounded approach represents a major step forward in teaching Greek grammar. Nevertheless, there are some minor areas where this work could be improved. First, in some sections the majority of examples illustrate why traditional views are wrong, rather than helping readers to understand how the grammatical phenomenon actually works. What impact, for example, does the choice of *εἶρηκα* rather than *εἶπον* have on the meaning of Rev 7:14 (p. 134)? Since the aorist, present, perfect, and future tenses can all be used in proverbial statements, what led a writer to choose one rather than the other? How does the “intentional” tense shift in Rev 5:7 (p. 136) impact the meaning of the verse? Second, there are occasional inaccuracies. What should have been “choice implies meaning,” an important principle for grammatical analysis, is presented as “meaning implies choice” (pp. 114, 152), leading to potential confusion. Third, the authors repeat the common misconception that the genitive absolute is “grammatically unconnected ... to the main clause” (p. 221), when this construction is linguistically just as connected to the main clause as any other adverbial participial construction, with the simple difference that the genitive participle has a different subject than the main clause. Fourth and related to this, switch reference devices are normally used when the following clause has a different *subject*; in other words, they point to a grammatical change of *referent*, rather than pointing to a switch in topic or scene (p. 221).

Finally, I should note that *Intermediate Greek Grammar* would benefit from a glossary or footnotes to explain common linguistic terms such as “nominal” (p. 1), “patient” (p. 14), “suppletive” (p. 151), “lexis” (p. 179), and “backbone” (p. 278); and the index would benefit from moving beyond including only a small sampling of the secondary sources cited and only listing some of the pages where modern authors have been cited.

These are minor issues and they do not detract from the fact that *Intermediate Greek Grammar* stands out among similar works for being manageable in size, highly accessible in presentation, and up to date in its application of linguistic theory.

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The Synoptic Problem: Four Views. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Bryan R. Dyer. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016, x + 194 pp., \$22.99 paper.

Biblical scholars seem to enjoy “Four Views” books. I have edited two such books myself, so I am obviously not against the genre. Why the interest? I think most of us who have strong convictions about this or that topic are motivated to defend our positions based on the notion that good scholarship is about convincing others to espouse our view instead of merely asking them to do so.

In discussing the Synoptic Problem with my students, I not only expose them to my own view of Synoptic origins (*Why Four Gospels?* [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2001]), but to the views held by Craig Evans, Mark Goodacre, David Peabody, and Rainer Riesner—the very contributors to the book I am reviewing here. I will also toss in the so-called “Independence Hypothesis” held by scholars such as Eta Linemann (*Is There a Synoptic Problem?* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992]). It is noble and necessary work to try and be as objective as is humanly possible about an issue and let students make up their own minds. Of course, I am convinced that my personal view about the Gospels is the best one out there and that it deserves a hearing. However, the truth is that good people disagree. Could the highest level of scholarship involve equipping rather than indoctrinating? As in any family, the family of God has matters to work out. We must teach each other, and it must be loving work between people who have earned the right to speak. If we are to think clearly, we must deal with issues head on. That is why I agreed to review Porter and Dyer’s book, even though my own view is not represented and even though I rather strongly disagree with each of the four views I am writing about.

The opening chapter, by the editors of the volume, makes the topic highly accessible to the non-academic reader. Key terms are introduced, as well as major concepts and hypotheses. Examples of similar wording between the Synoptic Gospels show us why there is a “problem,” and then we are given a brief introduction to the major “solutions” to this problem: the two-source hypothesis (involving Markan priority and Q), the Farrer hypothesis (Markan priority without Q), the Griesbach hypothesis (the two-Gospel hypothesis), and the oral tradition hypothesis (the orality and memory hypothesis). Then follows a brief introduction to the authors of the subsequent chapters: Craig Evans, Mark Goodacre, David Peabody, and Rainer Riesner.

In chapter 2, Craig Evans does a fantastic job of defending the two-source hypothesis. The internal evidence, he argues, is more compatible with Markan priority than Markan posteriority. Clearly (or so it seems to Evans), Matthew and Luke sought “to improve upon Mark’s language, economy, and clarity” (p. 29). A lengthy example follows concerning the verb *ekballei* in Mark 1:12, where we read that the Spirit “expels” Jesus into the wilderness. Mark, it seems, failed to anticipate that the verb *ekballō* would later be used for casting out evil spirits. Matthew and Luke thus revised Mark with the more acceptable expression “was led.” Moreover, Mark portrays Jesus in an “undignified light” (p. 31); “Mark makes little sense as an interpretation and conflation of Matthew and Luke” (pp. 34–35); “Matthew and Luke made use of Mark and much of Q” (p. 38); and the “minor agreements” between Mathew

and Luke are attributable “to evidence of oral tradition, scribal harmonization, and other factors” (p. 40). This is a chapter with a light touch and one that draws you in, but are Evans’s arguments irrefutable?

Mark Goodacre’s chapter is called “The Farrer Hypothesis.” This hypothesis challenges the notion that Matthew and Luke were written independently. Luke in fact used Matthew, and it is this fact that allows us to dispense with Q (note that Goodacre is not abandoning Markan priority). Both Matthew and Luke used Mark, omitting some material while adding a great deal of new material. Yet where Matthew and Luke agree, the wording is not derived from Q, since “Luke [had] direct access to Matthew” (p. 53). Indeed, the very outline of Luke’s Gospel seems derived from Matthew.

So has “Q” been debunked? Goodacre thinks so. The final part of his chapter seeks to answer the question, “Why, Then, Q?” (pp. 58–65). He asks (and answers) four basic questions: “Is Luke Ignorant of Matthew’s Special Material?”; “Is Luke Ignorant of Matthew’s Modifications of Mark?”; “Is Luke’s Reordering of Matthew Unintelligible?”; and “Does Luke’s Double Tradition Sometimes Appear More Primitive?” Goodacre answers by saying that Matthew’s special material is exactly the kind of material that Luke would chose *not* to include in his Gospel; that Luke is hardly ignorant of Matthew’s additions; that Luke’s reordering of Matthew is perfectly understandable once we pay attention to his editorial practices; and that the question of primitivity confuses literary priority and the age of traditions.

In his chapter “The Two Gospel Hypothesis,” David Peabody affirms that Matthew came first, that Luke utilized Matthew, and that Mark utilized both Matthew and Luke. Mark, in fact, “conflated” Matthew and Luke (p. 72). He did this in two ways: by the way he ordered his pericopes and by the way he made alternating use of the words of Matthew and Luke within individual pericopes. “Advocates of the Two Source Hypothesis . . .,” he writes, “have yet to provide a satisfactory explanation for these complementary alternating agreements” (p. 76). The rest of the chapter is devoted to discussing features that are unique to Mark: the way that Mark includes pericopes that are drawn neither from Matthew nor Luke; the way Mark contains its own linguistic peculiarities; the way Mark, by utilizing Matthew and Luke, solves the problem of the so-called “minor agreements”; and the way Matthean priority alone comports with the writings of the early church fathers. Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150–215 CE), in fact, is explicit that the Gospels containing genealogies came first. In passing, Peabody argues that Augustine’s own writings support the order Matthew-Luke-Mark, in contrast to those who argue for the so-called “Augustinian Hypothesis” (Matthew-Mark-Luke).

This brings us to Rainer Riesner’s chapter called “The Orality and Memory Hypothesis.” After sketching the history of research in this field and after showing how oral instruction was widespread in the first century CE, Riesner cites his evidence for an oral Gospel tradition in the NT. This evidence includes Paul’s famous “I handed the Gospel down to you” statement in 1 Cor 15:1–3; the likelihood that most of Jesus’s own teaching used mnemonic devices; the fact that the NT apostles were in the habit of passing on tradition to their disciples orally; and the probability that oral performance “was often aided and abetted by a written text” (p. 105). Ri-

esner concludes that the Synoptic Gospels were the result of an “oral tradition characterized by a flexible stability” (p. 110). While the sayings of Jesus were somewhat “fixed,” the narratives seem to have been handed down with greater flexibility. Hence “the Synoptic phenomenon is best explained by a combination of the Tradition Hypothesis and the Multiple Source Hypothesis” (p. 110).

The next four chapters in the book are “responses” by each of the contributors. In the final chapter “What Have We Learned regarding the Synoptic Problem, and What Do We Still Need to Learn?” editors Porter and Dyer note that “three of the four opinions promoted in this volume are based upon some type of Markan priority” (p. 167). In a sense, then, Markan priority can be considered the *consensus opinio* of the scholarly guild. However, that does not mean the problem has been solved. “We believe that there is still potential for further developments in the discussion of the Synoptic Problem” (p. 177). I could not agree more. This is, in fact, what I concluded after hosting our “Symposium on New Testament Studies” at Southeastern Seminary in 2000 (see David Alan Black and David Beck, eds., *Rethinking the Synoptic Problem* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001]). Major points of continuing dispute, write the editors, include the historical evidence, the triple tradition, the double tradition, the minor or major agreements, the oral tradition, determining textual movement, explanations for Mark, and Q. I suspect the matter can be boiled down to three major areas of disagreement: (1) the place of external evidence in discussions of the Synoptic Problem; (2) the willingness to rethink the importance of orality in the ancient world; and (3) the use of so-called “linguistic arguments” in favor of Markan priority that are really more socio-linguistic in nature (see my essay, “Some Dissenting Notes on R. Stein’s *The Synoptic Problem* and Markan ‘Errors,’” *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 1 [1988]: 95–101). My own views of the Synoptic Problem changed radically when I began to study each of these areas in some detail, beginning with my own translations from the Greek and Latin of the Church Fathers. That said, there is so much about the Synoptic Problem that we have yet to figure out. The authors of this volume have done their best to shape the contours of the discussion, and they have done so with kindness and the utmost respect for each other. I therefore cannot recommend this book enough, even though you will likely come away from it with more questions than answers. That, however, is not a bad thing. As Mark Goodacre reminds us: “While I am passionate about the solution to the problem that I advocate, I am still more passionate about this more fundamental issue, on which I am sure I agree with my colleagues, that studying the Synoptic Gospels is one of the most intriguing issues in the study of ancient Christianity” (p. 138).

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A Man Attested by God: The Human Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels. By J. R. Daniel Kirk. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016, xvii + 656 pp., \$60.00.

J. R. Daniel Kirk challenges a recent and growing consensus that the Synoptic Gospels present a high Christology like that of John, Paul, and Hebrews (e.g. Larry W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003]; Simon J. Gathercole, *The Preexistent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006]; Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008]; C. Kavin Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009]; Richard B. Hays, *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness* [Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014]). Specifically, Kirk develops the thesis that the Synoptic portrait of Jesus is best explained against a paradigm of idealized humanity, developed in Jewish tradition and confirmed in Peter's reference to Jesus as "a man attested to you by God through miracles, wonders, and signs" (Acts 2:22). On this basis, Kirk proposes that the Synoptic Gospels portray an idealized human Christology, in which Jesus is functionally rather than ontologically divine.

In the introduction, Kirk explains his approach. He defines idealized human figures as those who stand between the merely human and the divine, and idealized human Christology as that which occupies a middle ground between a low Christology (Jesus as mere human being) and a high Christology (Jesus as or approximate to Israel's God). Kirk's goal is first to establish the category of idealized humanity in Jewish Scripture and tradition. He hypothesizes that the category of "idealized human" has the most potent explanatory power for the evangelists' and the audience's understanding of the Christological concepts in the Synoptic Gospels. To test this hypothesis, he performs a historically informed, narrative study of the Gospels. In the last part of the introduction, Kirk surveys and critiques proposals for a high Christology in the Synoptic Gospels, such as those of Bauckham, Hurtado, Gathercole, and Rowe. He agrees that the Gospel writers identify Jesus with God by ascribing to him certain roles and functions that the Jewish Scriptures ascribe to God alone (e.g. creation, rule, worship). Yet Kirk cannot cross the logical line with those who assume that identification *with* God means identification *as* God. In the rest of the book, Kirk shows that both Jewish tradition and the Gospel narratives depict human beings as performing divine functions. This data, he argues, nullifies claims that the Synoptic Gospels uniquely ascribe divinity to Jesus.

Kirk unfolds his argument throughout the next six chapters. In chapter 1, he establishes a paradigm of idealized human figures from the Jewish Scriptures and a number of Second Temple texts. The hermeneutical key for Kirk's Christology is the creation story in Genesis, in which humanity plays the role of God on earth by sharing in God's sovereignty, authority, and rule. Kirk explains how various Jewish texts develop the creation account to depict the nation of Israel, Israel's prophets (e.g. Moses, Elijah), and the Davidic king as playing the role of God on earth—by displaying God's own attributes—in order to represent him to the nations. Climac-

tically, Jesus is *the* idealized human, that is, “the Human One who exercises God’s authority on the earth as God intended for humanity to do at the beginning” (p. 11).

In chapters 2 through 6, Kirk seeks to demonstrate that the paradigm of idealized humanity best explains the textual data in each of the Synoptic presentations of Jesus. The discussion is organized according to Christological categories that appear in the narratives: Jesus as Son of God (chap. 2); Jesus as Son of Man (chap. 3); Jesus’s birth and resurrection as the messiah (chap. 4); Jesus’s performance of miracles, including exorcisms (chap. 5); and Jesus’s fulfillment of Scripture (chap. 6). Finally, Kirk offers implications in a conclusion.

Kirk’s study is meticulously researched, carefully written, and exegetically insightful. Crucially, the study is a valuable reminder of the significance of the Synoptic tradition’s portrayal of Jesus as a human being: Jesus is God’s climactic and specially empowered representative anticipated in the Scriptures; he serves as the paradigmatic human who shows what it means to love God and love neighbor faithfully; and he embodies the destiny of God’s people. In addition, Kirk’s study suggests significant questions that must bring precision to any methodology for the investigation of the Christology of the Gospels, for example: What are the implications of the Synoptic presentation of God and Jesus as distinct characters? What would an ancient audience have understood by the Christological language in the text? How can we perform a historically informed reading of the text without importing the development of later creeds into our interpretation? Nevertheless, some methodological, logical, and exegetical problems hinder the outright success of Kirk’s thesis.

