

BOOK REVIEWS

Learning Biblical Hebrew: Reading for Comprehension—An Introductory Grammar. By Karl V. Kutz and Rebekah L. Josberger. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2018, xxviii + 471 pp., \$39.99.

Really, another Hebrew grammar? Don't we have enough already? That might be every Hebrew teacher's reaction to learning about this one. However, Kutz and Josberger present a refreshing, student-friendly beginning grammar. Kutz is Professor of Biblical Languages at Multnomah University and Josberger is Associate Professor of Hebrew and OT at Multnomah Biblical Seminary. Kutz contributed three chapters in *Dead Sea Scroll Fragments of the Museum Collection* (ed. Emanuel Tov et al.; Brill, 2016) and "Characterization in the Old Greek of Job," in *Seeking Out the Wisdom of the Ancients* (ed. Ronald Troxel et al.; Eisenbrauns, 2005).

Students and teachers will find this grammar more friendly than most other Hebrew textbooks. Charts that present the relationships and distinctions between the verb stems (pp. 149, 229, 251) encapsulate information in a fashion easily remembered. Drop-down menus for the same chart add a familiar touch to a computer-literate generation of students (pp. 150, 165). Awareness of how students think results in information appearing in the grammar just because "students wonder what it means" (p. 427). Telling students outright that some verb meanings must be looked up in the lexicon eases the pressure to memorize (p. 240). When it comes to memorizing, Kutz and Josberger provide students with a variety of mnemonic devices (e.g. the "*Skin 'em Levi*," p. 21; "*BUMP-Sheva* rule," p. 52; "*p-sghetti*" rule, p. 245). Perhaps the most student-friendly element occurs in the constant encouragement: "Most important of all, *do not give up if you do not parse a word correctly on your first try!*" (p. 364, emphasis original). That same encouraging tone concludes the grammar's last chapter by suggesting a means by which students might preserve, nourish, and expand their Hebrew knowledge (pp. 412–13).

Older textbooks and former courses offered in decades gone by too often emphasize rote memorization of immense quantities of verb paradigms and noun/adjective declensions. Kutz and Josberger offer a more effective and student-friendly pedagogical model. Students learning how a language *works* (p. 32) do far better than those who are told, "That's just the way it is—memorize it." Introducing students to the "Canaanite Shift" (pp. 65 n. 6; 396–97) and historic forms (pp. 67–79) builds a foundation for understanding how Biblical Hebrew works—how it develops its word forms (pp. 215, 286–87, 299). Memorization still proves necessary for certain elements, so those are clearly identified (pp. 172, 179), but some need not be memorized (p. 317).

Kutz and Josberger recognize their students' inquisitive nature. They list nineteen uses of the Hebrew genitive (together with biblical examples) when teaching the construction (pp. 101–2). Describing the use of the Hebrew alphabet for numerals, they explain the numbers for fifteen and sixteen break from the normal

pattern due to reverence for the divine name (p. 146). Many Hebrew professors tend to ignore the ongoing debate between Hebraists on the Hebrew verb system, leaving students to be surprised by it in advanced courses. This grammar not only mentions the debate, but directs students to some of the more recent literature (p. 169 n. 1). The authors identify similar resources on other matters, such as the *Qal* passive (p. 265 n. 4). Unfortunately, they have chosen to encourage the outdated use of “preterite” (p. 220). In addition, their treatment of the verbs follows an aspectual theory, but they never introduce the term “aspect.”

Throughout the volume the authors focus on translation. “A good translation,” they explain, “is sensitive to both languages. A translator must understand what the Hebrew says and then express that thought with a translation that accurately reflects meaning to an English reader” (p. 46). In order to train the student in translation, a graded reader supplements the textbook (p. xxiii): *Learning Biblical Hebrew Workbook: A Graded Reader with Exercises* (Lexham, 2019).

A selection of the biblical text complements each chapter of the grammar after chapter 4. The authors modify the Hebrew text of Genesis 37–50 (the Joseph narrative) to match the skill level of the students. Glosses and notes provide important information. Modification of the biblical text decreases proportionate to the students’ progress in the grammar. Ruth, Jonah, and Esther also become part of the reading later in the course.

Lest students mistake translation for acquisition, the authors remind them, “One of the goals of this grammar is to teach students how to read and understand Hebrew as a living language, without having to translate” (p. 82). Indeed, “*Understanding should precede translation, not the other way around*” (p. 90, emphasis original). Sometimes the student must learn to translate a clause or sentence a step at a time in an orderly progression (pp. 118, 154–60, 236). Every encounter with translating Hebrew into English has potential for requiring the expression of elements not normally expected in one or the other language (p. 83 n. 2). Focus on context characterizes this grammar’s approach to both grammatical functions and translation (pp. 83, 128 n. 11, 239).

The authors enable students to understand the challenges of learning Biblical Hebrew without becoming discouraged by all of the exceptions to the grammar rules. Simply put, languages are dynamic (p. xxi). In fact, “languages are messy” (p. 231). Therefore, Biblical Hebrew appears to violate the rules with what can be disturbing frequency: “One thing that you may as well come to accept it that *there is an exception to every Hebrew rule*” (p. 26 n. 2). Kutz and Josberger advise their students not to worry about those exceptions (p. 164). Even biblical word choices “may have been influenced by cadence, rhythm, or colloquialisms that a natural speaker would more readily recognize” (p. 108 n. 12).

Grammars grow and improve through use in the classroom, and this one will be no different. For example, students would benefit from knowing the Paleo-Hebrew letters provided for them (p. 1) were typical in the eighth century BC. Discussion of Gen 1:2 (p. 60) provides opportunity to mention the disjunctive clause and how *waw* plus non-verb can signal its presence. Treatment of pronominal suffixes (pp. 123–27) would make more sense to students after learning the independ-

ent pronouns, whose mention is limited (pp. 129 n. 12). Displaying the similarities (as the authors later provide for sufformatives on perfects, p. 171, Table 13.1; and preformatives on imperfects, p. 185, Table 14.1) would be quite helpful—especially if more explanation accompanied the tables. The authors missed the opportunity to underline the “i” in “with” like they underlined the “o” in “object” as a reminder of the difference in forms for the accusative marker with pronominal suffixes (p. 131). The discussion of Masoretic accents (pp. 156–59) needs more help than just the limited appendix (pp. 425–29). In fact, pages 156–59 could diagram the examples into their respective clauses. The *Qal* template (p. 166, Table 12.2) is the only time such a table includes a cross-reference (“Ch. 16”). More such cross-references would increase ease of use. Perhaps I just missed it, but I could not locate any prior mention or explanation of the “connect four” rule (p. 372 n. 4). A cross-reference (like that used for the “p-sghetti” rule, p. 374 n. 6) would help students. In fact, an entry for “rules” in the “Subject Index” (p. 468) would also prove useful. Treatment of the passive voice (p. 230) fails to identify its potential for indicating agency—even divine agency (a divine passive). Pointing to differences between two similar Hebrew roots (p. 352) could be highlighted by referring to the grammatical and textual issue in Psalm 23:6.

Some editing mistakes also occur—such as the unhappy page break with the extra line on the bottom of page 135 resulting in the footnote appearing on the next page. An inadvertent misspelling of “lightning” as “lightening” occurs on page 267 in note 7.

The book’s appendices include “Introduction to the Hebrew Bible” (pp. 419–24), “Hebrew Accents” (pp. 425–29), “How to Create a Grammatical Diagram” (pp. 431–39), “How to Create a Thematic Outline” (pp. 441–44), “Transliteration” (pp. 445–48), and “Verb Paradigms” (pp. 449–56). The diagramming appendix contributes significantly to the value of this book and enables students to better understand and use Biblical Hebrew. A “Bibliography” (pp. 457–59) and “Subject Index” (pp. 461–71) close the volume.

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Reading Genesis Well: Navigating History, Poetry, Science, and Truth in Genesis 1–11. By C. John Collins. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018, 336 pp. \$36.99 paper.

C. John Collins is Professor of OT at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, MO, and also serves as chair of the OT translation committee for the ESV. A prolific writer, several of his previous works prepared him for the present work under review. In addition, Collins’s educational background (a graduate degree in science and engineering from MIT and a Ph.D. in Hebrew and Comparative Semitic Linguistics from the University of Liverpool) qualify him to produce *Reading Genesis Well*.

Many contemporary readers seem to approach the reading of Genesis 1–11 and similar passages with a methodology akin to the description found in the book

of Judges—“everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (17:6b; 21:25). Such differing approaches by both scholars and laypeople create a mass of confusion regarding just how to read Genesis 1–11, or any other biblical text, whether narrative, poetic, or, figurative language in general. In short, there exists no literarily acceptable approach to a proper reading of the text.

Collins’s methodology brings order out of this chaos by establishing what he designates a “rhetorical-theological” (p. 28) approach that puts great weight on how the ancient audience would have perceived and interpreted the text.

Collins summarizes his methodologies on pages 24–31, with specific summaries of chapters 2–11 on page 28. Chapter 1 sets the stage by showing the inadequacies of reading the Bible literally. Collins observes that both traditionalists and evangelicals agree with the basic premise of both Benjamin Jowett and James Barr—“that anything other than a straightforward literalism is less-than-fully-honest way of reading the ancient text” (p. 24)—and argues that this view is problematic. In contrast to this literal approach, Collins labels his method “critically intuitive” (p. 26) and describes how the work of C. S. Lewis in “lexical semantics, speech-act theory, and sociolinguistics” offers “a model” for his approach and orientation (p. 25). Like Lewis, Collins is “a religious traditionalist” and “not a fundamentalist” (p. 30). His “critically intuitive” approach relates to apologetics; nevertheless, he is “not aiming at apologetics as such” but at “an interpretative program for biblical material, especially, that of Genesis 1–11” (pp. 31–32).

Chapter 2 introduces Lewis’s views. Collins argues that some simple observations from Lewis will point us to questions whose answers lie in the areas of linguistic studies. Collins combines this methodology with rhetorical and literary criticism, which are usually treated as separate departments of study.

Chapter 3 builds on one of Lewis’s unpublished essays that deals with ways in which language can be used for different kinds of communication. Chapter 4 describes how communication takes place against a backdrop of a shared experience. Chapters 5–6 deal with various aspects of reading Genesis 1–11: the different kinds of context (chap. 5) and the function (chap. 6) of these chapters in an attempt to determine what kind of cosmic picture is inherent in the texts and what role that picture has in their communication.

Chapters 7–8 offer a rhetorical-theological reading of Genesis 1–11, arguing from a sociolinguistic perspective that we should greatly respect what audiences from organically connected cultures have seen in these chapters. Chapter 8 examines the interpretations of audiences from organically connected cultures by examining what readers from such audiences have said on selected topics. Chapters 9–10 examine some of these passages in light of the tools Collins has developed in the preceding chapters. Chapter 11 deals with responsible appropriation for the ancient context and the modern believer.

Without doubt, this book is a “must read” for all evangelical scholars of the Hebrew Bible/OT. Collins provides a healthy but challenging approach that should create modifications in the way many individuals read the Bible. Apologists on one hand read the text with a methodology that argues a literal reading of the passage will show it is scientifically accurate, while an anti-inspirationalist or source critic

will consider such an approach invalid. Between these two extremes are many who recognize that poetic and figurative language should not be used to prove doctrine, but who have yet to define precisely the relationship and purpose of figurative versus literal interpretation.

Among the myriad of passages Collins examines, Judges 4–5 illustrate how his new approach is helpful. The differences in the descriptions of the death of Sisera in these two chapters have generated multitudes of inadequate interpretations. Chapter 4 (narrative) describes what occurred, while chapter 5 (poetry) describes the celebration of his death. Readers have often noticed the difference without exploring in detail what the intention and interpretation of each account with the original audience, as well as the responsibilities of all readers of these chapters. Collins deals with these issues (pp. 102–3), arguing, “Prose narrative has its own artistry, especially in its sparse and understated description,” while “the poem has a different purpose, namely to celebrate,” inviting “its audience to picture the events *as if* they were as portrayed here.” What is more, the images of Sisera’s mother peering out the window and the princesses suggesting there is so much Israelite spoil to be taken that the armies are occupied (see v. 30), which suggests Israelite girls in the spoil were to be used sexually (“a womb or two for every man”), would be repulsive to an Israelite audience. Collins suggests readers would “exult in Sisera’s defeat and ignominious death—which fulfills the poem’s purpose. The poetic portrayal does not compete with the prosaic one.”

Similarly, Job 26:7–8 (a poetic passage) speaks of God “stretching out the heavens” and “hanging the earth on nothing.” Apologists use this, and similar passages, to demonstrate that the Bible contains pre-scientific statements because Job says that God “stretches out the heavens” and “hangs the earth on nothing.” Job 9:8 also says the heavens are “stretched out” and Job 9:6 says the earth is on “pillars.” Thinking people recognize that both poetic passages cannot be correct as pre-scientific statements. Logically, if one is a pre-scientific statement the other must be also. This makes no logical sense.

Such selective choosing of passages to prove a point fails to do hermeneutical justice to the passages, creating a desperate need for a refinement in hermeneutical technique. Collins’s work provides that. His observations are insightful and thought-provoking. He admits the biblical writers may have “had any such primitive pictures as we have been considering,” but “we cannot take their statements as any kind of affirmation of the pictures,” because such references “are either conventional ... or poetic,” making them “an invitation to the audience to picture the referent *as if* it were such and such” (p. 260).

Moreover, Collins argues, when “some have tried to vindicate the Bible by showing how its statements anticipate modern scientific findings” (p. 260), even though they “may have the purest of intentions,” these texts “do not achieve the goals set for them,” because this language is “generally poetic (or rhetorically high), and physical cosmology is simply outside their communicative intent” (p. 261). Rather, such texts “use this image to stress that it is the Lord alone who fashioned the whole earth and heavens and prepared them as a place for habitation” (p. 261). In short, both skeptics and “Bible-science defenders” share the “common assump-

tion that scientific language is the most accurate and therefore the most truthful kind of discussion; and then it follows that for the Bible to be true, it must address these scientific questions,” which is an “assumption inadequate for real life” (p. 261). These are but a few of the clarifying arguments Collins makes in the presentation of his new methodology.

The work does have drawbacks. Sometimes the presentation gets in the way of the argument. Specifically, Collins continually engages in explaining how what he is presently saying will affect what he will say in future chapters, or how what he is presently saying relates to what he said in previous chapters. This writing style creates a wordiness that hinders the presentation. This writing style may be necessary due to the seminal nature of the work. It may also imply that I need to reread the book! Creative works that show promise of influencing hermeneutical issues may need this writing style. Such criticism is insignificant in light of the possible future impact of the work on biblical studies. The unprepared may find the work too challenging, but it would definitely be useful for those who have prepared themselves in these areas and have been dissatisfied with this lack of refinement in methods of reading the Bible. To such individuals, *Reading Genesis Well* certainly lives up to its name and offers a new and more satisfying approach.

Finally, the detailed bibliography and the indices (OT, NT, ANE, and Subject) make the work very useful in studying various issues. As such, it would be an excellent textbook for a specialized hermeneutical course.

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2 *Samuel*. By Richard D. Phillips. Reformed Expository Commentary. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2018, 486 pp., \$39.99.

Richard Phillips is a co-editor of and one of the main contributors to the Reformed Expository Commentary series. This is his eighth commentary in the series. He serves as the senior minister of Second Presbyterian Church in Greenville, SC. He is also a council member of The Gospel Coalition and chairman of the Philadelphia Conference on Reformed Theology.

This commentary series believes in the interdependence of biblical interpretation and theology. It also believes these tasks are best conducted in the church (p. ix). One of the unique aspects of this commentary is that it is divided into thirty-nine chapters, each of which was originally an exposition given in a church context (p. x). The homiletical nature of the commentary comes through in the frequent illustrations and applications peppered throughout the volume. The commentary is consciously written from within the framework of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms (pp. ix–x). It is an “unashamedly *doctrinal*” commentary (p. ix, emphasis original).

While the entire text of 2 Samuel is treated, it is not a verse-by-verse commentary, but an integrated exposition of whole passages of 2 Samuel (p. ix). This means some passages of 2 Samuel are treated in more detail than others. For exam-

ple, chapter 18 exposit five verses in eleven pages, while chapter 25 covers thirty-seven verses in the same amount of space. Each of the thirty-nine chapters includes a title, a key verse, and headings that divide the exposition into major points. For example, the exposition of 2 Sam 11:1–5 is titled, “David’s Dreadful Sin.” The key verse is 2 Sam 11:4. The major headings are as follows: the Causes of Sin, the Course of Sin, the Consequences of Sin, and the Cure of Sin (pp. 201–11). The introduction both engages the audience in the topic and sets the passage in its literary context (p. 201). The bulk of the exposition is comprised of a close reading of the biblical text tied to theological principles and application.

Throughout the commentary, Phillips dialogues with several classic authors; the most-often cited are John Calvin, William Blaikie, A. W. Pink, and Matthew Henry. This is often refreshing. Their quotes are generally not used to clarify the meaning of a passage, but to highlight a doctrinal or applicational point. Modern commentaries are more scarcely referenced. The most-often cited contemporary commentators are Dale Ralph Davis and Gordon Keddie. The preface of the work states that the commentary seeks to be “sufficiently conversant with up-to-date scholarship” (p. x). This may be true for the author, but it rarely comes through in the footnotes. For the most part, Phillips dialogues within his Reformed tradition.

This commentary has many strengths. Phillips is a gifted writer. These expositions are a joy to read and help one imaginatively enter into the narrative of 2 Samuel. Phillips focuses on the final form of the text. One will not read anything about the Succession Narrative, the Ark Narrative, or pro- vs. anti-monarchical sources here. While that would be a serious omission in a critical commentary, it is appropriate for the audience and purpose of the series.

Phillips connects the dots well between biblical exposition and theology. For example, in discussing Absalom’s murder of his brother Amnon, Phillips reflects upon the biblical teaching on vengeance. This leads him to discuss this theological theme in a nuanced way in the light of the whole canon, drawing in passages from the Torah, Prophets, Gospels, and Pauline epistles (pp. 262–64). His three chapters devoted to David’s sin with Bathsheba are a wonderful exposition of the dynamics of sin and abuse of power informed by Calvin’s incisive reflection on the text (pp. 201–34). The commentary is also equipped with a thorough index of subjects and names (pp. 473–86). This feature makes it easy to locate any of the illustrative stories included as a part of the exposition.

The commentary shines brightest in its pastoral theology and application. For example, in his section on the death of the son born to David and Bathsheba after their adultery (2 Sam 12:15–31), Phillips includes a helpful section on a “biblical guide to grieving” (pp. 238–42). He follows this up by a pastoral reflection on the loss of a child. While affirming the Bible “contains no straightforward declarations regarding children who die in infancy,” he summarizes his biblical support for hope that believers can have for a lost child (p. 243). This is the kind of discussion that one rarely finds in a traditional commentary and its value for pastoral ministry is self-evident.

Because the book is the product of pulpit expositions, it is lacking a couple of features that would strengthen it as an expositional commentary. First, little atten-

tion is paid to either the macro- or micro-structure of the book, or to literary features it contains. In relation to this, Phillips does not often step back and examine how a particular pericope fits into the book as a whole. An exegetical outline of the passage under discussion would be a helpful addition. Second, at times the theological lens overpowers the text itself. For example, his discussion of the procession of the ark to Jerusalem becomes a short treatise on the regulative principle of worship (pp. 112–15). While David's humility and joy are biblical models to emulate in corporate worship, his dancing is not (pp. 116–17).

