

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Exegetical Gems from Biblical Hebrew: A Refreshing Guide to Grammar and Interpretation.* By H. H. Hardy II. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019, xx + 202 pp., \$19.99 paper.

Many Biblical Hebrew students struggle to see the practical payoff of learning the language. H. H. Hardy's new book *Exegetical Gems from Biblical Hebrew: A Refreshing Guide to Grammar and Interpretation* is an excellent step toward remedying this unfortunate situation. Similar to its Biblical Greek companion volume (Benjamin L. Merkle, *Exegetical Gems from Biblical Greek: A Refreshing Guide to Grammar and Interpretation* [Baker Academic, 2019]), this book seeks to apply abstract concepts of Biblical Hebrew grammar to specific OT passages so students can gain motivation to learn Hebrew.

The book's purpose is clearly laid out in the introduction, along with explanations of how to use the book and who might benefit from using the book. Hardy states that his aim is "to wrestle with key interpretative questions in specific passages and arrive at exegetically informed answers" (p. xiii) in light of a knowledge of Hebrew grammar and syntax. He intends, furthermore, that the volume be used by Hebrew students in their first year and beyond, as well as those looking to refresh their knowledge of Hebrew. To this end, Hardy recommends that teachers use the volume as a supplement to their grammatical instruction.

The bulk of the book is found in the thirty chapters that follow the introduction. The first three chapters cover non-grammatical topics: the Hebrew language, textual criticism, and lexical analysis. Most of the remaining chapters cover fundamental elements of Biblical Hebrew grammar: nouns (i.e. the construct state, definiteness), adjectives (i.e. adjective function), pronouns (i.e. the use of pronouns to mark topicalization, resumptive pronouns), verbs (i.e. *qatal* vs. *wayyiqtol*, *yiqtol* vs. *wəqatal*, the volitives, participles, the infinitives, stative vs. fientive verbs, impersonal verbs, voice and valency, the verbal stems and semantics), particles (i.e. negative particles, prepositions, directive *he*, interrogatives, **וְ** and clause structure (i.e. verbless clauses, temporal clauses, relative clauses). The final chapter covers the pragmatics of **הַיְהוּדָה**, specifically its discourse function of introducing newsworthy information.

Each chapter has a consistent format comprised of four sections: "Introduction," "Overview," "Interpretation," and "Further Reading." The "Introduction" section presents a biblical passage in Hebrew and an issue the passage raises for interpretation. The following "Overview" section sketches pertinent details of grammar that are needed to solve that interpretative issue. The "Interpretation" section then applies the grammar to the passage introduced in the chapter's introduction. Finally, the "Further Reading" section lists various resources (e.g. books, journal articles) related in some way to the topic of the chapter.

*Exegetical Gems from Biblical Hebrew* is indeed, as the title indicates, a “refreshing guide” to Biblical Hebrew grammar. It is refreshing in that it offers some very practical applications of grammar and syntax to the OT text. Students reading this book will gain significant motivation to persevere in their study of Biblical Hebrew, and along the way will receive a helpful review of basic grammatical points. Instructors will also have much to glean from this volume, including many examples they might share with their students to demonstrate how knowledge of Hebrew grammar and syntax can assist interpretation. Thus, Hardy has done both students and instructors a great service in writing this book.

That said, not all the chapters are equally strong. Many chapters clearly show how knowledge of grammar benefits exegesis or even solves long-time cruxes. Good examples here include Hardy’s analysis of Leah’s “weak” eyes (Gen 29:17) in the chapter on word studies (pp. 13–21) and his discussion of the placement of  $\text{אל}$  prior to both the infinitive absolute and main verb (Gen 3:4) in the chapter on negation (pp. 136–37). However, in some chapters the discussed point of grammar does not significantly impact how the passage would be understood without knowledge of the grammar. This is evident, for example, in Hardy’s discussion of the use of directive *be* in Exod 13:21 (pp. 153–54). Furthermore, sometimes by Hardy’s own admission, the context rather than grammar is more helpful for interpreting the passage. A good example of this can be found in his analysis of how to translate  $\text{אִשָּׁמ}$  in Prov 31:1 (pp. 32–33), concerning which Hardy concludes: “While the grammar and syntax of Proverbs 31:1 are abstruse, the book’s literary context indicates that it should be read as ‘the words of Lemuel, a king. An oracle that his mother taught him’” (p. 33).

My only other quibble with *Exegetical Gems from Biblical Hebrew* is its potential audience. As I noted earlier, the introduction says this volume would serve well as a supplement to both first- and second-year Biblical Hebrew courses. *Exegetical Gems from Biblical Hebrew* would indeed make an excellent supplement for second-year Hebrew students, especially because the topics it covers represent standard topics treated in most second-year Hebrew courses. However, topics like textual criticism (pp. 8–9), composite adjectives (pp. 38–39), the use of resumptive pronouns in relative clauses (pp. 50–53), and verbal valency (pp. 118–20) may be too complex for first-year students who are struggling to understand more elementary points of grammar. For this reason, the book is probably best suited for second-year Biblical Hebrew students and not first-year students.

These criticisms aside, *Exegetical Gems from Biblical Hebrew* fills a much-needed gap in resources that show students the practical value of learning Biblical Hebrew. It connects abstract points of grammar with concrete examples, thereby providing students the motivation they need to persevere in their study of Hebrew. This is a book I will seriously consider using as a supplement for my second-year Hebrew courses, and all other Hebrew instructors should consider using it, too.

Benjamin J. Noonan  
Columbia Biblical Seminary, Columbia, SC

*The Semantics of Glory: A Cognitive, Corpus-Based Approach to Hebrew Word Meaning.* By Marilyn E. Burton. *Studia Semitica Neerlandica* 68. Leiden: Brill, 2017, 309 pp., \$121.00.

The concept of glory is one of the most significant themes in the Hebrew Bible, lying at the heart of God's self-disclosure in biblical revelation. Yet, while the concept has received theological treatment, and while various relevant Hebrew roots have individually benefited from linguistic surveys, the group of lexemes surrounding this concept is as yet untouched by a comprehensive semantic study. This vacuum has now in large measure been filled by Marilyn Burton's *Semantics of Glory*. She analyzes all the material written in Classical Hebrew—not only the Hebrew Bible, but also the Dead Sea Scrolls. She rightly argues that the linguistically rather homogeneous nature of the texts justifies taking the whole corpus of Classical Hebrew as a single entity.

Burton criticizes the structuralist approach that is usually followed among biblical scholars when seeking to determine the semantic value of words. She points out that the approach's neat divisions between lexical fields and subdivisions into components of meaning do not accurately reflect the semantic subtleties and vagueness of actual language. The author proposes a cognitive approach to semantic analysis, an approach that acknowledges the inherent relationship between language and human cognition. Because Classical Hebrew is no longer a spoken language, we must pay close attention to the textual evidence; and this is what the author does.

Burton examines the set of nouns semantically grouped around כבוד, that is, its near-synonyms. In order to limit and focus her study, she does not include related verbs and adjectives in her investigation. She writes in terms of near-synonyms because "synonymous" does not mean identical. Perfect synonyms do not exist, because never are two words identical in all respects, or, put differently, never do two words have all their semantic features in common.

Burton focuses on lexical interrelations (relational) and the internal composition of lexemes (decompositional). With regard to interrelations, both word pairs and parallelism in which the word כבוד occurs are analyzed. Particular attention is given to overlaps between the two lists that are produced. This way, words frequently occurring in both lists demonstrate their relevance for gaining insight into the semantic value of כבוד. Those words are then eliminated from these lists that have no association with any other word associated with כבוד as well as words that have significant, obvious associations with a set of words not connected with כבוד.

Members of the semantic domain of "glory" will demonstrate relationships not only to the central term כבוד but also to each other. Using this method, the following members of the semantic domain of כבוד are identified: עז, הדר, הוד, תפארת, and תהלה. Although less important, the following words can be mentioned, ones that occur only once or twice with כבוד but which also occur in collocation with the words that have already been identified as important to determining the semantic value of כבוד. The words that thus come to be included are: גאון, צבי, נצח, and גאזה. Finally, the words חדוה and גאות are mentioned. Although they do not

occur with **כבוד**, they are associated with more than one of the already-identified members of the domain of **כבוד**. Thus, the procedure followed by Burton results in the identification of eleven lexemes as members of the semantic domain of **כבוד**.

The majority of Burton's conclusions are in agreement with traditional lexicography. Also, her procedure makes clear that besides **כבוד**, the most important members of the domain of "glory" are **הוד**, **תפארת**, and **הדר**. However, an important additional finding is that **עז**, too, is of real significance in defining our key term.

The very objective nature of the procedure followed by Burton highlights the importance of the results of her study. The procedure she follows can be seen as an example for examining the semantic domain of other Hebrew words.

The reader can see that the inclusion of the textual material of the Dead Sea Scrolls does not lead to other conclusions with regard to near-synonyms of **כבוד** than when only the Hebrew Bible is researched, although the distribution of "glory" lexemes does show differences between the two corpora. In the Dead Sea Scrolls, we find most of the occurrences of **כבוד** more than in the Hebrew Bible. But I must add that if we expressed the figure in terms of the percentage of the occurrences of **כבוד** compared to the total number of words of a corpus, the outcome would have been different.

Burton makes the important observation is that in around fifty percent of its occurrences in the Hebrew Bible, **כבוד** is ascribed to God, while in a large number of this cases the phrase **יהוה כבוד** expresses this attribution; and that of the near-synonyms identified by her, only **תהלה** has a higher rate of referring to YHWH (44 of its 57 occurrences).

Burton herself points out that following her procedure, a number of near-synonyms suggested by traditional scholarship—including particularly **יקר**, **אדר**, and **שאת**—are not seen to be semantically related lexemes of **כבוד**. She states that this is due to the relatively small size of the corpus of texts. I would add that of these, at least **יקר** seems to be a word that became more frequent in Late Classical Hebrew. It might have been more frequent in dialects, but we have insufficient textual material to verify that hypothesis.

I have a few additional remarks. Burton divides the occurrences of **כבוד** into three categories. The first category is formed by those cases of cases of attribution of **כבוד** to God involving the expression **יהוה כבוד**. Among the other occurrences, she distinguishes between occurrences in two classes: where **כבוד** is portrayed as something that God possesses in and of himself, and where it is something he receives from mankind.

I would suggest a somewhat different categorization than the author: first, those instances where **כבוד** is a more or less independent manifestation of YHWH. Besides all the occurrences of **יהוה כבוד** this sense can be argued for in several other occurrences: for example, Num 14:21–22. When **כבוד** refers to YHWH, it can also denote his glory manifested in his mighty acts. Not always can a clear demarcation be drawn between this second category and the first, however. Finally, we have the category of occurrences where **כבוד** is simply something that YHWH receives.

Burton writes about the כבוד that YHWH receives from mankind, but in Psalm 29 heavenly beings too are exhorted to give כבוד to YHWH. Moreover, it must be stated that כבוד is never ascribed to any other heavenly being than YHWH.

Burton also gives a figure that shows how frequently each “glory” lexeme takes an active role as the subject of a verb. The reader learns that this is more often the case with כבוד than with its near-synonyms. If the author had also taken into account those instances where כבוד is the object of a sentence, it would have been even more apparent how often כבוד is governed by the verb ראה. If the categorization I suggest is followed, one then notes that in most cases, כבוד has the notion of an independent manifestation of YHWH, whereas when כבוד is the object of נתן it never has this notion.

What I argue is that the specific semantic value of nouns—in this case, כבוד—is related to other words and especially to those verbs with which they are used. I suggest combining Burton’s procedure with this approach to glean more insight into the semantic value of Hebrew words. Burton has written an important linguistic study which I can heartily recommend to Hebrew scholars.