First, Kirk’s choice of data is unbalanced. He aims to “provide a historically viable reading” (p. 9) of the Synoptic Gospels by investigating their Christology from the standpoint of Israel’s Scriptures and their development in Second Temple Jewish texts rather than from the standpoint of later Trinitarian theology. However, he eschews the performance of such a reading from the standpoint of the evangelists’ own linguistic community by excluding data from other Christian texts—like Pauline letters or first-century Christian texts—that show how other early followers of Jesus understood his identity and were interpreting their Scriptures.

Second, Kirk’s use of the creation account as a hermeneutical key for his Christology is incomplete and as a result skews his interpretation of the Gospels. From creation he identifies the model for idealized humanity without acknowledging what afflicts it. According to that model, humanity’s purpose is to rule the cosmos with God; but Kirk does not explain the implications of sin, rebellion, and exile that mar the image of God in human beings and prevent the realization of that purpose. Kirk reads the Synoptic Gospels in continuity with his conception of idealized humanity by viewing Jesus as a royal Adamic-Davidic messiah. For example, in his analysis of the Synoptic material, Kirk argues that Christological titles like “Son of God” and “Son of Man” express Jesus’s functional identity as God’s agent and that various Christological actions (healings, exorcisms, nature miracles) exhibit his embodiment of humanity’s potential to rule the cosmos with God by virtue of creation. People become idealized humans by following Jesus, *the* idealized human, and acting in his name, that is, by means of discipleship. Yet as with the Jewish texts, Kirk does not adequately address the problem of human sin, failure, and im-

perceptiveness in the Synoptic narratives that would prevent the realization of idealized humanity. While Kirk's study is important for emphasizing that the imitation of Jesus reveals what it is to be truly human, his proposal that discipleship is what achieves this is unpersuasive because it does not account for all the data in the texts.

Third, it is persuasive that the Synoptic Jesus is human but not that the Synoptic Jesus is not divine, because not all of Kirk's exegesis is compelling. For example, Kirk concludes that Jesus's act of forgiveness in Mark 2:1–12 does not indicate his divinity since other human figures also forgive. He assumes that John the Baptist (1:4–5) and the community of disciples (11:25) forgive like God and like Jesus. However, John performs a purity rite (cf., e.g., Lev 4:20, 26) and disciples forgive one another, and both forgive so that God may ultimately forgive and remove sins. By contrast, Jesus offers unmediated forgiveness, and as a result his words (not John's nor the disciples') are taken as blasphemous. It is therefore difficult to sustain Kirk's argument that "Jesus is not the only human in Mark who removes sins" (p. 279).

Fourth, Kirk's running assumption is that the presence of human characteristics in certain Christological titles or functions nullifies the possibility of divinity. For example, he states that, "son of God is a title of suffering royalty rather than preexistent divinity" (p. 190). However, Kirk never adequately establishes on an exegetical or historical basis why the Synoptic presentation of Jesus's full humanity necessitates the mutual exclusion of divinity. Rather, Kirk appears to base his assumption on the theological objective that he expresses at the outset of the study and that is evident in the following comment: "The urge to recognize divinity in the Gospels' depictions of Jesus runs the risk of separating or dividing Jesus's humanity from the actions he performs, or else of turning Jesus into an odd admixture of humanity and divinity" (p. 447). One wonders if Kirk restricts his analysis and therefore his conclusions in order to avoid what might appear to be a proto-Chalcedonian reading.

In conclusion, Kirk's book is impressive and engaging, and a noteworthy contribution to the study of the Christology of the Synoptic Gospels that will be required reading for those who perform a Christological investigation. Most importantly, the book reminds us that Jesus's humanity is a crucial part of Christology and highlights methodological shortcomings in recent approaches to the task that require precision; but the book's own methodological shortcomings may dampen its overall effect.

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The Saving Cross of the Suffering Christ: The Death of Jesus in Lukan Soteriology. By Benjamin R. Wilson. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 223. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016, xi + 216 pp., €93.41.

In this revised University of Cambridge Ph.D. dissertation, Benjamin Wilson offers a fresh contribution to a crowded field of studies on the death of Jesus in

Luke-Acts. He argues that “Luke conceives of the crucifixion as a cultic act of atonement that results in the establishment of a new covenant relationship between God and his people, a relationship marked by the eschatological forgiveness of sins and experience of salvation” (pp. 1–2). Put simply, “Luke presents to us a Christ who suffers upon a cross that saves” (p. 2). Such affirmations may seem unsurprising to some, but they directly challenge the standard conclusions of Lukan scholarship since the mid-19th century, including Hans Sellner’s *Das Heil Gottes: Studien zur Soteriologie des lukanischen Doppelwerks* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007), published in the same series. Wilson’s monograph is commendable for its masterful engagement with the voluminous corpus of secondary literature, its patient attentiveness to Luke’s narrative and theological concerns, and its original and convincing argumentation.

Chapter 1 deftly surveys a wide swath of German, American, and British scholarship on the Lukan cross. Wilson engages the usual suspects—Cadbury, Creed, Dibelius, Conzelmann—but he helpfully demonstrates that their “minimalist” approaches to the saving significance of Jesus’s death were in fact indebted to the assumptions and methods of 19th-century German biblical scholars such as Baur, Zeller, and Overbeck. Wilson considers Dibelius and Bultmann to be transitional figures within German scholarship who bequeathed to Conzelmann and others a concern for Luke’s distinctive theological perspective and salvation-historical framework. Wilson astutely observes that such scholarship reached minimalist conclusions about Jesus’s death “only by virtue of an eschatological framework that can no longer be maintained” (p. 18). He then surveys other interpretive approaches to the Lukan passion—the suffering righteous one, the martyr, the Isaianic servant, and the Davidic messiah of the Psalms—before highlighting key evidence offered by “maximalist” interpreters who affirm the “intrinsic soteriological significance” of Jesus’s death (p. 29). As signaled by the book’s title, Wilson affirms the saving significance of the cross within Luke-Acts. His distinctive contribution comes in his “wide-angle” analysis of the “narrative development of Lukan thought” about Jesus’s death and his reassessment of “Lukan soteriology in relation to early Jewish practice and belief” (pp. 33–35).

Chapter 2 considers how Luke’s “anticipatory passion references” emphasize the necessity and centrality of rejection and death (p. 38). Wilson concludes that the Lukan Jesus can carry out his messianic mission within God’s saving plan only by willingly embracing his destiny of suffering. He explores the interplay of divine concealment and the disciples’ ignorance of Jesus’s necessary suffering, concluding that Luke transforms “the messianic secret . . . into a passion secret” (p. 59). Wilson then reasons that this ignorance motif plausibly accounts for Luke’s omission of the “ransom saying” (Mark 10:45).

Chapter 3 patiently examines the disputed text and interpretation of Luke 22:19–20. Wilson ultimately favors the “longer reading” of the Lukan last supper (attested in all extant Greek manuscripts except Codex Bezae) over against the “shorter reading” defended by Westcott and Hort and many “minimalists.” He explores the rich biblical resonances of the words of institution and concludes that “Jesus interprets his own death as a redemptive event that establishes a new cove-

nant relationship between God and his people through an act of cultic atonement” (p. 94).

Chapter 4 focuses on the Lukan passion narrative. Wilson reasons that “the cross for Luke is both revelatory and redemptive” (p. 129), and he explores the Christological and soteriological significance of unique Lukan material such as Jesus’s prayer, “Father, forgive them,” as well as Lukan redaction of Synoptic material. For example, Wilson intriguingly links Jesus’s promise of paradise for the penitent criminal to the tearing of the temple veil at the moment of his death (pp. 124–25).

Chapter 5 investigates how Luke 24 and the book of Acts reinforce the Christological and soteriological significance of Jesus’s passion. Wilson argues that apologetic speeches in Acts primarily emphasize the Christological fulfillment of Isaiah 53 and other texts from the Law, prophets, and Psalms. However, soteriological concerns remain in the background in these speeches and come to the forefront in Acts 20:28.

Minimalists (e.g. Sellner) frequently claim that Luke-Acts presents no intrinsic connection between the forgiveness of sins and a saving, sacrificial interpretation of Jesus’s death. Chapter 6 addresses this commonplace view by highlighting the “inter-dependence of repentance, cultic atonement, and divine forgiveness within early Judaism” (p. 159), which corroborates Wilson’s findings about the saving significance of Jesus’s death. This brief but important chapter convincingly shows that early Jewish and Christian tradition consistently presents a cultic act of atonement as the basis for the forgiveness of sins. Thus, “If the Lukan understanding of repentance and divine forgiveness is completely divorced from any conception of cultic atonement, then Lukan soteriology truly is a strange anomaly ... within the religious context of Luke’s day” (pp. 177–78). Strikingly, Wilson concludes that the minimalist conclusions of 19th-century German scholarship were based on “a caricature of early Judaism” that is now indefensible (p. 190). Recognizing the Jewish character of Luke’s theology does not undermine the saving significance of Jesus’s death but rather confirms it.

Overall, Wilson makes a persuasive case that “the cross stands at the nexus of Lukan christology and soteriology, functioning both as an indispensable marker of Jesus’ messianic identity and as an indispensable mechanism of atonement within the divine plan of salvation” (p. 192). While studies by Kimbell, Marshall, Peterson, and others have questioned the assured results of the minimalist consensus and defended a soteriological interpretation of Jesus’s death in Luke-Acts, Wilson’s work stands out in several respects.

First, he laudably engages critically and winsomely with major scholarship in English, German, and French since the mid-1800s, patiently analyzing arguments and showing larger interpretive trends and underlying assumptions. To Wilson’s impressive bibliography one might add the recent Acts commentaries by Keener and Schnabel, and Witherington and Cunningham’s monograph *“Through Many Tribulations”: The Theology of Persecution in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997).

Second, Wilson effectively blends sound exegesis of key texts, sensitivity to the narrative dynamics of Luke-Acts, awareness of Luke's historical-cultural context, and effective theological synthesis. His argument is rigorous, patient, and ultimately convincing. Chapter 6 represents Wilson's most significant original contribution as he shows that atonement and forgiveness of sins belong together in early Jewish and Christian tradition and in Luke-Acts. In his treatment of Luke 24:46–47, Wilson suggests "that the availability of divine forgiveness to the penitent *individual* is predicated upon the death and resurrection of Jesus" (p. 185, italics mine). Here he could go further by considering Luke's stress on proclamation of forgiveness *among all nations*, which Jesus ties to the fulfillment of Scripture but which challenges the assumptions and views of many early Jews.

Wilson's monograph is a model of outstanding NT scholarship. This represents perhaps the new standard treatment of the saving significance of the cross in Lukan theology, a work with which future studies must reckon.

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When Paul Met Jesus: How an Idea Got Lost in History. By Stanley E. Porter. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, xiii + 212 pp., \$99.99.

Did Paul ever personally encounter Jesus? In *When Paul Met Jesus*, Stanley Porter has reengaged an idea that had some currency a century ago but that has since been relegated to the dust bin of passé NT scholarship. Porter follows the lead of William Ramsay, Johannes Weiss, and James Hope Moulton in arguing that Paul encountered and heard Jesus teach prior to the crucifixion. Porter pursues a project of probabilities, since certainties in such a discussion appear unattainable.

Porter begins his monograph by surveying the arguments of those who in the past have supported the idea that Paul met Jesus, but especially those of Ramsay, Weiss, and Moulton. Porter's own project begins by building upon the arguments already presented by these three (especially Weiss). This survey of earlier proponents constitutes the first of four sections of the monograph.

However, before developing his own arguments, Porter expends some necessary energy explaining why he thinks that the Paul-met-Jesus idea is currently out of bounds. He focuses on the ideological influence of three scholars: (1) F. C. Baur, who pitted Petrine Christianity (which, according to Baur, was closer to the Jesus movement) against a Pauline Christianity (which knew and cared little about the historical Jesus); (2) William Wrede, who memorably dubbed Paul the second founder of Christianity; and (3) Rudolf Bultmann, who essentially argued that Paul needed no more than simple belief in the existence of Jesus to proclaim his message about a crucified and resurrected Messiah. This chapter is an important part of the book, since Porter has to construct his argument in an interpretive climate in which anyone who posits continuity between Jesus and Paul is decidedly out of fashion. Highlighting how we arrived at this state of affairs helps Porter's case.

The third major portion of the monograph is Porter's own contribution to the discussion. His argument is fairly straightforward, and in its broadest strokes follows the lead of those who came before him. Many of the details of the argument, however, appear to be his own. First, Porter argues that it is more likely than not that Jesus and Paul would have been physically proximate—that is, in some of the same places at the same time—and thus likely to have come in contact with one other. Though the final week before Jesus's crucifixion is viewed as the most likely of all possible overlapping moments, Porter will later argue that contact between Jesus and Paul may not have been limited to the Passion Week but may even have included moments from Jesus's ministry in Galilee. The simple likelihood that these two were at some of the same locations (especially Jerusalem) during the same period of time is probably one of the strongest arguments for an encounter between Paul and Jesus. Would an activist Pharisee have missed the chance to hear and possibly engage with a traveling rabble-rouser like Jesus?

Moreover, in this third section Porter engages in detailed examination of three passages that he argues offer clues that Paul in fact did see Jesus: Acts 9, 22, 26 (Paul's conversion); 1 Cor 9:1; and 2 Cor 5:16. His detailed examination of each passage leads Porter to conclude that even though each on its own suggests that Paul came in contact with Jesus, the three passages in concert make such encounters probable.

In the fourth and final section of the book, Porter extends his argument by suggesting that there are passages in Paul that so closely parallel sections in the Gospels that such literary connections are best explained as Paul having heard Jesus himself, albeit as an unsympathetic listener. Porter focuses especially on five (clusters of) passages: (1) the list of Rom 12:12–21; (2) Rom 13:8 and Gal 5:14 (neighbor love); (3) 1 Cor 7:10–11 (divorce); (4) 1 Cor 9:14 and 1 Tim 5:18 (support for ministers); and (5) 1 Thess 4:15–17 (the Lord's coming).