However, none of this should detract from the value of the work. Phillips has gifted us with a warm, intelligent, informed, and engaging reading of 2 Samuel. This commentary will be especially helpful to pastors and teachers in a church setting. The pastoral sensitivity Phillip brings to the text of 2 Samuel will work well in conjunction with a more traditional commentary as resources for sermon writing or Sunday school teaching. Phillips has succeeded in providing a resource "that pastors, teachers, Bible study leaders, and many others ... will find to be a faithful, inspiring, and useful resource for the study of God's infallible, inerrant Word" (p. ix).

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Psalms 73–150. Edited by Herman J. Selderhuis. Reformation Commentary on Scripture: OT 8. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018, liv + 488 pp., \$60.00.

The Reformation Commentary on Scripture (RCS) is in one sense a sequel to IVP's 29-volume Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (ACCS). While the ACCS provides commentary from the early Church Fathers, the RCS focuses on the period of the Reformation. As of this writing, fourteen of the projected twenty-eight volumes of the RCS have been published, with *Psalms 73–150* the latest volume in the series. Both this volume and the earlier *Psalms 1–72* work are edited by Herman Selderhuis, a leading Reformation history scholar from the Netherlands.

Each volume of the RCS begins with a general introduction to the series. Written by general editor Timothy George, it provides an excellent introduction both to the series and to Reformation thought as a whole. George lists four goals of the series: (1) enriching "contemporary biblical interpretation through exposure to Reformation-era biblical exegesis"; (2) strengthening contemporary preaching through exposure to the Reformation writers' insights; (3) deepening the understanding of Reformation thought and its multifaceted character; and (4) advancing contemporary Christian scholarship by reaffirming the Reformation writers' continual integration of the academic study of the Bible with its practical transforming spiritual outworking in daily life (pp. xvii–xix). George then discusses the various schools of exegesis during this period, including Erasmus and the biblical humanists, Luther and the Wittenberg School, Bucer and the Strasbourg-Basel tradition, Zwingli and the Zurich group, Calvin and the Geneva reformers, the British reformers, and the Anabaptists (pp. xxxi–xxxvii).

The general introduction is followed by an introduction to the Psalms. Here Selderhuis discusses some key issues in the Reformers' understanding and use of the Psalms. A main issue is in what sense the Reformers saw Christ in the Psalms. While they believed in a literal understanding of Scripture, this principle did not operate outside the rule of faith, which recognized the divine author alongside the human, and thus often saw Christ in the fulfillment of many psalms. Luther in particular saw Christ in every psalm, while Calvin was more restrained. Often those such as Calvin who did not see Christ in every psalm were labeled pejoratively as "Judaizers," who only saw the literal meaning but not the true spiritual meaning. Selderhuis also discusses how important the Psalms were to the Reformers, constituting their prayer book in praise and in lamentation. In short, the Psalms were "the very words of God for the people of God" (p. 1). Selderhuis then provides a brief discussion of Psalms 73–150 as a whole, in particular noting that the "Songs of Ascent" (Psalms 120–34), which the Israelites sang while on pilgrimage to the temple, were regarded by many Reformers as a model for Christian worship (pp. lii–liii). He concludes by briefly discussing the order, vocabulary, and numbering of the Psalms. All but the section on Psalms 73–150 are identical to the first Psalms volume (*Psalms 1–72*), but that repetition is understandable given that not all readers of this book will have the previous companion volume.

The heart of the volume (encompassing 399 pages) is taken up with the Reformers' comments on each individual psalm from Psalms 73–150. Selderhuis provides the ESV translation of each psalm, followed by an "overview" section in which he summarizes the Reformers' overall interpretation for that psalm. Since the amount of material written by the Reformers on the Psalms is enormous compared to the relative paucity of selections provided in this volume, the overview section is quite helpful. However, compared to the earlier ACCS series, the "overview" section is much shorter. Furthermore, in the ACCS series, the overview section documents the individual writers who held each view, whereas in this volume there is usually no mention of specific commenters. To get an idea of the difference, in the *Psalms 50–150* volume in the ACCS, the overview section of Psalm 110 contains 525 words (with 16 statements attributed to a specific Church Father), whereas the RCS overview section of the same psalm is only 86 words with no specific Reformation author cited. Similarly, in the ACCS, there are actually 6 separate overview sections for Psalm 119, totaling 1,145 words and 42 specific citations, while in the RCS there is only a 185-word overview section for the entire psalm with no specific citations. Because the editor is in a unique position of accessing so much of the original material for each psalm, I would have preferred a much larger overview section with specific attributions of different views.

Following the overview section, each psalm is broken up into two to seven subunits (the exception being Psalm 119 with its 22 subunits). Each subunit contains from one to ten comments from the Reformers, with helpful bold headings given for each comment and a footnote providing the precise bibliographic reference.

A key question in any collection of this type is what criteria were used for inclusion of any particular comment and/or commenter. Other than the introductory

comments about seeking to represent various Reformed traditions (including a few Catholic scholars as well), there is not much other guidance provided. The best that I could do to try to answer that question was to tabulate the comments by each scholar. Overall, by my count there were a total of 1,009 individual comments on these 78 psalms by 57 authors. However, that statistic does not tell the whole story. Not surprisingly, the primary Reformer cited is Calvin, with 220 citations (22%), commenting on all but 4 psalms (95% of them). The next highest is Luther, but with only around half as many citations (113, or 11% of the total) spanning 51 psalms (65%). In the third tier, with between 6–8% of the citations, are Pellikan (80 citations spanning 52 psalms), Musculus (67 citations spanning 44 psalms), and the English Annotations (61 citations spanning 40 psalms). The fourth tier, with 3–4% of the citations, has Selnecker (38 citations in 30 psalms), Bugenhagen (35 citations in 27 psalms), and Bellarmine (31 citations in 29 psalms). The final tier that I tabulated, with 2–3% of the citations, consists of Dickson (26 citations in 16 psalms), Bucer (24 citations in 20 psalms), Strigel (24 citations in 20 psalms), Melancthon (22 citations in 16 psalms), and Cajetan (20 citations in 19 psalms). On the other end of the spectrum, 20 of the 57 contributors (including all six women) were given only one or two citations, leading one to wonder why they were included at all.

The individual psalm receiving the most coverage is (not surprisingly) Psalm 119, with its 176 verses garnering 87 comments encompassing 33 pages. The next highest is the second longest psalm, Psalm 78, with 38 comments in 14 pages. But the four next longest psalms (Psalms 89, 106, 105, and 107) receive only 13–18 comments in only 6–8 pages each. The median number of comments per psalm is 11, with the least number of comments for any psalm being 4 (for Psalm 126). It is hard to quibble with the number of comments for any one psalm, since certainly some psalms may be theologically more significant than others. But the reader needs to keep in mind that these comments are an extremely small sample of all that the Reformers wrote on any particular psalm. To give just one example, for Psalm 110 (the psalm cited more times in the NT than any other), Calvin wrote 16 pages of commentary, while Luther wrote on this psalm on two separate occasions: the first comprised 12 pages, while the second (consisting of eight sermons) totaled 124 pages. So of these 152 pages of commentary by Calvin and Luther, we have in this volume only four selections (two by Calvin and two by Luther) totaling two pages. While one gets a good flavor of the Reformers' writings on each psalm, by necessity it is far from complete. But what this volume (and the entire series) does do well is to present comments from a wide range of Reformers, many of whom are not commonly known.

At the end of the volume, there are a number of helpful features: a map and timeline of the Reformation, a fairly extensive biographical sketch of Reformation-era figures and works, a bibliography, and author, subject, and Scripture indices (the author index on p. 477 incorrectly ascribes one of Calvin's comments [pp. 179–80] to Cajetan and inexplicably cites Edwin Sandys in first name, last name order). Overall, the volume is very well laid out and a pleasure to use.

All in all, this volume certainly accomplishes what it sets out to do. While my preference would have been to have a more thorough overview section for each

psalm, the comment selections themselves provide a fascinating window into the interpretive mindset of the Reformers. In short, I highly recommend this work for any student of the Psalms (scholar, pastor, or lay person) willing to glean from the insightful exposition of the Reformers so conveniently presented here.

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A Life That Is Good: The Message of Proverbs in a World Wanting Wisdom. By Glenn Pemberton. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018, xviii + 236 pp., \$18.00 paper.

What is the purpose of the book of Proverbs? What function does it serve to help shape, mold, and grow godly character? How do proverbs speak about God and faith? Is the wisdom that is available from the sages a valid source of theology? How does one distinguish between the so-called “good life” and the life that genuinely and truly is good? These questions (and more) are all effectively answered within Glenn Pemberton’s volume *A Life That Is Good: The Message of Proverbs in a World Wanting Wisdom*.

Pemberton explicitly states that this book was primarily written for “faith-based discussion groups and Bible classes” and that Christian university, Bible college, seminary students, and the like receive only “secondary consideration” (p. xv). In a deeply poignant, yet culturally sensitive and highly relevant way, the author consistently provokes and urges his readers to invite the oft-overlooked sages of old to come to “the discussion table” and to carefully listen to and consider their wisdom until we begin to understand them and to “grow comfortable with their perspective” (p. 14).

Aside from a brief foreword (written by esteemed OT scholar Tremper Longman III), a two-page bibliography, and three helpful indices (“Subject,” “Hebrew Words,” and “Scripture”—regrettably, there is no “Authors” index), the book itself is divided into four parts of roughly equal length, comprised of 2–3 chapters each.

Each chapter begins with a number of stimulating quotations and a “To Prepare for Reading This Chapter” section that is (usually) comprised of two parts. The first section includes every text in Proverbs that pertains to the specific topic, while the second list is a thinner version of the first. Each chapter also ends with at least five stimulating and thought-provoking discussion questions as well as a unique “project challenge” that seeks to apply the meaning/purpose of the biblical text into contemporary life. The example below (from chapter 6) is illustrative of the many, diverse project challenges:

Here is a case study in justice and mercy. Politicians and the media (to name only two) have had much to say in recent years about immigration policies and the crisis of illegal immigration. How does what we have seen in Proverbs intersect with this debate? In your wisdom, in what way does justice need to guide any resolution of the problem? In what ways should mercy contribute to a resolution? (pp. 115–16).

For those immersed within the academic world of Proverbs, it is worth noting that Pemberton holds to a “purposeful lack of organization in Proverbs” (p. xv; see also pp. 54 and 63) and that he maintains the figure in Proverbs 31 should be understood as a “final appearance” of Woman Wisdom herself, a “curtain call of sorts,” rather than providing an example of an excellent wife (p. 33). With respect to “The Words of the Wise,” or, as Pemberton likes to label them, “The Sayings of the Sages,” and its similarity to the Egyptian collection “Instruction of Aememope,” the author states:

The general consensus from interpreters is that the Israelites sages used this Egyptian collection as a source while composing Proverbs 22:17–24:22. Of course, since wisdom by nature comes from careful observation of the world, sages in Egypt are able to contribute to the stock of wisdom in the world. The Israelite sages apparently took the Egyptian sayings and filtered them through the lens of relationship with the Lord (p. 55; cf. 161ff).

By way of critique, there is very little in this volume to quibble with. Pemberton’s writing style is engaging and winsome as well as culturally sensitive and extremely relevant. His exceptional ability to connect with and speak to a diversity of backgrounds and ethnicities is most appreciated as are the author’s many (but not overly many) personal stories, quips, and anecdotes. Pedagogically speaking, *A Life That Is Good* also has a very pleasing format with ample, but not too much, white space, easily identifiable headings and subheadings, a thorough table of contents, excellent discussion questions and “project challenges,” as well as plenty of charts, graphs, tables, and the like, all of which are offered in a remarkably clear format. Alongside this, each chapter is also of a reasonable length, as is the book itself. As such, it is my opinion that no student would feel overwhelmed or unnecessarily burdened in having to read this text in its entirety for a one-semester course, even if an additional text (or two) were assigned.

I only wish Pemberton had engaged more thoroughly with the scholarly community at large. That is to say, there are precious few footnotes found throughout the work. As such, many specialized monographs and notable articles that could have been a boon to the reader have seemingly been overlooked. There is also a conspicuous absence of some of the more notable evangelical voices within the world of Proverbs; strangely, one cannot find even a single reference to Tremper Longman’s Proverbs commentary! Alongside this, the lack of engagement with the standard Hebrew lexicons and certain other reference tools seems somewhat odd considering how frequently Pemberton makes use of the Hebrew (in transliteration) within his volume. Lastly, the fact that there is no index of allusions, analogies, and illustrations (or even an author index), makes revisiting some of the content to find that “really great quote” or illustration unnecessarily and overly difficult/tedious at times.

Despite these (relatively minor) shortcomings, however, Pemberton is an excellent guide on the journey of discovering how to live a good life, and *A Life That Is Good* is deserving of a wide readership as one of the most up-to-date and engaging works in its field. Its primary readers will likely be beginner to intermediate

students of the Hebrew Bible/OT and, one hopes, all serious expositors and teachers of Scripture.

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Hosea. By Joshua N. Moon. Apollos OT Commentary 21. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2018, xiv + 253 pp., \$45.00.

Joshua Moon is the Fellow Tutor at Anselm House, University of Minnesota. As with other volumes in the AOTC, Moon offers an introduction to Hosea with commentary that includes sections on Translation, Form and Structure, Comment, and Explanation. The commentary is both exegetical and theological, with primary focus on the theological message of the book.

A substantial portion of the introduction focuses on issues surrounding the formation of the book of Hosea. Moon is appropriately cautious in his conclusions but argues that “we have good warrant for reading the Hosea scroll as the words of the prophet Hosea” (p. 9). The primary evidence for editorial additions are the numerous references to Judah in the book, but Moon notes the possibility of Hosea traveling to the south (particularly after the fall of Samaria). The political intertwining of the northern and southern kingdoms, as well as the disastrous political fortunes of Samaria in its final decades, make it implausible that a prophet to the north like Hosea would have been disinterested in the south or would not have looked there for Israel’s future hopes.

The “Notes” section of the commentary elaborates on technical issues related to translation, and textual issues are prominent. While departing from the MT in several instances, Moon reflects an approach that has moved beyond earlier views of extreme textual corruption in the MT of Hosea. Recognizing that the MT of Hosea is “on more solid ground than was once supposed” (p. 18) does not diminish the difficulties created by the large number of *bapax legomena* (31) and peculiar syntactical constructions in the book.

The “Comment” section provides the primary exposition of the text and the discussion of key interpretive issues. The central issue for most readers of Hosea is how to understand the marriage of the prophet Hosea in chapters 1–3. Moon’s approach highlights the concept of honor and shame. In ancient Israel and the ANE, the disgraced status of a woman who was guilty of sexual transgression was transferred to her husband. Moon explains that YHWH’s directive for Hosea to marry Gomer commands the prophet “to act in a way that would bring public shame, and in that way demonstrates YHWH’s status of disgrace in being bound to Israel” (p. 43). YHWH’s own honor was at stake because of Israel’s wrongful behavior.

As for the particulars of the marriage, Moon views the command in Hos 1:2 to be a command for the prophet to take a woman already characterized by sexual disgrace rather than a proleptic anticipation of Gomer’s later unfaithfulness. The command for Hosea to “have children of whoredom” in 1:2 also reflects that he

was the actual father of these children. Like Hosea, they shared in the shame of their mother's sexual transgression. Moon understands 3:1–5 to refer not to Hosea's reconciliation with Gomer but to his marriage to a second woman, and the point of the second marriage is the same as the first—the social shame attached to this union. While the opening marriage to Gomer in chapter 1 exposed Israel's shame, the second marriage in chapter 3 reflects a movement from purification to restoration and demonstrates YHWH's devotion to his disgraced bride. In taking this approach that sees two different wives for Hosea, Moon argues that “we should not expect precise consistency in Hosea's use of metaphors” (p. 70) or attempt to fill in details as to what happened with Gomer, but some of the details of Moon's treatment appears to diminish the parallel between Hosea/Gomer and YHWH/Israel set up in the opening chapter.

In other interpretive comments of note, Moon clarifies that YHWH's “hedging” of Israel as his wife in 2:6 (ET) is as much to prevent her from returning to him without remorse as it is to limit her accessibility to other gods. In discussing Hosea 6, Moon treats verses 1–3 as a genuine call to repentance rather than an expression of Israel's insincerity and makes a compelling case for viewing 6:7 as a reference to Adam's transgression rather than reading “Adam” as a place name. In contrast to many, Moon views the opening lines of 13:14 as promissory in nature rather than rhetorical questions expecting negative responses, thus aligning the original meaning with Paul's use of this text in 1 Corinthians 15:54–55. The commentary also gives attention to literary and rhetorical features and especially how Hosea uses repetition and word play to highlight reversals from judgment to salvation (e.g. the children's names in 1:4–11 [ET]; the verbs “tore, heal, (re)turn” in 5:8–15 and 6:1–3; the verbs “walk/(re)turn” in 11:1–11). These reversals are particularly prominent in 13:16–14:9 (ET), which repeats all of the book's major themes and primarily uses words that have already appeared in the book.

The theological insights derived from Hosea are explored in the “Explanation” section of his comments, and Moon views the covenant between YHWH and Israel as the central theological concept in the book. The concept of an eternal covenant between YHWH and Israel does not preclude mutual obligations, but also means this covenant “is always open to be reoffered” (p. 23). Among the theological themes addressed in the book, Moon includes a helpful discussion of divine passions (wrath and compassion) in his comments on Hosea 11. The commentary gives attention throughout to how Hosea's message connects to the larger canon of Scripture, including an excursus on how Hos 6:2 points forward to the resurrection of Jesus (through typology that views Messiah as the embodiment of Israel). Moon views Israel's “disordered loves” in Hosea as a powerful reminder to the church today that we are shaped by what we love and that we must faithfully “wait on the Lord” rather than attaching ourselves to the wrong desires and appetites (p. 223).

This Apollos volume is a welcome addition to the commentaries on Hosea and provides rich insights for students and pastors. This work does not contain the same level of exegetical detail as Dearman's 2010 NICOT volume, but the concise

discussion of interpretive issues, along with the theological focus of the commentary, will perhaps make it more accessible for pastors preaching Hosea.

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A Commentary on the Book of the Twelve: The Minor Prophets. By Michael B. Shepherd. Kregel Exegetical Library. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2018, 523 pp., \$38.99.

The uniqueness of Michael Shepherd's approach to the Minor Prophets is apparent in the very wording of the book's title. He is providing a commentary on "the Book [singular!] of the Twelve." He sees the more usual approach that treats the books as twelve individual works as being a holdover from the influence of the historical criticism that developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Shepherd begins his commentary with a 26-page introduction to the Twelve that is followed by an analysis of each of the twelve prophetic books that constitute the "Minor" Prophets. The introduction begins by discussing the way that the Book of the Twelve fits into the Hebrew canon. Shepherd maintains, rightly in my view, that the original shape of the Hebrew canon, though different from the typical order in Christian traditions, should be given a significant place in our approach to the understanding of the books of the OT, and in particular, the Book of the Twelve. The order of the prophetic books—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve—should indicate these books have some meaningful relation to each other (pp. 13–14).

The second section of the Introduction deals with authorship and date. Shepherd holds that this issue must be discussed on two levels. On the one hand, the twelve books range in time from "the eighth century down to the postexilic period" (p. 16). However, there is also internal evidence, according to Shepherd, that an unnamed final composer "brought these twelve works together to form a single composition" (p. 16). The evidence for his view is presented in a later section of the introduction ("The Composition of the Twelve").

The third section of the Introduction deals with the issue of the text of the Twelve. Shepherd has a dual focus here. He makes some comments first regarding the need to move from the variety of "available textual witnesses" to the establishment of the presumed original text (p. 19). The second matter he deals with is the order of the individual prophetic books. The order in the MT is not followed in the Septuagint or in some manuscripts of the Dead Sea Scrolls. However, the author holds that the MT order should be viewed as determinative (p. 19).