Pieter de Vries

Reformed Theological Seminary (Free University of Amsterdam, Netherlands)

*The Old Testament in Seven Sentences: A Small Introduction to a Vast Topic.* Introductions in Seven Sentences. By Christopher J. H. Wright. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019, 184 pp., \$16.00 paper.

Christopher J. H. Wright is the International Ministries Director of the Langham Partnership and has written numerous books on the OT, including *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God*, *The Mission of God*, the *Knowing God* through the Old Testament trilogy, and several commentaries. This book is part of IVP Academic’s *Introductions in Seven Sentences* series.

Wright notes in his introduction several biblical examples where the author summarizes the message of the OT. Usually the authors do so by telling the story of God and his people (p. 1). Wright accomplishes the aim of the *Seven Sentences* series by telling the story of the OT in seven texts, moving from creation (Gen 1:1) to the establishment of the people of Israel via the Abrahamic blessing (Gen 12:3), their rescue from Egypt (Exod 20:2), and the Lord’s choice of David (1 Sam 13:14). He then moves to the prophetic assessment of Israel’s failure (Mic 6:8) and their announcement of “good news” (Isa 52:7). Finally, Wright encapsulates the Lord’s relationship with his people as shepherd (Ps 23:1).

Wright chooses these texts as summaries of the key aspects of the Lord’s story in the OT. For example, in chapter 1, Wright discusses Gen 1:1, which provokes some of the key issues of humanity: (1) Where we are; (2) who we are; (3) what’s gone wrong; and (4) what the solution is (pp. 12–13). Thus, he addresses the nature and character of God, creation, humanity, and sin. Similarly, his discussion in chapter 2 focuses on the Abrahamic blessing in Gen 12:3. There, he notes the global aspect of God’s mission to bless all through Abraham’s offspring, incorporating

the components of people, land, and blessing. The remaining chapters function similarly, with the “sentence” serving as an anchor for a broader discussion of important OT concepts.

Those who have read Wright extensively will not find much in the way of new material from him, but this book highlights well his understanding of the OT message. Could one do better choosing seven texts as an introduction to the OT? He does not include a text that highlights sin, which seems a glaring omission given his intent to portray the story of the OT. Yet, he clearly addresses the problem of sin in nearly every text he included, so the reader is not deprived of the subject matter. Wright may also have included the Shema (Deut 6:4) or the announcement of the new covenant (Jer 31:31), but again, he addresses these topics in other chapters. Readers will find that Wright selected seven texts that adequately convey the message of the OT and, necessary for a book like this, texts that provide a basis for deeper discussion of the themes they represent.

While not a detriment to the book, Wright’s approach changes somewhat in chapters 6–8. Whereas the first five texts serve to introduce topics that Wright expounds, the final three sentences seem to serve as placeholders to introduce those sections of the OT, that is, the Prophets and the Writings. In these chapters, Wright addresses introductory matters such as the identity and role of the prophets (pp. 107–13), the history of the monarchy and exile, and the various genres and their purposes in the Writings. Perhaps this shift expands the usefulness of this volume, but readers may find the focus of these chapters more academic than the first five.

*The Old Testament in Seven Sentences* will serve as a good resource for undergraduate Bible survey courses or perhaps as a supplement in graduate-level OT classes, providing the reader a big picture view of the OT in seven summary statements. Moreover, this book would be an accessible introduction to the OT in small group settings and even includes four to six discussion questions for each chapter in the back of the book. Wright’s style and emphases package significant information in a readable format that will inform and inspire a wide range of readers.

Ryan C. Hanley  
Boyce College, Louisville, KY

*A Historical Theology of the Hebrew Bible.* By Konrad Schmid. Translated by Peter Altmann. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018, 456 pp., \$55.00.

Konrad Schmid is Professor of Hebrew Bible and Ancient Judaism at the University of Zurich and author or editor of numerous books on OT interpretation. In addition, he serves as main editor of the journal *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel*.

After an important introduction, Schmid presents his material in nine sections that fall into three broad categories. First, he summarizes the way the concept “theology” occurs in various areas of biblical discussion (in different periods and according to various methodologies). Second, Schmid offers numerous observations concerning various “theologies” throughout the OT. Third, he considers the

question of a Jewish theology of the Hebrew Bible and a Christian theology of the OT.

Schmid provides abundant footnotes throughout the volume and sprinkles helpful bibliographies before various sections. (Understandably, many of the resources cited are only available in German.) The indices for authors, subjects, and Scripture at the end of the volume add to the value and usability of the book. By his own admission, Schmid includes material from his previously published works for several of the sections.

A key concept found throughout his volume is Schmid's distinction between Hebrew Bible and the OT. He writes, "In the divergent forms that have come down to us—[they] comprise different systematizations and organizations of material, which partially overlap and partially compete with one another" (p. 3). He also assumes "the books of the Hebrew Bible only reached their current forms over a period of time through inner-biblical commentary and expansion" (p. 3) and that the theology of those biblical books is for the most part implicit rather than explicit.

In his introduction (section A), Schmid asks and answers the question, "Is There a Theology of the Hebrew Bible?" His short answer is that there are theologies of the OT, but no eternal or unchanging theology. Another conclusion that informs Schmid's theological reconstruction is his view that the canonicity of biblical books is not based on the content of those books but is based on their liturgical use. He rejects the idea of the inherent authority and inspiration of the content of biblical books (p. 6).

After tracing the understanding of the concept of theology in various movements and methodologies (section B), Schmid explains why he rejects the notion of "the" Hebrew Bible and "the" OT—arguing for the "pluriformity of the tradition" (sections C–E). For Schmid, the variations of canonical arrangements and lists (e.g. Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, Vulgate, Protestant Bible, and more) point to the "relativity" of the canon and the variegated nature of its theologies. His section F on the theologies of the three sections of the Hebrew Bible follows customary critical categories. Although the Torah has the clearest literary structure of all three sections, its multiple redactions result in a growing and changing theology. The prophets (*Nevi'im*), though presented as building on the Torah, were composed totally separately from it. Only much later were they edited in accordance to the Torah when that section reached ascendancy. The *Ketuvim* represents the most amorphous collection.

After elucidating the principal theological guidelines in the literary history of the Hebrew Bible (section G), Schmid present his understanding of the themes in the theology of the Hebrew Bible (section H). A couple of examples will suffice to give the reader as sense of Schmid's approach.

In his section on the perceptions and impressions of God (§30), Schmid explains his view of "the Israelization of Yhwh and the Yahwehization of Israel" (pp. 288–90). The author states that Yahweh was not the God of Israel from the very beginning and that Israel had no connection with Yahweh at the beginning of their existence (ca. the 12<sup>th</sup> century BC). He suggests that a relationship between Yahweh and Israel may have occurred between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. This seems to

be especially based on extra-biblical inscriptions and the variety seen in theophoric names. Of course, this view also assumes the late dating of Pentateuchal and most historical books.

Another telling section deals with “Messianic Prophecies” (§37, #3, pp. 409–10). Schmid refers to “so-called messianic prophecies” as part of a traditional Christian interpretation of the Hebrew Bible. He suggests that this messianic focus led to the placement of the prophetic books at the end of Christian “Old Testaments” (without providing any evidence that gave that rationale for a canonical order). He writes that the Hebrew Bible does not utilize the term “anointed” (the basis for the Hebrew term *מָשִׁיחַ* that only refers to the Messiah in Dan 9:25–26 and relates to the Greek term found throughout the NT, *Χριστός*) for a “future king of salvation” (p. 410) but only for historical rulers or leaders. He contends that eschatological expectations of salvation in the Hebrew Bible “focus neither exclusively nor centrally on a new Davidic ruler” (p. 410).

His section “Zion as Ruler and Eschatological Visions of Jerusalem” (§38, #5, pp. 422–24) provides a final example (and one related to the previous paragraph). He suggests the initially ascribed royal dignity ascribed to the Davidides in Isaiah 9 and 11 were transferred to Cyrus in Second Isaiah. Building on that, Schmid argues that a coming king of salvation does not bring the customary messianic passages to fulfillment. Instead, Zion takes over the functions and actions attributed to a future king. He affirms that Isaiah 60 presents Zion as the promised messiah, the truth of which should occasion a reinterpretation of the servant songs to match that understanding. The biblical march toward fulfillment “was considerably spiritualized and also rationalized so that now an entity like Zion was able to take on royal functions” (p. 423).

Now for some summary evaluation. On the one hand, Schmid’s volume provides a needed and important update to our understanding of the discipline of OT theology in the broad world of biblical scholarship. The author interacts with and cites the key works on the subject and clearly presents a summary of the main views as well as his understanding of a given issue. His historical overview of the ways various people and groups and people have handled the concept of theology is enlightening. The bulk of the volume provides a clear expression of his understanding of the theologies of the Hebrew Bible, engaging various methodologies as well as considering the Hebrew Bible according to its three main sections (*Torah*, *Nevi'im*, and *Ketuvim*) and walking through Israel’s history from the exile to Assyria (722 BC) through the Maccabean crisis.

On the other hand, Schmid’s assumptions about the biblical text limit the way his understanding might enhance an evangelical’s understanding of Scripture. His reconstruction of the theologies of the Hebrew Bible loom large in his convictions about how to understand Scripture. Although this volume provides a valuable update for students of the discipline of Hebrew Bible and OT theology, it does not have the same value for our understanding of the theological message of Scripture.

No doubt this volume should be on the shelves of biblical readers who want to understand many of the conversations taking place in the broad discipline of



biblical theology. However, its contribution to their understanding of the biblical theology of the OT will be much more limited.

Michael Grisanti  
The Master's Seminary, Sun Valley, CA

*The Elder Testament: Canon, Theology, Trinity.* By Christopher R. Seitz. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018, 304 pp., \$39.95.

What does it mean to read the OT as Christian Scripture? In this volume, Christopher Seitz explores the historical, theological, and hermeneutical issues involved in answering this question. We can see Seitz's overarching concern by considering his reason for naming this volume *The Elder Testament*.

The OT is not old in the sense that it must be moved beyond, is outmoded, or is a developmental step unambiguously on its way to a subsequent testament that completes it. Rather, the "old" in OT originally conveyed "venerable, original, and time-tested" (p. 15). Drawing on connotations in the French language, Seitz characterizes the Hebrew Scriptures as the Elder Testament. The oldness of the Elder Testament "inheres within its own extended scope" (p. 18). "It took time," Seitz continues, "to be what it is in distillation and in aging over centuries. It says what it says, and then that finds a new point of reference in God's disposing through time" (p. 18). Rather than seeking to alter official terminology, Seitz argues for "widening our conceptual lens on what the term 'old' likely meant" (pp. 14, 279).

Keeping the OT and NT related but rightly ordered is important for maintaining this conceptual lens. As Seitz notes, "The main challenge this book sets for itself is allowing the first witness the scope to do its peculiar and distinctive work in the One God's economic and ontological life with Israel and the church and all creation" (p. 48). This task involves "not fusing the witnesses, not ranking them, but allowing their distinctive contribution to sound forth to those of us who stand outside the circle of their specially mediated life with God" (p. 48).

Seitz divides his book into three parts. In Part 1, he provides an orienting discussion on the name and nature of the Elder Testament as an object of study on its own terms (chap. 1). He also outlines his approach to canonical interpretation (chap. 2), theological interpretation (chap. 3), and the disposition and theological requirements of interpreters (chap. 4).

In Part 2, Seitz focuses on the nature of the OT by drawing on, engaging, and critiquing current historical-critical scholarship. This type of analysis provides a "depth dimension" that allows us to see the nature of narrative, the places in the text that require explanation and elaboration, and to illuminate the final form. After examining both a critical and canonical approach to the alternation of the divine name (chaps. 6 and 7), Seitz discusses the order, arrangement, and canonical shape of the Law, Prophets, and Writings (chaps. 8–11).