How should Porter's proposal be evaluated? Let me state up front that I was eager to read this book and initially quite open to being persuaded that Paul actually encountered Jesus at some point before Jesus's crucifixion. This openness is largely because I have long been persuaded, largely through the writings of David Wenham, that modern scholarship has unnecessarily inserted a wedge between the teachings of Jesus and Paul. Thus, whenever I encountered the general issue of continuity between Jesus and Paul in this book, I was not at all disappointed with Porter's study. Porter has rightly and forcefully challenged those who suggest that Paul pursued his mission among the Gentiles with little knowledge of the teaching of Jesus. The section in which Porter seeks to explain how we arrived at such a skeptical position in the first place via Baur, Wrede, and Bultmann was a reasonable and helpful piece of intellectual history.

When it came to specific arguments for Porter's thesis, I found myself agreeing in some cases, and not in others. I imagine that the same will hold true for others who read this book. I appreciated the verve with which Porter defended the geographical proximity argument. The detailed exegetical discussions of 1 Cor 9:1 and 2 Cor 5:16 were useful, and I believe that a plausible case has been established

simply from those passages that Paul may have encountered Jesus. (I found Porter's discussion of Acts 9, 22, and 26 to be less convincing.)

However, in the fourth and final section of the book I repeatedly found myself unpersuaded that a personal recollection of the teachings of Jesus was the most compelling way to explain instances of overlapping language and themes between Paul and similar words of Jesus in the Gospels. The main problem from my perspective is that in this book Porter appears to give little weight to the idea that there existed a robust and widespread oral tradition based upon the teaching of Jesus that guided the early church during the first decades of the Christian movement. He does acknowledge that Paul received the information in 1 Cor 15:3–7 and 1 Cor 11:23–25 through the passing on of tradition. Yet that is because Porter *has* to: Paul explicitly says that he “received” these words. However, it appears that for Porter any dependence upon Jesus in Paul's writings—unless explicitly stated that it was “received”—is likely to have been absorbed by Paul when he heard Jesus teach in person. Such a conclusion is unwarranted. Even into the early second century, the oral passing on of Jesus's words played a role, as can be substantiated from comments in Papias (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39) and from the occasional appearances of *agrapha* (sayings of Jesus not found in the Gospels) sprinkled throughout early Christian writings (e.g. Acts 20:35; Papias in Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 5.33.4; 2 *Clem.* 5.2; Justin Martyr, *Dial.* 47). Is it not more reasonable to assume that early Christians, especially during the first and second generation, were *constantly* talking about what Jesus said during his ministry, correcting those who incorrectly transmitted his words, and drawing upon orally-mediated sayings of Jesus to help them weather persecution, temptation, and doctrinal disputes? (Cf. the writings of Birger Gerhardsson, Kenneth Bailey, and James Dunn on oral tradition.) If such conversations were occurring all the time, there is no reason to think that Paul did not also receive such orally-transmitted information about Jesus from others who heard him. In addition, we should not forget that Paul spent 15 days with Peter (and James) only a few years into his Christian life (Gal 1:18–19)! What do you think they spent their time talking about?

This may mean, then, that a decision about whether Paul encountered Jesus before the crucifixion may be primarily dependent upon combining the geographical proximity argument with particular readings of 1 Cor 9:1 and 2 Cor 5:16 (and perhaps Acts 9, 22, and 26). I, for one, think that based upon those considerations alone it is more likely that Paul did in fact see Jesus than that he did not. For others to be persuaded, they will need to pick up a copy of Porter's monograph and weigh the evidence for themselves.

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Paul the Ancient Letter Writer: An Introduction to Epistolary Analysis. By Jeffrey A. D. Weima. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016, xv + 267 pp., \$24.99 paper.

Jeffrey Weima is Professor of NT at Calvin Theological Seminary. He completed his doctoral work at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, where he studied under noted Pauline scholars Richard Longenecker and John Hurd. His dissertation was subsequently published as *Neglected Endings: The Significance of the Pauline Letter Closings* (JSNTSup 101; Sheffield: JSOT, 1994). In the intervening years he has become an advocate for the importance of epistolary analysis in NT interpretation. The central thesis of his new volume is “that Paul is a gifted letter writer who skillfully adapts the epistolary conventions of his day so that they more effectively support his persuasive purposes, and that consequently the method of epistolary analysis is an important hermeneutical key for properly interpreting his letters” (p. 32).

In a brief introductory chapter Weima provides an overview of epistolary analysis as a method of interpretation and contrasts it with thematic and rhetorical approaches to Paul’s letters. He then divides his discussion into four chapters, each dealing with one of the major sections that comprise Paul’s letters: the opening, the thanksgiving, the body, and the closing. He concludes with a detailed test case in which he applies the method to Paul’s letter to Philemon. Throughout the discussion he goes beyond form and function to consider the interpretive significance of the sections and conventions that appear in Paul’s letters.

Chapter 2 examines the opening sections of Paul’s letters by looking at three conventions: the sender formula, the recipient formula, and the greeting formula. Weima includes helpful tables that compare each of the formulas in all of Paul’s letters (with the addition of comparable formulas in the general letters) and that allow the reader to see the similarities and differences firsthand. After an analysis of each formula, Weima explores the interpretive significance of representative examples (e.g. Rom 1:1–6; 1 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3–5).

Chapter 3 examines the thanksgiving sections of Paul’s letters. Following Jer-vis and deviating from Schubert (p. 53 n. 5), Weima proposes five basic units to the thanksgiving section: statement of thanksgiving, manner of thanksgiving, cause of thanksgiving, explanation, and prayer report. He also pays particular attention to three important functions of the thanksgiving sections: pastoral, exhortative, and foreshadowing. This chapter would have benefited by one or more comparative tables similar to those included in the discussions of the opening and closing sections of Paul’s letters (chaps. 2 and 5).

Chapter 4 examines various conventions found within the bodies of Paul’s letters. This chapter differs from the others because, as Weima notes, “the content of each letter body varies widely as Paul addresses the specific and unique problems faced by his various congregations” (p. 91). Rather than attempting to compare what Paul writes in one letter with the rest of his correspondence, Weima compares what Paul writes with the contents of other extant letters of his day. This chapter is also the longest of the four that discuss the major sections of Paul’s letters, and it covers transitional formulas (appeal, disclosure, “now about,” vocative), autobio-

graphical sections, the apostolic parousia, the confidence formula, paraenesis, liturgical forms (prayers, doxologies, confessions, and hymns), and other literary forms (inclusion, chiasm). This material is familiar territory for anyone who studied at Toronto under Longenecker and Hurd, but Weima does a good job of going beyond the form and function of the epistolary conventions to explore their interpretive significance.

Chapter 5 resumes the basic pattern of chapters 2 and 3 to examine the closing sections of Paul's letters. Weima treats five conventions that occur in those closings: the peace benediction, the hortatory section, the greetings, the autograph, and the grace benediction. In particular, he argues that the function of the closing sections is similar to that of Paul's thanksgivings in that they serve "to highlight and encapsulate the main points previously taken up in the body" (p. 165). Weima supports his argument with examples from passages in six different letters (Romans, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1–2 Thessalonians).

In chapter 6 Weima examines Paul's letter to Philemon as a test case for the method he advocates. He moves through the letter section by section and considers the persuasive impact of what the apostle has written. As is often the case, the letter body (verses 8–18) is the least formulaic portion of the letter, which leads him to consider persuasive techniques that are more tangential than integral to epistolary analysis (e.g. the word play on Onesimus's name). The fact that Weima frequently supports his own conclusions by citing those of other scholars suggests that, at least in this test case, the value of epistolary analysis lies as much in identifying areas that deserve careful attention as in providing new insight into the interpretation of Paul's letters. As such, epistolary analysis is a useful addition to the interpreter's tool box. Weima never suggests that epistolary analysis is the *only* tool in the box, but it seems safe to say that he views this method of interpretation as the *first* tool the interpreter should use when approaching NT letters.

Paul the Ancient Letter Writer fulfills the promise of its subtitle by providing an introduction to epistolary analysis. It is well written and researched. It interacts well with and is up to date on current scholarship. Weima's analysis is careful and detailed, and his use of examples keeps the pace of the discussion moving nicely. The primary values of the volume are its comprehensive scope and its emphasis on interpretive significance. Although other scholars have looked at epistolary sections and conventions from a variety of perspectives, this book seeks to deal with their form and function in all of the letters attributed to Paul. It also goes beyond form and function to consider the significance of those conventions. The latter feature challenges the serious interpreter of Paul's letters to use epistolary analysis as a starting point for identifying potential areas for in-depth interpretive exploration.

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The Mind of the Spirit: Paul's Approach to Transformed Thinking. By Craig Keener. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016, xliii + 402 pp., \$32.99.

The Mind of the Spirit introduces the reader (thoughtful lay person as well as scholar) to the understanding of the role of the mind in Paul's writings, which Keener places on the backdrop of Greco-Roman and Jewish thought. Such juxtaposition illuminates and clarifies Paul's own conception of transformed thinking in the life of the believer. Although books abound on many aspects of Paul's theology (soteriology, Christology, ecclesiology, anthropology, etc.), relatively little scholarship has addressed Paul's understanding of the mind in a comprehensive way. Keener's work redresses this omission compellingly and authoritatively and is now the definitive treatment on this topic.

Keener's primary concern is to connect the theological dots between the significance of the righteousness of a believer with respect to their status before God and their moral transformation. Keener argues, "What interpreters have often missed ... is how Paul uses cognition to connect these key elements. How does one move from righteous identity to righteous living?" (pp. xv–xvi). Keener's approach to exploring this question is to identify concepts, themes, and ideas relating to cognition in select passages from the Pauline corpus. His interest is neither to provide detailed exegetical commentary on these passages nor to engage in lexical studies. Rather, he seeks to examine these concepts and ideas in conversation with how they were understood in the ancient world.

As we have come to expect from him, Keener's treatment of the original sources is impressive. He begins his discussions of Pauline texts by identifying topics or concepts related to cognition. He then proceeds to survey how various Greek and Roman authors and philosophical schools (Stoics, Epicureans, Platonists, etc.) understood a concept and follows that with a corresponding survey of texts from Judaism (Philo, Josephus, the rabbis, etc.). He then compares Paul's usage with the voices surveyed, and finally he draws conclusions as they pertain to the Pauline text under consideration. Keener stresses repeatedly that, though Paul may articulate a concept with his distinctive voice, he "would have been fully intelligible to his contemporaries" (p. 251). Keener focuses on the Roman and Corinthian correspondence, since these "sufficiently establish" (p. xvi) how Paul connects cognition with divinity, but he also dips into Philippians and Colossians to "offer further samples of Paul's interest in thinking" (p. 218).

Chapter 1, "The Corrupted Mind (Rom. 1:18–32)," examines Paul's negative depiction of the pagan mind as it operates devoid of the Spirit. Paul portrays the wise pagan's thinking as being increasingly given over to passions in their rejection of knowing God. Chapter 2, "The Mind of Faith (Rom. 6:11)," lays out a new paradigm of thinking for the believer, who exercises faith based on Christ's victory. The *imperatives* of the Christian life—Paul's consistent calls for "new behavior"—flow out of the *indicatives* of Christ's triumph and the knowledge that a person has been "righted ... in Christ" (p. 54).

In chapter 3, "The Mind of the Flesh (Rom. 7:22–25)," Keener permits himself a more extensive discussion of the "I" in this passage because of debates sur-

rounding this topic. He concludes, correctly, that it “depicts neither the ideal Christian law nor Paul’s current experience but Paul’s graphic dramatization of life under the law” (p. 112). Religious people, who know the law, are not able to extricate themselves from their passions in their attempt to conform to the law. What they need is to have “the mind of the Spirit,” the topic Paul picks up in Rom 8:5–7 and that Keener addresses in his next chapter. In this passage, Paul contrasts a *fleshly mind*, which Keener understands as “the disposition or habitual way of thinking dominated by worldly, purely human concerns,” with a *spiritual mind*, which he describes as a “righteous mental lifestyle in which God’s presence by the Spirit makes the decisive difference” (p. 141).

Chapter 5, “A Renewed Mind (Rom. 12:1–3),” brings the theme of the function of the mind to its climax in Romans—a passage constructed and positioned as a deliberate contrast to the depiction of the pagan mind of Rom 1:18–32. It is a *rational* (cognitive) act for believers to offer their bodies for godly ends, since it is rooted in “God’s wise plan” laid out in Romans 9–11. *Being transformed* occurs through the mind *being renewed*. The renewed mind of the individual is closely tied to “the mind of the Lord” (Rom 11:34), which has been on display in the three preceding chapters. What this renewed mind looks like is then fleshed out in the remainder of Romans 12.

Chapter 6, “The Mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:15–16),” focuses on the true nature of wisdom. Christ’s wisdom, demonstrated in his self-emptying of power and control, is contrasted with “status-conscious worldly wisdom” (p. 216). True wisdom is not determined by standards set by current societal norms; rather, it is determined by embracing an eschatological perspective that is revealed, informed, and shaped by the crucified and risen Christ. Mature (truly wise) believers acknowledge this and conform their thinking and behavior to align with the ways of the crucified Christ, which will lead to increasing personal and social transformation that is marked by unity, not rivalry.

Chapter 7, which examines “A Christlike Mind,” looks briefly at three texts in Philippians. Philippians 4:6–8 addresses the transformative power of meditating on virtuous objects and by intentionally transferring our needs to the care of God—actions that are volitional and cognitive. Philippians 2:1–5 uses the example of Christ to call the Philippians to think and act as Christ did in his selfless service of others—a unity-creating mindset that overcomes dissension. Philippians 3:19–21 uses the concept of citizenship to capture how a mindset shapes thinking: earthly citizenship leads one to chase fulfillment of animal desires; heavenly citizenship leads to a way of cognition and living attuned toward eternal significance.