The fourth section of the Introduction deals with the composition of the Twelve. Shepherd deals first with the historical evidence for the unity of the Twelve. Next, he discusses internal evidence for the composition of the Twelve. This is seen in three specific ways. First, Shepherd discusses the way individual books are "joined" at the "seams," that is, how something at the end of Hosea connects with something at the beginning of Joel, etc. Second, he develops how succeeding books use the author's programmatic text, Hos 3:4–5. The final criteri-

on for showing evidence of composition of the Twelve is dependence on the book of Jeremiah (p. 23).

The remainder of this section shows the specific connections between the individual parts of the Twelve. The section and the introduction are completed by an outline of the Twelve that illustrates the connections between the individual parts that make up the whole of the Twelve. There is a very interesting and helpful connection between texts of Jeremiah 17 and Psalm 1 that shows how the Twelve provide a transition between the words of Jeremiah and the Psalter, the first book of the Writings division of the Hebrew canon (p. 34).

The rest of Shepherd's work gives a discussion of the individual parts of the book of the Twelve. I will highlight a number of very helpful comments from Shepherd's treatment of Hosea. In his treatment of the superscription to Hosea (1:1) he states that "Hosea's message is in fact divine revelation and not merely the prophet's own assessment of things (see 2 Pet. 1:19–21)" (p. 37). He adds that "this revelation is rooted in real time and space. When the superscription says that Hosea was the son of Beeri, it is not because Beeri is well known from elsewhere. Rather, it is because Hosea was a historical prophet and not a figment of the writer's imagination" (p. 37). He also helpfully discusses why the superscription mentions Judean rulers when Hosea's ministry was largely targeted to the northern kingdom.

In two places in his commentary on Hosea, Shepherd offers notes on teaching and preaching the book of the Twelve. While his entire commentary is extremely valuable, this may well be one of the strongest parts of his work. Two quotes illustrate this strength: (1) "It is not the task of the preacher to adopt the persona of the prophet Hosea and deliver a moralistic message to the congregation as if they were ancient Israel living under the terms of the Sinai covenant" (p. 61); and (2) "The Book of the Twelve is new covenant Scripture and should be delivered as such to the new covenant community. The Hebrew Bible is Christian Scripture not in the sense that Christians living in the first century AD wrote it but in the sense that Christianity stands in continuity with the message of the prophets." (p. 62).

The second note on teaching and preaching Hosea occurs at the end of Shepherd's treatment of the prophet. The author expresses some sage advice for those who would expound any part of the OT Scriptures: "Your job is to provide a guided tour of the composition on its own terms and for its own sake in a way that will equip the hearers with tools to read the Twelve on their own" (p. 114). He adds, "It is thus not the interpreter's necessary duty to update the book. The task is not to contextualize the book to the readers but to contextualize the readers to the book" (p. 114).

Most of the other eleven sections on the rest of the Twelve contain at least one section that discusses the relevance of the book for today's church. For the book of Joel, Shepherd discusses the citation of Joel in conjunction with the Pentecost event in Acts 2 (pp. 146–47). For Amos there are two notes. The first deals with teaching and preaching the judgment oracles of Amos 1–6 (p. 184). The second note comes at the end of the author's treatment of Amos where he discusses the citation of Amos in Acts 15:17 (pp. 204–5). In the treatment of Obadiah and Jonah there are no separate sections on teaching and preaching, but in his final

comments Shepherd highlights how the sequence of parts Amos-Obadiah-Jonah demonstrate that the message of Hos 3:4–5 is also for the nations (p. 215) and that God has the right to show compassion to the Gentiles (p. 236).

Shepherd's treatment of Micah includes a note on the application of chapter 3 (p. 253). The section devoted to Nahum includes a reminder about teaching/preaching Nahum (pp. 308–9). There is a concluding section for the treatment of Nahum (p. 350). The treatments of Zephaniah and Haggai do not include separate sections relating to the teaching/preaching for today's church. The section dedicated to Zechariah concludes with a brief note relating to teaching/preaching (p. 478). Given the general difficulty of this prophet's book, it might have been helpful to have included a longer, more developed treatment to aid teachers and preachers who want to share the riches of the book with their students/hearers. The treatment of Malachi concludes with a section called "Final Thoughts on Teaching and Preaching the Twelve" (pp. 510–12). This contains some observations regarding the role of teaching and how it can best be accomplished in the church.

Shepherd's book is well written and helpful. It deserves an honored place in the library of both teachers and preachers in today's academy and church. If it is used by those responsible for teaching, it just may be that the Book of the Twelve will no longer be considered part of the forgotten books of the Scriptures.

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Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels. Edited by Barry J. Beitzel. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2016, xvi + 583 pp., \$39.99.

I am an avid fan, and a long-term advocate, of reading biblical books for their construals of space and place. Holding PhDs in both human geography and biblical studies, I am enthusiastic for exegeting the geography that the Scriptures generate and the geography they use to communicate their message, and I am equally eager to explore how biblical books can speak back to understandings of geography as an academic discipline (see my book *Geography and the Ascension Narrative in Acts* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009]). As part of their theological riches, I am convinced that the span of Scriptures offers a critique, a theological critique, of how we "write the earth," to pick up the etymology of "geography." I relish the prospect of geographical readings of biblical books.

With that in view, I was excited to take on the invitation to review this volume. Edited by Barry Beitzel, it consists of 48 chapters written by 14 authors. Some chapters are previously published works that have been repurposed here, others were written for this book. The chapters are arranged in broadly chronological order, spanning the sequence of Jesus's earthly life. In broad terms, they reach from Christmas to Easter. Most chapters exhibit a clear locational focus, with a few adopting a thematic aspect such as domestic architecture, fishing, or pig husbandry. There appears to be at best a light editorial hand to make chapters cohere with each

other. Some repetition occurs, but generally chapters appear to stand on their own terms.

Beitzel's three-page editorial preface is the most revealing part for the tenor of the book as a whole. It posits "that geography (space) is a legitimate, if commonly overlooked, hermeneutical category" (p. xiii). I would heartily agree, but I would also look for more explanation as to what geography actually *is*. The bracketed single-word explanation in the above quotation is not expansive or illuminating. Indeed, space is *not* the focus when, on p. xiv, Beitzel contrasts "empty space" with "very precise places on earth," the latter being presented in italics. For Beitzel and most of his contributors, geography in its operative sense means locations, both particular ones and, at a broader scale, "the spatial environment" (p. xiv). With an anachronistic metaphor, Jesus is presented "as knowing his cultural map quite intimately and using it very effectively" (p. xv).

Repeatedly, as I read the chapters in this volume, I found myself coming up against this construction of geography and sensing its limits, even its distortions. Distortion is a strong word, but it seems appropriate given the absence of any chapters considering the geography of each of the four Gospels on their own terms. This absence strikes me as a foundational need in a book seeking to be a geographic commentary on the Gospels. In his providence God has given us four Gospels, four canonical geographies of Jesus, each different, each complementary with, and not in contradiction with, the others. I am struggling to think of any other modern scholarly commentary that harmonizes the four Gospels into a single account, but that is what happens here. Why? The answer must lie in the understanding of geography. That answer is, I think, unstated explicitly, but I see it resting in the assumption that, since the events recounted in the four Gospels happened in the same locations, they can easily and without cost be harmonized into a single geographical account.

Here lurks a common-sense approach to what constitutes geography—namely, location—that permeates the book. Geography is something to be "used," a preexisting thing, a sufficiently static and self-evident stratum—staging, we could say—on which the events of wider history and theology take place.

I want to give one or two cheers for this understanding of geography. I very much appreciate Beitzel's desire for geography to help us avoid otherworldliness, spiritual or moral abstraction, or sentimentalism (p. xiv). This is a vital gain, especially for those who simply do not consider geography when reading Scripture. However, I think geography is more than mere location. It is more than the map. What this understanding misses is that geo-graphy, writing of the earth, is more than mere location: it is something that is made, crafted, in human engagement with the world. Shifting practices, habits, and conventions make, sustain, and re-make places. In addition, in the case of written texts such as the Gospels, this geography is persuasively constructed as part of their rhetorical communicative act. The Gospels speak their geography into being; their events do not merely happen on its surface.

Thus, I looked in vain for where places are appraised and constructed by the Gospels, as more than simply locations that the Gospels pass through. I hope three

instances in Luke's Gospel, each of which is absent in this volume, will illustrate briefly what I mean. The devilish geography narrated in Luke 4:5, Jesus's exclusionary reading of OT signs and wonders in Luke 4:25–27, and Jesus's commentary on Jerusalem in Luke 13:33–35 are integral to Luke's geo-graphy, but they fail to receive attention in this volume. None of these references are locations or the conventional tropes found in the subfield of Bible Geography, the subfield that provides the filter on what constitutes geography in this volume. It will be for readers of this book, and of Scripture, to appraise the varying strengths and weaknesses of different understandings of geography, but I personally was anticipating something more—something more theological, more dynamically formed by the biblical texts, something more than mere mapping and description of spatial location and forms.

The strength of this book is in bringing together a sustained account of what Bible geography can illuminate about the locations of Gospel events. Yet, even on their own terms, I find the chapters uneven in their style, depth of analysis, and critical strength. The frequent “Bible Word Study” pie-graphs lack clarity or meaning, and many graphics seem abstracted from context (e.g. the “first-century Israelite house” on p. 114). Appeals to North American equivalents will appeal to a target audience, but they risk hiding differences as well as illuminating similarities. For instance, it is curious to compare rural Galilee with the footprint of Washington, DC (p. 119 n. 11), especially when so soon after it (p. 120) the reader is told “Capernaum was no mean city!” A footnote justifies this assessment of Capernaum by comparing the frequency of references made to it in the Gospels with the number of times Jerusalem is referenced. This seems a naïve means by which to assess the status of Capernaum as a “city.” At this juncture, for a reader who has not visited Galilee, the risk of misunderstanding is high.

Indeed, it is the reader who is visiting Israel-Palestine who comes to be the intended and ideal reader for this volume. This is especially apparent in the final chapters, where the usual focus on locational accuracy morphs into a different visitor-response mode. Rather than prioritizing likely actual and specific location, the focus falls instead on what site can evoke an appropriate “I can feel it” sensation befitting how the biblical location should feel, at least for the Protestant Anglo-American visitor (p. 521). In the case of the preferred site for recalling Jesus's death and resurrection, this sensation trumps likely historical verisimilitude. Ironically, geography-on-the-ground—or at least the centuries of accretion of it—comes to trump geography-as-location. The ground, in the case of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, “conceals more than it reveals” (p. 516). My query is whether this tension between concealment and revelation has, unwittingly, been the case in all the chapters that have gone before. Is it possible, let alone true, that “all of this is stripped away at the Garden Tomb” (p. 515), or is that site merely constructed in a different way, a way that also both conceals and reveals? Conversely, what of those visitors for whom more ecclesially-marked sites “work”?

There are different geographies at work for the visitor-reader, and—again ironically—the latter recognition of emotional and affective geographies raises a richer understanding (or specter) of geography than the book as a whole admits. Even this book unravels its predominant logic when it admits “discussing the true

location of Jesus's tomb appeals to historical-geographical/archaeological geeks, but it is a moot point" (p. 522 n. 15). Instead, an uneasy mix of evidence and affect ushers an abrupt diminishing of precise location (pp. 508–9): "Visitors to the land ... are faced with the question of which of the two candidates ... accurately commemorates the area of Jesus's crucifixion and burial." With too sharp a focus on event-location, there is a real risk that Jesus's resurrection and ascension does away with the importance of geography, at the very juncture where, in broader theological ways, geography *still* matters.

In conclusion, it is great finally to see a geographical commentary in print. Yet I hope this does not come to define or delimit either what is "geographical" or what constitutes "geographical commentary." There is more to geography than archaeology or topography, and I hope there is more to come in the future under the remit of geographical commentary. The Gospels—each of the four of them—emit a richer and more theological geography and a more geographical theology. As such, they deserve more.

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Jesus, the Essenes, and Christian Origins: New Light on Ancient Texts and Communities. By Simon J. Joseph. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018, x + 238 pp., \$39.95.

Simon Joseph launches his study with the following thesis statement: "The relationship(s) between Jesus, the Essenes, and Christian origins needs to be reexamined and explained on the basis of 'specific' and 'distinctive' parallels that also account for the similarities and differences in both *corpora*" (p. 18). He continues with his statement of method: "Critical comparison should proceed ... by creating compelling explanations for why perceived 'parallels' appear to form a constellation of possible contact points between two contemporary and geographically proximate Jewish movements" (p. 19). Joseph refines these two statements with a third addressing both thesis and method: "The present study attempts to [contribute] ... by revisiting the characterization of the historical Jesus—in particular, his eschatological halakhah, the quintessential identity marker of Jesus' 'Jewish' ethnicity and *praxis*—in light of the Dead Sea Scrolls" (p. 25).

The present volume is not Joseph's first foray into this battle. He has previously authored *Jesus, Q, and the Dead Sea Scrolls: A Judaic Approach to Q* (WUNT 2/333; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012) and two other books broadly concerned with the relationship between early Judaism and Christian origins. In the work before us, Joseph begins with an initial chapter acknowledging that comparison between the Essenes—or at least, the DSS—on the one hand, and Jesus and emergent Christianity, on the other, is a somewhat thread-worn theme. A person familiar with the history of this comparison might be forgiven for thinking that all the juice has already been squeezed from this fruit. Thus, the first chapter seeks to argue that the Essenes in the study of Christian origins must be *rediscovered*. We cannot rest satisfied with the juice in the glass. Comparison has not been exhausted,

and in particular, method can be improved. Today we know, as we have not always realized, that *halakhab* or legal issues constituted the fault lines in the fissile Jewish society of Jesus's day. Publication of 4QMMT and subsequent scholarly discussion of this and related legal writings among the Dead Sea texts have brought this realization to the fore. Most earlier work comparing the Scrolls and Christianity is obsolete for lack of focus on what mattered most, the law and its proper interpretation. This was the soil of Second Temple sectarianism. Accordingly, this is where Joseph proposes to dig.

The second chapter, "The Community of the New Covenant," seeks to define terms with regard to the Essenes and the Scrolls: "The general consensus today is that they were copied and/or collected by a group of Essenes living at the Qumran site" (p. 27). The term "consensus" is important to Joseph; he seeks throughout the book to anchor himself in consensus with regard to the Scrolls. For a scholar who is not a professional Qumranologist, this search for safety in numbers is perhaps understandable, but some readers might prefer a different line of approach, given that so much in the consensus construct is moot today. It was not so long ago that the consensus insisted that, apart from the biblical manuscripts, all the Scrolls were composed at Qumran. To say now that they were "copied and/or collected" is a notable shift that matters more than Joseph seems willing to acknowledge. He does not sufficiently take account of how much this difference in consensus thinking complicates his study and problematizes his attempt to define terms. How can we know, for example, if scrolls come from elsewhere, that it was the people at the site whose voice they represent, rather than representing the voice of those who brought them out into the wilderness? This complication is never considered. This second chapter methodically considers classical sources and texts from the Qumran caves and ends by embracing a modern version of the Essene hypothesis to explain the social origin of the Scrolls. The author also discusses initiation procedures and aspects of life within the Essenic movement and at Qumran.

Chapter 3, "The Anointed Prophet," is essentially a brief treatment of Qumran messianism with a view to Jesus. Here Joseph digs into a number of the Qumran texts and displays an impressive knowledge of the secondary literature. Indeed, bibliographic coverage is one of the book's strongest features throughout. With the topic of messianism, sequence is of the essence; that is, which texts are earlier, which later? Here the aforementioned attachment to consensus becomes especially problematic for Joseph, in that he simply echoes without argument the results various text editors have produced, while prosecuting Frank Moore Cross's paleographic dating method. Today Cross's method is less favored by Qumranologists. Many find it artificial in its assumptions and overly confident in its conclusions, and they prefer the approach argued and demonstrated by the Israeli paleographer, Ada Yardeni. Applying her method gives broader ranges and less confident dates for individual texts, and if applied would potentially rearrange the data in Joseph's third chapter to significant effect.

The text on which Joseph focuses most attention in this chapter is 4Q521, which contains phraseology and concepts strikingly reminiscent of Gospel statements about Jesus. Most scholars have found these similarities explicable by reason

of a common culture in which ideas circulated and were absorbed orally, with occasional written intersections. For Joseph, this understanding fails to deal with the degree of verbal similarity: “The argument from order, in addition to the high density of parallels, and the complex exegetical decisions involved with combining several passages from different texts, strongly suggest familiarity and dependence” (p. 94). Matthew 11:4–5//Luke 7:22 reflect shared written traditions with this Essenic text. 4Q521 was a source for the evolving Christian traditions about Jesus.

The fourth chapter, “The Eschatological Teacher,” is the heart of the book. Joseph argues here with impressive detail for *halakhic* intersections whereby the DSS may throw light on the historical Jesus. He considers five legal topics: divorce, Sabbath law, temple sacrifice, celibacy, and violence/non-violence. He makes many interesting comments on individual texts, and even those who find themselves unable to embrace the totality of the arguments will find much here to reward the time spent reading. Then, in a short concluding chapter, Joseph brings his analysis to the finishing line: “Was the historical Jesus influenced by the Essenes? Yes. Was the Jesus movement influenced by the Essenes? Yes. Did the early Jesus movement develop in ideological proximity and relationship to the Essenes? Yes” (p. 164). The early Christians were not Essenic as such, but influences were manifold and at times textual and should be acknowledged as research goes forward.

Looking at the book as a whole, one’s reaction will probably be a correlate of how one evaluates the methods Joseph and many of his dialogue partners pursue. In some ways, this book is reminiscent of a work written at the dawn of Scrolls research, Helmer Ringgren’s *The Faith of Qumran* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1963). Ringgren set about to write a sort of systematic theology of the (much smaller number of) Qumran texts that were known at that time. His assumption in doing so was that the texts were more or less all known and believed by all the people at the site and that they had created from these variegated offerings a common worldview not fully in view in any one of the texts. One could therefore read any one of them into any other. If applied to the Bible, most specialists would consider Ringgren’s approach essentially that of a fundamentalist. Little of the nuance with which he read biblical texts was to be found in his exposition of the materials from the caves. Though by no means as blunt-edged as Ringgren, Joseph similarly tends to flatten the texts in order to derive “Essene doctrine.” His reading of “Essene” texts strikes the reader as notably less sophisticated than his reading of the NT and its presumed sources such as Q.

Similarly, Joseph sometimes gets uncomfortably close to a common historiographical fallacy when he compares Essene notions to early Christian ones. That fallacy is to assume that the sources of ideas that have come into our hands—that is, that happen to survive—were the very sources from which ancients we read derived those ideas. So, for example, the eschatological thought of Jesus and his early followers seems from what survives to be most like that of people we call Essenes among the ancient Jews. Therefore, that was the source and direction of influence: Essene to Christian. What do we know, however—just to take one questioning tack—of the eschatological ideas that certain Pharisee groups may have

held? In fact, we know very little, just as we know very little of what Pharisee *halakhab* actually was.

To approach such topics we rely mostly on triangulation from rabbinic literature, which gives us what is for eschatology unquestionably a tilted perspective, given the attitudes expressed against the “calculators of times.” Where did one of the only actual Pharisee writers we know, the apostle Paul, get his eschatological ideas? True, he was no longer a “pure Pharisee” when he wrote his letters, but why should we suppose that some of his eschatological ideas, at any rate, were not at home in Pharisaic circles? Important elements of his legal thinking seem to have been at home there. Doubtless his experience with Christ and Christian followers shaped Paul—but can we say that we know precisely how? Paul is, of course, one of two surviving “Pharisee” sources, the other being Josephus, who explicitly says that he followed Pharisaic ways only for political advantage, while his true heart seems to have lain with a contemporary Elijah in the wilderness.