Part 3 consists of theological case studies including the triune name, the theological meaning of Prov 8:22–31, the relationship between Ecclesiastes and Genesis

1–11, the portrayal of Christ’s speech in Hebrews, and the nature of theophanies. These exegetical reflections represent a range of examples of “how the Elder Scripture may be said to pressure forth and open onto a dimension of ontology that finds more explicit articulation in the early church’s confession of One LORD God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (p. 201). The “exegetical impulses” present in these OT passages “may be said to manifest a sustained interest in ontology” and are what “gave rise to the earliest Trinitarian reflections” (p. 261). Seitz relentlessly contends that “the Elder Testament had and has its own providential role in articulating the doctrine of God toward which Trinitarian confession is calibrated” (p. 264). These theological developments “in their own way contribute to the ontological ambition of the Elder Testament’s literal sense witness” (p. 276).

How do these three sections relate to one another? Each series of chapters blends a concern for canon, theology, and the textual witness to God’s Trinitarian nature. Seitz sees these three areas as “interlocking realities” (p. 7). As he explains, the movement of canon to theology to Trinity “is not a strictly sequential track but one ontologically calibrated through time by the one God who is the selfsame subject matter of its two main parts” (p. 9).

This integrated approach can be seen in the question that hangs over every level of discussion in the work: “Can we read this book?” (pp. 51–68). For Seitz, the answer to this question is a qualified yes. We have to become a certain type of reader in order to understand the Elder Testament in its final canonical form and the claims about God’s being it makes “in its own idiom” (p. 277).

Accordingly, while recognizing that canon studies typically discuss literary stabilization and questions of historical development, Seitz focuses in this work on the theological and hermeneutical aspect of canon. He seeks “to ground use of the term in the earliest context of its circulation, that is, arising from reflection on how the scriptures’ many-faceted pieces properly fit together, and how the one God of the scriptures’ first witness is the same one Lord God of the church’s confession” (p. 22).

Hermeneutically, the Elder Testament is “a certain kind of literature that has the right to ask for a readership consistent with itself as literature” (p. 52). Theologically, it is a “privileged lens onto God and a people he has chosen for himself” (p. 52). Given this scenario, Seitz insists, we must be “conscious of our place outside the privileged speech and life of God with his people, as the Old Testament describes this, as central to what it is as a book” (p. 56). The OT “remains powerfully what it is in the form it is reported to us. And God said to Abraham. And God told Moses. The word of the Lord was to Amos” (p. 66). Even as it becomes part of a two-testament witness, the OT “releases its force when we allow the relationship between God and the Israel of God to retain its peculiar immediacy and address” (p. 67). In this recognition, Seitz makes a theological case for reading the OT in its final form.

The complementary move Seitz makes is to affirm that the literal sense of the canonical OT texts makes meaningful statements about who God is as Trinity and his relation to his people. In other words, “The ontology of the Old Testament, that is, how the depiction at the center of the Elder Scripture—the divine life of the

One Lord God YHWH—opens onto and indeed pressures a specifically Christian reading of the triune God as arising from this first scriptural witness” (pp. 35, 183–99). As Seitz contends, “It is the literal sense of the Old Testament that is generating, within its own grammar and syntax, the theological design of ontology” (p. 45). For Seitz, then, “The economic and ontological are mutually reinforcing and impossible to extricate or prioritize” (p. 47).

This volume represents the convergence and synthesis of many of the projects Seitz has been working on his entire career. These major areas of the relevance of historical-critical study of the biblical text, the privileged shape of the final form of the canon, and the theological claims made in these texts have appeared in Seitz’s previous work. In this volume, Seitz demonstrates that these three major tributaries flow into a coherent and integrated stream. For Seitz, canon, theology, and Trinity are not simply terms that mark discrete areas of interest but rather are rooted in the same divine and textual reality. Consequently, this work provides a lens through which to interpret Seitz’s corpus of scholarship on the text and canon of the OT.

For those taking a historical-critical approach, Seitz offers a challenge to recognize the logic of the final form’s witness. For evangelicals who reject historical-critical readings, Seitz offers a challenge to consider the way the canon itself maintains and orders unity and diversity within its textual presentation. Because the burden of Seitz’s book relates to issues of method and hermeneutical foundations, the work will perhaps be less accessible to a casual reader. However, this very feature also makes this contribution a substantive and re-orienting achievement for serious students and scholars of the OT.

Ched Spellman  
Cedarville University, Cedarville, OH

*Reading Scripture Canonically: Theological Instincts for Old Testament Interpretation.* By Mark S. Gignilliat. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019, xvi + 125 pp., \$21.99 paper.

Mark S. Gignilliat offers a thought-provoking exploration of how we might read the OT as Christian Scripture in his most recent book, *Reading Scripture Canonically: Theological Instincts for Old Testament Interpretation*. As professor of divinity at Beeson Divinity School and canon theologian at the Cathedral Church of the Advent (both in Birmingham, Alabama), Gignilliat writes for both the academy and the church. This dual concern drives the overarching question behind the volume: “How and why should we read the material of Scripture—words, sentences, paragraphs, books, and so forth—in conjunction with Scripture’s theological subject matter?” (p. xiv).

Gignilliat answers this question in two distinct but related parts that structure the book. Part 1, entitled “Scripture’s Material Form,” presents a canonical approach to reading Scripture. Gignilliat resists a sharp distinction between the terms *canon* and *Scripture*, instead defining canon as “a broad theological category where multiple matters pertaining to the compositional and editorial processes of biblical

books reside ... not as a term relegated to the conceptual realm of a final list of biblical books” (p. 6). This definition lies behind Gignilliat’s concern with the material form of the OT. Following Brevard S. Childs, Gignilliat privileges the final material form of Hebrew Scriptures because he considers the OT a witness to God.

This commitment to the final form of the OT leads Gignilliat to locate the biblical text’s intentionality in the authorial voice of its final form. He argues that biblical texts need to be “loosened” from their historical particularity so that Scripture can speak to us today. At the same time, Gignilliat recognizes the need to determine which biblical texts we are talking about. Thus, he seeks to integrate textual criticism with the canonical approach. He contends that the textual pluriformity observed in the Dead Sea Scrolls coexisted alongside a uniform textual tradition, the latter of which is behind the Masoretic Text. Gignilliat further argues that, notwithstanding the influence of the Septuagint on the NT, the Hebrew Scriptures as preserved by the Masoretes take privilege over the Septuagint as canon.

Part 2, titled “Scripture’s Subject Matter,” applies Gignilliat’s canonical approach to the doctrine of the Trinity. Specifically, Gignilliat explores whether the OT itself attests to the triune character of God, or whether this understanding is a later Christian imposition. He argues that historicism threatens the relationship between the biblical text and its divine subject matter because it inherently rejects Christian metaphysics and any account of the transcendent. The result, according to Gignilliat, is to collapse two distinct categories—metaphysics and epistemology—into one. Rather than focusing entirely on the historical sense, Gignilliat contends that God’s triune self-revelation encourages us to approach Scripture from the perspective of its original meaning *and* the Bible’s theological subject matter.

Building on this perspective, Gignilliat goes on to argue that the OT supports the doctrine of the Trinity, particularly when it comes to the distinction between person and essence. In making this claim Gignilliat does not mean to say that the biblical authors would have thought of God in trinitarian terms; rather, he contends that they were not always “conceptually aware of the full ontological implications of their prophetic words regarding the divine being” (p. 111). Gignilliat comes to this conclusion through analysis of Gen 32:22–32 and Hos 12:4, which he says depict the man with whom Jacob wrestles as “both an angel and Yhwh, equally and at the same time” (p. 111). In this he largely follows Benjamin D. Sommer’s *Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

*Reading Scripture Canonically* testifies well to Gignilliat’s command of both OT studies and theological interpretation. These two fields are typically kept distinct in the guild, and rarely does a scholar possess enough competency in both disciplines to integrate them. Yet Gignilliat masterfully brings them together in the volume and offers us much food for thought regarding how we might read the OT as Christian Scripture. As such, Gignilliat accomplishes the goal he sets out to achieve in *Reading Scripture Canonically*: to offer some theological instincts on how we might read the material form of Scripture in light of its theological subject matter.

By way of critique, I would have liked to have seen more discussion of how the canon’s shape affects its interpretation. Gignilliat does discuss how textual criticism informs our understanding of Scripture’s material form, concluding that the

Masoretic Text is to be privileged over the Septuagint. Yet, Gignilliat does not explore the important question of how the canon's arrangement might impact our reading of it. The Jewish canon and Christian canon (in its Protestant form) contain the same books, but they present these books in different orders, and their distinct arrangements shape the message of their contents differently. As such, any exploration of how to read Scripture canonically must grapple with the arrangement of the OT canon.

To sum up, *Reading Scripture Canonically* takes an excellent step toward integrating OT studies and theological interpretation. Readers will find much food for thought regarding how the OT's material form relates to its subject matter, even if they disagree with certain points here and there. Gignilliat is to be thanked heartily for encouraging students, scholars, and pastors alike to read the OT as Christian Scripture.

Benjamin J. Noonan

Columbia Biblical Seminary, Columbia, SC

*God of Violence Yesterday, God of Love Today? Wrestling Honestly with the Old Testament.* By Helen Paynter. Abingdon, UK: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 2019, 176 pp., \$23.00 paper.

Years before Helen Paynter helped launch the Centre for the Study of Bible and Violence at Bristol Baptist College (UK), she received a phone call from a church youth leader because a teenager was experiencing a crisis of faith prompted by the distressing violence of the OT (p. 9). Why is there so much bloodshed and judgment in the OT? And how can Christians faithfully read and receive such violent texts without relinquishing their confidence that the God of Israel is the God of love revealed in Jesus Christ? These are scholarly questions with intense pastoral implications, and in *God of Violence Yesterday, God of Love Today?* Paynter offers a treatment that is simultaneously scholarly in its nuance and precision and pastoral in its accessibility and sensitivity to the suffering and perplexed.

Paynter organizes her work into two parts. Part 1 lays a foundation, a set of theological commitments, definitions, and strategies from which questions of OT violence may be constructively engaged. Chapter 1 outlines a conception of Scripture as the trustworthy, Christ-oriented, and unified word of a loving God, demonstrating that the OT "provides the framework, the language and the narrative background to the gospels, the epistles and Revelation" (p. 26) in a manner that invalidates any resurrected Marcionism that would diminish the OT's truthfulness, significance, or authority. With chapter 2, Paynter clarifies the character of violence, revealing its multiplicity of form, its power as a communicative act, its ubiquity, and the influence of narrative framing on its perceived meaning. Offering hermeneutical principles for reading Scripture well, chapter three highlights how attention to biblical theological themes, recognition of genre, and humble wrestling with the OT's challenges to our presuppositions aid in interpretation of violent texts. Paynter's illustrations of the illuminating potential of careful interrogation of allu-

sion, characterization, and narrative repetition are particularly helpful, pushing the reader—or, in the case of instructors, a class—into the text with a new sensibility and set of interpretive resources.