The final chapter, “The Heavenly Mind (Col. 3:1–2),” picks up themes similar to Phil 3:19–21, but emphasizes “heavenly contemplation” in contrast to being driven by earthly passions. This “heavenly contemplation” has a Christocentric orientation and shape that Paul calls his readers to live into—a lifestyle reflecting and embodying the life and character of Christ.

In the conclusion, Keener provides a helpful summary of the results of his research, one that is worth quoting in full: “For Paul, the mind of love, the mind of faith, the mind of the Spirit, the heavenly mind, the mind of Christ focused on the

weakness of the cross, and so on are all the same mind. They are simply different entrances into the same reality in Christ and in the Spirit, approached from different angles, varying according to Paul's emphasis in a particular passage. In other words, they do not offer us a long list of new rules but instead present various windows on a new reality, each of which takes us to the same place in Christ" (p. 253).

In a postscript, Keener addresses pastoral/practical concerns on how this material is relevant to "divided churches" and "divided hearts." Keener also addresses how this material may both provide new insights into "pastoral theology" and inform the believer's "worldview."

Eight helpful excursions, extending from a half page to three pages in length, are sprinkled throughout the book, providing focused treatment of topics germane to subjects discussed in the body of the book.

The book is rounded out with one appendix that is substantial, "The Soul in Ancient Mediterranean Thought," which helpfully surveys competing notions of the soul, and a second brief and somewhat puzzling appendix, "Some of God's Wise Plan in Paul's Bible," which left me scratching my head regarding the necessity and value of this brief, one-page, treatment. The book's bibliography is extensive (46 pp.) as are the indexes (75 pp.).

If one is permitted a trifling niggle: Key Greek terms that Keener helpfully treats in his work do not appear in the indexes: *λογίζομαι* (p. 45), *φρόνημα*, *φρονέω* (pp. 113–15, 230–31, 237–41), *λογικός* (p. 150–52), *τέλειος* (pp. 163–65), *πνευματικός* (pp. 183–84), *ψυχικός/ψυχή* (pp. 189–94), *ἀρετή* (p. 227–29), and numerous others. The inclusion of these terms, either in the subject index or in a separate index of Greek terms, would have benefitted the reader. This minor note aside, we are once again indebted to Keener for his compellingly argued study—a study that both challenges the mind and aims to transform it.

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When in Romans: An Invitation to Linger with the Gospel according to Paul. By Beverly Roberts Gaventa. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016, xix + 140 pp., \$22.99.

This book is the latest in a series of volumes entitled "Theological Explorations for the Church Catholic," a series deriving from lectures delivered at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Its author, Beverly Gaventa, Distinguished Professor of NT at Baylor University and President of the Society of Biblical Literature in 2016, has published many articles and books in the field of NT studies. This small volume is written not for fellow scholars or specialists in the guild, but for, as she puts it, "people who would not normally read a book about Romans" (p. xiii). Eschewing jargon and arcane scholarly labyrinths, she writes to make this most crucial letter accessible to a larger audience. Doing that does not mean surveying the letter's contents but rather addressing four crucial issues, or perhaps, misconceptions in how to understand Paul's key concerns in his magisterial epistle.

The book begins with an introduction in which Gaventa sets the stage, arguing that in Romans Paul confronts his readers (and us) with the universal, cosmic horizon of the good news. Yet her understanding of what that entails will challenge the assumptions that many Christians have about the main issues found in Romans. First, she reminds readers about the nature of NT letters, and Romans in particular—what we know about Paul; the audience (small groups of believers); Phoebe (a prominent woman who not only carries the letter to the recipients but who would discuss and explain its contents to them); and Paul's purposes in writing the letter. The introduction concludes with Gaventa's salutary warning against a common misuse of Romans: proof-texting to support particular theological points. Romans is, in fact, "intricate and requires us to read carefully for context, for transitions, even for twists and turns that displace or reinterpret previous statements" (p. 19). She hopes her four chapters will help readers understand more of that intricacy.

In chapter 1, Gaventa overturns what she believes to be too restrictive views of salvation that consist of only a linear story of problem and solution. Rather, she finds salvation in Romans to be cosmic in scope. God has acted in Christ to reclaim humanity, individual and corporate, from the powers of sin and death. Christ died not merely to assuage God's wrath so individual sinners can go to heaven when they die, but to defeat the anti-God powers of sin and death. Controversially, she finds no place in Paul's treatment of salvation in Romans for a "human response" to God's actions in Christ; she notes that terms such as "repentance" and "forgiveness" are absent from Paul's vocabulary. She continues with "slaves cannot repent their way out of slavery; neither can they be forgiven" (p. 43). Slaves can only be rescued; power must come from the outside to redeem them. Readers get the first hints of what will follow.

Chapter 2 focuses on Paul's understanding of Israel. In short, Israel belongs to God as God's creation, and for Paul it is coterminous with what we usually call "ethnic" Israel. In Romans 4 she finds that Paul mentions Abraham's faith but never Abraham's obedience (recall the comment in the previous paragraph about the lack of "human response"). "Abraham's story becomes the story of God's faith-generating actions for Abraham and, now for all humankind" (p. 60). She argues that in Romans 9–11 Paul's point is that Israel exists not by virtue of its own faithfulness or goodness but by God's creative act, and God will save all Israel. Intriguingly, Gaventa observes: "Paul does not say that 'all Israel' will believe" (p. 69). Apparently, for Gaventa, God will save Israel despite continued unbelief, although she retreats to a kind of mystery about how God will ultimately resolve the relationship between Israel's salvation and belief in Jesus as Lord.

In chapter 3, Gaventa takes up the issue of Pauline ethics. Rather than employing the common indicative/imperative approach, Gaventa, very convincingly, locates Paul's treatment of Christian behavior within the subject of worship, specifically Rom 12:1–2. Christians are obligated to present their bodies to God as a sacrifice, which is their reasonable worship—the fitting response to God's gracious actions on their behalf. There is no limit to God's claim on his people. All of Christian living occurs within the sphere of worship. Conversely, all sin results from withholding from God the worship that is his due. With great insight Gaventa ends

this chapter: “Inside the carapace of worship, even if nowhere else, we know who is our Lord, and we are shaped to live accordingly” (p. 95).

Chapter 4 picks up the topic of the Christian community, the church. Gaventa notes that the term *ἐκκλησία* occurs only in the final chapter of the letter. Yet “we” in the letter are identified distinctively as “those who believe,” who belong to Jesus Christ, trust in God, are at peace with God, are slaves of God, and who are God’s sons and daughters. The notion of being “in Christ” is especially important in how Paul designates the church, since it affirms that members have responsibilities to and for each other. Further, for those in Christ, there is no exit plan. These realities present a stark contrast to the perverse notion residing within the dominant Western idolatry of the individual, where we are free from the needs and claims of others and can opt out any time we please (p. 105). Under the rubric “welcome one another,” Gaventa addresses the issues resident in Romans 14, particularly arrogance, judgmental attitudes, misuse of power, and setting aside one’s convictions to build up a neighbor. As she noted concerning Israel, the church also is God’s, not a voluntary association; it is a gathering of those called to be holy. Again, a final sentence is poignant: “The community of those grasped by the God who raised Jesus from the dead does not reside in gated enclaves of the smug and condescending” (p. 117).

In her conclusion Gaventa draws the themes together showing (using her metaphor of the folk song “This Train Is Bound for Glory”) where her train has been going. In her reading, “all” are bound for glory. As “all” are under the power of sin, so “all” will be saved. She paraphrases Bruce Springsteen’s cover of Curtis Mayfield’s lyrics, “You don’t need no ticket. You just get on board.” She anticipates objections to her conclusions. What about Paul’s condition of *faith* embedded in Rom 1:16: “for everyone who believes”? She concludes that faith is indeed a gift that God gives to some, but that “does not limit God’s capacity to bestow that gift on others—even on all people” (p. 124). But will God give the gift of faith to “really bad people”? Her answer is that all people are undeserving of God’s grace so *really* bad is simply a relative term. Then why is Paul so concerned about “mission” if all will be saved in the end? Her answer: Paul engaged in mission because God called him to it, apparently not because he believed that all people needed to hear and respond in faith to the good news in order to be saved.

While there is much to commend in Gaventa’s reading of various portions of Romans, I am extremely wary of her ultimate destination. While I agree this brand of universalism is very palatable for some readers, I think it does serious injustice to Paul’s presentation in Romans, not to mention many other sections of the NT. While she distinguishes “obedience” from “faith,” I wonder what she thinks of Paul’s words in Rom 1:5 where he speaks of *ὕπακοήν πίστεως*, the “obedience of faith,” which may be rendered the “obedience that comes from faith” (NIV), or even “faithful obedience” (CEB). She agrees that the church consists of those in Christ and ones who believe, but apparently she does not see that these words imply the requirement of personal trust in Jesus, of actually engaging one’s will in order to enter into the community of Christ. Paul speaks of “those who *receive* God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness” (Rom 5:17

NIV; italics mine). While Paul may speak little explicitly of repentance (he does use the term in Rom 2:4; also 2 Cor 7:9, 10; 2 Tim 2:25) or forgiveness (though see Eph 1:7; Col 1:14), he speaks volumes about sin and how it separates people from God and his salvation. I think that for Paul, trusting in Christ effects the removal of sin and its consequences. Though as Paul says (and Gaventa highlights), “everyone will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord” (Phil 2:11), this does not equate to “everyone will be saved,” as she apparently concludes. So, while “you don’t need no ticket” (because God is gracious and provides the vehicle bound for glory), people still must “get on board”! Gaventa’s contention that according to Romans all people without exception are on board remains unproven in my view.

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Strangers to Family: Diaspora and 1 Peter’s Invention of God’s Household. By Shively T. J. Smith. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016, xxi + 207 pp., \$39.95.

Strangers to Family is based on the doctoral dissertation of Shively Smith (Assistant Professor of NT at Wesley Theological Seminary) completed at Emory University. In this study, Smith engages in a comparative analysis of the conceptions of diaspora within 1 Peter, Daniel, the Letter of Aristeas, and Philo. For Smith, “diaspora” is best understood (following P. Zeleza) as “a condition, a state, and a discourse of a people that touches space and places and includes matters of time, culture, etiquette, and consciousness” (p. 2). Throughout her analysis, Smith investigates the manner in which diaspora is depicted and how the various authors encourage the faithful to respond to their diaspora existence. In terms of 1 Peter, it is worth noting that Smith argues this text “envisions Christianity—particularly diaspora Christianity—as a balancing act between integration and segregation, presence and difference, conformity and distinction” (p. 45). For Smith, the rhetoric of 1 Peter neither endorses oppression nor does it call for resistance against the oppressor. Rather, 1 Peter encourages survival and calls for a life of “double-consciousness,” whereby Christ-followers are to affirm the place of human and divine authority by assuming a position of both conformity and non-conformity (p. 46).

In chapter 1, Smith considers how the notion of kinship is connected with diaspora in 1 Peter. For Smith, the close association between the noun *diasporas*, the phrase *eklektōis parepidēmois*, and the list of Roman provinces in 1 Pet 1:1 points to the reality that kinship plays an important role in Peter’s depiction of diaspora (pp. 20–21). Smith then examines how this collective existence influences three sets of choices in 1 Peter: (1) how one relates to the broader Christian community; (2) how one relates to those within the local Christian community; and (3) how one relates to God and his creation. Her conclusions regarding *parepidēmois* play an important role in her argument and are worth noting. According to Smith, the term conveys a sense of dual attachment to two different geographic areas and this then leads to a life of duality (pp. 31–34).

Smith next addresses how 1 Peter exhorts believers to live out diaspora existence in three specific arenas: cult, citizenship, and household relations. Careful attention is devoted in these discussions to discerning how the letter exhorts a sense of double consciousness and encourages believers to live carefully under human authority and divine sovereignty (p. 46). Within chapter 2, Smith discusses the cultic significance of monotheism, baptism, the proclamation of the gospel, prayer, hospitality, and sobriety in 1 Peter. Chapter 3 then addresses life under civic rule and within the household. For Smith, the duality of diaspora existence is present in two ways: (1) the need to submit to civil authorities, but also to prioritize divine rule (p. 62–69); and (2) the manner in which 1 Peter both affirms *and* departs from conventional social norms (pp. 70–82). Throughout this discussion, Smith suggests this duality is ultimately a survival tactic that averts persecution (pp. 66, 71, 76–77).

Smith then turns to the portrait of diaspora within Daniel 1–2, the Letter of Aristeas, and Philo. According to Smith, as in 1 Peter, kinship, citizenship, and cult are social arenas in Daniel 1–2 in which one is to live under either human or divine rule (p. 89). Unsurprisingly, cultic duality in Daniel plays a significant role in Smith's argument. More specifically, Smith suggests the court tales in Daniel 1–2 narrate an ethic of double-consciousness, whereby the Jewish exiles carefully shift between conformity and noncompliance. This is particularly seen in how the exiles navigate their Babylonian education, dietary matters, and their Babylonian names (p. 94–102). Ultimately, Smith concludes the portraits of diaspora in 1 Peter and Daniel 1–2 exhibit a number of similarities. She does, however, note diaspora is a narrowly defined geographic concept in Daniel that shows no real connection with the land of Palestine (p. 89).

Chapter 5 examines diaspora in the Letter of Aristeas. Smith's discussion primarily considers the relationship between diaspora, Torah, temple, and the land. According to Smith, Torah for Aristeas is a "source of universalism" (particularly in the symposiums) in that while it is an important marker of Jewish identity, it is also valuable for Hellenistic culture as a source for political philosophy and military strategy (pp. 125–27). Regarding the Jerusalem temple, Smith notes that while Aristeas clearly highlights its greatness and grandeur, it is never referred to as the "house of God." For Smith, Aristeas emphasizes the Torah rather than the temple as the place where God's presence is now found, thus further establishing the former's universalistic significance (pp. 131, 134). Smith similarly argues that Aristeas embellishes the virtues and boundaries of the land as a means of making it comparable to Egypt. This then allows Aristeas to portray the friendship between Ptolemy II and Eleazar as a friendship between equals. The portrait of the land in the Letter of Aristeas thus comes to serve sociopolitical ends (pp. 134–37). Smith ultimately concludes diaspora for Aristeas is a much more positive concept when compared to 1 Peter and Daniel.