Enough said; Simon Joseph’s book is a good place to get up to date on the debates alluded to in the title. It is well written and solidly researched and deserves to have a voice in the continuing discussion.

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God’s Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts. By Brent Nongbri. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018, xii + 403 pp., \$35.00.

Brent Nongbri has aimed to write the kind of introductory book he wishes he had when he first began to study Christian manuscripts (p. 20), and in *God’s Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts* he has written a helpful work. The overall tone of the book leans negative because Nongbri shows how little we can know with certainty about early Christian papyri. Still, it is better to acknowledge the gaps in our knowledge honestly than to let a desire for certainty override the evidence. In many ways, *God’s Library* serves as a foil to oversimplified popular treatments of these manuscripts, which abound.

God’s Library begins by recounting the initial discovery and publication of the Freer manuscripts, the best-known of which are the Freer Gospels (W 032). This story is exemplary in many ways to the themes of *God’s Library*. The initial newspaper reports were overly sensational. Experts are divided about *when* several of the manuscripts were written. Information about *where* the manuscripts were discovered is conflicting (Akhmîm, Dime, a monastery in the Nitrian Desert, and Batn Harit were all contenders). The antiquities market is often the source of information, and statements from antiquities dealers should not always be trusted uncritically. Moreover, the Freer manuscripts faded into relative obscurity once older, “more important” manuscripts came to light. Though the Freer manuscripts were publicly announced in 1907, these issues are still relevant over a century later. Paleographic dating is still often difficult, provenance is still often uncertain, and newspapers (and even some Christians) still make overly sensational statements about

manuscripts. After the prologue, Nongbri describes the surprisingly complex issue of how early Christian books were made. He covers an array of matters such as quire (or gathering) formation, covers, repairs, and even discusses the way codices were stitched together.

The next two chapters are iconoclastic and invaluable. In his chapter, “The Dating Game,” Nongbri problematizes paleographic dating. He gives a helpful overview of the way manuscripts are dated and even includes a discussion of the *limits* of radiocarbon dating—it is not a panacea for all dating problems. Readers might be tempted to think Nongbri is too skeptical of early dates, but it is important to note that he is neither alone nor new in his criticism of paleographic precision. Many of Nongbri’s objections were already stated decades ago by others. By the early 1970s, Eric Turner and Peter Parsons had already pointed out problems in the way dates were often assigned paleographically, including the dearth of securely-dated literary manuscripts and the problems that could be induced by assuming linear development across “styles” of handwriting (see the introduction in the first edition of Turner’s *Greek Manuscripts of the Ancient World* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1971] and especially Parsons’s review of Guglielmo Cavallo’s *Ricerche sulla maiuscola biblica* in *Gnomon* 42.4 [1970]). In this regard, Nongbri is more of a popularizer than an innovator. Although the effect of the chapter is to undermine the reader’s confidence in early and/or narrow date ranges for many NT papyri, it is a necessary antidote to the overconfidence in early and narrow paleographic dates such as the dating of manuscripts as reported in a number of apologetic and text-critical writings.

After paleography, Nongbri moves on to provenance. Nongbri summarizes his chapter by stating, “reliable knowledge about discoveries of early Christian books is extremely difficult to come by” (p. 115). Often, our lack of reliable knowledge concerns not only the location of a manuscript find, but its extent as well. Misinformation can come from misunderstanding or deliberate falsification and can originate from a variety of sources. One example of the way in which a lack of knowledge about provenance can pose significant problems is instances where two manuscripts were discovered together but sold separately with different provenance “histories,” in which case there would be no way for scholars to identify them as forming parts of the same ancient library.

Nongbri’s next three chapters are overviews of three important collections containing early Christian papyri: the Bodmer, Beatty, and Oxyrhynchus Papyri, respectively. Nongbri discusses provenance, dating, and content of these collections. One value of these chapters is their ability to give a bit more life to the NT papyri in these collections than they have as text-critical sigla in the apparatus of a Greek NT. It is easy to think of \mathfrak{P}^{46} as a series of readings in the apparatus of the NA²⁸ and forget its wider context (pp. 131–38)—it comes from a collection that also includes copies of other books of the NT (the Gospels and Acts [\mathfrak{P}^{45}] but also Revelation [\mathfrak{P}^{47}]), a few books of the OT in Greek (including two different copies of Genesis), and a manuscript that contains some non-canonical and patristic material. Most of the collection is Greek, but there are a few Coptic notes in the copy of Isaiah. In short, \mathfrak{P}^{46} did not exist as the only book on someone’s shelf, and Nong-

bri reminds his readers that we know what some of its ancient shelf-mates likely were.

Finally, Nongbri brings his book to a close by applying all of the potentially problematic issues he has addressed to a specific test case: \mathfrak{P}^4 . \mathfrak{P}^4 is traditionally dated very early partly because it was allegedly found bound within a codex of Philo (Paris, BnF, supp. gr. 1120), which itself was claimed to have been discovered in an archaeological context that gave it a *terminus ante quem* of AD 292. Nongbri shows once again that reported provenance stories do not always hold up under scrutiny, and we are left with questions about the date of \mathfrak{P}^4 .

The strengths of *God's Library* are manifold. Nongbri gives a genuinely comprehensive overview of Christian manuscripts, which includes many aspects typically overlooked in an introductory lecture on textual criticism, such as the existence of composite or “miscellaneous” codices or a detailed discussion of the way codices were stitched together and the types of stitching that were used to do so (pp. 29–34). The book is full of helpful black-and-white images that effectively illustrate Nongbri’s points and give the reader a good visual grasp of the issues involved with various aspects of the study of manuscripts. The chapter on dating manuscripts is alone worth the price of the book, and it is especially important when dates can be pushed earlier and narrower in apologetic publications.

Although I have a few criticisms of *God's Library*, most of them should probably be directed toward the publisher rather than to Nongbri himself. Two aspects of the book will undoubtedly cause some frustration to readers: endnotes (pp. 16–17) and the use of LDAB but not GA numbers (pp. 17–20). The use of endnotes can be particularly problematic at times. As one example, Nongbri helpfully offers definitions of various technical terms used to describe elements of books (sheet, leaf, quire, etc.). Among these terms, Nongbri describes *verso* and *recto* as the pages on the left and the right, respectively, when a book is open. In context, Nongbri had been discussing parchment codices at that point, and for parchment codices, those definitions are accurate. However, previous generations of papyrologists used *recto* and *verso* to denote directions of the fibers rather than the pages on the left and the right when the book is open. In older literature, a papyrus might be described as having two *recto* pages that face each other. Papyrologists now usually describe pages by the direction of the fibers (horizontal or vertical). This important distinction is explained, but the necessary explanation is relegated to the notes at the end of the book and easily missed by a quick reader. The use of LDAB but not GA numbers will pose difficulties for readers who know NT manuscripts primarily by their sigla in modern editions of the Greek NT. This practice does have a useful effect—it reminds the reader that ancient copies of the NT did not exist in isolation from ancient copies of other works. Still, it might be helpful for a reader to pencil “ \mathfrak{P}^{66} ” into the margin whenever P. Bodmer II is mentioned or “ \mathfrak{P}^{47} ” for Beatty Codex III.

In summary, Brent Nongbri has written an outstanding book that gives needed context to early Christian manuscripts, among which are included some of the earliest copies of the NT. His skepticism and general negative tone are warranted,

but as God calls us to be honest, it is better to admit what we do not know than to be wrongly confident about what we do.

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Communal Reading in the Time of Jesus: A Window into Early Christian Reading Practices. By Brian J. Wright. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017, xxvi + 291 pp., \$39.00.

This volume challenges a number of traditional assumptions about the written word in the first-century Greco-Roman world. These include: (1) that writing was predominantly the domain of the elite; (2) that 90% of the population was illiterate; (3) that a professional scribe was behind most every work; (4) that writing materials were expensive and in short supply; and (5) that some sort of professional reader was required whenever a manuscript was read publicly. Wright argues instead that written texts were experienced and engaged widely and by many people of various social classes and all across the Mediterranean region. Such texts when read became the textual property of the community—of the circles that heard them read. This provided a significant amount of “quality control” on the transmission of traditions.

In chapter 1, “Introducing a New Control Category,” Wright sets out his thesis. He argues that during the first few centuries CE, literary traditions were commonly passed down via communal reading and recitation events. Basic evidence for this comes from NT texts like 1 Tim 4:13 and Rev 1:3, early Christian writings like 2 *Clem.* 19:1, *Herm.* 8:3, and a variety of secular writers. While many scholars have noted the importance of public reading events, few have focused on this as a means of stability control for Christian tradition. Wright’s main goal is quite limited: to examine evidence that communal reading events were a widespread phenomenon in the first century CE (p. 10). Once this is answered a variety of related questions can be asked, such as to what extent communal reading events controlled and protected the accurate transmission of tradition.

Chapters 2 through 4 set the stage methodologically and contextually. Chapter 2 establishes a set of parameters and defines certain Greek and Latin terms related to communal reading. Concerning types of evidence, Wright focuses primarily on literary evidence; on dates, he seeks first-century documents while acknowledging that some are difficult to date reliably; geographically, he seeks texts from a wide range of locations in which Christianity was active in the first century.

In chapter 3, the author seeks to determine the economic state of the first-century Mediterranean region and the impact this would have had on communal reading. He concludes that “growing evidence is indicative of a core Mediterranean economy stronger than previously recognized,” which “strengthens the possibility of widespread communal reading events” (p. 31). The same conclusion is reached in terms of the political climate. The *Pax Romana* and relative ease of travel meant an increase in mobility and leisure activities, which was conducive to communal reading.

Chapter 4 examines the evidence for communal reading in various social contexts. The increase in libraries and proliferation of publishers provided impetus for greater reading activity. Audiences were not just the elite, and the places where readings occurred encompassed a variety of social and physical settings, including the market place, assembly halls, synagogues, theaters, homes, etc. Wright next focuses on the Jewish context, where the reading of texts was central to community life centered on the synagogue. This tradition was inherited by the Christians, as evidenced by the hundreds of citations from the OT in early Christian literature. Quoting Carl Mosser, Wright notes that the “Jesus movement was born and nurtured in Second Temple synagogues” (p. 58). Wright concludes that “it would be no exaggeration to state that virtually all literature during this time period was composed to be read communally.” Furthermore, “the early Christian movement largely inherited the book culture, reading communities, and literary practices of Judaism” (p. 59).

The heart of the book comes in chapters 5 and 6, which survey examples of first-century communal reading events in the Roman world generally (chap. 5) and in the NT (chap. 6). Chapter 5 surveys twenty authors from the first century. These turn out to be not all social elites. Some are from lowly backgrounds (e.g. Valerius Maximus, Martial) and some even former slaves (e.g. Epictetus). Five Jewish authors are surveyed (Philo, Pseudo-Philo, Josephus, and the authors of 4 Maccabees and 4 Ezra). Geographically, over a dozen place names are identified, from “as far east as Jericho, as far west as Spain, as far north as Prusa and as far south as Alexandria” (p. 111). An appendix at the end of the book provides many more examples. In short, throughout the Roman world there is evidence of communal reading events in a wide range of cultural, geographical, and social settings.

Chapter 6 is the longest in the book (90 pp.), identifying communal reading events in the NT. Wright moves through the entire NT book by book. Written texts clearly played a major role in early Christian communities. There are over 300 direct quotes from the Jewish Scriptures and another 2,300 or so allusions. The Matthean Jesus quotes, references, and alludes to written texts constantly. The Markan Jesus assumes his readers are familiar with OT texts (“You know the commandments”; 10:19). In John, the crowds even quote Scripture back to Jesus (6:31). Matthew (24:15) and Mark (13:14) assume their Gospels will be read aloud (“Let the reader understand”). Readers and hearers are assumed to be present in passages such as Mark 13:14 and 13:37 (“What I say to you, I say to everyone: Watch!”). Luke has the most explicit references to reading events, with Jesus reading the Hebrew text aloud in the Nazareth synagogue and teaching throughout the synagogues of Galilee. The book of Acts includes numerous references to the proclamation of the gospel in synagogues throughout the Mediterranean region. Paul’s ministry in the lecture hall of Tyrannus in Ephesus confirms that “Christians were involved in a didactic movement that relied heavily on the use of texts” (p. 150).

Wright’s survey shows that the NT letters were clearly meant for public reading in Christian gatherings. This is evident in the reality of circular letters (Ephesians, 1 Peter) and in Paul’s explicit commands to “have this letter read” to the whole church (1 Thess 5:27), to prioritize “the public reading of Scripture” (1 Tim

4:13), and to pass letters on to other churches and to read their letters (Col 4:16). This is also clear when second-person-plural commands appear in letters addressed to individuals (Titus 3:15; Phlm 25; pp. 174, 182). Revelation 1:3 is perhaps the most explicit statement of communal reading, pronouncing blessings over both the reader and the hearers.

Wright has produced a significant work. The endorsements for the book, which come from a veritable “Who’s Who” of NT scholarship, include terms such as “groundbreaking,” “compelling,” “innovative,” and “long overdue.” Wright admirably accomplishes his (limited) goal, which is to demonstrate that communal reading was common throughout the Greco-Roman world (pp. 10, 207). Chapter 5, which is worth the price of the volume, confirms this. The appendix provides further evidence. It seems to me that the data Wright presents warrants at least four important conclusions: (1) The Jewish synagogue communities had as their foundation the written Scriptures, which were read aloud and taught regularly. References to OT texts and themes were well recognized by the hearers. Whether or not they could actually read, the idea of an illiterate and ignorant Jewish peasantry is not defensible. (2) Second, the early church—founded within Judaism—continued this practice of the public reading and teaching of Scripture both in worship and for apologetic purposes. Their “reasoning from Scripture” almost certainly meant that they had *written copies* of the Hebrew (or LXX) Scriptures available to them, which were read publicly and related to their fulfillment in Christ. (3) The NT letters were read publicly to the Christian community to which they were addressed and were copied and shared with other Christian communities. They were also viewed as authoritative documents preserving doctrinal truth. (4) While it cannot be proven, it seems likely that in places where Paul established an extended teaching ministry, such as Ephesus and Corinth, he would have utilized notes and perhaps full manuscripts for communal lectures.

What, in my opinion, still lacks definitive support is Wright’s claim that the apostles utilized written notes or manuscripts in their proclamation of the gospel. Without doubt, *once they were written down*, the narratives about Jesus were read publicly in the churches. Yet Wright’s work has not overturned the consensus that the early apostolic period was primarily oral and that the apostles and prophets proclaimed the message about Jesus primarily through the spoken word. It is certainly possible that at times they utilized written notes, but this is never stated. Wright claims that, in addition to reading from full manuscripts, “I accept and underscore . . . that people in the first century CE, such as the apostles and disciples, were using excerpts, notes, and incipient testimonia, especially during many communal reading events, or at least according to the author’s portrayal of them” (p. 120). Elsewhere he writes, “Luke often seems to assume texts were being read and recited more than he explicitly states it” (p. 149). While this is a given with reference to the Hebrew Scriptures in the context of synagogue services and with the public reading of letters, I am not aware of any mention of notes or manuscripts in the context of proclaiming the gospel or related to the teaching of Jesus. It is never indicated that speakers are carrying or reading from manuscripts. Luke never says, “Jesus read this parable,” or “Paul took out his notes,” or “Peter read to them.”

The question remains how much of the Christian tradition was oral and how much was written (whether notes of some kind or full manuscripts). Is the “word of God” that spreads throughout the book of Acts (6:7; 8:14; 11:1; 12:24; 13:46; etc.) a reference to actual texts being read or is it figurative for the positive response to the proclamation of the gospel? The latter seems to be Luke’s intent. Furthermore, when a public event is in view, it is not always clear how much is *recited* (by memory) and how much is *read* (from a manuscript).

It seems to me Wright also overstates his case in identifying specific instances of communal reading events: Zechariah’s writing on a tablet “His name is John” (Luke 1:63) is certainly evidence of literacy, but should it really be called a communal reading event, as Wright asserts (pp. 128, 201)? Or is the twelve-year-old Jesus’s Q&A with the religious leaders (2:46–47) really communal reading? Wright claims that “this typical question-and-answer pattern is often based on physical texts” (p. 128), but I have trouble envisioning the religious leaders of Israel checking their notes before answering Jesus. Furthermore, when Jesus “opened up the Scriptures” to the disciples on the Emmaus Road, was this a literal opening of a scroll, as Wright asserts (pp. 133–34)? This seems unlikely. Indeed, Jesus’s tendency to teach outdoors—in the boat by the sea or on the hillside, where presumably no written text would be present—does not seem conducive to public reading. Is Phillip’s encounter with the Ethiopian an “explicit communal reading event,” as Wright asserts (p. 141)? Are the “traditions” Paul passed to the Corinthians (11:2) physical copies of the letters he wrote to them (p. 158)?

There is also quite a lot of redundancy in the book. For example, the text might be crisper if examples of communal reading in the epistles were treated topically rather than repeated book after book. Similarly, it seems beyond dispute that within Judaism the foundational written texts were read publicly (see Acts 15:21) and that the early Christians inherited this literary tradition. For Wright to refer to this engagement with Scripture over and over again feels redundant. What I kept looking for were more examples that written text were utilized in the preaching and teaching of the early church. The statement, “Let the reader understand” is dealt with separately in Matthew (24:15) and Mark (13:14) in subsequent paragraphs with no apparent reference to one another (pp. 124–25).

These small points, however, do not diminish Wright’s considerable contribution to the ongoing discussion related to literacy, orality, performance, and the stability of texts in the Greco-Roman world and in early Christian communities. This is indeed an important and groundbreaking work that carries the discussion forward.

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From Good News to Gospels: What Did the First Christians Say about Jesus? By David Wenham. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018, xx + 124 pp., \$16.00 paper.

From Good News to Gospels is the latest offering from esteemed NT scholar David Wenham. In this recent monograph Wenham brings the important topic of the oral tradition behind the canonical Gospels into a wider, non-academic purview, consequently producing a short, easy-to-follow, highly-accessible book.

In a relatively long foreword (it is longer than three of the book's eight chapters), Fuller professor Donald Hagner lays the groundwork for Wenham's volume, highlighting a few key figures in the field of oral tradition and its transmission in the early church, settling on Birger Gerhardsson's model, which Wenham also adopts for his study. Hagner's history-of-research-like foreword allows Wenham to devote more time to surveying the depth (rather than the breadth) of oral Jesus traditions. The book focuses particularly on what the earliest Christians said about Jesus as they preached throughout the Mediterranean, arguing that "oral tradition was indeed the default setting" and that "[it] was substantial and carefully preserved" (p. 12).

The opening chapter, "Good News to Gospels," functions as the introduction. In it, Wenham begins to wade into oral tradition and its transmission, explaining that the nature of both the gospel message and its evangelistic enterprise would have invariably led to the passing along of stories about Jesus, a phenomenon the author describes as "a normal part of ancient communication" (p. 6). He begins his careful examination of the evidence with "The Teaching of Jesus and the Story of Acts." Here Wenham argues that the process of oral transmission began immediately, as evidenced in the book of Acts (as well as in Luke). While the focus of the speeches in Acts rests on Jesus and his resurrection, it is also clear—especially in the summary of Peter's sermon in Acts 10:36–43—that, when preaching to the masses, the earliest Christians spoke not simply of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus: they told the story of Jesus.