Part 2 distinguishes and investigates several types of OT violence, attending to the varying rhetorical functions, theological rationales, and ethical evaluations of such violence within Scripture. Chapter 4 addresses descriptions of violence and supplies diagnostic questions for determining the narrator's attitude toward events while observing that these oft-disturbing narratives speak truly to the reality of violence, bearing witness to victimizers' sin and victims' suffering. Chapter 5 takes up requests for violence—with a particular focus on the imprecatory psalms—arguing that such prayer may in fact promote repentance and the relinquishment of personal vengeance to a just God and proposing a mode of Christian imprecation that petitions against depersonalized evils rather than human beings, prays on behalf of persecuted others, and cries for the *parousia*. Considering violence against animals, chapter 6 seeks to elucidate the logic of animal involvement in warfare, the flood account, and cultic animal sacrifice, and Paynter makes the incisive observation that the modern world so quick to recoil at the treatment of animals in the OT participates itself in large-scale animal sacrifice, just to different gods. The discussion of violence in Chapter 7 as divine judgment advances the basic argument that “judgment is a good thing” (p. 105), that a sin-filled world is better for being ruled by a God who cares about and executes justice. Chapter 8 investigates divine commands of violence by examining the Israelite conquest of Canaan. Paynter interacts closely with the Waltons' *Lost World of the Israelite Conquest*, commending their (for this reader, questionable) contention that the conquest is not punishment against the Canaanites and articulating the more promising proposal that the conquest is a new creation event whose ethical intelligibility must be understood in terms of God's purposes to bring order to chaos that he may dwell with his people. In my estimation, it is just this sort of pressing into the contours, themes, and structures of the reality defining biblical narrative that is required if imaginations are to be reshaped, if the OT's witness to the conquest specifically and to human mediation of divine judgment more generally is to become not only comprehensible but praise-inducing. The work concludes with a survey of *shalom* as God's over-arching intention for his world.

A work of such modest size, expansive scope, and contested subject matter will inevitably elicit disagreement on certain issues, but refreshingly noteworthy about Paynter's treatment is the candid honesty of her wrestling. Paynter admits where she is unsatisfied with her own proposals (pp. 125–26), where she suspects there is more to be uncovered, and this frankness may encourage readers to continue their wrestling alongside her, undaunted by the difficult reality that these questions concede no easy answers. Paynter even acknowledges where she wishes she could reach conclusions—e.g. that God did not order the conquest (p. 153)—but is constrained by her reading of Scripture, and in this, she models the humble posture she endorses as integral to the quest for understanding. Consciously written with the conflicted teenager who sparked Paynter's inquiry in mind, this work may

be especially suitable as a brief but undoubtedly provocative survey for undergraduate courses.

Trevor Laurence  
University of Exeter, Exeter, Devon, UK

*2 Kings*. By Philip Graham Ryken. Reformed Expository Commentary. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2019, xiv + 460 pp., \$39.99.

It is with great appreciation that I review Philip Graham Ryken's new commentary on *2 Kings* in the Reformed Expository Commentary series. I will proceed with a quick description of the contents of the commentary, some observations concerning felicitous style in the work, some things the commentary does well in its exposition, and some recommendation for the commentary from my perspective and interests.

After the editor's preface and the author's preface, which lay out the aims of the commentary series, which is stated as to be a support to the preaching and teaching ministry of the church, Ryken goes straight to the exposition of the text, with no real introduction to the book of *2 Kings* as a whole. The commentary then follows Ryken's division of the text into two major sections: "Part 1: Elisha: The Prophet Who Followed the Forerunner;" and "Part 2: Rush to Judgment: A Tragedy of Two Kingdoms." The commentary divides the main sections into 31 different passages. The commentary includes a bibliography, two indexes, a Scripture index, and an index of subjects and names.

Ryken expounds the text of *2 Kings* with a mastery of written communication that emerges from decades of preaching these passages in the church. For that reason, each passage is presented in a way that facilitates remembering the main points Ryken wants to communicate. The titles of the sections are pithy and easy to remember, descriptive of the main point of the exposition. For example, the exposition of *2 Kgs* 5:1–18, involving the curing of Naaman the Syrian from leprosy is entitled "The Gospel of Free Grace." The subsections of the exposition are titled "Shared Grace," "Powerful Grace," "Wide Grace," "Free Grace," and "Life-Changing Grace." This leaves readers with no doubt as to what they are to take away from the exposition.

The commentary also incorporates a lot from popular culture, from U2's *Bono*, to *Star Wars 3: The Revenge of the Sith*. It also incorporates historical events and traditional hymns. These references help readers to connect with the biblical text.

I believe Ryken is at his strongest in the times he takes a truly canonical approach in his commentary and extends his exposition into the NT. He does this often enough, but it is a welcome feature that could be done even more. An example of this treatment is his exposition on the coronation of King Joash in *2 Kgs* 11:1–21. His exposition on the *2 Kings* passage leads to a meditation on Christ the King, in which he draws parallels between the Joash narrative and the depiction of Jesus in both the Gospel narratives and in the Epistles. He concludes it with a

comment concerning the Church's awaiting the day when "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever" (Rev 11:15; pp. 211–12).

Another thing the commentary does well is apply the text of 2 Kings to contemporary theological problems and pastoral concerns, such as his treatment of the story of the Syrian general Naaman in 2 Kgs 5:1–18. Ryken discusses the important theological and pastoral concern of how a new believer should practice faith in an environment that may be inimical to the life of faith (p. 106). It is an example of being "in" the world, but not "of" the world.

The exposition in Ryken's commentary models an appropriately judicious use of Hebrew in preaching. As I worked my way through the commentary, I was struck by how seldom Ryken directly appeals to the Hebrew text. This is a good model for preachers. At times, though, it seems this would be useful. An example of where more exposition of the Hebrew text would be welcome is 2 Kings 18, in which Hezekiah is said to have trusted in the Lord unlike any before or after him. The Hebrew term used for trust here is a key theological term in this passage, which contains a large majority of its uses in the OT narrative, along with the parallel passages in Isaiah 36–37. Trust has always seemed to me to be too passive of a translation for the term, and perhaps "rely" would be a better translation than "trust." Hezekiah is commended for actively relying on the Lord, rather than more passively trusting in him.

Philip Ryken's commentary avoids the historical critical discussion that takes up some space in most commentaries, including those more geared toward preaching, such as the Preacher's Commentary Series published by Thomas Nelson. This is in a certain sense to be expected, as the Reformed Expository Commentary is geared toward preaching and teaching in the church, where such issues often muddy the waters when incorporated too much into a sermon, in a similar fashion that talking about the Hebrew text too much does. It seems an introduction to these issues that informs the preacher or teacher may be useful. An example of how this sort of introduction may be useful is in the discussion of the placement of the fall of Samaria in 2 Kings 17 next to 2 Kings 18–19, the miraculous rescue of Jerusalem. Some insight into the rhetorical organization of the book in relation to its overall message would be helpful.

One such issue is whether the text of 2 Kings has a larger role in narrative that stretches from Joshua to 2 Kings, and the reason behind its compilation. A discussion of the motivations of the authors or editors of the book of 2 Kings can inform how the ancient readers understood the text, and inform the contemporary preacher and teacher in the Church. Fortunately, there are other commentary series that discuss those issues.

Ryken draws upon an array of both pastoral and academic resources when writing this commentary from a variety of perspectives, from Charles Swindoll to Walter Brueggemann.

One major resource he seems to have overlooked, though, is Lissa M. Wray Beal's commentary on 1 and 2 Kings from the Apollos OT Commentary series.



This is a relatively major evangelical commentary, so it seems an important oversight.

Overall, Ryken's volume on 2 Kings will guide preachers and teachers in the Church to faithfully expound Christ, and give pastoral guidance. In the classroom, it would be a good text for a class on expository preaching from the OT.

Joel Hamme

William Carey International University, Pasadena, CA

*Walking the Ancient Paths: A Commentary on Jeremiah.* By Walter C. Kaiser Jr., with Tiberius Rata. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2019, xvi + 633 pp., \$49.99.

*Walking the Ancient Paths* is a new and ambitious commentary on the book of Jeremiah, authored by Walter C. Kaiser Jr. (Colman M. Mockler Distinguished Professor Emeritus of OT and former President of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary) with Tiberius Rata (associate dean of the School of Ministry Studies and professor of OT Studies at Grace Seminary). Kaiser and Rata bring a wealth of experience, knowledge, and insight to the lengthy and weighty book of Jeremiah, making the book accessible to a modern audience. The commentary is intended for "pastors, scholars, and serious students of the Bible" (back cover). These and many others will benefit from the pages of this volume.

*Walking the Ancient Paths* begins with a general introduction to the book of Jeremiah. In this introduction, Kaiser and Rata cover background information that is helpful for understanding and interpreting the book of Jeremiah, including such topics as Jeremiah's life, the historical background for the book, the composition of the book, and significant theological themes addressed in the book of Jeremiah, such as the God of creation, the God of love, the God of pathos, and God's use of historical means to accomplish his will. The introduction also includes an outline of the book of Jeremiah and a bibliography of commentaries Kaiser and Rata employ frequently in their work.

Following the introductory materials is the commentary proper. Kaiser and Rata separate the book of Jeremiah into eight major sections (prologue; the personal struggles of the prophet; increasing unbelief and opposition; the restoration of Israel and Judah to the land; the call for faithfulness; the siege, fall, and aftermath in Jerusalem; prophecies against nine nations; and the fall of Jerusalem). Each section is then divided into subunits, usually about a chapter in length. For each subunit or chapter, Kaiser and Rata typically offer a brief introduction to the content and significance of the passage, often including notes on the basic structure and organization. After the introduction comes an original translation of the passage with annotations as necessary. The authors then present a verse-by-verse commentary on the passage, paying careful attention to word usage, textual issues, and interpretive issues that would help the modern audience understand and appreciate the text. At the end of the verse-by-verse commentary for each passage, Kaiser and Rata offer a paragraph or two of devotional insights that help the audience apply the text to their lives.

Following the commentary is a series of four excurses that cover a few interesting topics related to the book of Jeremiah. In 1–2 pages each, these excurses discuss information and research that illuminate our understanding of the ark of the covenant, the Queen of Heaven, the Hebrew phrase *shub shebut*, and Topheth, especially as these topics relate to the book of Jeremiah. The book ends with a brief glossary of fourteen important but perhaps unfamiliar technical words used in the commentary, a comprehensive general bibliography, and a Scripture index.

This commentary on Jeremiah by Kaiser and Rata has many strengths. First, the translation is insightful and true to the Hebrew original, while annotating significant textual issues that arise from a comparison with other ancient texts, especially the Septuagint (LXX). Related to this, the authors' knowledge of Hebrew and familiarity with the LXX greatly enrich the verse-by-verse commentary as they expound on the meaning, frequency, and theological significance of various words and phrases, based on the original languages and primary manuscripts. For example, in their discussion of Jer 27:16–22, they note how the LXX leaves out many of the hopeful references included in the Masoretic Text and as a result presents a "much gloomier view of what is about to happen" (p. 320).

Moreover, the verse-by-verse commentary also offers other helpful information and discussion. In the case of an issue for which the interpretation is frequently disputed, the authors present the main scholarly views on the issue and then explain their preferred position. This approach effectively guides the readers through some of the challenging passages and issues and yet gives them the opportunity to think critically and come to their own conclusions on the matter. For example, in their introduction to the Book of Consolation in the center of the book of Jeremiah (chaps. 30–33), Kaiser and Rata present three different theories regarding when Jeremiah received this part of his prophecy. The brief discussion alerts the readers to an important interpretive question and discusses the primary answers to the problem. While the authors clearly explain why they hold to a position in the middle (neither early nor late), they present evidence for all of the possibilities and ultimately allow the readers to examine the evidence and make their own decisions.

Finally, the excurses at the end of the volume offer an informative discussion of various subjects that are somewhat unique to the book of Jeremiah. These sections serve as enrichment for the readers and allow for a more in-depth look at some theologically significant topics. Of particular interest to the prophet Jeremiah were the abominable practices related to worshipping the Queen of Heaven and offering child sacrifices at Topheth. Because these are not frequently mentioned outside of the book of Jeremiah, Kaiser and Rata do well to further describe who and what these are, how they are related to the wider Israelite and ancient Near Eastern culture, and why they are so vehemently condemned by the prophet. The other topics addressed in the excurses are similarly significant and helpful.