Smith examines diaspora in a variety of texts within the writings of Philo in chapter 6. Smith first addresses Philo's personal duality as a Jew struggling to navigate faithfulness to Judaism within a pagan Gentile context (pp. 143–48). She contrasts the positive response to social crisis in 1 Peter with Philo's more negative tone in *On the Embassy to Gaius* and *Against Flaccus* (pp. 148–54). Smith also investi-

gates Philo's universalization of diaspora to all of humanity in *On the Confusion of Tongues* and *On Rewards and Punishments* (pp. 158–61).

This is an interesting study of ancient responses to diaspora in Scripture and Second Temple Judaism. Smith's account of the manner these texts depict diaspora and diaspora life helpfully sheds light on the complexity of life this side of heaven. This study also provides an important corrective to the tendency within Petrine studies to discount the importance of the believer's heavenly hope within 1 Peter (see esp. pp. 38–39).

Having said that, *Strangers to Family* is not without some rather serious weaknesses. A consistent concern with this study is the absence of close examination of the texts under scrutiny. Space limitations are a genuine concern for any academic project. Nonetheless, there were several points in Smith's analysis where I found myself wanting further substantiation of a claim. For example, Smith suggests 1 Peter presents five divine characteristics that point to the limited duration of the addressee's dispersion (p. 39). A variety of texts are then appealed to that mainly highlight Peter's emphasis on patrology, yet none definitively prove her assertion.

Perhaps the most serious problem with Smith's study is her frequent suggestion that survival in a hostile environment is the primary rationale behind the acceptance of Greco-Roman attitudes towards slaves and women in 1 Peter. For example, Smith argues 1 Peter "champions conventional notions about the domestic household and its patriarchal structure out of a concern for the real peace and safety of the Christian community" (p. 79). Smith's pragmatic reading of the household code in 1 Peter, however, ignores the theocentric motivation for submission and the acceptance of suffering in texts like 1 Pet 2:13, 16, 17, 19; 3:1, 5. There is undoubtedly a need to be sensitive to the ways in which the statements regarding the slave-master and husband-wife relationships in texts like 1 Pet 2:18–3:6 have been misused throughout church history. One can therefore appreciate Smith's attempt to rehabilitate the way in which 1 Peter's household code is perceived. Nevertheless, her solution does not account for the positive manner in which Christian suffering is depicted in the rhetoric of 1 Peter (e.g. 3:19–25).

Despite the shortcomings of *Strangers to Family*, it is nonetheless a constructive study. Serious students of 1 Peter, however, will likely find themselves regularly asking for more. That said, *Strangers to Family* is an interesting historical analysis with direct implications on contemporary life. This combination of scholarly investigation and tangible significance makes *Strangers to Family* worth the time and effort.

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Destroyer of the gods: Early Christian Distinctiveness in the Roman World. By Larry W. Hurtado. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016, xiv + 290 pp., \$29.95.

Larry Hurtado is Emeritus Professor of NT Language, Literature and Theology in the School of Divinity at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. His expertise is in early Christianity and NT

manuscripts. In this book he highlights major features of early Christianity that made it distinctive and peculiar in its Roman setting, while showing that these features, though unusual at the time, have become commonplace in the modern view of religion (pp. 6–7). Roman-era critics designated it as a perverse “superstition” and “dangerous” (p. 2). Yet no cult in the Roman Empire grew at anything like the speed of Christianity.

In chapter 1, the author surveys firsthand evidence from Jews and pagans. The evidence from Jews is that from Saul/Paul of Tarsus, an early well-known opponent of Christianity. In Galatians 1, 1 Corinthians 15, and Philippians 3, Paul spoke of himself as a violent persecutor of Christians (pp. 16–17). Hurtado believes that Paul’s “zealous anger” against Christians was provoked partly by their reverence for Jesus, their extravagant claims about Jesus, and their devotional practices relating Jesus too closely to God (p. 18). The Jewish authorities had condemned Jesus as a false teacher, and the Christians’ claim that he had been vindicated by God through resurrection seemed outrageous to Paul (p. 19).

The second line of evidence in chapter 1 is from pagan writers. Tacitus and Suetonius wrote of Christians being “hated for their abominations” and promoters of a dangerous and wicked “superstition” (pp. 21–22). Pliny the Younger wrote to Trajan that his procedure with Christians was to give them three opportunities to recant, and then he executed them. A Christian could recant by reciting a prayer to the Roman gods, making a supplication to an image of the emperor, and cursing Christ (p. 23). The growth of the Christian communities had led many people to abandon the worship of the Roman gods, and this was causing a severe economic impact (p. 24). That Pliny admitted he could not find the Christians guilty of any actual crime shows that Christianity required new measures to deal with it (p. 25). The odd judicial process of allowing people to absolve themselves by worshipping Roman gods and cursing Christ was a new judicial development in the Roman Empire, as a specific response to Christianity (p. 26). Marcus Aurelius held a great hostility toward Christians and saw them as dangerously at odds with Roman culture (p. 28).

Toward the end of the second century, Celsus, an eclectic platonic philosopher, wrote a full-scale critique of Christianity based on pagan religion and Greek philosophy. He portrayed Christians as a threat to the civil and political order of Rome. He could tolerate them if only they would honor the gods and follow society’s customs (pp. 30–31). That Celsus wrote such a lengthy critique probably indicates that Christianity was growing rapidly (p. 32). This growing combination of popular abuse against Christians, philosophical critique, and oppression by governing authorities has no parallel in ancient Rome (p. 35).

In chapter 2, Hurtado distinguishes the Christian belief that there is only one true God from typical Roman belief in many deities that were all worthy of respect and worship. Roman-era people commonly accused Christians of impiety or even atheism (p. 38). Christians not only refused to worship the traditional gods (p. 44), but also said that everyone else ought to worship only the Christian God. The Romans had a cafeteria full of gods, and Romans typically accepted and welcomed them all (p. 45). In every area of life, they were expected to take part in honoring

the relevant deity. Romans did not think that one deity would be offended if they worshiped other deities as well (p. 48), but refusing to worship the gods was seen as bizarre and impious (p. 48).

Christians, however, viewed the various gods as idols, false entities, even demonic beings. They certainly could not worship them (p. 50). Pagans made allowances for the Jewish preference for their own God, but it was different with Christians. It appeared to Romans that they were simply withdrawing from sacrificing to the traditional gods; this was arbitrary and bizarre, and had no precedent. The Gentile Christians could not claim any traditional ethnic privilege to justify their refusal to worship the gods (p. 53). Gentiles who converted to the gospel remained Gentiles (p. 56); so they could not justify their exclusivism in worship by associating themselves with Jews. Hurtado calls the Jesus movement a “mutation” in ancient Jewish tradition. Jesus had an exalted place in their beliefs and worship that had no precedent in Judaism. It represents a “dyadic” devotional pattern, in which Jesus was linked uniquely with God the Father in worship (p. 68). The believers incorporated Jesus along with God as the recipient of their devotion (p. 75), both linking and distinguishing Jesus and God (p. 73).

Chapter 3 shows that Christianity began to reshape what people mean by the concept of “religious identity.” For most people of the Roman era, one’s ethnic identity was given at birth, and their gods were linked to that identity (p. 78). Religious identity was a component of ethnic identity (p. 79). By way of contrast, early Christianity was the only new religious movement that demanded an “exclusive loyalty to one deity” (p. 86). This gave them a new kind of religious identity that was not only exclusive but also unrelated to their ethnicity (p. 93).

Chapter 4 shows that the reading, writing, copying, and distribution of texts were prominent tasks in early Christianity (p. 105), an outgrowth of the NT emphasis on Scripture (1 Timothy 4; 2 Timothy 3). The emphasis on reading texts in Christian gatherings was similar to various philosophical groups, where texts were collected, read, studied, distributed, and discussed (pp. 110–11). Yet other cults and religious groups did not do this. Hurtado thinks that the epistles of Paul were regarded as Scripture earlier than the other writings of the NT, due to their authoritative presentation (1 Cor 14:37–38; p. 113). In addition, 2 Peter 3 mentions Paul’s letters as Scripture and indicates that his letters had been collected and well-known among the churches by that time (p. 114). Hurtado says that “this Pauline letter collection may have been the earliest step toward the larger collection that we know as the New Testament” (p. 114). As long as there was one person in the church who could read out a text, all the others could thereby gain a knowledge of it.

Early Christianity was distinctively “bookish.” Hurtado writes at length about the work involved in writing, copying, and circulating the literary products of the early church (pp. 127–33). Early Christians were “heavily invested” in the activity of copying and distributing the NT Scriptures and later Christian writings. Churches in various cities were busy “producing texts and copying and disseminating them to Christians elsewhere” (p. 131). There was an extensive interaction among Christians throughout the Roman world, accompanied by a broad circulation of Christian writings (p. 131). During the first three centuries AD, the broader Roman liter-

ary culture preferred the book roll for literary texts (p. 133). However, Christians preferred the codex, especially for texts treated as Scripture. Hurtado cites statistics showing that non-Christians preferred the book roll over the codex 95% to 5% (based on extant copies of literary texts), whereas Christians preferred the codex over the book roll by about the same percentage.

In chapter 5, Hurtado shows that early Christianity was distinctive also in many of its behavioral and social practices (p. 144). For example, people in the Roman world commonly engaged in infant abandonment (exposure) (p. 144). Christians, however, universally opposed it (p. 146); the only large-scale criticism and refusal to engage in this cultural practice came from Christians and Jews (pp. 147–48). Gladiator contests were another activity that illustrated the distinctiveness of Christianity, being widely supported by Roman pagans but opposed by Christians (pp. 148–50). Hurtado then expounds two NT passages (1 Thessalonians 1–5 and 1 Corinthians 5–7) to demonstrate how the apostle Paul developed a Christian ethic relating to sex and marriage that was distinctively different from the pagan approach (pp. 155–65). Pagans taught that having sex with prostitutes and boys should be affirmed as a “hedge against adultery,” but Paul taught that marital sex was a “hedge against temptations to extramarital sex” (p. 165).

The book ends with a summary and a brief appendix detailing how Edwin Hatch (1888) and Wilhelm Bousset (1913) introduced erroneous assumptions into the study of Christian origins through the history-of-religion school of thought. A major weakness of the book is its repetitiveness. The author restates ideas and facts that have already been rather exhaustively covered. A major strength of the book is the mass of historical and biblical detail that Hurtado introduces and analyzes. Professors would do well to consider it for courses on NT backgrounds or introduction, or on early church history. In addition, chapter 4 on the “bookishness” of early Christianity should be considered “must reading” for all Christian students and leaders.

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The Covenant of Redemption: Origins, Development, and Reception. By J. V. Fesko. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016, 256 pp., \$76.55, hardcover.

For centuries, detractors have maligned the doctrine of the *pactum salutis* (an intratrinitarian, eternal covenant of redemption) as a speculative, rationalistic, non-biblical, hair-splitting byproduct of Reformed orthodoxy (ca. 1560–1725). Consequently, this so-called covenant of redemption has been relegated to the theological attic as little more than a relic warning of the danger of scholastic method. J. V. Fesko, however, critically weakens such accusations in the work under review and offers an attempt at retrieval.

Fesko describes his aim as essentially polemical in nature: his primary intention is to systematically disprove the most common objections to the covenant of redemption. He confesses in the preface that he himself sympathizes with the cov-

enant of redemption and that, consequently, the matter is personal. However, he attempts to produce the results of an unbiased research process. In this he largely succeeds.

Fesko begins his body of work by defying the claim that the *pactum* was an innovation of the post-Reformation period. He surveys evidence of the covenant of redemption's primary ingredients in the early Reformation in figures such as Martin Luther (1483–1546), Johannes Oecolampadius (1482–1531), and John Calvin (1509–1564). He also explains how the production of a critical NT and return to the original Greek rather than the Latin during the period led to greater awareness of an eternal covenant between the Father and Son, particularly through passages such as Luke 22:29 (Jesus's words to his disciples, "I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom"). In other words, the Bible was the critical impetus of exploration into this locus.

In subsequent chapters, Fesko demonstrates the exegetical reasons for the further development of the covenant of redemption with particular attention to Luke 22:29, Heb 7:22, Gal 3:17, and Zech 6:13. More than offering proof texts, however, the seventeenth-century English and continental divines relied on a scriptural logic that compelled them to recognize this doctrine in its individual scriptural parts. The divines understood the biblical term "covenant" to refer to an agreement between parties with obligations and promises for fulfillment of those obligations. Consequently, these divines recognized that scriptural references to agreement between the members of the Godhead, or obligations placed upon the Son prior to his incarnation, imply a covenantal relationship. Likewise, passages that refer to rewards promised to Christ on the basis of obedience similarly imply a covenantal agreement among the persons of the Godhead (Isa 49:4; 53:10–12; Pss 2:8; 40:7–9; John 8:29; 10:18; 12:49; 14:31; 15:10; 17:4–5; 19:30; Gal 4:4). Fesko renders the accusation that the *pactum* developed on less than exegetical grounds simply untenable.

Fesko also demonstrates that rather than irrelevant speculation, the *pactum* has considerable bearing for important practical matters such as revelation and epistemology, as well as biblical themes such as the love of God, the mediatorial work of Christ (particularly the incarnation and the active and passive obedience of Christ), and subsequently the *ordo salutis*, particularly saving faith, justification, and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers.

Fesko acknowledges, however, that not all complaints about the *pactum* are baseless, particularly the supposed danger of undue speculation. In his treatment of the eighteenth century, he shows that John Gill (1697–1771) and Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) deviated from the Reformed tradition in their attempts to describe this Trinitarian covenantal relationship. This drift is especially evidenced in their treatments of the doctrine of justification. Yet Fesko maintains that these were deviations from the standard flow of theological development attributable to the move away from Aristotelian logic toward a new post-Enlightenment metaphysics, or Neo-Platonism, especially in the case of Edwards. However, Charles Hodge and his contemporaries rescued this period of "deconfessionalization" by returning to more solid footing in their confessional forebears.