In the third chapter, Wenham considers the evidence of Mark, Matthew, and John, contending that the Gospels' theme of discipleship, which at its core revolves around following Jesus, entails knowing the life that Jesus modeled—something that must have been passed along so as to facilitate its emulation. Wenham saves his largest discussion for "The Evidence of Paul" (it is twice as large as any other chapter). Here he investigates what the apostle says and the way in which he said it, focusing largely on 1 Corinthians but also surveying passages in Galatians and 1 Thessalonians. Paul explicitly speaks of "receiving" Jesus traditions and "passing on" these teachings to his churches. Furthermore, some of the expressions Paul employs—for example, offering his micro-narration to the Corinthians about the night of Jesus's betrayal, publicly portraying Jesus as crucified to the Galatians, applying the ordinarily negative language of "thief" to describe Jesus's *parousia*—strongly suggest not only that Paul passed along traditions of Jesus to his churches, but that his readers had already been instructed in them.

In "The Oral Tradition in the Gospels," the author discusses the import that oral tradition has in relation to source criticism, specifically, that a fixed and circu-

lating oral tradition offers a better way to explain the Synoptic problem. Although brief, Wenham provides rather thought-provoking argumentation. He asks, "Should one imagine that when, for example, Matthew read the parables in Mark 4 [or accounts of Jesus's deeds] that he had never heard any of these sayings and stories before he read them in Mark?" (pp. 68–69). Further, if Jesus traditions were formal and controlled, then it is conceivable that Q, rather than being a lost document, might actually be oral tradition reproduced by Matthew and Luke.

The next chapter, "Two Examples of the Oral Tradition," explores the relationship between oral tradition and the formation of the canonical Gospels. While the thesis of the chapter becomes clear as Wenham unfolds his argument, its initial statement might set the reader off in a slightly different direction. He writes, "This chapter seeks to demonstrate from two passages that oral tradition offers persuasive explanation for the formation of the canonical gospels" (p. 74). He then refers to Luke's two missionary discourses in Luke 9:1–9 and 10:1–37 before turning to passages such as Matthew 10, Matthew 24–25, Luke 12, and various Pauline texts. What Wenham actually means—and this becomes evident—is that he seeks to examine the missionary and eschatological discourses, and how, when compared with Pauline texts, they show, on the one hand, that oral tradition accounts for Paul's obvious knowledge of these discourses and, on the other hand, that oral Jesus traditions possess greater explanatory power to deal with the variations between the Gospels than does a purely literary relationship between them. Implicit to Wenham's discussion is the notion of the manipulability of the oral tradition: that the NT authors deploy oral Jesus traditions differently. I would have liked to have seen him develop this more. If, as Wenham believes, this tradition was formal and fixed, then their appropriation would present evidence for oral redaction—similar to what redaction critics observe in the Synoptic Gospels. Is variation a question of reliability, as Wenham assumes, or simply usefulness? While some of his parallels remain less than convincing, he develops a strong-enough case that should cause at least some "two-source" proponents to rethink or perhaps nuance their view to account for oral tradition.

Chapter 7, "The Extent of the Oral Tradition," maps a suggested outline of the contents and contours of the oral tradition. Wenham proposes that oral Jesus traditions were comprised of sayings, discourse material, eschatological, ethical, and parabolic teaching, sections of the Sermon on the Mount, extended narratives like the passion and resurrection, as well as stories of Jesus's pre-passion life including accounts of his infancy. The final chapter, "The Message of the First Christians," concludes his work by offering a summary of his argument and discussing its implications for solving the Synoptic Problem, as well as for understanding Paul's letters.

Wenham presents us with a work that is stimulating and challenging, yet easy to digest. He clearly aims at a general, non-scholarly audience: he explains technical terms and theories; he often adopts traditional views of texts (e.g. Mark writing under the tutelage of Peter; Luke the evangelist being the travel companion of Paul), offering brief defenses for the position; he raises objections to his argument and then answers them; he even uses exclamation marks (I counted three). A chief indicator that Wenham writes at a more popular level is his use of the word "Chris-

tian.” While this term remains for lay audiences the accepted designation for the earliest followers of Christ, biblical scholars recognize its highly problematic nature, as Wenham doubtless knows. He should have briefly discussed this in a footnote right at the outset. Given the intended audience, one quibble would be the length of some of his footnotes: more than a few extend beyond 250 words.

Although he speaks to a general readership, it is quite clear that this book represents the extract of deep, top-shelf research. He regularly (and wisely) cites his own previous scholarly inquiries in this field, as well as the works of other scholars—both classic and recent—including German sources, thus displaying a tremendous command of the history of research. Sometimes he can be too easily dismissive of opposing views. For example, while acknowledging the Jewishness of Matthew, he regards the notion that Matt 10:5–6 reveals the evangelist’s Jewish orientation as “quite unlikely,” asserting that “he is clearly committed to the Gentile mission, as is made clear at the end of the account (Matt 28:16–20)” (p. 75); Wenham then offers additional support with a footnote about the visit of the Magi in Matt 2:1–15. There is, however, such an immense and still-growing body of literature on the other side of this issue that it would have served the author well to refer at the least to a few key works in a footnote (e.g. Anthony J. Saldarini, *Matthew’s Christian-Jewish Community* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994]).

Overall, Wenham has written a highly engaging book that deftly introduces general audiences to a central issue in Gospel studies. Seminary and Bible college students will enjoy this piece. Moreover, because Wenham covers the scholarly terrain in his footnotes, academics involved in high-end research will also benefit.

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Semitisms in Luke’s Greek: A Descriptive Analysis of Lexical and Syntactical Domains of Semitic Language Influence in Luke’s Gospel. By Albert Hogeterp and Adelbert Denaux. *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* 401. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018, xxvii + 656 pp., €189.00.

In the preface to his book the authors explain that it is the result of a research project from 2008–2012 on Semitic language features in the Greek of Luke’s Gospel promoted by Denaux, then Dean of the Tilburg School of Catholic Theology (the Netherlands), and done primarily by Hogeterp, his part-time postdoc researcher in NT. They continued to work together after that project to complete the book. The book is handsomely printed, in the style of the works in the WUNT series, and very well organized for purposes of reference, containing in addition to the five chapters of the main body: Preface, Table of Contents, Lists of Abbreviations and Tables, Bibliography of Sources and Literature, and Indices of Sources (in nine sections), Semitisms, Modern Authors, and Subjects. The 111 pages of indices add substantially to the value of this “linguistic tool” (p. vi).

In their quest to identify Semitic influence in the Greek of Luke’s Gospel, the authors do not take their point of departure from sources behind the Gospel or

supposed Semitic retroversions of the Gospel. Instead, Hogeterp and Denaux seek to identify Semitic language influence in the vocabulary and syntax of the text of Luke's Gospel (p. v). Their analysis of the Gospel is descriptive, and they employ quantitative and qualitative evidence. They have chosen Luke because the Semitisms in it are sometimes neglected (p. 3).

The first chapter is on "The History of Scholarship on the Greek of the New Testament and Its Semitisms." The authors do not give a precise definition of a Semitism, but for the purposes of this book Semitisms "should be broadly conceived as Semitic features of vocabulary, syntax, and style" (p. 1). Such a broad description allows them to include in the category features resulting from the influence of Semitic spoken languages, bilingualism, written sources, and indirect influence in translation Greek, primarily the Septuagint (LXX). When considering Semitisms, they prefer the more neutral term, "interference," rather than calling them "aberrations" from standard *κοινή* Greek. Their summary of the history of scholarship on Semitisms in the NT, which is extensive, reveals two main approaches: those who primarily compare NT Greek with Semitic languages and sources and those who, following Deissmann, compare NT Greek with other *κοινή* documents. They conclude that, although NT Greek is a variety of *κοινή*, "the study of Semitisms can draw on increased evidence for a Semitic language background to the Palestinian Jesus-Movement," and in light of the literary and documentary evidence, Aramaic can be considered the "most common language in first-century C.E. Palestine" (pp. 23–24).

Chapter 2 moves from the history of scholarship on Semitisms in the NT to "Theories about Luke's Semitisms and Approach." The theories examined are Semitic sources, LXX Greek, the socio-linguistic setting of Jewish religious worship in the ancient synagogue (Pentateuchal Greek), code-switching (i.e. Semitisms are the result of "poetic emphasis that alternates with idiomatic Greek depending on scene and setting of narration"; p. 25), and bilingualism (or multilingualism). The authors weigh the relative or exclusive application of each theory for explaining the Semitisms in Luke's Gospel, and they find some value in all five theories. In the last section in the chapter (pp. 55–61), they outline their "approach" for the case-by-case discussion of possible Semitisms in Luke, which comprises chapters 3 and 4. After the introduction of the item being discussed and its meaning, the "order of discussion" (pp. 58–59) for their case-by-case analysis of the vocabulary and syntax in chapters 3–4 includes nine parts: (1) Attestation in Luke, with other information relevant to its occurrence in the NT; (2) Bibliography of Scholarship; (3) Biblical Attestations (Jewish Scriptures); (4) Early Jewish Literature in Greek; (5) Graeco-Roman Literature; (6) Greek Documentary Texts between 300 BCE to 300 CE; (7) Semitic Texts of the Hellenistic and Early Roman Periods; (8) Discussion (highlighting "relative frequencies of attestation" and providing "qualitative and quantitative information on linguistic items in context"); and (9) Conclusion. On pages 59–61, the authors explain some of the terminology they use in their discussions and conclusions. "Primary Semitisms" involve "non-idiomatic Greek directly from a Semitic background," while "secondary Semitisms" comprise "Semitic 'over-use' of language otherwise Greek." "Septuagintalism" is a subclass of Semitism com-

prising “idiomatic Greek and literal approximations of Hebrew (or Aramaic),” while a more literal rendering of the Hebrew source language is called a “Hebraism.”

The “Semitisms in Luke’s Vocabulary” (pp. 63–222), which are the focus of chapter 3, “can be identified on several linguistic grounds, such as morphology, semantics, and/or grammatical categories and relationships” (p. 63). Greek vocabulary that involves semantic borrowing from Semitic sources, as well as place names and proper names are not included in this chapter, because such “do not contribute further linguistic insights, which this chapter aims to survey” (p. 63). The chapter surveys nouns, noun word groups, verbs, idiomatic expressions, stylistic usages, and alleged Semitisms not maintained. Each case is examined in as much detail as possible, following the approach outlined at the end of chapter 2. The following categories of Semitic language influence are judged to be discernable in Luke’s vocabulary: primary (exclusive Hebrew and/or Aramaic comparative evidence) and secondary (through LXX Greek), and the proposed Semitisms are helpfully listed and categorized on pages 219–21. The alleged Semitisms that are not maintained are discussed on pages 213–19.

Chapter 4, “Semitisms in Luke’s Syntax” (pp. 223–475), is structured like chapter 3, and the focus is on arguable Semitisms of syntax at the clause and sentence level. Some of the main items discussed are function words as parts of clauses and sentences, verbal syntax, and syntactical features concerning sentence construction, like parataxis and word order (p. 223). A helpful level of nuance in the author’s classification of Semitisms, which they emphasize at the beginning of this chapter, is the distinction they make with LXX Greek influence between whether the Semitism agrees with the Hebrew/Aramaic source or whether it differs from it. After the discussion of the syntactical synonyms that are discernable, there is a list of “Alleged Semitism of Syntax Not Maintained” (pp. 458–71).

In the concluding chapter, “Evaluation and Conclusions” (pp. 477–515), the authors endeavor “to revisit the overall picture [derived from their study] of the Semitic substratum in Luke’s Greek and to evaluate how this differs from previous scholarship” (p. 477). Whereas previous scholarship has tended to distance Luke from “Semitic backgrounds of the Jesus movement in Israel” and to attribute graecizing and avoidance of Semitisms to Luke (pp. 477–78), on the basis of their study Hogeterp and Denaux question such a conclusion. They summarize the evidence of their study of Semitisms in Luke in four steps. First, their diachronic, source-oriented study of Semitisms in triple (Mark, Matthew, Luke), double (Matthew, Luke, i.e. Q), and single tradition (Luke) passages in the Gospels indicates that Semitisms in the Gospel of Luke are not limited to biblical Hebraisms from LXX Greek and that Luke does not always lessen Semitic influence, sometimes diminishing it and at other times adding it. Second, from a synchronic viewpoint, the incorporation of language and tradition in Luke fits into his overarching thematic concerns, and he uses Semitisms in his Gospel to affirm and buttress the accuracy and reliability of his account. Third, concerning the linguistic factors behind Luke’s Semitisms, while Hebraisms from LXX Greek are an important factor in Luke’s narrative, there is more variety in the types of Semitisms in Luke’s poetic and dis-

cursive modes, and there is evidence of the influence of Aramaic and various types of Hebrew (including Qumran and Rabbinic) in Luke's Semitisms. Fourth, the authors review the five major linguistic hypotheses related to Semitisms and Luke's Greek and reformulate them in keeping with their findings. The five theories are use of sources, imitation of LXX Greek, the Greek of the ancient synagogue, code-switching, and bilingualism. As far as Luke's use of sources is concerned, they affirm that there is evidence that he used Mark and Q, but that "verbal agreements in Greek wording and Semitic source backgrounds are not mutually exclusive" (p. 508). Regarding Luke's imitation of LXX Greek, this Greek is mainly represented in Luke's narrative, and there is a greater variety of Semitisms in his discursive mode. Concerning the influence of the Greek of the ancient synagogue, there is evidence of "non-Septuagintal Hebrew, Aramaic, and late antique Semitic backgrounds" in Luke's Greek. There is also evidence that Luke altered his style (literary code-switching) in different social contexts (Jewish and Hellenistic) and with different language registers. Finally, the authors are open to Lucan bilingualism, and they suggest that the milieu to which Luke's sensitivity was oriented was an "urban milieu of Graeco-Semitic bilingualism" (p. 511), like that of Syrian Antioch. These five linguistic hypotheses are not mutually exclusive, but they are rather "complementary models for the interpretation of Semitisms in Luke" (p. 513).

The authors outline four areas for further research on this topic: "Semantic borrowing and cultural expressions"; "the poetic stylistics of Semitic parallelism"; "the field of 'contrastive rhetoric' or 'intercultural rhetoric'"; and "broader issues of narration" (p. 514).

It was the authors' goal that this book be "a useful tool for study of linguistic, literary, and cultural questions about Luke's Gospel in a cross-cultural context between the worlds of pagan Hellenism, Jewish Hellenism, and Judaism" (p. 515). They have fulfilled their goal, and all future studies of Semitisms in the Gospel of Luke will have to interact with this tool.

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The Divine Name in the Gospel of John: Significance and Impetus. By Joshua J. F. Coutts. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/447. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017, xvi + 259 pp., €79.00 paper.

The formative influence of the OT on the NT has been a familiar subject in scholarship for many decades but continues to fascinate scholars and generate research. Joshua Coutts's *The Divine Name in the Gospel of John*, a slight revision of his doctoral thesis at the University of Edinburgh, is a recent work in the field. It focuses on the influence of the book of Isaiah on John's Gospel, specifically on the concept of the divine name, which (Coutts claims) is more succinctly pronounced in John than in any other NT book. Coutts's thesis is that John's concept of the divine name was indebted to Isaiah, particularly the second half of Isaiah, where the divine name carries much eschatological and associative significance.

It is important to understand Coutts's definition of three terms: "divine name," "eschatological," and "associative." Coutts uses "divine name" to refer to the use of $\text{ὄψ}/\delta\text{νομα}$ in reference to God (the Father) in John. In the subsequent chapters Coutts exegetes the actual occurrences of the divine name in the Gospel. Coutts uses "eschatological" to mean that "the disclosure of the divine name was a historical event—future from Isaiah's perspective, but both realized and future from John's perspective" (p. 22). By "associative" Coutts means that "the divine name language in Isaiah had a built-in duality, evoking both God and a distinguishable figure with whom God was associated" (p. 22). Coutts claims that this duality is also present in John and that John derived it from Isaiah. With the conceptual aid of Isaiah, John sees "the event of Jesus (i.e. his actions, words, death, and exaltation to the Father) to mark the beginning of the revelation of the name anticipated in Isaiah which would continue to occur in the future" (p. 22).

The Divine Name has five chapters bookended by an introduction and a conclusion. Chapter 1 focuses on the influence of Isaiah's concept of "divine name" on John. This chapter has three parts. In the first part, Coutts analyses the "I am" sayings and the theme of glory in John, which (Coutts claims) derive from Isaiah. In the second part he discusses the divine name cluster (i.e. the divine name and "I am" sayings) as well as the theme of glory in Isaiah, examining their polemical, eschatological, and associative significance. In the third part Coutts analyses Isaiah's name cluster in John. He concludes by restating his thesis that John's concept and usage of the divine name was indebted to Isaiah: "Isaiah's name concept furnished John with an ideal category for presenting Jesus as the object of eschatological expectation by locating him within divine categories, without falling prey to charges of blasphemy in the polemical climate of the Fourth Gospel" (p. 69).

Chapters 2–4 are devoted to the exegesis of the actual occurrences of the divine name in John. These chapters follow the same two-point outline throughout. In part 1, Coutts analyzes the significance of the divine in a given passage; in part 2, he discusses the impetus for the divine name in that same passage. In chapter 2, Coutts focuses on John 12:28 and 17:6, 26. Coutts posits that the significance of the divine name in these passages is both associative (i.e. it has a built-in duality that allows for the association of two distinguishable figures) and eschatological (i.e. an object of eschatological expectation which, from John's perspective, is both realized and yet future). Then Coutts repeats his argument in chapter 1 that Isaiah provided the impetus for John's concept of divine name.

Chapter 3 focuses on the occurrence of the divine name in John 17:11–12, which speaks of the Father keeping in his name those who believed and would believe in Jesus. Coutts posits that "John's concept of name keeping and name giving emerged out of a fundamental conviction that eschatological name revelation occurred in Jesus—a conviction crystallized by John's engagement in particular with certain passages in Isaiah" (p. 121). Once again, Coutts reiterates his familiar argument that Isaiah (e.g. 56:5; 62:2; 65:15) provided the impetus for John's "divine name" motif.

Chapter 4 focuses on the occurrences of the divine name in John 5:43 and 10:25, where the expression "in my Father's name" occurs on Jesus's lips. Coutts

claims that this expression is John's reformulation of the Synoptic tradition's "in the name" (at Jesus's triumphal entry to Jerusalem). The name in 5:43, says Coutts, points to "the prerogative of the Father on the one hand, and on the other, is bound up with the Son" (p. 169). If the name indicates "the disclosure of divine prerogatives in Jesus ... there may be a hint here that the disclosure itself is at the heart of eschatological expectation reflected in the 'coming'" (p. 172). The name in 10:25, Coutts contends, "constitutes the heart of that which the works testify about Jesus, i.e., the divine prerogatives exercised by Jesus" (p. 174) and undergirds Jesus's claim to oneness with the Father. Coutts adds that the oneness foregrounded by the name in 5:43 and 10:25 "signals far more than is encompassed by the categories of agency or functional unity ... signifies an association between the Father and Son that is best described by Jesus' claim 'I and the Father are one'" (p. 178).

Coutts's exegetical work stops in chapter 4, and in chapter 5 he hazards a rough reconstruction of a probable socio-historical *Sitz im Leben* that may explain John's divine name concept. Coutts adopts the majority view that John's Gospel was written to a group of Christ-disciples who were being persecuted by a majority Jewish population. Coutts speaks of a polemical context: "John's distinctive emphasis on the divine name ... was formulated in response to the charge that reverence for Jesus, or perhaps even the cultic use of his name, constituted blasphemy against the divine name" (p. 188). Coutts also imagines a pastoral context: John uses the divine name concept to assure his readers that, among other things, "they encounter in Jesus the action and character of God himself, because he comes and acts in the divine name" (p. 193).

While it has long been shown in scholarship that Isaiah exerted a formative influence on John, a genuine contribution of Coutts's research is in focusing on the theme of the divine name in John and tracing its probable impetus back to Isaiah. This thesis, to me, is highly probable, and Coutts has done a good job in substantiating it. The thesis is clear and simple: it is stated in the introduction and in chapter 1, and it is reiterated in every chapter up to the end.