While Kaiser and Rata's volume is informative, thoughtful, and useful, their commentary also has a few issues that detract from its quality. First, while the commentary does include a discussion at the end of each section expressing how the passage might be applied to the life of the readers, the applications are quite short, usually only a paragraph or two in length. Therefore, these applications often

end up lacking the depth of discussion in spiritual formation that they could potentially have for the modern readers. Moreover, the application points can be rather self-evident or even cliché at times. For example, at the end of the story of Jeremiah and Hananiah's confrontation over the yoke (Jeremiah 27–28), Kaiser and Rata present three sentences of application that can be summarized as, "Don't lie about God's word like Hananiah did or you could suffer judgment also." While this may be true, it seems a little flat.

In addition to benefiting from richer application points, the commentary would also be improved by the addition of a of general word index. The Scripture index is useful, but an index that covers important words and topics could be quite useful for the audience. Finally, the volume suffers from a number of editorial errors that seem to be more than what would be expected, including some typographical errors, misspellings, and the misplacement of a few sentences under the wrong headings. One cannot expect a perfect printing, but fewer errors of this sort would be better.

In spite of the shortcomings noted above, this commentary on Jeremiah by Kaiser and Rata is a useful and valuable tool for students, pastors, and those who wish to gain a deeper understanding of this challenging but rich prophetic book. Kaiser and Rata's understanding of Hebrew, textual issues, and the details of the text combine to give us an insightful and beneficial study of this portion of Scripture. This commentary should be included in the library of anyone interested in a serious, in-depth study of Jeremiah.

Jennifer E. Noonan

Columbia International University, Columbia, SC

*How New Is the New Testament? First-Century Judaism and the Emergence of Christianity.* By Donald A. Hagner. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018, xii + 211 pp., \$22.99 paper.

*How New Is the New Testament?* originated as a lecture series presented at the Asian Pacific Theological Seminary in Baguio, Philippines in January 2016. The audience for the lecture series included seminary faculty, staff, and students from across East Asia, while the book itself engages a scholarly debate regarding the extent to which the early Christ-believing community stood in continuity with Judaism. Whereas a growing number of scholars conclude that the early Christ-believing community is best understood as a Jewish sect that did not become separate from Judaism until at least the fourth century of the Common Era, Hagner posits an earlier and more dramatic separation between early Judaism and Christianity on the basis of his reading of newness, and hence discontinuity, in NT texts.

Hagner's exploration of the "issue of continuity and discontinuity between formative Judaism and early Christianity" (p. 11) takes shape in a wide-ranging survey of how the various texts of the NT stand in both continuity and discontinuity with the OT. While the survey format makes the book accessible to non-specialists,

Hagner also addresses the interests of a scholarly audience. Accordingly, the study will appeal to a relatively broad readership.

In the first chapter, Hagner provides a brief literature review to illustrate the current tendency in some scholarly circles to focus almost exclusively on the continuity between Judaism and Christianity. With a particular emphasis on the study of Paul, Hagner traces the work of proponents of the so-called “New Perspective on Paul” (e.g. Sanders, Dunn, Wright) and subsequently notes the current trend to situate the Christ-believing Paul squarely within Judaism (e.g. Nanos, Eisenbaum). According to Hagner, those who overlook the newness that pervades NT texts are influenced by an ideological concern: they wish to overturn the anti-Jewish tendencies of the church. While not discounting this sentiment, Hagner aims to correct what he perceives as undue stress upon continuity.

In chapters 2 through 4, Hagner examines the themes of newness and discontinuity throughout the Synoptic Gospels and Acts. In chapter 2, Hagner illustrates how newness emerges in Mark and Matthew, above all, through the announcement of the eschatological kingdom in the ministry of Jesus: “The coming of the Messiah, the Son of the living God, into history puts us into a *new time frame*” (p. 31, emphasis original; cf. p. 175). Hagner further highlights how, in these Gospels, Jesus is depicted as a *new* teacher who inaugurates a *new* covenant, which cannot be contained in the old covenant—just as old wineskins cannot contain new wine (Mark 2:21–22; cf. Matt 9:16–17). In chapters 3 and 4, Hagner cites the theme of fulfillment in Luke-Acts as a particularly poignant marker of both continuity and discontinuity. While dependence upon the OT in Luke-Acts serves as a strong indicator of continuity, Hagner also sees discontinuity in Luke’s assertion that Jesus fulfilled OT promises in an unexpected way—through his death and resurrection (e.g. Luke 24:21, 25–27, 44–45). Hagner claims that discontinuity also finds expression in the book of Acts through the portrayal of a growing gap between the Christ-believing community and non-Christ-believing Jews. In Hagner’s reading, Luke paints a picture of the church—comprised of Jews and non-Jews—as the new people of God and heir of scriptural promises originally made to Jews.

In chapter 5, Hagner argues that the Christology of the Johannine writings marks a division between Christ-believers and Jews: “The contrast between the old and new, between Christianity and Judaism, appears mainly through the claims of, or about, Jesus and the rejection of these claims by unbelieving Jews” (p. 96). Based on his assumption that the Gospel of John was written later than the Synoptic Gospels, he concludes that its more developed Christology reflects a clearer rift between Jews and non-Jews.

Chapter 6 explores how the Pauline letters express discontinuity, primarily through a discussion of key events and themes: Paul’s “conversion” to Christianity (Galatians); the contrast between faith and the Mosaic Law (Galatians, Romans, Ephesians); the emphasis upon the new creation and the inauguration of a new covenant (Romans, 1–2 Corinthians); claims about the exalted nature of Jesus (Philippians, Colossians); and the presentation of the church as the new people of God (Romans, 1 Corinthians, Colossians, Ephesians).

In chapters 7 and 8, Hagner discusses similar markers of discontinuity in his survey of Hebrews (e.g. high Christology, a new covenant, a better sacrifice), the Catholic letters (e.g. the perfect law of liberty in James, the new people of God in 1 Peter), and Revelation (new creation and the consummation of God's plan). Finally, in chapter 9, Hagner discusses the significance of "newness" terminology in the NT (e.g. new covenant, new commandment, new exodus, new song). Here he also reiterates key themes from the NT that, in his view, provide overwhelming evidence of discontinuity: references to the dawning of the eschatological era, expressions of a high Christology, and descriptions of non-Jews as members of the people of God. While Hagner emphasizes the newness of the NT, he rightly recognizes how continuity and discontinuity overlap with and inform each other: "the new belongs to the old. It grows out of the old, and in the new the old finds its ultimate meaning" (p. 171).

Although I am sympathetic to Hagner's overall aim of illustrating the newness of the NT, his methodology limits his effectiveness in achieving the stated goal of the book. In the opening chapter, Hagner announces that his study will "examine the issue of continuity and discontinuity between formative Judaism and early Christianity" (p. 11). This introductory statement raises the expectation that he will explore the ways in which early Christian texts stand in continuity and discontinuity with other early Jewish writings. Indeed, the subtitle of the book (*First-Century Judaism and the Emergence of Christianity*) implies as much.

While Hagner's investigation of how NT texts stand in continuity and discontinuity with the OT represents a significant area of research, a book about the emergence of Christianity within the context of first-century Judaism requires a careful examination of how the NT *and* other early Jewish texts interpret the Scriptures of Israel. It seems difficult to assert, for example, that the Christology of the NT is entirely new without first outlining how its descriptions of the identity, teaching, and ministry of Messiah Jesus stand out as distinct from other contemporaneous messianic claims. Similarly, the NT interpretation of OT prophecy and Mosaic Law cannot be regarded as unique without a consideration of the differences between how the NT and other early Jewish texts appropriate parallel passages from the Jewish Scriptures. Since both the NT and early Jewish texts interpret the heritage and Scriptures of the Jewish people in startlingly novel ways, we cannot assume that newness emerges only in the NT. In short, a study that seeks to demonstrate the discontinuity between first-century Judaism and the NT cannot simply show discontinuity between the OT and NT; it must also offer compelling evidence of a contrast between how NT authors and other early Jewish exegetes configure the relationship between the Jewish Scriptures and their own groups.

Beyond this, I am not entirely convinced by Hagner's assertion that the theme of fulfillment in the NT inevitably signals discontinuity (e.g. pp. 41, 72–73, 157). In his discussion of the birth narratives in Luke 1–2, for example, Hagner rightly demonstrates how Luke underscores the continuity between his account and the scriptural promises made to Israel. When Hagner attempts to show how Luke 1–2 also expresses discontinuity with the OT, however, he simply points to the declaration of the fulfillment of OT promises in the birth of Jesus (p. 41). In what sense do

such announcements of fulfillment indicate discontinuity? Rather than offering evidence directly from Luke 1–2, Hagner advances his argument by inferring that Luke applies the promises for Israel to the church “as the new or true Israel” (p. 42)—a claim that Luke–Acts itself does not corroborate.

Notwithstanding these weaknesses, the volume offers an accessible survey of newness in the NT. When assigned alongside other studies that address the complexity of this subject, the book could serve as a helpful text for a college or seminary class. It also provides a corrective to scholarly works that emphasize continuity between Judaism and the NT but neglect important points of discontinuity between early Christian and Jewish thought.

Susan Wendel

Horizon College and Seminary, Saskatoon, SK

*Can We Trust the Gospels?* By Peter J. Williams. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018, 153 pp., \$14.99 paper.

This small volume by Peter Williams delivers a big answer on the question posed by its title: *Can We Trust the Gospels?* Several have attempted to answer this question—Williams lists several books that address the historical veracity of the Gospels (p. 13, n. 1). Unlike these other treatments, Williams’s focus is on those who are thinking about the subject for the first time. The format and style of the book are geared for a layperson introduced to these questions. Throughout the book, Williams emphasizes that his point is to show the reliability of the Gospel narratives, not prove individual stories. Each chapter provides a broad analysis. For more information, interested readers can follow his footnotes.

Williams is an able guide. He traces details such as the variation in spelling “Christian” in Greek throughout the earliest manuscript history, the normal rainfall in the city of Tiberius as it relates to the Gospel narratives, and the history of quotation marks. However, he presents all of this in a way that is accessible. You could give this book to any of your neighbors and engage them in some of the more critical issues that Williams raises.

After a short introduction, each chapter of the book presents a different question as it pertains to the reliability of the Gospels. The first chapter raises the question: “What Do Non-Christian Sources Say?” In this chapter, Williams traces descriptions of Christianity from Tacitus, Pliny, and Josephus, writers without a bias toward Christianity, and in the case of Tacitus and Pliny, hostile to Christianity. Despite these passing references, we can learn quite a bit. From Tacitus and Pliny, we learn that Christianity spread quickly throughout the Roman Empire. Pliny, who wrote in the early second century provides the details of a first-century Christian worship service, where believers worshiped Christ as a God. The significance of Josephus’s description is that James, Jesus’s brother, was a part of the early Christian community where he could serve as a resource for those who wrote the earliest Gospels.

The second major chapter asks: “What Are the Four Gospels?” In this chapter, Williams investigates the character of the Gospels themselves. A comparison with the Gospels as a historical record of Jesus with the historical record of Tiberius, the emperor who reigned during Jesus’s ministry, shows the historical value of the Gospels. The evangelists wrote an account focused on Jesus and his ministry a few decades after his death. Other historians wrote nearly a century after Tiberius’s reign. In addition, they focused on the time period, not specifically on Tiberius. Williams presents the Synoptic Problem and the possible dates for the Gospels. He does not reach any firm conclusion. Rather, he highlights the fact that the Gospel writers used materials and therefore the fact that multiple authors were working with the Jesus tradition. Even a more critical date allows the Gospel writers to be a part of the earliest generation of Christians.