An especially valuable portion of the book is its treatment of the twentieth-century critics of the covenant of redemption. Fesko analyzes and critiques the positions of anti-*pactum* theologians such as John Murray (1898–1975), Herman Hoeksma (1886–1965), Klaas Schilder (1890–1952), and Karl Barth (1886–1968). He makes the case that, although these men represented various theological schools, they were united by two characteristics: anti-Scholasticism, and what Fesko calls “*Solus Calvinus*” (Calvin as the chief representative of the Reformed tradition). He provides plausible explanations of these two tenets and reasons for their emergence. However, the treatment is necessarily brief and somewhat simplistic as it constitutes only about fifteen pages. This is not a fault of the book, merely a recognition of its limitations and the need for further scholarship. One could easily treat one of these anti-*pactum* scholars, their protests and explanations, in a lengthy monograph.

Lastly, Fesko addresses the twentieth-century proponents of the *pactum*. He particularly describes the variegated positions of Abraham Kuypers (1837–1920), Herman Bavinck (1854–1921), Geerhardus Vos (1862–1996), Louis Berkhof (1873–1957), and G. C. Berkouwer (1903–1996). At times, Fesko loses focus and this chapter becomes a bit tangential. He spends a considerable deal of time attempting to rehearse the origin of the individual proponent’s thinking. For example, he goes to great lengths to show that Berkhof was dependent upon Vos in his articulation of the *pactum*. Such an extensive discussion does not appear particularly germane to the aim of the book. Nevertheless, such treatments reveal the significant impact of Vos in propagating the covenant of redemption on American soil during his tenure at Princeton Seminary.

The chief limitation of Fesko’s work is his failure to trace discontinuity between the Reformers and Reformed orthodoxy. Fesko’s commitment to undermining the charges of detractors—that the federal theologians represent a deviation from the Reformers—appears to make him unable to concede any discontinuities between them. The recognition of essential continuity between these two theological time periods does not require the denial of any discontinuity. However, Fesko acknowledges little deviation from the major proponents of the *pactum* until the eighteenth century. For example, in the development of the doctrine, federalists regularly utilized Ps 2:7 to provide exegetical footing for the *pactum*; Calvin, however, did not. Although Calvin’s exegesis may maintain elements that would later lead successors to make that move (continuity), he himself did not find an intratrinitarian covenant necessary to an adequate understanding of the text as did his successors (discontinuity). If Calvin did not find it necessary to utilize the concept of a covenant of redemption, why did later Reformed theologians? Did circumstantial factors, alongside exegetical ones, contribute to the rise of this doctrine? Fesko’s commitment to maintaining the continuity of the Reformation and post-Reformation teaching on the matter precludes him from asking some significant questions that would have enhanced his work.

A second limitation concerns Fesko’s selection of material. In the first chapter, he laments the scarcity of extant material on the *pactum*. However, he restricts the sources under consideration to works particularly devoted to the *pactum* as a

separate covenant. In so doing, he excludes writers that include the *pactum* in their discussion of the covenant of grace. For example, there is no treatment of the work of Thomas Boston (1676–1732) or Adam Gib (1714–1788) because they treated the *pactum* within the two-covenant system. However, they contributed significantly to the development of the doctrine, particularly in post-Reformation Scottish thought.

In the same vein, Fesko offers only a small discussion of the differences between those who recognized a threefold covenantal system (*pactum*, covenant of works, and covenant of grace) and those who held to a twofold system (covenant of works, and covenant of grace with the inclusion of *pactum* within it). He glosses over this difference as if inconsequential. However, not only has the matter been of great import, but alternative positions have sometimes been the cause of very negative results. For example, there is evidence to suggest that in some cases, proponents of the three-covenantal system tended towards hyper-Calvinism. For example, some members of the Church of Scotland during the Marrow Controversy (early eighteenth century) so sharply divided between the *pactum* and the covenant of grace that they were led to limit the free offer of the gospel. Such a position constituted a significant break from the teaching of the Reformers. An open recognition and critique of these and similar aberrations would have provided appropriate balance to Fesko's work.

These limitations aside, Fesko offers a significant contribution to the study of the *pactum salutis* in Reformed Theological history. He has provided a sufficient starting point for the further promotion of scholarship and study in this area. It will go a long way in challenging the commonly held misconceptions that Fesko exposes. It is to be hoped that his work will enjoy a large readership in post-Reformation historical and theological research.

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Between Pain and Grace: A Biblical Theology of Suffering. By Gerald W. Peterman and Andrew J. Schmutzer. Chicago: Moody, 2016, 350 pp., \$22.99 paper.

There are a large number of works on suffering from a Christian perspective. Gerald Peterman and Andrew Schmutzer (herein P&S) are certainly aware of this oversaturation and attempt to make a fresh contribution. First and most importantly, they discuss topics often neglected in books on suffering such as divine passibility, the emotional aspects of suffering (even claiming that anger is a type of suffering), dysfunctional families, sexual abuse, and mental illness. Second, they emphasize giving sufferers a voice by devoting an entire chapter to the appropriateness of lament and by emphasizing the need to listen to victims of sexual abuse. Far too often, those who suffer are silenced by well-meaning counselors and pastors who are quick to speak and slow to listen. Third, they show that the metanarrative of Scripture is the key to understanding the sufferings of this present age; hence the subtitle of their book, "A Biblical Theology of Suffering." Fourth, although P&S

do not explicitly acknowledge this point, their work is unique in its integrative approach, gleaned the best insights from psychology and the social sciences. They do not defend this integrative approach against those who are suspicious of psychology; those interested in diverse perspectives of the relation between psychology and Christianity can see *Psychology & Christianity: Five Views* (ed. Eric L. Johnson; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010).

Rather than summarize the book, I will discuss five issues that merit synopsis, critique, and/or commendation. First, P&S draw a helpful distinction between pain and suffering: “pain is primarily *objective*, external, and typically social or physical as opposed to personal and mental” (p. 14, italics original). In contrast, “suffering is primarily *subjective*, internal, and typically mental or emotional as opposed to physical or social. That is, we will look at suffering primarily as an experience. So, for example, one might have the same physical symptoms (objective) but vastly different subjective interpretation (that is, emotion)” (pp. 14–15, italics original). P&S give the real-life example of a twenty-two-year-old female Israeli Army lieutenant whose leg was blown off by a shell explosion: “She was in deep distress with tears flooding over her face. When asked about her pain, she replied, the ‘pain is nothing, but who is going to marry me now!’ Her suffering was related to her physical pain, but only indirectly. The suffering was primarily about the perceived loss of a cherished future goal (i.e. marriage), not about the pain in her leg” (p. 15). Thus, suffering is primarily a matter of *interpretation* or *assigning meaning* to pain, and such interpretation will be guided by one’s beliefs, values, and desires. This distinction between pain and suffering has important implications for counseling, for showing empathy, and for diagnosing and overcoming suffering in one’s own life.

Second, before treating human suffering, P&S give two chapters on God’s suffering (i.e. passibility) and Jesus’s emotions/sufferings. These chapters lift up our eyes that are so often focused on ourselves and this painful world, so that we might behold and marvel at the God who suffers with and for us. As Schmutzer argues, “God relates to his creation in willing vulnerability. From his committed relationship with his rebellious creatures, God experiences an inevitable emotional pain. Further, we claim that a theology of the suffering God is evident throughout the testimony of Scripture, not just in the passion of the crucified Lord Jesus” (p. 62). He rejects the doctrine of impassibility because it seems overly influenced by Greek philosophical thought and too quickly resorts to explaining divine emotional displays as metaphorical/figurative language. Schmutzer then argues his case from several biblical texts (Gen 6:5–6; Exod 3:7–10; Num 14:2–5, 9–13, 19–20; Hos 11:8–9; Jer 9:1, 10; 13:7; 14:17–18; Rev 5:6) and gives guidelines for studying God’s suffering. He provides an able defense of divine passibility that merits interaction and that will open the eyes of those who only know the stoic, distant god of the Greek philosophers. While Schmutzer’s chapter is not focused on philosophical or historical theology, one could wish that his characterization of Western/Chalcedonian/Reformed theology were more balanced, nuanced, and attentive to philosophical concerns. Issues such as the *communicatio idiomatum* and Trinitarian relations come into play when discussing impassibility (see Stephen Wellum, *God the Son Incarnate* [Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016], 438–39). However, I do understand

Schmutzer's desire to focus on Scripture (which he handles well) rather than engage extensively with historical views on impassibility. Those interested in understanding the patristic and Reformed view on impassibility should see Richard Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics, Volume 3* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 551–61; and Rob Lister, *God Is Impassible and Impassioned* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 41–122.

Peterman's chapter on Jesus's emotions should inspire wonder and reshape how Christians think about emotions. Because Jesus is fully human, sinless, and worthy of imitation, Peterman rightly urges Christians not only to imitate Jesus's thoughts and actions, but also his emotions. Some may initially resist imitating Jesus's anger, fear, and discontent because those emotions are generally viewed as sinful, but Peterman surveys numerous texts to establish his argument (on compassion, Matt 9:36; Luke 7:13; on anger, Mark 3:5; on fear, Luke 22:39–46; on discontent, Mark 7:34; Matt 17:14–17); those willing to learn and be challenged will benefit greatly. Although Peterman cites and interacts with some notable treatments of Jesus's emotions (e.g. Warfield, Hansen), the interested reader should also see the important contributions of Stephen Voorwinde, *Jesus' Emotions in the Gospels* (London: T&T Clark, 2011) and Robert Law, *The Emotions of Jesus* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915).

Third, lament, anger, and tears are often viewed negatively or frowned upon as immature; chapters 5, 6, and 8 deal admirably with these three topics. Sufferers are often ashamed to voice their pain. Schmutzer offers an important corrective by pointing to the biblical language of lament and calling the church not only to listen to those who lament, but also to incorporate lament into church services. Rebekah Eklund's *Jesus Wept: The Significance of Jesus' Laments in the New Testament* (London: T&T Clark, 2015) was not available to Schmutzer at the time of writing, but Schmutzer's treatment of lament in the OT should be supplemented with Eklund's treatment of lament in the NT. Peterman's chapter on anger will surely be met with some skepticism, but those willing to listen will benefit from his careful definition of anger and treatment of biblical passages (e.g. Neh 5:1–10; John 11:33–38; Eph 4:26–27). Peterman's treatment of leadership and tears is a serious challenge to those who have a warped view of masculinity and to leaders who remain emotionally disconnected from their congregation: "If you lead in matters of the gospel, sooner or later you will weep. If there are no tears, we should begin to wonder if there is any leadership" (p. 163). The examples of Jeremiah, Jesus, and Paul, as well as the command in Rom 12:15, demonstrate that weeping is an inevitable part of genuine gospel ministry.

Fourth, I consider chapters 9 through 11 the most important section of the book as P&S discuss dysfunctional families, sexual abuse, and mental illness. These are crucial topics that are often overlooked by or even suppressed in the church. Schmutzer's reading of the Joseph story as a window into dysfunctional families will strike some as overly integrating psychology into biblical interpretation, while others will view it as a fresh, insightful reading that will encourage honest discussion about transgenerational patterns of sin and suffering, the dangers of favoritism,

the true nature of forgiveness, and God's "majestic ability to take the broken pieces of our lives and make something beautiful from them" (p. 201).

Schmutzer's discussion of sexual abuse summarizes his other work in this area and exposes a topic that many churches are too ashamed or too ignorant to discuss. During a church nursery training session that addressed sexual abuse, I once heard a young woman say, "That won't happen at church!" Schmutzer's chapter will hopefully foster compassion and honest discussion for those unacquainted with the horror of sexual abuse. He calls for "theological healing" (pp. 216–18), an idea that was eye opening and will change the way I think about helping the sexually abused. He also encourages serious effort to overcome barriers that thwart healing and gives specific recommendations.

In his chapter on mental illness, Peterman dispels the dangerous belief that mental illness is a sin problem that is utterly different from physical illness. He suggests a multifactorial approach that accounts for any and all contributing factors such as genetics, gender, sinful or foolish choices, biological/physical issues, environment, family trauma, and spiritual issues. Unintentionally or intentionally, many Christians hold to a hard dualism that acknowledges body and soul, yet only the soul influences the body in a one-way direction. Peterman argues that Scripture teaches a soft dualism where body and soul mutually affect one another in a two-way direction.

Fifth, *Between Pain and Grace* claims to be a "Biblical Theology of Suffering," which fits into the repeated emphasis on situating our suffering within Scripture's metanarrative. Those who do not understand the distinctions between systematic theology and biblical theology may have a hard time grasping what the authors are trying to argue (a good explanation of the distinction between systematic and biblical theology is Kevin Vanhoozer, "Is the Theology of the New Testament One or Many? Between (the Rock of) Systematic Theology and (the Hard Place of) Historical Occasionalism," in *Reconsidering the Relationship Between Biblical and Systematic Theology* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014], 17–38). As someone acquainted with biblical theology, I was able to piece together their argument by combining the foundation of creation/fall (addressed in chapter 2) with the eschatological consummation (treated in chapter 13). As I understand P&S, they argue that God created us as relational embodied beings, but sin's entrance into the world fractures our relationships as it brought pain and suffering into the world. Only in the consummation will relationships be fully restored, death fully defeated, and suffering brought to an end. Scripture itself validates this *salvation-historical* understanding of suffering along *chronological* lines. Many works on suffering emphasize the *timeless* nature of God's providence and goodness in using suffering for our benefit; P&S want to view suffering within Scripture's metanarrative from creation to consummation. This present world filled with sin and suffering is not what God intended at creation. And this present world filled with tragedy and evil will not triumph over God's plan to restore all things in a new heaven and new earth. This salvation-historical explanation of the origin and final defeat of sin and suffering is uniquely Christian and better than any other religious, materialistic, or atheistic explanation. However, this salvation-historical explanation for suffering will likely be missed by those unfamil-

iar with the discipline of biblical theology and the separation of chapter 2 from chapter 13 makes it even harder to see the full picture of Scripture's metanarrative, especially because the intervening chapters deal with so many specific topics. Thus, P&S's claim to present a "biblical theology of suffering" is never fully realized, although they do lay the seeds for others to further develop.