The focus on the divine name itself is to be appreciated, as are also the categories of eschatological and associative. Coutts shows sensitivity to the fact that the association of the Father with the Son in John cannot be adequately accounted for by the categories of functional subordination and agency but is rooted in the profound union of the Father and the Son, so that Jesus can claim, "I and the Father are one." Coutts is to be commended too for his careful exegesis of passages in John, although I have not found myself agreeing with every conclusion he makes.

I cite a couple of weaknesses of Coutts's work. The first lies in his method of trying to discern what he calls the "socio-historical impetus" for John's divine name. Granted, the precise *Sitz im Leben* of John's original readers will always be subject to scholarly dispute. Moreover, Coutts's decision to follow the dominant view (that John was written to a group of early Christ-followers who faced opposition from their Jewish detractors) is perfectly reasonable. However, a doctoral work like this should have been a lot more comprehensive by including at least a brief mention of the fact that there are other views (such as the one propounded by Richard Bauckham) on John's intended readership. Another weakness is inherent in

chapter 4, where throughout Coutts assumes John's knowledge and use of the Synoptic tradition without mentioning the fact that the relationship between John and the Synoptic tradition remains a contested issue.

However, these two weaknesses do not affect the central thesis of the book, and Coutts's argumentation remains clear and persuasive. Those interested in the use of Isaiah in John, as well as those looking for exegetical works on select passages in John, will find this book helpful.

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The Letter to the Romans: Exegesis and Application. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Francis G. H. Pang. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2018, vii + 174 pp., \$24.00 paper.

The Letter to the Romans: Exegesis and Application is a seven-essay result of "Romans: A Conference," the 2014 H. H. Bingham Colloquium in the NT at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, ON, Canada. The seven essays offer new insights into both the theology of Romans and the historical, lexical, and intertextual contexts of the letter. This review will offer a brief summary of the key points or thesis of each essay and an evaluation of each in its turn.

Christopher Land opens the book with his essay on the historical context of Romans. He suggests that F. C. Baur's hypothesis, though filled with significant weaknesses, still points to the reality of a tension that existed between Pauline and Petrine groups of early believers. Though Paul did not suggest supersessionism, Land argues that Paul nonetheless did address social disparities between Jewish and non-Jewish Christ-followers in Rome. Land's essay offers a helpful reminder about Bauer and his hypothesis and demonstrates well how old theories long dismissed might still be worthy of being mined. His conclusions offer helpful insights into Romans, especially chapters 12–15. The primary weakness of the essay is that, in order to make his argument, Land spends the majority of the essay (24 pp.) tracing the tension with Peter and those insisting on religious purity via Jewish practices in the Jerusalem incident, the Antioch incident, and 1 and 2 Corinthians before drawing conclusions for the background of Romans (3 pp.). One is left yearning for the hypothesis to be fleshed out anew more substantively in Romans itself.

Stanley Porter digs into the typically overlooked linguistic concept of Register Analysis. He traces the field (i.e. the subject matter as determined by analysis of the primacy and frequency given to particular semantic domains in the text), tenor (i.e. the character or nature of the interpersonal relationships established between the participants in the text), and mode (i.e. the means by which the field and tenor are communicated as a text). Register analysis, Porter suggests, provides a more complete and sophisticated approach to classification of a text than genre theory and demonstrates this well with the letter to the Romans. The greatest strength of Porter's essay is that it helps the reader to reconsider Romans through a significantly different lens than is typically used. The weakness, however, is that the necessarily

detailed and technical nature of the essay is quite cumbersome for readers without some familiarity with linguistic analysis and its own register of words.

Robert Yarbrough takes on the task of Romans 1–4 and examines the theme of salvation in those chapters. Yarbrough provides a helpful overview of some of the trends in scholarship for these chapters, ranging from the Old to the New Perspective to something in between—what is now a common focus on union with Christ as a central motif of Pauline soteriology. He also offers helpful insights into how Romans 1–4 and its particular vision of the righteousness of God might impact the church today, both the global church—much of which experiences daily persecution—and the Western church—much of which experiences spiritual and theological indifference. Yarbrough’s essay offers a helpful overview of scholarship trends, offering names and resources for the scholar desiring to become more familiar with recent developments. His essay also offers an important challenge to those in the affluent West of what the righteousness of God might mean for brothers and sisters involved in a daily struggle against religious persecution.

Cynthia Long Westfall’s essay, “Changing Allegiance: Set Free and Spirit-Led (Romans 5–8),” is worth the price of the entire book. She offers a superb overview of Romans 5–8 as a subunit of Romans, walking the reader through the key themes of each chapter. As reflected in the title of the essay, she introduces the reader to the often-overlooked issue of humanity’s enslavement to sin, death, and other powers of evil, and how, through Christ’s redeeming work, humanity is set free from that enslavement and given a new allegiance to a new master under the power of the Spirit. In terms of what is written for non-specialists, Westfall offers one of the best overviews of Paul’s apocalyptic framework and how the believer fits into that framework that I have read. While the background information and theological content of each chapter help the reader to see this subunit afresh, her points for application offer countless preaching points that need to be heard by every congregation in the affluent West today.

August Konkel takes on the task of Romans 9–11 and the mystery of the gospel revealed there. Konkel notes that this mystery ultimately comes down to two problems in Romans: Gentile belief and Jewish unbelief. After carefully suggesting that the name “Israel” in these chapters refers to a “singular reality” for Paul which consists of all ethnic Israel, the faithful remnant, and the “children of promise,” Konkel states that this singular reality cannot be conflated with the church, the fulfillment of the Gentile mission. He then traces the themes of Israel’s election and salvation, noting Paul’s reliance on Deuteronomy and Isaiah for evidence of this election and salvation as God’s fulfillment of his own faithfulness to his promises, for both all Israel and the fullness of the Gentiles. Konkel’s essay offers a helpful examination of the texts that reinforce Paul’s understanding of God’s faithfulness to Israel without becoming too lost in details. The essay could be made more helpful with some counterpoints for comparison and an explicit application section to help the reader understand the weight of the argument for the Christian life today.

Linda Belleville walks the reader through Romans 12–15, noting how critical this section is for the letter and Paul’s ethics but how infrequently it is discussed.

Belleville introduces the reader to Paul's key ethical imperatives in these chapters. She consistently remarks on the situational differences between the Christian life today and a believer's life in first-century Rome, as well as the relevance of Paul's ethical imperatives for today despite those situational differences. Perhaps more significantly, she grounds Paul's ethical expectations in his imperatives to "present your bodies as a living sacrifice" and to "be transformed by the renewing of your minds" in 12:1–2 (NRSV)—two imperatives that apply today just as much as they did then. In addition to Westfall's treatment of Romans 5–8, Belleville's examination of these chapters and their importance for the letter and the Christian imperative today is an important and necessary read for all believers of the twenty-first century.

Mark Boda rounds off the book with a helpful overview of Paul's hermeneutical methods of engagement with the OT in Romans. Boda surveys the various OT texts from which Paul drew and their levels of explicitness in Romans. He also examines the ways in which Paul understood the revelation of God in Christ to be fulfilling, carrying on, or surpassing the OT texts. What is perhaps most rewarding about Boda's essay, particularly at the end of this larger collection of essays, is his wonderful reminder that, despite the various ways in which Paul utilized the OT, the primary character of the narrative never changed. Boda reminds the reader that the OT and the NT are both *theocentric*, revealing the God who creates and redeems in the OT as the Holy Trinity who brings about that redemption into new creation in the NT.

Unlike commentaries and the ongoing scholarly debates found within monographs and other larger volumes dedicated to Romans, this collection of essays is a helpful survey of the letter's key themes. The reader is walked through the letter, section by section, without becoming bogged down in the minutiae of exegetical details. Each of the essays is expertly written, with fresh thinking, clarity of expression, and helpful insights on chapters and topics well-trod by centuries of scholarship.

The primary weakness of the collection is that the title suggests that it offers both exegesis and application, but only three of the seven essays actually offer comments on application. The reader who purchases the book specifically for the opportunity to bring exegesis and application together will be left wanting more. Nevertheless, the book is a helpful resource for all pastors who preach and teach on the letter but have not kept up with recent debates surrounding the letter (or have forgotten them since their seminary days). It is also a helpful resource for seminary students doing current research and may even be a resource for an undergraduate course on Romans, assuming the students have some level of biblical knowledge. In short, it offers something for everyone.

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Pauline Language and the Pastoral Epistles: A Study of Linguistic Variation in the Corpus Paulinum. By Jermo van Nes. Linguistic Biblical Studies 16. Leiden: Brill, 2018, xxii + 532 pp., \$182.00.

Van Nes's doctoral dissertation, written under the supervision of Armin D. Baum and P. H. R. van Houwelingen (ETF Leuven and Theologische Universiteit Kampen, 2017), is a significant contribution to the study of the Pastoral Epistles. As the title indicates, van Nes explores the variation in language between the Pastoral Epistles and the other letters attributed to Paul. Specifically, he contrasts modern interpretations of this linguistic variation with explanatory models offered by classicists and linguists studying other Indo-European text corpora. He asks, "What might we learn from classicists and linguists concerning how they have analyzed linguistic variation in other bodies of texts?" This is another in a helpful stream of works that seek to bring NT study into conversation with modern linguistic studies.

One of the strengths of this book is its clear and user-friendly layout. At 532 pages, it could appear daunting. However, a little more than half of the pages are given to appendices. These are not tangential compilations of extraneous data, however. The appendices are the crucial data from which everything else arises. Yet keeping this data in clear appendices allows the text of the chapters to flow smoothly with the use of a few tables. Many detailed studies are almost impossible to read because the data is mixed with the analysis. Van Nes is to be commended for making such a dense study more accessible by this arrangement of material.

The 224 pages of analysis are divided into two roughly equal parts. Part 1 (chaps. 1–3) lays out the problem and state of study, while part 2 (chaps. 4–6) argues for a fresh answer to the problem. Chapter 1 is a thorough chronological overview of the scholarly discussion of the "problem" of linguistic variation in the Pastoral Epistles. This chapter is a valuable resource that corrects some commonly assumed points along the way. Van Nes demonstrates that the question of the language in the Pastoral Epistles has been stated in both quantitative (e.g. the number of missing or unique words) and qualitative ("just doesn't sound like Paul") terms. Chapter 2 focuses on the quantitative aspect with a comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of the lexical, semantic, and syntactic variations in the Pastoral Epistles. Van Nes notes the subjectivity of various assessments and surveys the attempts to categorize these variations. Chapter 3 details the different ways scholars have sought to account for this linguistic variation. All scholars admit that there is some sort of linguistic variation, but how we account for this dissimilarity in a body of literature that claims to be from the same author is the issue. The majority of scholars believe that significant linguistic variation can only be explained by different authors of the corpus in question.

Part 2 contains van Nes's arguments for a fresh approach to the linguistic variation of the Pastoral Epistles. Chapter 4 critiques the typical ways this problem has been "solved," demonstrating difficulties that arise in scholars' explanations of Paul's interpolations. Most significantly, van Nes draws from statistical linguistics to suggest a simple linear regression analysis for investigating Paul's linguistic variation. While this will likely be one of the more complicated aspects of the book for

NT scholars, this method holds significant promise. Van Nes does not assume that language can be reduced to numbers, but his analysis does help us to summarize data and draw inferences without mere subjective impression. While linear regression has rarely, if ever, been used in Pauline studies before, it is commonly used in science. It is an insightful application to compare the variation of language between different writings. This is a key part of the analysis in the following chapters.

Chapter 5 examines the broader vocabulary of Paul and particularly the Pastorals while chapter 6 scrutinizes the syntax. In each case, van Nes executes linear regression analyses and consults the work of modern classicists when considering linguistic variation. In general, the linear regression analyses show that the language of the Pastorals does not deviate from the other Paulines as much as is often thought. Furthermore, he shows that modern classicists and linguists, when studying other languages, typically do not consider linguistic variation as evidence of different authors. Rather, they see lexical richness to be caused by emotion, topic, or age. As van Nes states, “The scatter diagrams [linear regression analysis] showed that there is no significant linguistic variation in the *Corpus Paulinum* except for a significantly high number of *hapaxes* in the Timothy correspondence and a significantly low number of ellipses in Ephesians” (p. 221).

This study is the most thorough investigation of linguistic variation between the Pastorals and other Pauline letters to date. It is comprehensive, up-to-date, and linguistically sophisticated. I know of nothing else close to it. It demonstrates that “even though the language of the Pastorals differs from that of the other Paulines in some respects, it is quite similar in many more respects” (p. 222). While it does not settle the question of the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles (and did not set out to do so), it does seriously dampen the casual consensus that has suggested a radical difference between the language and style of the Pastorals and the other letters attributed to Paul. It is on this point that van Nes concludes his study: “the vocabulary and syntax of the PE do not seem as peculiar as [others] have claimed” (p. 224).

It would be difficult to overstate the significance of this contribution to the study of the Pastoral Epistles. Any future work on the language of the Pastoral Epistles or the authorship question will have to reckon with this study. The work is careful and judicious. The presentation is clear and helpfully delineated. Future work might interact with the linear regression analysis, either to pursue other areas where it might be useful or to argue how it should be used. I find van Nes’s methodology sensible and compelling. It will be interesting to see others with greater linguistic training than I have interact with it.

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The Book of Revelation and Early Jewish Textual Culture. By Garrick V. Allen. Society for NT Studies Monograph Series 168. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017, xix + 356 pp., \$99.99.

In the well-trodden path of studies devoted to the use of the OT in the Apocalypse, Garrick Allen seeks to break new ground by locating John's reuse of textual tradition in the shared context of Second-Temple Jewish scribes. In this developed and enhanced revision of his PhD thesis from University of St Andrews, Allen argues that the book of Revelation was situated in an early Jewish textual culture with a pluriformity of scriptural texts. Textual pluriformity refers to the "existence and concurrent circulation of multiple textual exemplars or forms of a composition, with variant literary arrangements and/or various instantiations of wording, within a single community or textual milieu" (p. 12). In other words, the textual tradition of the Hebrew Bible was fluid during the Second Temple period as evident by variations in the OG/LXX and Proto-MT/MT as well as in the writings of Qumran. Allen contends that the author of Revelation exhibits the same proclivity of concerted exegetical engagement with the pluriform scriptural texts evident within broader Jewish textual culture (pp. 1–2). Because of the interweaving of Hebrew Bible texts in Revelation, it places John in the same league as other scribes who produced scriptural works that engaged with the Jewish Scriptures. As such, this study represents an "an attempt to provide a description of John's engagement with his scriptural texts in conversation with similar examples located in Jewish works composed between 200 BCE and 200 CE" (p. 4). He clarifies that his "objective is not to describe fully the textual history of Jewish scriptural works, but to recognize that multiple textual exemplars existed and circulated simultaneously in a single milieu, sometimes in ways that defy straightforward text-critical categorization, and that it was plausible that John had access to a selection of these forms through various points of access" (p. 40). This attempted description of the reuse of Scripture in Revelation hinges on the related questions of how John processed these diverse scriptural traditions and what were the influences that controlled his engagements with these texts. In particular, Allen contends that the evidence of John's consciousness of Jewish Scripture and of traditions concerning its interpretation is best seen through his appropriation of Zechariah.

He is convinced that the current research on the use of the OT in the Apocalypse has not properly understood the ramifications of a pluriform textual culture because it is based on modern hermeneutical assumptions instead of on "how an ancient author understood an antecedent literary work" (pp. 34–35). One of his main complaints is that many scholars, like Beale and Moyise, tend to conflate the issue of *form* (i.e. presentation) of the reused material in order to focus on the *function* (purpose or rhetoric) of the reused material without paying much attention to the form of textual sources (p. 36). Allen argues that "John's re-presentation of his source material (whether by allusion or quotation) often clarifies gaps or ambiguities embedded in the source's textual substance" (p. 32). So that what John does with the OT text is exegetically significant in the way he interpretively reworks the texts and their alterations.

This book is meticulously researched and impressively demonstrates textual pluriformity with numerous examples of textual variations evident between passages in the proto-MT/MT, OG/LXX, and Qumran scrolls. The first two chapters focus on the pluriformity of the textual traditions and how the reuse of these texts involved exegetical choices. In chapter 2, Allen demonstrates the pluriformity of the OG/HB texts during this early era to show that the texts were not fixed as evident by the revisions and variants in the textual traditions during this fluid period. These textual variants would have made a difference in how the texts were interpreted. The third chapter examines the *Vorlagen* of John's references to Zechariah to identify the textual forms of his sources. Allen's purpose is to determine John's techniques of reuse and interpretative strategies by examining the textual differences between the source text and target text (p. 107). The passages he examines are Rev 1:7//Zech 12:10; Rev 5:6b//Zech 4:10; Rev 6:1–8//Zech 1:8 and 6:1–5; Rev 11:2//Zech 12:3; Rev 11:4//Zech 4:14; Rev 19:11–16//Zech 1:8 and 6:1–6; and Rev 19–22//Zech 14:7–11. He concludes that John was primarily following the proto-MT with some revising from the OG textual tradition and, in some instances, he may be working with some preexistent Jesus traditions. Chapter 4 focuses on John's techniques of reuse by examining his hermeneutical and exegetical choices with the changes he makes to the inherited textual traditions. By "techniques of reuse" he refers to the "expansions, omissions, and alterations which the author made to the quoted source in the process of incorporating material" (p. 169). He argues, "John's perception of the meaning of Zechariah traditions, predicated on his close engagement with its textual features, shapes the role that Zechariah plays in creating meaning in Revelation" (p. 172). Chapter 5 examines the reception and reading of Zechariah in early Judaism as a control for the techniques of reuse he observed in Revelation. He concludes that all the writings he analyzed share the same techniques of reuse observed in Revelation. They exhibit the same six traits: (1) the addition of supplementary descriptions; (2) the addition of other discernable traditional sources; (3) omission of material due to harmonization; (4) selective omission of linguistic material; (5) sensitivity to the discourse and narrative of the target texts; and (6) syntactical alteration (p. 251). His final chapter summarizes his findings and offers suggestions for further research.

Allen's fascinating monograph is like peering into a window of the first century's biblical library to watch John sitting at a table cluttered about with multiple manuscripts, consulting them frequently as he composed his Apocalypse. Allen's methodology is well-articulated and meticulously followed. His work grapples with the pluriformity of the text of the OT, which is largely overlooked in NT scholarship. The emphasis on the techniques of the reuse as exegetically conditioned represents a welcome advancement to scholarship on the use of the OT in the NT. For example, Allen's discussion of the alteration of "the seven eyes of YHWH" in Zech 4:10b to "the seven spirits of God" in Rev 5:6b is brilliant. He argues that a consonantal Hebrew reading of a non-Masoretic text of Zech 1:1–14 can explain how John connects "eyes" with the spirit of the Lord because of the reference to "my spirit" in Zech 4:6. Yet, in the consonantal texts it uses the plural ("my spirits"). He argues that Zech 4:10b is an answer to the prophet's question in 4:4 so

that it effectively implies the answer as “these seven [spirits] are the eyes of YHWH; they range throughout the earth.” He notes that most commentators suggest the switch from eyes to spirits is merely motivated by John’s theology, but Allen contends that it is an exegetically motivated alteration (pp. 183–84). Anyone interested in John’s use of the OT must consult Allen’s monograph.