The third question that Williams addresses is “Did the Gospel Authors Know Their Stuff?” The chapter investigates the details of the Gospel stories, showing that the Gospel writers were familiar with the area and time of Jesus’s ministry, or else accurately reported stories from those who were familiar with the area. Williams looks at place names, personal names, specific roads, gardens, bodies of water, botanical terms, and financial terms. These subtle details add weight to his point. For instance, each Gospel writer contains a number of obscure locations—twenty-six in total—that could only come from an insider. There are a number of common locations, but each Gospel contains unique place names, suggesting that each writer has access to this knowledge. This subtle point becomes stronger in light of the noncanonical Gospels. *The Gospel of Thomas* mentions Judea and *the Gospel of Philip* names Jerusalem, Nazara, and Jordan. With reference to the noncanonical evidence Williams states: “It must be appreciated how truly unimpressive this is” (p. 63). In the same way, personal names in the Gospels suggest that the writers had knowledge of the time. The most popular Jewish names in Israel during this time correlate with the names found in the Gospels. When we encounter the most popular names, such as Simon or Mary, the Gospel writers add an element to disambiguate them from others, such as their father’s name or vocation, indicating the popularity of these names. The Gospel writers even used a disambiguator for Jesus, which would drop throughout the early part of Christianity. Williams argues that their presentation gives the sense that they reported names the way that they were used during Jesus’s life.

The next chapter raises several “Undesigned Coincidences,” based on Lydia McGrew’s work *Hidden in Plain View: Undesigned Coincidences in the Gospels and Acts* (Chillicothe, OH: DeWard, 2017). For example, Luke 10:38–42 reports the story of Martha and Mary. Martha is busy serving, while Mary is sitting at Jesus’s feet. We find Mary and Martha in John as well. After Lazarus’s death, Jesus comes to the family. Martha runs out to meet him, while Mary remains seated (John 11:20). The stories are unique, but both narratives seem to characterize Mary as inactive and Martha as practical. Williams concludes that the argument of undesigned coincidences is cumulative: “the complexity of alternative explanations therefore becomes apparent as more examples are considered” (p. 91).

The fifth question: “Do We Have Jesus’s Actual Words?” addresses the issue of *ipissima verba* and *ipissima vox*—do the Gospels contain the very *words* of Jesus or the *voice* of Jesus? Williams begins the chapter by distinguishing truthful reporting in antiquity and the modern convention of “bounded quotations.” Ancient historians generally reported indirect discourse as they presented speeches. Williams argues that the material itself suggests that Jesus is the point of departure for the material. For example, unique parables appear in each Synoptic Gospel. Parables were rare before Jesus’s ministry and waned in early Christianity. Jesus’s use of parables fit within the time period of his ministry. In light of this, for Williams, it is easier to posit that the parable material came from a single teacher than that three different sources read the parable material back into the life of Jesus.

The sixth question: “Has the Text Changed?” raises some issues about the textual history of the Gospels. Williams first looks at how much the Gospel text has changed since 1516 when Erasmus worked on his edition of the Greek NT. Erasmus used two manuscripts from the twelfth century to complete his edition of the NT. Several thousand manuscripts have been found since, but the text of the NT has changed very little. The most obvious changes are the longer ending of Mark and the story of the woman caught in adultery (John 7:53–8:11); however, even though Erasmus included these texts, he was aware of doubts about both of these texts. Williams concludes: “In other words, the most learned man on earth in the sixteenth century would not have been surprised by any discoveries in the last five centuries that have called these verses into question” (p. 114). Williams also addresses the possibility of the text changing in the first or second century. While it is impossible to know with certainty, Williams reminds us that we should assume that scribes most likely copied the text before the third century like they would after the third century. In fact, because we have four Gospels and because the text spread so quickly, it would have been impossible for someone to make a significant change to the text.

The seventh question is “What about Contradictions?” The chapter is short. Half of the chapter presents a number of statements from the Gospel of John that seemingly contradict each other. Williams argues that contradictions within a book, particularly within the same context, require the reader to understand both statements at a deeper level. Without showing any possible contradictions between two Gospels, Williams concludes that he knows of no contradiction that cannot be resolved. This rationale may keep Williams from giving more examples, but it would have been nice to see other types of possible contradictions—contradictions between two different Gospels or between the Gospels and Josephus.

The last chapter raises the question: “Who Would Make All This Up?” The first part of the chapter addresses the probability of miracles, particularly the resurrection. In response to an atheistic, materialistic worldview that regards the existence of the miraculous to be too hard to believe, Williams argues that the majority of humanity finds no difficulty with miracles. The pattern of the Gospels themselves suggest that they were a part of Jesus’s ministry. The alternative is too hard to believe.



In short, the book delivers on its promises. Even though Williams might be able to go a little further in some areas, the strength of the book is its conciseness. The book raises a host of issues surrounding the Gospels and provides enough information to challenge some of the more skeptical conclusions and encourage interested readers to engage the Gospels directly as trustworthy witnesses to Jesus and his ministry. Williams concludes the book with a “simple supposition,” but one that is not “small” (p. 140). If the Gospels present Jesus’s ministry and claims about him with accuracy, then the reader has to respond to his call: “Follow me.”

Benjamin I. Simpson

Dallas Theological Seminary, Washington, DC

*Jesus the Priest*. By Nicholas Perrin. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018, xx + 345 pp., \$32.00 paper.

*Jesus the Priest* represents the second installment in a proposed three-volume series on the historical Jesus by Nicholas Perrin (the first volume being *Jesus the Temple* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010]). In this new work, Perrin argues that the historical Jesus conceived of himself as the *ex officio* eschatological high priest of a counter-temple movement (p. xiv). Perrin also contends that Jesus considered his disciples priests of the same movement. Perrin attempts to make this case by moving in two directions. First, he traces the background of priestly themes forward from the Hebrew Bible to the time of Jesus. Then, he works backward from the early church to the historical Jesus, using passages most scholars consider authentic. This results in a hypothetical trajectory on which he plots the development of Jesus’s priesthood. Perrin’s thesis implicitly supports an argument for continuity between Jesus and his depiction in the NT, and it provides a path toward understanding the relationship between Jesus’s humanity and divinity.

Perrin argues his thesis along several lines. Since Israel is described as Yahweh’s son in the Hebrew Bible (e.g. Exod 4:23) and Israel was to be a “kingdom of priests” (Exod 19:6), Perrin considers the disciples’ call to God as Father in the Lord’s Prayer a recognition of their status as priests (p. 43). He thus contends that the Lord’s Prayer is a petition aimed at preparing Jesus’s eschatological priests for the coming trials of the tribulation. He associates this with a reading of Ezekiel 36 in light of the petition that God’s name be hallowed on earth. Perrin concludes that in the Lord’s Prayer the disciples “were asking Yahweh to effect the eschatological restoration of Israel’s priestly office and cultic space in their very midst” (p. 43). This type of eschatological reading is present throughout the book and is its primary strength.

Next, Perrin contends that Jesus’s baptism “was first and foremost about priesthood” (p. 90). In essence, his baptism—and by extension his command to baptize his disciples (Matt 28:18–20)—served as a consecration for priestly service. Perrin constructs this argument from allusions to Psalm 2 and Genesis 22 in the voice from heaven at Jesus’s baptism. Though Psalm 2 is traditionally considered a statement of royal coronation, Perrin finds the Psalm invested with priestly signifi-

cance (p. 71). He then concludes that the presence of the Spirit in Jesus's ministry was, for Matthew, a sign that Jesus was "the human repository for the Spirit," and therefore "Jesus is the temple" (p. 82; he argues similarly with respect to Luke: p. 86). Perrin also argues that the Transfiguration in Mark 9:2–13 would have been understood by its earliest readers to indicate a priestly role for Jesus, since Moses functioned as a priest for Israel on Sinai (p. 78). As a priest, Jesus's role in securing sacred space, according to Perrin, supports a priestly interpretation of Jesus's mission. In support of this, Perrin reads *Psalms of Solomon* 17 as referring to a priestly deliverer rather than a royal one.

Perrin then provides a priestly-eschatological reading of three key authentic teachings of Jesus: the sower, the salt, and the beatitudes. He concludes that four elements of "Ezekiel's return-from-exile vision—restoration of cultic space, the establishment of a new priestly class, cleansing from idols, and the issuance of the Spirit—were also vital elements for the historical Jesus's mission" (p. 140). Throughout this discussion, Perrin argues for several images and concepts (seed, salt, and blessing) used by Jesus as depictions of him and his followers' role as eschatological priests.

In chapters 4 and 5, Perrin anticipates an objection to his interpretation of "Son of God" in relation to the exodus tradition (see above). Specifically, he addresses the traditional perspective that this title would have been understood as referring to Jesus as the "son of David" or "Son of Man" (p. 144). He confirms this likely would have been the case but argues that both of these terms would have entailed priestly ideology. He begins by reinterpreting the David tradition in priestly terms, arguing that David's consumption of the Bread of the Presence in 1 Samuel 21 "raises the possibility that David had certain priestly rights after all" (p. 153). Perrin also notes how the ark narrative (2 Samuel 6) and efforts to appease God after the census (2 Samuel 24) demonstrate David's priestly function. In support of this point, Perrin marshals evidence from Psalm 110, in which the association of kingship with Melchizedek the priest "betrays intensifying expectation for a coming *priestly* son of David" (p. 161; emphasis original). With respect to the "son of David" tradition, Perrin concludes that "for the historical Jesus, to be the 'son of David' was to take on the ephod of the eschatological priest" (p. 163).

Next, Perrin addresses the concern that the title "Son of Man" does not cohere with his priestly interpretation of the historical Jesus. Perrin argues that the Son of Man in the book of Daniel represents "the eschatological resolution to a very specific problem: the defiled temple under Antiochus IV" (p. 167). Thus, Perrin states, the Son of Man would have been understood by ancient readers as a "royal-priestly figure," sitting "at the right hand of the Ancient of Days within the temple sanctuary" (p. 182). Perrin claims this understanding would have extended to the historical Jesus, who offered forgiveness collocated with the Son of Man title in Mark 2 as an expression of his priestly function.

Finally, Perrin includes a discussion of three events attributed to Jesus that demonstrate how his eschatological priesthood shaped "his life in the day-to-day" (p. 190). In this context he addresses the Sabbath-grain controversy (Mark 2; the grain meal is a sacred meal), the homelessness of the Son of Man (Matt 8:20//Luke

9:58; Jesus is like Jacob, who wandered and founded a sacred space), and the ascription of wisdom to Jesus (Matt 11:16–19//Luke 7:31–35; Jesus is wisdom, which is the domain of the high priest). The concluding chapter of the book considers the trial of Jesus, which Perrin considers the final announcement of Jesus's priesthood (p. 261). Perrin claims that the blasphemy charge leveled against Jesus at the trial was sourced in "his own identity as the royal-priestly Son of Man, in flat contradiction to the high priest's *de facto* tenure" (p. 276). Thus, Jesus was indicted on claims of rivalry and judgment against Caiaphas (p. 277).

There are several strengths to this work. Perrin's book tugs on a fresh strand of research into the function and perception of the priesthood in the first century by challenging the traditional divisions between the concepts of prophet, priest, and king in messianic discourse. Additionally, Perrin offers a consistently eschatological reading of the historical Jesus tradition. It is rare to find a work that so thoroughly applies an eschatological lens to the ministry of Jesus. For this, the work is to be commended. In summary, several arguments found in this book have not been offered anywhere else; the work therefore deserves careful consideration and response.

Yet, Perrin wrote this as a work of history (p. xiv). As such, it has several weaknesses. As history, the results of his research should be open to inquiry by anyone using the tools of historical-critical investigation. In line with evangelical theological commitments, however, Perrin gives a privileged place to the canonical connection between the Hebrew Bible and the NT. Rather than supporting arguments using material contemporary with the NT, Perrin's arguments often require the Hebrew Bible to serve as a direct backdrop for Jesus's self-understanding (e.g. Perrin's discussion of "salt" in the Hebrew Bible; p. 118). This limits the impact of Perrin's work to the realm of evangelical theology rather than history. Perrin's argument, therefore, would have been strengthened by providing more detailed analysis of relevant non-biblical sources. The result of this weakness is that many of his arguments—including his overall thesis—remain unconvincing. At the end of the work, the reader is forced to question whether the category of "priest *ex officio*" (p. xiv) would have been intelligible in Jesus's context. Unfortunately, Perrin's lines of argumentation were often difficult to follow, especially when he sacrificed clarity on the altar of rhetorical cleverness. Due to these factors, it remains to be seen whether this work will make a significant impact in mainstream study of the historical Jesus.