Despite my critiques, I still highly recommend this book. It will be especially profitable for church leaders. Specific chapters can be assigned in biblical counseling or theology courses, and the end-of-chapter questions can be used for homework or class discussion. Hopefully, those who are skeptical of certain views expressed (e.g. the emphasis placed on emotions, divine passibility, integration with psychology) will read with an open mind and open Bible. For the weary, this book will lift the heavy burden of suppressed emotions and encourage them to lament their frustrations and sorrows. For some, this book will reveal their emotional immaturity and encourage them to express godly sorrow, redemptive anger, and compassionate tears. For many, this book will open fruitful discussion on hushed topics (e.g. family troubles, sexual abuse, mental illness). And for the downcast, this book will lift their gaze to behold and marvel at the God who not only suffers with and for his people, but also will win a final victory over sin, suffering, and death.

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Socrates and Other Saints: Early Christian Understandings of Reason and Philosophy. By Dariusz Karłowicz. Translated by Artur Sebastian Rosman. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017, xxii + 93 pp., \$17.00, paperback.

If we made a Venn diagram with one circle being "Polish theologians" and the other, "English books exploring the different ways ante-Nicene Fathers appropriated philosophy," both circles would be very small and the overlapping set would be empty. Until now. With his *Socrates and Other Saints*, Dariusz Karłowicz fills that unexpected and unique spot as a philosopher, publisher, columnist, and political theologian. In this translation of his 2005 book, Karłowicz makes a short but powerful argument about the different ways that Justin Martyr (also called "The Philosopher"), Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian each wrestled with the Greek and Roman philosophical traditions of their day as they developed and influenced early Christian understanding and practice.

This book is unique not only in filling this Venn set place but also as a representative of a genre not found much in our current publishing market: the extended essay. This little volume (just over 100 pages total) is not an introductory guide to the big topic of philosophy in early Christianity (as I expected it to be) but, rather, makes a very specific case that extends beyond what a normal academic article can or should do. It is a tightly-packed and logical argument that would feel very long as an article but works well as an extended essay with four short chapters. That is, it works once the reader realizes that it is *not* an introduction but is speaking to a particular assumption within scholarship and dismantling its argument. The title did

not help with my confusion as to what I was about to read (as the author himself alludes), indicating that the scope of the argument was bigger than it is. Nevertheless, I commend Cascade Books/Wipf & Stock, whose different business model as a publisher gives it the freedom to publish a slim volume like this that for sales reasons would likely not make it past the publication board at more traditional houses. Karłowicz's extended essay needed to be translated and published because it makes a significant contribution to a specific issue, one whose implications are deep and wide.

I anticipated this book to make the argument, along with Pierre Hadot and others, that early Christianity developed by adopting and adapting the best of the Greco-Roman philosophical traditions. Karłowicz does indeed argue this, but only en route to a more nuanced and specific argument. Namely, he addresses head-on the modern assumption (via von Harnack) that while some Christians adopted Greek philosophy (Justin, Clement, et al.), others stood against this and by so doing, sought to keep Christianity pure (Tertullian). Tertullian's famous question, "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?" becomes the rallying cry and pudding-proof for this interpretation of a supposed pitched battle in early Christianity.

Karłowicz does not deny that there were differences of opinion and different tactics taken by assorted ante-Nicene theologians regarding Christianity's relationship to the philosophical schools. But he shows with deftness and clarity that this Athens-versus-Jerusalem approach is a vast oversimplification. Instead, *all* the early Christian theologians did appreciate and imbibe and utilize aspects of their contemporary philosophical traditions, including Tertullian, while they also engaged in critiques and carefully selected adaptation. He distinguishes early Christianity's stance toward reason from its stance toward philosophy: Christianity was not opposed to philosophy or rational thinking but to an undue role of reason apart from/over against faith. Karłowicz is careful to show that the Fathers did not blindly sanctify the philosophers, nor should Christians today.

In light of the obvious evidence that the Fathers knew and appreciated the intellectual heritage of their day (often marveling at the wisdom evident among the "pagans"), Karłowicz identifies three questions that must be answered and that drive the subsequent chapters of his argument. These questions are: How did Greek and Roman philosophers come to have wisdom that overlaps with the revealed truth? What truths did they come to understand? And is their philosophical knowledge still needed and helpful after the fullness of revealed truth has come through Christ?

Chapter 2 addresses the first question and shows that while Tertullian is harder on the philosophical tradition than Justin is, they both understand that the pagan philosophers' emphasis on reason can be understood as part of the larger and fuller Christian understanding of reason and revelation, a part to the whole. Christianity's revelatory stance does not make it irrational or opposed to reason, only to reason's autonomy.

Chapter 3 shows how the Fathers explored the works of the philosophers, both appreciating and critiquing ways in which their views at times accorded with Christianity and at times did not. The Fathers clearly knew the philosophical tradi-

tion and they made and preserved collections of the philosophers' sayings. Yet the Fathers also argued that whatever wisdom philosophers had was an inferior kind, especially pointing out that the philosophers' less-than-virtuous lives gave the lie to their metaphysical arguments.

Chapter 4 is particularly helpful in showing how different streams of Christianity adopted and adapted different versions of the Greco-Roman philosophical commitments. Justin, Clement, and Tertullian each manifested ways in which the philosophical traditions were recontextualized according to their own needs and other commitments, resulting in different emphases within orthodox Christianity.

Certainly the greatest contribution of the book is Karłowicz's nuanced interpretation of Tertullian. Tertullian did have many harsh words to say against Christians biting on the bait and hook of Greek philosophy; and he was certainly prone to polemical flourish. But Karłowicz shows that as a Roman, Tertullian's sharp words against speculative philosophy were actually part of the common suspicion that Roman philosophers exercised toward their Greek predecessors. "Athens versus Jerusalem" was a slogan Tertullian used not against the good of some aspects of philosophy (such as Seneca, whom he praises) but against any Christian derivations, such as Gnosticism, which are overly beholden to Hellenization. "Tertullian was ruthless toward philosophy wherever it misappropriated the deposit of faith, but he also willingly resorted to it wherever useful" (p. 76). It is possible to philosophize so long as it is done in proper measure.

If Karłowicz is correct, and I am convinced he is, his perspective casts vanquishing holy water on the lingering ghosts of von Harnack's ideas that somehow the Fathers corrupted the faith via the influence of Greco-Roman philosophical categories. The Enlightenment spiel proclaimed that Tertullian was the heir of *pure* Christianity, seeking (mostly unsuccessfully) to protect it from the acids of Greek philosophy that resulted in catholic dogmatism and thereby despoiled the church. Rather, Karłowicz shows that the ante-Nicene Fathers had a thoughtful relationship to philosophy, neither unconditionally rejecting or unconditionally embracing it. This same stance is what Karłowicz encourages Christians to approximate today, remembering Augustine's helpful *uti* and *frui* distinction: philosophy is not an end in itself but is useful when employed toward the proper ordering of our loves, which will set us free. Philosophy as a goal will only lead to death, but used properly, it can lead to joy.

As noted, the size and title of this book did not clearly indicate to me what I was going to find. This is not an introductory guide nor the first book one should read on this important question of the relationship of philosophy and theology in the early church. (Hadot's *What is Ancient Philosophy?* [Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2004] deserves that place.) Every paragraph of this short book is thoughtful and even chewy; there is no fluff or wasted space. It took me a second reading to figure

out what the flow of the argument was. Nevertheless, I highly commend the erudition and carefulness of Karłowicz's work and believe that his nuanced argument here needs to be read and embraced.

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Global Gospel: An Introduction to Christianity on Five Continents. By Douglas Jacobsen. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015, xviii + 249 pp., \$24.00 paper.

Douglas Jacobsen is Distinguished Professor of Church History and Theology at Messiah College. This book is intended to be an introduction to world Christianity in light of Christianity's spread outside the West in the twentieth century. Jacobsen focuses his attention on the "five big continents" of Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas (p. ix). His method is avowedly historical and sociological, telling the story of how Christianity developed on each continent up to the present day, thus providing a picture of Christianity as it is presently lived, but always situated within the bigger picture of church history. Jacobsen also provides samples of contemporary theology from each continent. This book is meant to encourage better dialogue among Christians worldwide, not by imposing uniformity, but by encouraging a gospel unity through interconnected diversity. Jacobsen believes that such dialogue helps us understand ourselves better and enculturate the gospel better in our own context.

Jacobsen prepares the reader for the chapters on each individual continent with two introductory chapters. The first chapter is a very brief history of Christianity from the beginning to the present day. Jacobsen's argument in this chapter shows how Christianity before Constantine had a diverse range of practices, how Christianity became more unified in practice after it became the official religion of the Roman Empire, and how diversity of practice has returned in Christianity, particularly through missions in the last century. The second chapter orients the reader to the "most significant characteristics" of the four great traditions within the church: Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Protestant, and Pentecostal (p. 21). This is important since one cannot understand Christianity without a basic understanding of the different theological and ecclesiological traditions that have developed. These traditions unite believers across the globe, yet in the chapters that follow, Jacobsen will show how cultures and regions exert a role in shaping Christian practice that is sometimes even stronger than the tradition's role.

For this reason, Jacobsen proceeds to his discussion of the five continents, beginning with Africa. Jacobsen narrates the history of the African church from its early prominence in the ancient period, followed by its decline in the Middle Ages and reintroduction through Portuguese traders in the early modern period. He then turns to the concentrated missionary activity of the colonial period and finally to the African churches since colonialism. He also provides a sampling of African theology, focusing on the concept of *ubuntu*, that all people are connected to one

another and to the creation. He suggests this idea may be a corrective to a Western Christianity that is often individualized and independent.

Jacobsen then turns to Latin America, including the regions of South America, Central America, and the Caribbean. Jacobsen shows how the church, despite violent beginnings, has taken hold in Latin America and, especially since the twentieth century, has advocated for the continent's oppressed and impoverished inhabitants. Christianity came to Latin America with Spanish and Portuguese colonizers, but the Catholic Church's close relationship with the state was problematic in the nineteenth century as the various Latin American colonies declared independence from their European overlords. It took until the end of the century for the church to reestablish relations with the various independent governments. Yet in the twentieth century, the church has had a prophetic voice against violence and for the poor. Pentecostalism has also influenced practice in Latin America since it entered the region in the 1960s. Jacobsen's sampling of local theology focuses on liberation theology and shows that the concept applies not only to political, economic, and social issues, but to spiritual oppression as well.

Europe is Jacobsen's next subject and his treatment is refreshing by including a detailed discussion of the Eastern Orthodox churches alongside the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant churches; in fact, for part of the historical section of the chapter, he follows each tradition separately. This allows Jacobsen to focus on the particular challenges each tradition faced/faces. Orthodoxy often faced persecution from Muslims and communists, but has seen a resurgence in Eastern Europe since the collapse of communism in 1990. The Catholic Church's greatest challenge before modernism was the Reformation. Protestant churches adapted to modernism more easily than Catholics, but both traditions declined during the twentieth century. In his discussion of European theology, Jacobsen highlights the importance of reconciling faith and reason in the European Christian tradition, which is not a new development, dating back at least to Augustine and maybe even to Paul.

The story of Christianity in Asia is a story of advancement and retreat; indeed, Jacobsen has five expansions and four contractions, some considerable, in his narration of events. Early Christianity first traveled with traders across the continent, then with monks. But the spread of Islam in the seventh century contributed to the first contraction. Similarly, in China, the Tang Dynasty changed its attitude toward foreigners and banned both Christianity and Buddhism in the ninth century. Catholic missionaries continued to spread the gospel in the late Middle Ages, but their efforts were hampered by the negative witness of the Crusades. Catholic missions were renewed in the sixteenth century, but faced challenges from rulers in Japan and China. Protestant missions accompanied colonizers in the nineteenth century, a development that unfortunately linked Christianity with colonization in the eyes of many Asians. Persecution remains acute in the region despite the church's growth in the twentieth century. Jacobsen's discussion of Asian theology focuses on principles of harmony and solidarity that seem pervasive across the continent. This corporate outlook affects how Asian Christians view non-Christians and how they interact with their cultures.

Jacobsen's last chapter is on North America, but in actuality he focuses entirely on the United States. American Christianity was shaped by the Puritan outlook from New England, the Anglican/Baptist outlook of the South, and the religious freedom outlook from the middle colonies. The Great Awakenings provided some unity across these outlooks and helped to further shape the development of Christianity in America. The idea of religious liberty may be the single most formative theological idea for American Christianity, as Jacobsen points out in his discussion of American theology.

Global Gospel is an insightful *tour de force*. Each chapter impresses with its concise yet informative summary of church history on the continent under discussion. Jacobsen's claims are strongly supported with specific evidence, and these events are well chosen so that the reader is never lost in the narrative. Another strength is Jacobsen's theological savvy, which shows itself in his choices of theological issues that have shaped Christianity in each region. Some of the issues on which he focuses, such as liberation theology in Latin America, are obvious. But others seem like background issues until he shows how fundamentally they have shaped the region's practice of Christianity. Two examples are the importance of faith and reason for Europe, or religious freedom for the United States. In each case he shows how the issue is important for understanding the church in the region.

Despite this book's evident strengths, there are a few points where Jacobsen's volume could be made even better. First, Jacobsen's division of Asia into four regions when he discusses the contemporary situation is so helpful that the historical section might have been even more effective had he used this technique there also. Second, more detailed discussion of Vatican II and the Enlightenment's effects on theological studies, which receive surprisingly little attention, would improve his chapter on Europe. Lastly, although the final chapter on the United States is surely well done, its neglect of Canada strongly detracts from the *global* impression of the rest of the book. It creates the impression that the United States on its own is as important as entire continents in the rest of the world. Including a few Canadian examples would have defused this impression.