There are some issues with the viability and implementation of Allen’s methodology. The main obstacle Allen must overcome is the precise identification of the actual textual traditions. He even remarks, “I must note, it is difficult to measure the techniques of reuse of a tradition that is no longer extant. . . . One cannot know the wording of John’s source with confidence” (p. 178). His admission belies a problem when it comes to identifying the textual traditions at John’s disposal. If we cannot be sure of John’s sources with confidence can we be confident that he was interacting with a such a wide diversity of texts and traditions? Another obstacle to Allen’s methodology is that it works very well when examining John’s use of a given biblical text, like Zechariah, but John’s allusions to biblical texts abound in a kaleidoscopic collage throughout every chapter. Isolating every allusion to a pluriform subtext may not be as straightforward as with only examining Zechariah. When it comes to the rich theological tapestry of the images created by John’s use of Scripture, we may want avoid “unweaving the rainbow” as G. B. Caird once posited. Despite any potential challenges inherent with employing Allen’s methodology, it is still one of the best and most innovative treatments of John’s use of Scripture in recent years.

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Anthropology and New Testament Theology. Edited by Jason Maston and Benjamin E. Reynolds. Library of NT Studies 529. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2018, xiii + 317 pp., \$114.00.

Anthropology and New Testament Theology is a fine collection of essays. The essays in this volume provide synthetic overviews of the anthropological material from specific parts of the NT corpus, summarizing major textual and conceptual themes. There are chapters on the anthropologies of each of the Gospels, the Pauline epistles, Hebrews, James, Peter and Jude, and Revelation. To provide context for the NT chapters, the volume also includes chapters on the OT wisdom literature, early Judaism, and Greco-Roman perspectives. The book concludes with theological chapters by Brian Rosner and Ephraim Radner. In these final chapters, the authors focus on a key synthetic theme that ties the previous essays together and advances reflection on NT anthropology. Rosner’s focus is on the Son of God as the true human. Radner focuses on the limitations inherent in creatureliness and the effect that recognizing these limits has on ethics. He includes an account of relational and epistemic dependence along with reflections on death and marriage.

As with all edited volumes, there are a variety of styles and strategies employed in the various essays, but a few summary comments can be made. The es-

says are clear and insightful. Generally, they make a good case for the particular focus on which they are working. There is always more that could be said than what a given author has the space to say. How could it be otherwise? After all, how could someone discuss everything Paul says about humanity in a single chapter? Yet the chapters do pick out relevant themes and develop them well. These themes, and the volume's bibliography, will be useful for scholars who wish to study the anthropology of a specific part of the NT in further detail. It will also be useful for students, since the essays orient the reader to the ways that various texts can be read together to build biblical-theological arguments.

In the following paragraphs, I will highlight the virtues of selected chapters. Jamie Grant's chapter on the OT includes an insightful analysis of Job that emphasizes God's sovereignty, including the need to accept God's sovereignty over human actions and to recognize human finitude and death as existing under the providence of God. Working from the wisdom literature rather than from Genesis, Grant shows that the OT emphasizes the limits of human understanding, especially with respect to how one's life fits into God's larger plans. Life is to be enjoyed, but it cannot be fully understood. In such an "anthropology of frustration," "one has little chance of making sense out of life with God, but, at the same time, one has no chance of making sense out of life apart from God" (p. 21). In this context, it becomes clearer why "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (see e.g. Prov 1:7; 9:10; Ps 111:10) and "the end of the matter" (Eccl 12:13; p. 23).

In chapter 5, Amy Richter describes "The Familial Anthropology of Matthew's Gospel." Richter notes that anthropology is not the focus of Matthew's narrative. Nevertheless, an anthropology may be inferred from a careful look at the "humans who populate the first Gospel" (p. 65). After considering positive and negative biological families in Matthew, Richter turns her attention to Jesus. She shows that "Jesus is part of a different kind of family. Just so, he will make a new kind of family later in the narrative" (p. 69). From beginning to end, Matthew's Gospel shows that "Jesus redefines family" (p. 69). By using a passive verb to describe Jesus's generation instead of the active verb used of the generations described earlier in the genealogy, *ἐγεννήθη* rather than *ἐγέννησεν*, Matthew shows that Jesus's birth, and family, are unique. Later, in Matt 12:50, Jesus indicates that "whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." According to Richter, Matthew does not overlook the fact that humans have biological families and that this is important to human existence and experience. Yet, a person's fundamental identity is shaped by a relationship with Jesus and his Father in heaven. Richter also describes the characteristics of Jesus's family as those who pray and offer praise to God.

One of the most comprehensive chapters is Mark Strauss's "The Redemption of Fallen Humanity: Theological Anthropology and Mark's Narrative World" (chap. 6). Strauss provides accounts of humanity's identity, humanity's predicament, and humanity's purpose and destiny in Mark. The chapter is structured along the lines of creation, fall, redemption, and, in some ways, it is a biblical theology of humanity in miniature. This does not feel forced; rather, Strauss convincingly shows that the Gospel of Mark intends to comment on the whole biblical narrative.

In each section, Strauss is attentive to a wide variety of texts, and his theological commentary on these texts is insightful. His subsections on human creation in the image of God, human dignity, and human responsibility set the stage for understanding the depth of corruption unleashed by sin. In addition, Strauss's discussion of "Jesus as Ideal Humanity," salvation, suffering, and "New Family Relationships and a New Humanity" show how Mark anticipates so much of what is developed in more detail elsewhere in the NT.

In chapter 11, Miriam Kamell Kovalishyn focuses on "Life as Image Bearers in the New Creation" in James. Kovalishyn rightly connects imaging God to God's character. The theology of God's character in James, she argues, is the same as the theology revealed to Moses (p. 178). She highlights the significance especially of the role of Genesis in various texts in James. In both the law and in James, humanity is called to emulate God. Kovalishyn describes the nature of this emulation through the themes of wholeness and integrity (pp. 180–81) and the themes of love and mercy (pp. 181–82). She also describes the limits on the emulation of God to which James is attentive. Of course, an account of the anthropology of James has to include a discussion of wisdom, which Kovalishyn provides toward the end of the essay. Reading James through the lens of the image of God and the emulation of God's wholeness, wisdom, and mercy provides important insights on a range of difficult texts. Kovalishyn concludes by pointing out that James's anthropology is realistic, and at times even pessimistic, even though his view of renewed anthropology in Jesus Christ is very high indeed (p. 187).

The eschatology of the various parts of the NT corpus is rightly emphasized throughout the volume. The NT describes human destiny often and in a variety of ways, and the NT accounts of humanity's destiny consistently provide a rationale for living out the new humanity now. Karen Jobs touches on two relevant points in this regard in her chapter on Peter and Jude. She describes the way that Christian self-identity should be linked with moral transformation and one's new identity in Christ. She also emphasizes the biblical link between eschatology and ethics. Accordingly, Amy Peeler has a section on "Eschatological Anthropology." Here she focuses on humanity in Jesus's kingdom, on those who await the fulfillment of "their sonship." They are "both holy and becoming holy, perfect and on their way to perfection" (p. 172). This section is beautifully written. What would have been helpful is for one of the authors to take up a fuller portrayal of perfection itself so that the way to perfection could be more fully illumined. In other words, since the connection between ethics and eschatology is so fundamental, it would have been helpful to develop the eschatology of these texts more fully so that its bearing on life now could be clarified and deepened. In addition, the significance of pneumatology for anthropology could have received more attention in the volume. Humanity is dependent upon the work of the Spirit for reception of the benefits of Christ's work, especially for the imitation of Christ so often referred to in the various essays. Further attention to the relation of pneumatology and anthropology throughout the volume would have strengthened its theological moorings.

As noted above, Jason Maston and Benjamin Reynolds have organized a collection of clear and insightful essays that will be beneficial for scholars and stu-

dents. The work in the volume also invites further work on the theological anthropology of the NT. In future studies there is room for the themes covered here to be developed in greater detail and for additional themes to be explicated and brought into conversation with the solid material in this book.

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Paul's 'Works of the Law' in the Perspective of Second Century Reception. By Matthew J. Thomas. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/468. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018, xvi + 269 pp., €84.00 paper.

What can the second century offer to current debates about Pauline interpretation? Can early patristic writers help bridge the divide between “old” and “new” perspectives on Paul? Specifically, when Paul states that Christians are justified by faith apart from “works of the law,” what does he mean? Is this about the Jews attempting to earn salvation by doing good works, or is Paul rejecting the specific practices found in the Mosaic Law that identify and separate the Jews from the other nations? This book, a lightly revised version of Matthew J. Thomas’s doctoral dissertation (Oxford University), examines these very questions.

Thomas looks to early second-century writers for discourse on “works of the law” and related phrases, and for the use of Paul’s letters in treating this subject in their own context. Thomas looks at the *Didache*, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, Ignatius’s letters, the *Epistle to Diognetus*, the *Apology of Aristides*, Justin Martyr’s *Dialogue with Trypho*, Melito of Sardis, Irenaeus’s *Against Heresies* and *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching*, as well as several fragmentary pieces from the same era. The sources are catalogued in terms of their relevance, or usefulness, to his research question. Those ascribed “A” are most useful, then “B,” and “C” follow with less relevance (though not totally irrelevant). The strongest sources for his argument are those from Irenaeus and Justin.

The second-century sources are valuable for many reasons. They constitute the earliest interpreters of the apostolic writings. Their historical context is also not too different than Paul’s own. They often worked at the crossroads of gospel expansion from primarily Jewish to primarily Gentile believers. It is also worth noting that the Protestant Reformers did not have much access to the earliest patristic writings. However, they usually respected what they did know from early tradition; this is especially true for John Calvin. Their arguments may have been shaped by these texts had they known them. In fact, Calvin himself notes in his Romans commentary, “It is a matter of doubt, even among the learned, what the works of the law mean.” Perhaps better access to second-century works would have helped Calvin with this dilemma.

Before examining the second-century sources, Thomas helpfully outlines and summarizes the major lines of argumentation from the so-called “old” and “new” perspectives, along with the unique contributions of representative figures. For the old perspective, Thomas looks to Martin Luther, John Calvin, Rudolf Bultmann,

and Douglas Moo. For the new perspective, he summarizes the views of E. P. Sanders, James D. G. Dunn, and N. T. Wright. These are arguably the most notable figures in each perspective, though they also have differences between themselves, which Thomas highlights. For instance, Sanders, Dunn, and Wright agree with each other that (in their view) Paul's works of the law refer to specifically Jewish laws, or the Law of Moses, and pertain to things that separate Jew from Gentile. They disagree, however, on why these are to be rejected by the Christian community. For Sanders, it is about the experience of Gentiles who have received the gospel and the Spirit apart from Jewish law. For Dunn, it is the separatist attitude itself that must be rejected. For Wright, it is about the new covenant and redemption history. For each representative, Thomas states their understanding of the *meaning* of "works of the law" in Paul, the *significance* of these works, and the *reason* for Paul's opposition to them. He continues this pattern when examining the second-century sources, creating a helpful parallel analysis.

After an engaging and thorough walk through the ancient sources (in which readers will learn a great deal), Thomas summarizes the arguments found in the second-century material for why the "works of the law" are unnecessary for Christians. The reasons are thus:

- (1) The arrival of the new law and covenant in Christ, the Messiah, whose teachings and ordinances replace those of the Mosaic law;
 - (2) The witness of the Hebrew Scriptures, in which the prophets testify regarding the Messiah and this new covenant, and the cessation of these previous works;
 - (3) The universal nature of this new covenant, which is promised to be for all nations, and which has its arrival confirmed by the Gentiles receiving grace and turning to God apart from becoming Jews;
 - (4) The transformation of humanity wrought by Christ, understood as the new birth or the circumcision of the heart, which renders the laws given to hard-hearted Israel unnecessary, and which allows the types and mysteries of Scripture to be rightly understood;
 - (5) The examples of Abraham and the righteous patriarchs, who were similarly accepted by God apart from these practices, and whose righteousness confirms that the Mosaic law and circumcision were not given for humanity's justification.
- (p. 217)

Additional arguments can be found in each individual source, but these are the points of common agreement found throughout.

Just before his concluding section, Thomas references C. S. Lewis's "Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism" where Lewis states, "The idea that any man or writer should be opaque to those who lived in the same culture, spoke the same language, shared the same habitual imagery and unconscious assumptions, and yet be transparent to those who have none of these advantages, is in my opinion preposterous. There is an *a priori* improbability in it which almost no argument and no evidence could counterbalance." This quote gestures toward affirming the "new"

perspective on Paul as the one that most coheres with the ancient evidence and adds color to some critiques of the “old” perspective, which at times appears to screen out the historical context of Paul’s arguments. Thomas writes,

While not uniform, the early perspectives on works of the law are found to be largely cohesive, with the Mosaic law being the law in question, and the specific points in conflict including the works of circumcision, Sabbath, regulations regarding food, sacrifices, observance of Jewish feasts and fasts, and a focus on the temple and Jerusalem. The practice of these works represents an identification with the Jewish people and the old covenant, as well as with humanity’s juvenile state before Christ’s advent. These works are opposed for a variety of reasons, the most prominent of which are the arrival of Christ’s law in the new covenant; the prophetic witness of Scripture; the universal scope of the new covenant; the heart transformation produced by Christ, which renders the Mosaic laws unnecessary; and the examples of Abraham and the righteous patriarchs, who were similarly justified apart from these practices. (pp. 19–20)

It may surprise some readers to learn that these early witnesses align closely with the “new” perspective, though their reasoning is not always the same. The early sources view Paul as opposed to works of the law *not* because of concerns about moralism (contra “old” perspective), nor primarily for experiential reasons (contra Sanders) nor social reasons (contra Dunn), but because a new era has dawned with the person and work of Christ. Jesus established a new law and a new covenant, which reaches to all nations and transforms believers from the inside out. As Thomas says, “These early perspectives would suggest that Paul rejects these works of the Torah not fundamentally for experiential reasons, nor because they are socially exclusive, but because a promised new law and covenant of universal scope have come in Christ” (p. 20). And again, Thomas concludes, “On these issues, the alignment between early and new perspectives is such that one can regard the ‘new’ perspective as, in reality, the old perspective, while what we identify as the ‘old’ perspective represents a genuine theological *novum* in relation to the early Christian tradition” (p. 226, emphasis original).

This work provides valuable information that all scholars interested in biblical and theological studies will appreciate. It especially provides real new data for all those involved in the debates over justification and works. The study has potential to bridge divides, or better, to transcend current polarities, and therefore to provide a new way forward. Plus, Thomas’s engagement with the sources is insightful and interesting. There are few must-reads in the field, and few works that will still be referenced fifty years from now. Thomas’s work is a must-read and has potential for lasting value.

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The Atonement. Oxford Studies in Analytic Theology. By Eleonore Stump. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 538 pp., \$60.00.

Eleonore Stump's most recent book is proposing a significant contribution to the philosophical theology of the atonement. It belongs to a select number of works on the atonement that can be considered classics. It is guaranteed to be longstanding required reading in specialized seminars.

In the evangelical academia, Stump is a much beloved interlocutor. Her influence extends in this context primarily through her work in philosophical theology. Numerous evangelical "analytical theologians" have profitably used her work on divine attributes, hell, theodicy, and, not least, Thomas Aquinas. Given the renewed evangelical interest in the Thomistic tradition, but also in light of some of the recent erosion of penal substitutionary atonement (PSA), Stump's *Atonement* has been much anticipated by many of my peers, myself included. Stump's popularity with evangelicals is due in no small measure to her personal character, which embodies so well the virtues of love, hospitality, and patience. Such virtues have been on display in the very process of writing the book, particularly in her openness to critique, through the numerous presentations of this material prior to publication, and her uncompromising search for truth. The comprehensiveness of her presentation is the culmination of a painstaking process of subjecting her manuscript to a barrage of objections and questions. Those who will find this book compelling as a whole will certainly refer to its holistic nature. In characteristic style, Stump has left no stone unturned, no assumption unexamined, no objection ignored.

In this limited review my aim will be to raise the kinds of questions in which evangelical readers will be most interested. Because Stump takes exception with both Anselmian atonement theories, under which she groups both PSA and other Catholic proposals, and some aspects of the Thomistic approach, the book can be assessed from those angles as well. Mindful of the audience of this *Journal*, however, I will be concentrating on the implications of her approach for PSA.

Atonement, Stump insists, needs to be understood as at-onement, as reconciliation between God and humanity. Thus, what drives her account of the atonement is this regulative ideal of union, which is expressed in Christian theology through the notion of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The union between the believer and the Spirit, however, is not a second stage made possible by some objective transaction accomplished in Christ. Rather, atonement encompasses it as well.

One of the most significant contributions the book makes, in addition to the atonement reflection itself, is Stump's theology of union, or indwelling. She defines union as "mutual *within-ness* of individual psyches or persons" (p. 117), and she believes that we can understand this in terms of shared attention. The psychological phenomenon of shared attention has been the object of much interest by recent neuroscience. Appealing to the notion of "mirror neurons," Stump suggests that in shared attention, there is a replication of the inner thoughts and feelings of one person in another. Therefore, "when Paula empathizes with Jerome in his pain, Paula has a painful feeling; and the painful feeling that she has is her feeling; and she feels and understands it as Jerome's feeling of pain. By rough analogy, in union

simpliciter between Paula and Jerome, Paula has Jerome's psyche somehow accessible to her *within her own*; only she feels and understands that accessible psyche as Jerome's, not hers" (p. 117). Thus a mutual indwelling of sorts is possible between persons, whereby a person "mind reads" another, such that the other person's thoughts and feelings are internalized within her, yet not as her own, but the other's.

In union a certain closeness between persons is realized, which Stump suggests is shaped by the "offices of love" (p. 123). There are a number of necessary conditions for this closeness: mutual desire, certain "higher-order desires and acts of will" (p. 124), which means that if a person is self-alienated, she will not be able to be close to another. A person that is not transparent to herself cannot make herself transparent to others.

This last condition is essential for the bigger picture because it follows that "even God cannot be close to a person and united with a person who is divided within himself" (p. 127). But a person can only be self-integrated around objective goodness. And so, complete integration is only possible for a person if that person knows and desires the good. Based on this condition, Stump will eventually argue that the ultimate reconciliation between God and the human person partly depends not only on the latter's willingness to open herself up for closeness to God, but also on her sanctification.

God is able to become united in this manner to humans in virtue of his assumption of a human nature in Jesus Christ. Through this human nature, God has access to the psychic mechanisms of empathy and mind-reading that make it possible for him to receive into himself (despite the validity of divine impassibility and immutability) these human emotions and thoughts. However, given the fact that the incarnation happens in time only with regard to temporal beings, but is simultaneous with God's eternal present (per her doctrine of eternity), God has always had this ability. Thus, Stump accepts the reality of the indwelling Spirit in those cases of Old Testament saints. That said, God's ability to receive into his own mind other human persons is only half of the story. The union is only complete when it is mutual. This happens when a person opens herself to God in love: "In an act of free will that is part of faith, Paula accepts God's grace and begins a relation of mutual love with God. In entering into this relationship, Paula accepts not only God's grace but also God himself" (p. 135).

Because the union is only complete when it is mutual, the Spirit's indwelling must be understood as constitutive of the atonement itself. Stump now has to explain how all this is connected to the life, passion, and death of Christ. She does this in two steps.

First, during the passion, Christ mind-reads the whole of humanity through his divinely enhanced human psyche. Because in mind-reading and shared attention the thoughts and feelings of another are registered with the same intensity within oneself, even though as another's, such an experience is not without consequences for Christ. Just as in empathizing with criminals we feel soiled by having their thoughts within our own mind, Christ himself receives the stain of sin through this experience. He was thus "made to be sin" (2 Cor 5:21), not in the sense that he actually sinned, because he experiences the sin of humanity not as his own sin. This

is a profound and thought-provoking explanation of Christ's agony in identification with humanity's sinfulness.

The same experience, precisely in virtue of its impact upon him, creates a sense of separation, leading to the cry of dereliction. Stump interprets the dereliction as a failure of shared attention between Jesus and God. This does not come about, however, because God withholds himself from Christ (Calvin's view) or because of any fault or failure of belief in Christ. "Flooded with such horror, Christ might well lose entirely his ability to find the mind of God the Father" (p. 165). Christ is in this hour of agony no longer self-integrated, and this makes it impossible for him to find the mind of the Father.