Perrin's work is best described as a priestly reading of the Bible and the historical Jesus tradition. The book could be helpful as a biblical theology that assumes significant continuity between the Hebrew Bible and the NT. From the perspective of evangelical theology, it is possible to make such claims. From a strictly historical perspective, however, the evidence cannot stand under the weight of Perrin's arguments.

Andrew J. Cress

London School of Theology, Northwood, UK

*The Writings of Luke and the Jewish Roots of the Christian Way: An Examination of the Aims of the First Historian in the Light of Ancient Politics, Ethnography, and Historiography.* By J. Andrew Cowan. Library of NT Studies 599. London: T&T Clark, 2019, xvi + 209 pp., \$114.00.

Cowan's work is a welcome addition to the growing number of monographs since World War II that trace the Jewish roots of the Lukan writings. His main objective is to show "that Luke's primary intention in pointing to Christianity's Jewish roots is to demonstrate to his readers that the events that have taken place in the life of Jesus and the early church are legitimate developments within God's salvific plan" (p. 22). For Cowan, Luke's concern is theological rather than sociocultural or political.

The Jewish people were the subject of criticism at the hands of ancient historians like Tacitus, who described the Jewish customs as "absurd and foul" (*Hist.* 5.5). Such negative evaluations were often considered to be the primary reason why many ancient Jewish writers saw the need to defend the Jewish people from their accusers. The assumption is that antiquity was often used in ancient times as a "key criterion in judging legitimacy and value" (p. 1); and those who defended the Jewish race argued in the same way. On this basis, Luke's attempt to trace the Christians' roots to Judaism was also construed as a sociocultural or political apologetic by some earlier scholars who studied Luke's writings.

A commonly held assumption is that the ancient Jews (or ancient people in general) valued antiquity more than novelty. By inference, Luke's purpose in appealing to the ancient Jewish Scripture and tradition and his attempt to link Christianity to Judaism was to legitimize the Christian movement. Following the steps of Peter Pilhofer and Susan Wendel, Cowan questions this assumption (pp. 18–20). He does so by comparing Luke-Acts with Dionysius of Halicarnassus's *Roman Antiquities* and Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities*.

A comparison between Luke-Acts and Greco-Roman or Hellenistic Jewish historical narratives has been a common practice in Lukan studies. The three ancient writers Cowan examines have at least one thing in common: they all traced the ancient roots of their respective subjects; for Dionysius, the Romans; for Josephus, his Jewish contemporaries; and for Luke, the early Christians. Cowan attempts to show that the three writers did essentially the same thing and that, while their objectives were diverse, they shared a common disinterest in appealing to antiquity for legitimizing claims.

Cowan begins with Dionysius's *Roman Antiquities*. In his preface, Dionysius explains his goal, "to justify Roman rule by refuting alternative and derogatory accounts of Rome's history" (p. 25). Dionysius debunks the idea that the Romans' rise to power was "not by piety, righteousness, or other virtues, but by chance and unrighteous fortune randomly giving the best of good things to the worst people" (*Ant. rom.* 1.4.2). The Romans were stereotyped as having descended from barbarians and, in this way, as undeserving of the power they possessed at that time. To justify their rule, Dionysius shows that they were "legitimate heirs of the ancient Greek tradition and that they are the most virtuous people among the Greeks" (p.

26). This implies that the Romans, being heirs of the Greeks, possess the same cultural sophistication, thereby having the DNA of ancient rulers of the world. Dionysius argues his case by showing that: (1) the earliest Romans descended from Greek immigrants; (2) Rome preserved the Greek tradition better than other Greek colonies; and (3) they possessed superior virtues as seen in their constitution, laws, and policies (p. 27). Dionysius maintains that the five waves of ancient immigrants to Rome, namely, the Aborigines, the Pelasgians, Evander and the Arcadians, Hercules, and Aeneas and the Trojans, have Greek ancestry (pp. 29–33). His claim that no other nation is more ancient than the Greeks (*Ant. rom.* 1.89.2) suggests that the Romans were of “venerable heritage whose value has proven the test of time” (p. 34). Although the customs they had were intermixed with barbaric ones because of the migration of some groups to Rome, the Greeks’ virtuous tradition was maintained (*Ant. rom.* 1.89.3) as seen in Rome’s way of life and adherence to the religious customs of the Greeks (pp. 45–54). Cowan concludes that antiquity, albeit important, was not the factor that decides whether one is respectable. Rome’s lineage and their way of life were the real determinants of respectability.

Cowan argues for a similar case for Josephus. Josephus claims that by the time he wrote the *Antiquities*, the Jews could already look back to a five-thousand-year history (*A.J.* 1.13). Cowan submits that the historian’s “claim that the demonstration of Jewish antiquity was a part of his agenda in *A.J.* is best taken at face value” (p. 62). Nevertheless, he posits that the argument that antiquity is a major theme in *A.J.* is disputable (p. 60). Josephus’s primary objective is to make the readers develop a greater appreciation of Jewish laws and develop a more positive view of the Jews (p. 59). The ancientness of the Jewish people points to the origin of a civilized culture, and the fact that the Jewish laws can be traced back a few millennia only shows the virtuousness of the Jews had already been proven (*C. Ap.* 2.151). Josephus’s sanitized and embellished rewriting of OT history was done in defense of the major figures of the OT, like Moses and Jacob, against many incorrect or inaccurate stories about them. The pious lives of the great men and women in Jewish past attest to the nobility of Jewish origins (pp. 65–68). Josephus also presents the ancient Jews as philosophers (p. 68); this is something appealing to the Greeks. The superiority of Jewish laws is also unquestionable because of their universal applicability (*A.J.* 1.15, 19, 23–24) and unchanging nature (4.309–10; pp. 75, 78). Having a superior set of laws, the Jewish people were of excellent virtue. Josephus’s presentation aims to combat the “negative stereotypes” that the other nations had against the Jews (p. 86). Being virtuous, the Jews need not be seen as a rebellious people, even though there were rebellious groups among them. Instead, they were friends of Rome, which Rome also acknowledged (p. 91). Cowan concludes, “Notably absent from the list of Rome’s motivation in supporting Jewish customs is the antiquity of the Jewish tradition” (p. 95). Like Dionysius, Josephus did not see antiquity as the basis for the respectability of the Jewish people.

As for Luke-Acts, Cowan bemoans the idea that all the trial scenes of Paul have only one purpose—to defend Christianity against Rome (p. 105). For Cowan, Luke had a variety of purposes for the trial accounts, which “suggests the inaccuracy of the claim that Luke intended to encourage Christians to seek legal advantage

by highlighting the Jewish roots of their movement” (pp. 115–16). Thus, using Paul’s trials as an argument for an apologetic purpose is oversimplified. Concerning the issue of antiquity, Cowan observes Luke’s redaction of Mark 1:27 (cf. Luke 4:36), which highlights Jesus’s teaching as “new,” his presentation of Christianity as a “new” movement (Luke 5:39), and his reference to the message of Paul as a “new” teaching (Acts 17:19). Such observations challenge the idea that Luke was legitimizing the movement on the basis of antiquity as seen in its relation to ancient Judaism (pp. 115–24). Instead, this relationship only accentuates the continuity of God’s salvific plan. Thus, his purpose is theological rather than sociocultural or political.

Cowan successfully shows that there are sufficient reasons to doubt the common assumption that the ancient historians used antiquity as the basis to argue for legitimacy, whether of a movement, tradition, belief, or practice. However, Luke’s acknowledgement of the newness of the Christian movement does not necessarily mean he deemphasized the importance of antiquity. The review of the Jewish history in the sermons of Stephen and Paul, for instance, attests to the value Luke placed on antiquity. Luke’s constant appeal to the fulfilled promises in the Jewish Scriptures undoubtedly shows that he had a theological purpose. One may legitimately raise the question, however, whether theological and sociocultural/political purposes are mutually exclusive. To say that Luke’s purpose is theological and not sociocultural and political is an unnecessary dichotomy, since Luke may have had both aims in mind. Questions concerning the Christians’ identity, whether relating to ethnicity (how the single-ethnic covenant people became multi-ethnic), religion (how the synagogue members, Jewish temple goers, and former pagans became worshippers of the same God), society (how multi-class social groups became partners for the Gospel), or politics (how the faithful ones in God’s kingdom can also be loyal to Rome), show that Luke’s theology is essentially sociocultural and political.

Samson L. Uytanlet

Biblical Seminary of the Philippines, Metro Manila, Philippines

*Theology and History in the Fourth Gospel: Tradition and Narration.* By Jörg Frey. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018, xiii + 241 pp., \$39.95.

In January 2018, Jörg Frey delivered the three Shaffer Lectures at Yale Divinity School. This book is a considerable expansion on those three lectures, while in some ways serving as a less detailed version of another 2018 volume by Frey (*The Glory of the Crucified One: Christology and Theology in the Gospel of John* [Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018]). Frey, Professor of NT Studies at the University of Zürich, is well known for the plethora of works he has penned on all matters Johannine.

On reading Frey’s title, students of John will inevitably call to mind the influential work of J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*, published half a century ago (New York: Harper and Row, 1968; with second and third editions in 1979 and 2003 respectively). It turned out that most of Martyn’s “history”

was his reconstructed history of the Johannine community and its interaction with the synagogue (as read through the lens of John 9), and virtually all of John's "theology" was to be read on the same historical level. Only tiny specks of the "history" of the so-called historical Jesus glinted through the fog of distance, with Martyn reading the Fourth Gospel so as to create what he designates a "two-level drama." Martyn's chief interest is not so much the recovery of the historical Jesus, as the recovery of the literary sources that enable us to recreate the Johannine community of John's day. In the decades that have elapsed since Martyn's first edition, most scholars have become a good deal more skeptical about Martyn's methods, including the ability to delineate literary sources, reliably identify their provenance, and accurately recreate the life and history of the community in which they flourished. Moreover, Martyn's reliance on the *Birkat ha-Minim* (essential for his reading of John 9) has been widely debunked (as Frey makes clear, pp. 7–8).

In any case, what captures Frey's attention is the order of the first two nouns in Martyn's title: Martyn's *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* has become Frey's *Theology and History in the Fourth Gospel*. Frey, no less than Martyn, accepts "the paradigm of the two-level drama" (p. 9)—"the level of the narrated story of the earthly Jesus and the level of the narration, of the author telling his story to his readers or hearers" (p. 9). He arrives there, however, by a rather different route. Martyn develops the history of the Johannine community and moves from that recreated history to the theology of the Fourth Gospel (hence "history and theology"); Frey moves in the opposite direction: John's priority, he says, is Christology as theology, out of which John shapes the historical traditions at hand (esp. in Mark), sometimes even creatively establishing the "history" out of whole cloth. Hence the appropriate sequence is "theology and history." This ensures that Frey devotes quite a lot of space to the critique of a good deal of contemporary Johannine scholarship, especially where it focuses on attempting to discern snippets of the life and times of the historical Jesus. Where this is done by trying to isolate the history from the theology, the project, Frey thinks, is doomed to failure. To "let John be John" (Dunn's phrase) is to read the theology of the Fourth Gospel with the attention it deserves, and this leads to a richer synthesis from which it is possible to discern the history of John's addressees, and even some history of the historical Jesus. As Frey puts it,

The Gospel author is well aware that he does not simply present the "historical truth" as was accessible to the contemporaries of Jesus. It is not simply a representation of the history of the earthly Jesus, and, thus, a historicizing approach to John must necessarily fail. But on the other hand, the Gospel is not merely a theological allegory that simply mirrors the insights and situation of the author and his contemporaries. Instead, John is a complex web in which both levels are fused with the result that the story of the Word incarnate, freshly narrated and interpreted, leads to a new understanding of the present. The present insights, gained in the post-Easter time, are used for a true understanding of Jesus, his fate, and his words. Thus, the interpretation of John can neither simply stay on the level of Jesus' history nor on the level of the Johannine community and theology. As readers, we are left with the two horizons and with a new space for

understanding the in-between. Herein, we are better off than Peter and the other contemporaries of Jesus who steadily misunderstand things during his earthly life. Only when their standpoint is left behind and the post-Easter insights are taken seriously can the story of Jesus be understood truthfully; on the other hand, the truth can never be told without reference to the history of Jesus, the incarnate and crucified one (pp. 11–12).