Global Gospel is an exceptionally fine introduction to world Christianity, and I highly recommend it for use as a main text in history of missions courses and as a supplementary text in church history surveys. It will also be useful to theology professors who wish to expose their students to important theological issues emerging from the majority world.

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Two Views on Homosexuality, the Bible, and the Church. By William Loader, Megan De-Franza, Wesley Hill, and Stephen R. Holmes. Edited by Preston Sprinkle. Counterpoints Series. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016, 237 pp., \$16.99 paper.

As one of the more recent installments in the Counterpoints Series, editor Preston Sprinkle draws together four scholars from biblical and theological persua-

sions for the purpose of exploring how Christians should respond to the current trends within modern sexual ethics related to the inclusion/acceptance of practicing same-sex couples within the church. William Loader and Megan K. DeFranza take an affirming/accepting position whereas Wesley Hill and Stephen R. Holmes argue the non-affirming side. Loader and Hill represent their respective positions from a biblical perspective while DeFranza and Holmes are tasked with addressing the topic from a theological vantage point.

The volume is organized in a similar fashion to other books within the Counterpoints Series. Each of the four authors presents his/her argument, which is in turn followed by a brief critique of the essay by the other three scholars. Before moving on to the next essay, each scholar is afforded the opportunity to offer a concise rejoinder to their fellow scholars' comments. The affirming position is presented first in Loader's and DeFranza's essays followed by Hill's and Holmes's essays arguing the counterpoint. The book begins and ends with chapters written by the editor for the purpose of introducing the content and the authors of the book and of drawing together and concluding the study.

In this review, I will briefly outline the main points of each author's essay followed by the strengths and/or weaknesses of the arguments. As such, I will not attempt to engage in a detailed evaluation of each essay; rather, I will handle the arguments in broad strokes. In full disclosure, I write this review from a traditional non-affirming position.

In the opening essay, Loader draws upon his vast reservoir of published works related to sexuality in an early Jewish context and systematically works through a number of the key biblical texts related to the same-sex debate (e.g. Gen 1:26–27; 2:15–24; Lev 18:22; 20:13; Rom 1:26–27). To this he adds the teachings of several intertestamental Jewish texts (e.g. Qumran, Sibylline Oracles) and the opinions of early Jewish authors (e.g. Philo, Josephus). Surprisingly, over the span of twenty-two pages Loader offers the most sustained argument within the book *against* accepting same-sex activity based upon Jewish tradition and the biblical text. While some scholars may take issue with Loader's reading of how Paul understood same-sex activity in Romans 1, the fact remains that Loader concedes that in no way do the Scriptures or Jewish tradition open the door for affirming same-sex activity in any setting. Instead, he comes to his affirming position based upon his personal reflections and experience with same-sex people and through the assertion that the church has moved beyond what the Bible teaches, at least on this issue. In support of this changing trajectory, Loader marshals to his defense Jesus's rejection of strict Sabbath observance (Mark 2:27) and food laws (Mark 7:1–23); Gentile inclusion within the church and Paul's rejection of circumcision; and the relatively recent movement of the church to abolish slavery, to reevaluate women's issues (cf. 1 Cor 14:34–36; 1 Tim 2:9–15), and to open the door for divorce and remarriage (Mark 10:9–12).

I applaud Loader's scholarship and honesty about the clear teaching and unchanging witness of the Jewish tradition when it comes to same-sex issues. For his extensive scholarship alone, scholars owe Loader a debt of gratitude. Nevertheless, many non-affirming scholars will find his leap from the clear biblical prohibitions

of same-sex activity to full acceptance problematic and troubling. True, it is becoming acceptable to present Paul and the biblical writers as limited in their knowledge of modern sociological, psychological, and general scientific perspectives, but belittling the knowledge of the inspired authors will put off a number of people just the same. Moreover, arguments related to the changing dynamics of the early church rooted in old and new covenant requirements is not the same as discussing clear and consistent moral teachings related to sexual ethics within the Bible. Similarly, the church's movement on issues of slavery, women's rights, and divorce and re-marriage are already founded upon biblical precedents. I, along with a number of other scholars, have handled these topics in detail elsewhere and have shown that these types of arguments amount to false dichotomies. For example, see Brian Neil Peterson, *What was the Sin of Sodom: Homosexuality, Inhospitality, or Something Else?* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016), 1–13; S. Donald Fortson III and Rollin G. Grams, *Unchanging Witness: The Consistent Christian Teaching on Homosexuality in Scripture and Tradition* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2016), 167–89, 381–85; Robert Gagnon, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), 460–69; and Michael L. Brown, *Can You Be Gay and Christian? Responding With Love and Truth to Questions about Homosexuality* (Lake Mary, FL: Front Line, 2014), 60–80.

In the second essay, Megan DeFranza argues from a theological perspective for the church's full acceptance of practicing same-sex couples who seek a life of committed marriage. DeFranza, having once held a non-affirming position, has since moved to full acceptance based upon her experience, exegetical work, and research in the field of gender and sexuality. Yet, unlike Holmes's theological argument (see below), the heart of DeFranza's essay is rooted in a reexamination of the biblical texts related to same-sex activity. She systematically works through these texts and comes to a completely opposite conclusion than her affirming counterpart, William Loader. A central tenet of DeFranza's argument rests on her assertion that Genesis does not give the full picture of God's good creation but only the "majority" pattern. Thus, "mixed" categories such as amphibians show that people who are born intersex, eunuchs, or same-sex attracted could very well fall within God's "good creation" in a minority sense and therefore should be afforded full inclusion in the church, just as Isaiah had prophesied concerning eunuchs (cf. Isa 56:3–8; Acts 8:26–40). Following a similar line of logic, DeFranza further argues for marriage rights for same-sex couples because while heterosexual marriage may be the "majority" pattern in the Bible, it does not represent every possible combination. She bolsters her position by noting that because egalitarian marriage today does not follow a "biblical" model of "patriarchal marriage" there is room to "revise" or "add" to the church's understanding of marriage. For her, modern egalitarian marriages are far superior to patriarchal marriages epitomized by vast age and education gaps between men and their brides.

DeFranza's essay is built upon her earlier work on sexuality and the Bible (*Sex Difference in Christian Theology: Male, Female, and Intersex in the Image of God* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015], see esp. 178, 203–6, 262–72, 287). Those who find her conclusions in that earlier work problematic will no doubt draw a similar conclu-

sion regarding her work in this volume. Negative assessments of her conclusions are exemplified by the formal responses to her essay within this volume. Apart from some of the same concerns I had with Loader's essay, I feel DeFranza has also missed the mark in a number of areas.

To begin, I was somewhat surprised that DeFranza opted to tackle the "contested" passages of the Bible without any meaningful engagement with scholars who are of an opposite persuasion. While I recognize that space limits may have been a factor, to overlook the work of scholars such as Robert Gagnon, James DeYoung, Michal Brown, S. Donald Fortson and Rollin Grams, or Donald Wold is simply bewildering. (She cites approvingly the work of James V. Brownson, *Bible, Gender, Sexuality: Reframing the Church's Debate on Same-Sex Relationships* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013] and Mark Achtemeier, *The Bible's Yes to Same-Sex Marriage: An Evangelical's Change of Heart* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014], but the latter of these works could hardly be classified as a scholarly presentation.) Indeed, these scholars have demonstrated that the arguments to which DeFranza appeals are problematic on a number of levels or are simply wrong. Again, as noted above, Loader's essay shows that trying to reinterpret the biblical texts to support same-sex activity is misguided.

Second, DeFranza's belief that the "contested" texts of the Bible speak *only* to same-sex acts of exploitation and dominance is based upon unprovable assumptions. She consistently uses language like these texts "could" or "may" be interpreted the way she asserts. However, DeFranza is setting up a false dichotomy. Many scholars, Loader included, note that the majority of these texts prohibit *all* forms of same-sex activity, loving and/or oppressive. If this is the case, DeFranza's argument falls flat. Third, apart from the false dichotomy of infertile/elderly couples vis-à-vis same-sex couples, DeFranza's assertion that procreation was not central to marriage for the biblical authors is to misunderstand a key rhetorical feature of not only Genesis but of texts throughout the Bible. That marriage was for procreation did not need to be spelled out for the readers of Scripture, especially in light of the fact that genealogies in particular served as a rhetorical means of showing that procreation was in fact taking place within marriages and was understood as the blessing of God (e.g. Gen 4:17–22; 5:1–6:1; 10:1–32; 11:10–26; 1 Chronicles 1–9). Moreover, when procreation was in any way threatened, God brought harsh judgment upon the perpetrators (Genesis 19; Exodus 1).

Finally, DeFranza's assertion that "biblical marriages" do not reflect modern egalitarian marriages will be off-putting to those who hold to a more complementary model. Indeed, some may see a return to a "biblical model" as the remedy for the high divorce rate today! And contrary to DeFranza's assertion, a number of biblical marriages do reflect more modern counterparts, which are self-giving, loving, and enduring. The marriage within the Song of Solomon, which DeFranza does not address, immediately comes to mind (noted also by Holmes; pp. 115–17), as does the marriage between Adam and Eve, which Jesus himself uses as a model (Matt 19:3–9). We could also note Elizabeth and Zechariah, Priscilla and Aquila, Ruth and Boaz, Elkanah and Hannah, and a number of others. Also, DeFranza's belief that we can "revise" marriage again is not convincing because she defines

“biblical marriage” based upon her analysis of a flawed patriarchal model. The descriptive versus prescriptive discussion comes to the fore here. Polygamy, slave-owner marriages, or loveless patriarchal marriages with vast age and education gaps in many ways reflect a fallen world, not God’s ideal. Despite the proposed inequality and so-called oppressive nature of these unions, they are nonetheless marriages between those of the opposite sex, not same-gendered coupling. To suggest that we can alter God’s design because of how we feel or what we experience is a dangerous precedent to set.

The third essay shifts to the non-affirming position with the work of Wesley Hill, a self-identified “gay Christian.” Even though he represents the biblical perspective, Hill augments his discussion with theological insights as well. He takes a traditional position that God’s design for marriage and sexual activity is to be between a male and female, coming to this conclusion based upon Augustinian concepts, the biblical witness, and gender/anatomical complementarity.

Hill, who practices celibacy, is to be admired for his strong stance on traditional marriage. When many within the church are telling him he can, and should, act upon his sexual orientation and drives, Hill stands firm in his conviction that Scripture is clear in its teaching. Traditionalists will find most of his arguments refreshing and encouraging in light of the push to conform. Having noted this, however, there is one area that readers may find problematic. At the end of his essay, Hill pushes for a new category within the church for gay Christians—what he calls “spiritual friendship”—based upon the precedent of the actions of a twelfth-century monk, Aelred, and Hill’s own earlier monograph, *Spiritual Friendship: Finding Love in the Church as Celibate Gay Christian* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2015). It is not at all clear from his essay if Hill is arguing for a formal ceremony whereby two people of the same sex enter a covenanted platonic relationship, or whether this is figurative. While I can appreciate Hill’s desire to be in a meaningful committed relationship, such closeness, especially between those of the same-sex who are also same-sex oriented, may put undue strain on one’s vows of celibacy, a concern shared by DeFranza (p. 158). Not surprisingly, Hill does acknowledge the potential pitfalls of his proposal (pp. 211–12; see also his concerns in *Spiritual Friendship*, pp. 69–71).

The final essay by Stephen Holmes addresses the topic of same-sex marriage from a theological perspective, specifically from an Augustinian view of marriage. Holmes notes that Augustine believed that the primary “good” of marriage is procreation, whereas any sexual acts that are not oriented towards procreation are sinful. With such strictures, an Augustinian perspective naturally pushes against the contemporary desire to sanction same-sex marriages in the church.

As a biblical scholar, I have the least to say about Holmes’s essay simply due to the fact that I tend to defer to the “experts” on Augustine in this matter. Yet, there are a few points of Holmes’s argument with which many may take issue. First, any argument that rests almost entirely on the views of a Church Father as opposed to the Bible is rife for critique. Sprinkle notes this weakness as well in his conclusion (p. 221) when he cites a number of Church Fathers who had a skewed perspective on women. In fact, Holmes himself wonders, “What if an Augustinian theology of marriage is just wrong?” (p. 193). Second, Holmes would have been

well served to address in more detail the complementarity of the genders, a deficiency he readily acknowledges. Third, based upon a number of denominations' acceptance of divorced and remarried people, Holmes opens the door for the inclusion of same-sex couples as part of what he calls "pastoral accommodation" (pp. 14, 168, 190–93, 215, 224). While recent court decisions have created a nightmare for pastors and counselors, this does not mean that simply because the church is lax in one area—even though there does seem to be biblical precedence for Christian divorce and remarriage (1 Cor 7:12–16)—that the door should be flung open completely. To be fair, Holmes does not go to this extreme, but he does feel that the church needs to accommodate those who do come into the church as already married to someone of the same sex. Many pastors may simply not be ready to accept such a position.

So where does a book like this fit into the larger discussion? While some will find it a fitting introduction to the topic of same-sex marriage for contemporary evangelicalism, unfortunately, I do not see it as advancing the dialogue in what some may call a "conservative" or "traditional" bent. With the exception of Hill's perspective, the "two views" really are "one view" on same-sex marriage. Of the four scholars involved, three of them are in favor of moving beyond the biblical witness and allowing for some form of acceptance of same-sex marriage by the church. Even though the arguments are irenic and well written, I felt that the proverbial deck was stacked against a traditional view of marriage. Some may even see Zondervan's willingness to publish these types of books as not holding the "line," but rather blurring it as the evangelical sexual ethic continues to erode. Indeed, the editor himself notes in his introduction (p. 11) that a book like this would not have been possible ten or even five years ago at Zondervan. In light of these and the other obvious deficiencies noted above, I cannot with a clear conscience recommend this book for a general audience, especially for those who do not know the nuances of the arguments.

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