As a result, we can explain the necessity of the death of Christ as the consequence of this radical internal fragmentation. The composite unity of Christ's divine and human natures suffers as a result of the introduction in Christ's psyche of the experience of humanity's sin. This results in the further dissolution of the unity between Christ's body and soul: "Seen in this light, the death of Christ at this time makes sense. Once the unity in the incarnate Christ begins to loosen through Christ's bearing human sin, then it is not surprising that the unity of the composite Christ should continue to unravel into the separation of Christ's human soul and body in death" (p. 171). Thus the death of Jesus has a sort of an inevitability, which is only a consequence of the indwelling in Christ of all of humanity, with its entire sinfulness. There is no sense in which Christ's death is any sort of divine retribution for sin. Neither is it anything which enables God to be reconciled to us.

But this is only half of the story. Because union must be mutual, the opening up of the divine mind to human persons, which takes place through the passion, must be matched by the opening up of human persons to God. This is, Stump acknowledges, the hardest thing. And this is the second thing that the passion of Christ achieves: "Christ's passion and death are a most promising way for God to help a human person to this surrender." The cross "gently disarms a human person's resistance to love, so that she is willing to accept the forgiveness that is always there for her in God's love" (p. 288).

Christ's death provides satisfaction, but not in the sense of appeasing divine wrath. Stump explains sacrifice as a "means by which a person draws near to God" (p. 393). On this view, what she calls the "Marian interpretation" of sacrifice, "when Christ offers himself as a gift to God, he is giving to God all those human persons united to Christ" (p. 398). Finally, because by this sacrifice Christ enables humans to surrender to God and thus to be united with him, he also defeats evil and suffering. Here Stump returns to a theme elaborated in her previous book, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering* (Oxford University Press, 2010), namely, that evil may be defeated, not so much justified. In this case, the mutual indwelling made possible by the atonement defeats the evil inflicted on and perpetrated by those who surrender to Christ.

There is much detail that I had to gloss over in this very cursory presentation. There is much that is very compelling about this book. I will mention only those things which lead to appropriate corrections of PSA.

First, Stump's critique of Anselmian atonement alleges an insufficient appreciation of the love of God. A God who has to condition his forgiveness on an appeasing sacrifice cannot be a God whose very essence is love. Stump rightly senses that the heart of the matter is the conception of the divine attributes. She is also right that an omnipotent God does not need to be enabled to be reconciled to us. God's holiness and love must not be understood as being in any sort of strife.

Second, God's trinitarian oneness should prohibit any sort of separation between Father and Son, such that the Father might punish the Son. Stump's reflection on the cry of dereliction is one of the most promising explanations of Christ's having become sin and curse for us.

Third, Stump scrupulously observes the grammar of Chalcedonian Christology, rightly distinguishing yet not separating the two natures of Christ and affirming his personal unity as the eternal Son of God. She thus rightly distributes the actions and passion of Christ across his natures.

I agree with Stump that, at least in some variants, the Anselmian picture, and by implication variants of PSA, needs a certain correction. I am less convinced of some of the joints in her new construction, however, and I do think that these should be of significant concern for evangelicals.

Perhaps the most problematic move is to explain the necessity of the death of Jesus for atonement as being a mere consequent of the internal dispossession that results from his experience of human sin. A first objection to this can be raised on a textual basis, when we note that although Christ experiences separation from God *at one point* during his passion, his demise finds him at peace with God. In Stump's terminology, Christ does manage to find the mind of God after all, and he dies at peace with him. So it seems that it could not have been the internal fragmentation that ultimately led to his demise, because he manages to overcome it. Another reason why evangelicals should be ill at ease about this explanation is that Christ's death does appear to have a retributive quality. PSA bases this fundamentally on Isa 53:5 ("the punishment that brought us peace was on him") and Rom 3:21–26, among other passages. I happily grant that PSA has not always appropriately explained the nature of this punishment in relation to trinitarian doctrine and the doctrine of divine attributes. On trinitarian grounds it must also be conceded that the death of Jesus need not placate or appease the Father. At the same time, there is a necessity to this death precisely as a penal death, in addition to the clear teaching that the Father willed it (Isa 53:10). Certainly, there are different ways in which the Father might have willed this death, so this by no means settles it. But it does seem to require an explanation of this death other than as a natural consequence of an internal fragmentation.

A second critique refers to the necessity of Christ's passion and death for the second movement of the union, the indwelling of God in the believer. Stump argues that the passion of Christ is a "most promising way" to move the believer to surrender. While she insists that this should not be confused with the Abelardian view, because the latter assumes that Christ's passion merely moves the intellect, not the will, there are good grounds to question this reading of Abelard, who intended just as much as Stump does to avoid Pelagianism, or semi-Pelagianism, and

in fact thought that Christ's death is able to stir one to love him. Now Abelard's teaching lacked the sophisticated psychology that demonstrates how Christ's passion moves the intellect as well as the will, but it remains the case that this passion is only one of the possible ways in which God can move the sinner to love him. In this case Stump's view appears to undermine the exclusivity of Christ's work, because other people may be stirred to love God in different ways. Stump's defense at this point is to appeal to the first movement of the mutual indwelling: God's opening his mind to others. Because this can only take place through the human nature of Christ, Christ remains the exclusive way in which people can be saved; it is in Christ alone that God opens his mind to ours. A problem remains, however, for this only seems to establish the necessity of the incarnation, not of the passion itself. It remains for Stump somewhat arbitrary that Christ opens his mind to the experience of sinful humanity only in the moment of his passion. This happens because of the divine influence upon his human mind, enabling it to have such an empathic experience. But there is nothing that requires such an experience to take the place during this passion and, as we have seen, it is not clear that such an experience needed to result in his death. Thus it appears that Stump only manages to secure the uniqueness and exclusivity of the incarnation, and not of the death of Christ itself.

This brings us to a final problem: the resurrection of Christ seems to play no significant part in her atonement construction. The fundamental work is done via the opening up of the mind of Christ to all of humanity during his passion, and, on the flip side of that, the opening up of human minds to Christ, leading to the reception of the Holy Spirit. It is true that PSA can sometimes be faulted for sidelining the resurrection as well, when it places too exclusive of an emphasis on the Christ's vicarious death. However, given Stump's enlargement of the atonement to include the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the idling of the resurrection is puzzling, especially given the manner in which the NT connects the sending of the Spirit to the "glorification" of Christ (John 7:39), understood as the complex of resurrection-ascension. It is for that matter instructive that Paul tends to refer to the indwelling Spirit as precisely the "Spirit of Christ" (Rom 8:9) and the "Spirit of his Son" (Gal 4:6), and he is even willing to speak about the Lord "who is the Spirit" (2 Cor 3:18) and who became a "life-giving spirit" (1 Cor 15:45). Whatever the complexity of these texts, there is an unmistakable correlation between the indwelling Spirit and the human existence of Jesus Christ. Aquinas rightly suggests that the Spirit is sent by Christ precisely through the medium of his human nature and not through his divinity. The upshot of all this is that the Spirit who indwells us is not simply the third person in the abstract, but precisely the Holy Spirit who has permeated and deified Christ's human nature and who continues to burst forth from that humanity as a river of living water. That is to say, through the Spirit it is not simply "God" who indwells us, as Stump almost exclusively says, but precisely Christ! And if it is Christ who indwells us, not just God in the abstract—and this not just in virtue of the inseparable operations of the Trinity, but in virtue of the refraction of the Spirit to us precisely through the humanity of Jesus—then our identity is found in one who has already obeyed all, loved all, completed all. Our inclusion is not simply

into God or the Trinity in the abstract, but in the concrete humanity of Jesus Christ, who “fulfills all righteousness” (Matt 3:13–15). This assigns to the humanity of Jesus a much more expansive role, beyond simply making it possible for God to have shared attention and us indwelling in him. Rather, it is a new humanity, a last Adam, one which goes through death and into life. Into this new humanity we have been baptized, and so the human response, the human opening up to God in love, is itself already completed in Christ.

Evangelicals can be grateful to Stump for revealing some additional layers of how the work of Christ can be holistically connected to the indwelling Spirit, for her deeply perceptive interpretation of the cry of dereliction, and for numerous other insights. But even as we appreciate the harmonious beauty of her work, we must note the dissonance as well.

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Marcion and the Making of a Heretic: God and Scripture in the Second Century. By Judith M. Lieu. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, xvi +502 pp., \$113.00.

A survey of recent academic works reveals renewed interest in Marcion (Sebastian Moll), his relationship to Luke-Acts (Joseph Tyson; Dieter Roth), and related studies. In the volume under review Judith Lieu, the Lady Margaret’s Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University and current President of the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas, offers her own contribution through a contextual reading of Marcion.

Writing mostly to fellow scholars familiar with Marcion scholarship, Lieu provides an account of Marcion in relation to the social, literary, philosophical, and theological currents of the second century. She contends recent scholarship largely employs a “parallel antithetical model” that “set[s] him within a narrative of action and counter-action” and gives Marcion “far-reaching explanatory power” to describe other phenomena (pp. 293–94). In contrast, Lieu proposes a “richly contextual” model (p. 295). She concludes it is possible to understand Marcion, his influences, and reactions to him by “reimagining the contours” of his context (p. 295).

Lieu’s study consists of three parts dealing with the polemical tradition about Marcion, his Scriptures, and his context. In the brief introduction Lieu addresses her problematic sources. The Marcion encountered among his opponents “is a Marcion constructed by the rhetoric of each author.” Furthermore, these accounts establish a “tradition” that informs what other authors “know” about him (p. 9).

When handling these sources, Lieu suggests a chronological limit (fourth century), a reading strategy, and a two-stage recovery process. She advises that awareness of polemicists’ “strategies” may “encourage appropriate caution” yet will not guarantee recovery of the “real Marcion.” For this reason she cautions, “The Marcion who can be uncovered and described will necessarily be Irenaeus’ Marcion, Tertullian’s Marcion, Ephraem’s Marcion” (p. 9). The recovery process involves examining the “‘constructed’ Marcions’ while noting his opponents ‘lenses,’” and

then placing the “most marked characteristics of the profiles ... within the currents of the second century” (pp. 10–11).

Lieu discusses these “constructed Marcions” in part one, addressing the here-siological literature related to Marcion chronologically followed by literature representing other genres and contexts. She notes each opponents’ aims and theological beliefs as she outlines and assesses their developing portrait of Marcion. This “heresiological tradition,” Lieu reminds her readers, is a growing tradition.

In chapter two, Lieu discusses Justin Martyr, the “fountainhead” of this tradition (p. 15). In Justin’s work Marcion is “mythologised” and “brought into association with a vocabulary, ‘heresy’ (αἵρεσις),” and with a sequence of ‘doctrines’ (δόγματα) in a way that will also be determinative for his future image” (p.17; cf. *Apol.* 26.5–8). Foundational to Lieu’s presentation is her assertion that this word begins with a “relatively neutral designation” (p. 86) and slowly develops into the later “term of excoriation” that it will become (pp. 18, 86).

Lieu contends that Irenaeus (chapter 3) follows Justin Martyr in the succession model of heresy to suggest a “genetic” affinity between all heresies and tends to “blur distinctions” between various groups (p. 47). She argues that Tertullian (chap. 4) continues this tradition and that his Marcion has been the most influential (p. 50). At times Tertullian is forced to “demonstrate difference where not all would have recognized it” (p. 55), and these men were “wrestling essentially with the same sources and questions” but operating with different principles (p. 85). Next she discusses “against the heresies” literature, in which Marcion is a “fixed component” (p. 87). Lieu notes both Marcion’s function as a malleable figure mirroring current opponents and the challenges to hearing Marcion’s “authentic voice” (pp. 97, 101, 115) in this literature. She closes part one by discussing the Marcion encountered outside this literature, particularly through Origen, Clement of Alexandria, and Ephraem of Syria.

In part two, Lieu studies Marcion in relationship to his Scriptures, namely, his “Gospel,” “Apostolikon,” and other writings, describing Marcion’s editorial and hermeneutical practices and offering weighted conclusions about the content of his “Gospel.” She asserts its similarity with yet differentiation from canonical Luke and claims that it was likely the only Gospel of which Marcion was aware. She emphasizes that while Marcion clearly edited, he was also willing to “retain” texts “inimical to his outlook” (pp. 196–203; 233). Thus, Marcion is not only an editor but also a complex reader of Scripture.

Regarding the origin of Marcion’s ten letter corpus, Lieu suggests his “Apostolikon” was the Pauline letter collection he knew. According to Lieu his “intertextual” reading is as equally “striking” as his deletions, and Marcion appears to be the first to treat Paul’s letters as a “coherent corpus in this fashion” (p. 269). Lieu concludes that rather than outlining Marcion’s entire system, his “Antitheses” likely “establish[ed] a set of premises and of examples for reading the ‘Gospel’” (p. 283).

In the third and final part, Lieu expounds Marcion’s second-century context, arguing that “overarching themes” exist both in the polemical accounts and this context (p. 297). She notes the parallels between Marcion and Justin’s contemporaneous Roman contexts. Both were founders of philosophical “schools” and con-

sidered similar questions as their environment while holding Scripture as authoritative. However, while related to “church communities,” they operated within a “school” rather than “the somewhat more enclosed and self-sufficient ‘church’” (p. 305).

This context serves as an “explanatory map” (p. 322) by which Lieu examines principles of Marcion’s thoughts within the second-century context, demonstrating similarity and dissimilarity with various interpreters. She notes that Marcion was not “simply another hellenistic Bible critic,” that he read Scripture as a “reliable record of the Creator God” whom he “distrust[ed],” and that “exegesis and dilemma,” not philosophy, determine his reading of Scripture. Finally, she hypothesizes that Marcion associated an anonymous gospel (pre-canonical Luke) with the “Gospel” Paul defended and read them as a corpus with a “‘cosmological’ narrative” provided by Lukan sayings (p. 431). However, it is anachronistic to ask whether this corpus “constituted ‘Scripture’ for Marcion, or even a ‘Canon’” (p. 432).

Lieu concludes her study with an afterword, asserting that Marcion is a “product of his age” yet a “thoroughly ‘Christian’ thinker” whose “authorities are ... the received Scriptures and the emergent yet sometimes competitive or contested writings that were increasingly shaping the network of Christian communities” (p. 434). On the whole, it might be best to see him as “discovering a distinctive and even plausible solution” to challenges of contextualizing the Christian message (p. 439). She maintains that Marcion “belongs not to the ecclesiastical or liturgical setting with its confessional formulae but to the school with its debates and its gifted teachers” (p. 439).

Lieu’s work is impressive and evinces a few key strengths. First, she possesses an commanding knowledge of both the primary sources and their challenges as well as secondary literature. Second, she wisely acknowledges Marcion’s creativity, similarity, and dissimilarity without flattening out his distinctiveness or overstating his significance and originality. Just as Marcion can serve as a “cipher” in the tradition (p. 135), in modern scholarship he too quickly becomes an originator or catalyst for the idea the “New Testament” or the church’s establishment of the canon or four-fold Gospel pattern. She wisely avoids such errors because she rejects the “parallel antithetical” model (p. 293). Third, Lieu takes seriously that Marcion’s continued influence suggests he provided satisfactory answers to the questions many in his environment were asking. Finally, her “richly contextual” model offers great promise for understanding Marcion’s similarity and dissimilarity to his context (p. 295).

However, Lieu’s particular contextual model and many of her conclusions remain unpersuasive due to some significant weaknesses. First, Lieu provides no methodology for evaluating portraits of Marcion beyond cautious awareness of writers’ “strategies.” As a result, the reader must rely upon Lieu as sole arbiter and trust her conclusions when she deems certain information as “imagined” (pp. 98, 100, 101) or belonging to “firm tradition” (p. 102), or when she disbelieves a claim about Marcion because it conforms to a standard “topos” (pp. 58, 88, 102, 104) or when an author’s knowledge of Marcion’s views “seems sketchy” (p. 52). Interestingly, apparent instances of multiple attestation among sources is deemed as repeating (untrustworthy?) tradition, and thus unreliable.

Second, while not uncommon, Lieu's assertion that *αἵρεσις* initially reflects a "relatively neutral designation" connoting "choice" among "schools" (p. 86) does not comport with the NT evidence. Lieu notes "school" uses of the term in Philo and Luke-Acts; however, she ignores other NT uses (1 Cor 11:19, Gal 5:20, 2 Pet 2:1) that not only use the term negatively, but also associate it with recognizing the "genuine" and "the works of the flesh" and compare those promoting "heresy" with OT false prophets. Perhaps Marcion's opponents, who also were readers of Scripture, identified Marcion's teachings as heresy based upon a received, negative definition reflected in these NT writings.

Third, many of Lieu's assertions about the diverse nature of Scriptural collections around Marcion's time are challenged by literary and manuscript evidence as well the mechanics of producing letter collections. She asserts that "the formation of the Pauline collection is unlikely to have taken place at one moment as a single, unparalleled event" and suggests that Marcion was unaware of the Pastoral Epistles and Hebrews (p. 242). However, evidence suggests that ancient letter collections were formed from authors' retained letter copies and that a Pauline letter collection was circulating in Rome by the time of *1 Clement* (see E. Randolph Richards, *Paul and First Century Letter Writing*, p. 223). Similarly, Lieu's hypothesis about how Marcion formed his scriptural collection rests on the assumption that Marcion only knew a "Gospel" that circulated independently and anonymously and that titles would have become "normative" once "more than one [Gospel] circulated together" (p. 212). Not only does this assume a pre-canonical stage of Luke and a titleless circulation of the Gospel, for which we have no manuscript evidence, but it does not adequately appreciate that Irenaeus appears to defend an established and received fourfold Gospel canon rather than innovate it. Furthermore, manuscript evidence such as \mathfrak{P}^4 , \mathfrak{P}^{64} , \mathfrak{P}^{67} , and \mathfrak{P}^{75} demonstrates that Luke circulated with other Gospels in the second century and suggests that the fourfold Gospel codex was likely an established form early in the second century.

Finally, her presentation of Marcion's second century context is underdeveloped and problematic at points. Given this chapter's crucial role in her thesis, it should have been more fully developed. Furthermore, while Lieu's account of the "school" environment in Rome appears largely accurately (cf. Peter Lamp, *From Paul to Valentinus*, pp. 272–79), she too quickly and unnecessarily downplays Justin and Marcion's connection to ecclesiastical communities or hierarchies, seemingly prioritizing their scholastic community. She ignores crucial counter-evidence when she suggests that evidence is lacking in Rome "for any centralised ecclesiastical structure uniting the various Christian communities," implying a "lack of control over individual teachers" (p. 304). Not only does she argue mostly from silence, but Lieu also fails to consider early NT evidence suggesting early Christian communities possessed the means to enforce right doctrine and practice (e.g., 1 Cor 5:11–13; 2 Thess 3:13–15) as well as the Old Roman Creed that, by the end of the second century, was the established creed of the church of Rome. For this creed to govern the Christian communities of Rome by the late second century (c. 180), previous cooperation and concern for orthodoxy must have existed among Roman ecclesial

communities. Lieu does not sufficiently establish that Justin and Marcion “belong not to the ecclesiastical or liturgical setting” but to the “school setting” (p. 439).

Judith Lieu’s impressive work deserves a close reading, and her chief contribution is to demonstrate the need and potential for a contextual reading of Marcion. Scholars interested in the fields of early Christianity, NT canon, and church history with previous interaction with Marcion scholarship will most benefit from this work. While some might contest her conclusions, I hope her work will inspire other scholars to adopt similar contextual approaches combined with a rigorous methodology so scholarship might better understand Marcion, his aims, and his reception.

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