With this as his agenda, Frey divides his material into three long chapters. In the first, “Christology as Theology: The Johannine Approach as a Challenge Then and Now,” Frey argues that in John’s Gospel Jesus is God, that this is consistent with Mark and Paul, that (against Martyn) this does *not* signal estrangement between the church and the synagogue, that the God of the Fourth Gospel is still very much identified with the God of the Hebrew Scriptures, and that the Fourth Evangelist perceives this stance to arise from the post-Easter work of the eschatological Spirit. Moreover, in providing “his narrative depiction of the Jesus story, the evangelist was hermeneutically aware that he did not simply draw a picture of the Jesus of history ‘as he was,’ but shaped the memory of the Jesus story under the presupposition of the paschal light and of the teaching of the Spirit” (p. 58). Thus the glory revealed in Jesus’s signs “is actually the glory revealed by the narrative text written in the light of the post-Easter insights. Even more so, the idea of a primordial glory of Jesus (17:5) and of his ‘incarnation’ are the ultimate consequences of the Easter revelation, rather than the presupposition of Jesus’ earthly ministry” (p. 58). Again, “Christian dogmatics has quickly adopted the logical and temporal priority of pre-existence and incarnation, but historically and, as I assume, also in the awareness of the Johannine author, the priority is in the Easter experiences and the post-Easter Spirit that inspired the remembrance of the earthly Jesus and ultimately reshaped his image in the Gospel narrative. *This is the only interpretation that can make sure that Jesus’ humanity is not endangered by his depiction as divine*” (p. 58, emphasis added).

In the second chapter, “The Quest for the Jesus of History: Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel,” Frey explores the ways in which scholarship during the last century has applied the “quest” for the historical Jesus to the Fourth Gospel. Included, among others, are J. Louis Martyn, C. H. Dodd, Raymond E. Brown, and James D. G. Dunn. Although Frey appreciates many facets of their work, he faults all of them for trying to establish from John bits of Jesus’s history—what happened “back there”—that can be cast over against the theology of the book. By contrast, while Frey acknowledges that the story of Jesus is the founding story of Christianity, “which took place in a clearly defined context of space and time” (p. 141), he argues that John “tells that story from a theological conviction of who Jesus really is,” and this “reshapes the memory of Jesus to a remarkable degree” (p. 141). “Therefore, John replots, renarrates, or even fictionally invents narrative images [Frey asserts, for instance, that the footwashing scene is one such fictional creation] according to his interest in depicting Jesus Christ in his true divine dignity. He does this while remaining consistent with the foundational story of the earthly Jesus . . . . These unique features of the Fourth Gospel place it ‘on the border’ between the earthly history of Jesus and post-Easter Christological insight, and this unique



placement may in fact be the reason for its distinctive narrative design and its sometimes bewildering freedom with regard to historical traditions" (pp. 141–42).

In his third and final chapter (apart from a brief conclusion), titled "The Spiritual Gospel: Reworking the Jesus Story for Deeper Theological Understanding," Frey begins by reminding his readers of what he has argued so far: "John utilizes the historical tradition available to him, from Mark and from his community traditions, in a remarkably free manner, taking the liberty of *replotting* the Jesus story, *renarrating* traditional episodes, and even fictionally *reimagining* new narrative episodes" (p. 143, emphasis original). So the questions arise, "How could the author feel so free toward the traditions he had received?" and "How could he be so 'careless' in terms of historical accuracy?" (p. 143). The answer this chapter provides is that John self-consciously makes these changes in order to address his readers in their lived experience. All history writing, Frey insists, involves various kinds of choice and transformation; all four of the evangelists indulge in similar practices. Yet John does so with the most gusto, with self-conscious awareness, all the while "claiming the authority of the Spirit for his version of the memory of Jesus" (p. 208). It is the "remembering Spirit" (Frey's repeated phrase) who enables John to reimagine and create the "memory" of Jesus that constitutes the Jesus narrative of the Fourth Gospel, and so today "we are left with the task of accepting and appreciating John's unique design, his claims about the remembering Spirit, and the ultimate priority of theology over history in the Fourth Gospel" (p. 209).

To interact with Frey in any detail would require a work of similar length and heft. Frey is always worth reading, not least because he writes clearly, has read widely, and interacts appreciatively with the world of Johannine specialists. One of the reasons why he is so widely respected is that he attempts to maintain an edifying stance toward today's readers: he is a contemporary version of scholars such as C. H. Dodd, whose old-fashioned liberalism remained pious to the end.

Yet there are certain features of Frey's work that cry out for evaluation. I am not thinking of such things as his confident insistence that for John "truth" is relational and personal, not propositional (a few moments with a concordance shows that it can be either, and is frequently both), or of his polite but dismissive treatment of scholars (such as Richard Bauckham) who in recent years have wrestled tellingly with the eyewitness themes in John (which sooner or later call into question the ease with which Frey resorts to what is in fact an early twentieth-century view of traditions and of tradition history). No, I shall close this review with two more fundamental criticisms.

First, in most if not all of his uses of the term, Frey associates the term "history" with events that take place in the naturalistic world, in the world where the naturalistic dimensions of cause and effect hold sway. Under such a definition, if something "takes place" that is said to be caused by direct supernatural power (e.g. the feeding of the five thousand, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead), it is not history. One may speak of it as belonging to the Spirit-revealed reimagined and freshly "remembered" narrative of Jesus, the "history of Jesus" as "remembered" by the Spirit and re-plotted by John, but it is not history in the naturalistic sense. It is far better, however, to think of history as that which takes place in space and

time, or reports of the same, *regardless of whether their causes are naturalistic or supernatural*. For otherwise we are perpetually reduced to pitting history against theology, as in Frey's book. Frey seeks to avoid the problem by talking voluminously about the events that took place being mediated by various traditions (esp. Mark and the Johannine traditions) *and then massively reconfigured by the theology engendered by the Spirit*. That more theology is added by the Spirit to the events themselves (such as the resurrection of Jesus) should of course be accepted, once it is clearly seen that the events are themselves the kind of history that carries deep theology. The resurrection took place; *God* raised Jesus from the dead. This is both history (in the best sense) and theology. Many of the historical events in the Bible ("historical" in that they take place in the space/time continuum) are profoundly theological, not only in their import but in their causation. However, because of Frey's assumptions regarding the nature of "history," much of his discussion is severely skewed toward a bifurcation that should not have been admitted in the first place.

Second, although it is transparently true that John spells out the post-Easter implications of events and sayings that take place "back then," during the days of the historical Jesus, it is most emphatically *not* true that John confuses or coalesces the two horizons. No canonical Gospel writer is more assiduously careful to distinguish the "back then" understanding from the understanding that belongs to the era after the resurrection. Of the seventeen major "misunderstanding" passages in John's Gospel, sixteen make clear that the disciples of the historical Jesus had to wait for the resurrection to be behind them before they could adequately understand what was taking place before their eyes, and what Jesus was saying (cf. D. A. Carson, "Understanding Misunderstandings in the Fourth Gospel," *TynBul* 33 [1982]: 59–89). The evidence shows that John was a great deal more careful to distinguish between what took place (and how it was understood) in the past, and what took place (and how it was understood) on the other side of the first Easter, than is Jörg Frey. And that, finally, is why the book is fundamentally mistaken in its fresh attempt to understand the Gospel of John.

D. A. Carson

The Gospel Coalition; Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

*Paul's Theology in Context: Creation, Incarnation, Covenant, and Kingdom.* By James P. Ware. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019, xiv + 270 pp., \$30.00 paper.

James Ware intends this work for non-specialists to provide an overall guide to Paul's theology for study, teaching, and preaching (it is not a passage-by-passage commentary). This book differs from other works in two ways: (1) it seeks to present Paul's gospel as he taught it to his readers, based on OT truths that revealed the fulfillment of Israel's hopes in Jesus Christ; and (2) it focuses on how Paul's gospel would have been heard by polytheistic Gentiles in a Greco-Roman culture. This includes discussion about the philosophical background of the Stoics, Epicureans, Plato, as well as the teachings of Buddha and the Hindu sages.

The author identifies four core constructs of Pauline theology that serve as major divisions: creation, incarnation, covenant, and kingdom. In the first section, “Creation” (chaps. 1–2; pp. 7–38), Ware discusses the polytheistic philosophical background of Paul’s time and then elaborates on creation as the foundation of Pauline theology, which directly informs Paul’s anthropology concerning fallen human beings. Unlike the Greek philosophers who sought knowledge of the divine through reason, Paul believes in a living God who reveals himself, and this knowledge of God corroborates the truth. Ware emphasizes Paul’s message of good news that a holy creator made human beings in his image, which contrasts the pagan world’s understanding that considers evil and moral darkness as a divinely given aspect of human nature. Thus Ware offers an interpretive key on two levels: (1) the distinction between creator and creation; and (2) the contrast between humanity’s union with the creator in the beginning with the separation from the creator after the fall. Paul’s proclamation of God’s restoration and renewal of creation would have been a unique and hopeful message to Paul’s original hearers.

In the second section, “Incarnation” (chaps. 3–5; pp. 44–94), Ware focuses on the two streams of Jewish hope. First, the Jewish people expected a Davidic messiah who would inaugurate and consummate the kingdom. Second, the Jewish people understood the identity of YHWH as the one God and creator who would return in power to deliver them. Ware then discusses several Pauline passages (1 Cor 8:4–6; Col 1:16–17; Rom 10:12–13; and Phil 2:9–11) to show how the two Jewish streams of expectation are met in Jesus Christ, the promised messiah and human king from the line of David who was Israel’s God in person. Ware describes the various pagan worldviews of Paul’s first hearers and emphasizes how they would not have had a prior notion of the incarnation. At the heart of Paul’s theology is how the supernatural union of the faithful with God through the incarnation involves believers’ participation in the Trinity, a restoration to repair the separation from the fall. Ware reviews the doctrine of the Trinity—the Father begetting the Son and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son—and the relevance of God making union possible for those who believe. In other words, these chapters show how the doctrines of the Trinity and the incarnation come from an understanding and interpretation of Paul’s teachings.

In the third section, “Covenant” (chaps. 6–8; pp. 95–136), Ware defines “law” and “covenant” from Paul’s perspective (and explains the “New Perspective” and “two covenants” approaches) with particular importance given to justification and the theology of the cross. Ware finds an interpretive key to understanding law and covenant through the “righteousness” of YHWH in Psalm 143. He explains this as informing the covenantal context in Romans (specifically 3:20), which leads to the truth that Christ is the foundation and fulfillment of the covenant. According to biblical and ancient Jewish belief, the law is to be considered *within* and *apart from* the covenant relationship of faith—a principle foundational to Paul’s theology. Ware describes this reality in dualistic terms (“within the covenant” and “outside the covenant”) and explains how the atoning grace of Jesus Christ justifies and unites the believer with the creator. This would contrast with ancient polytheistic beliefs where the gods had human-like passions of lust, anger, deceit, love, kindness,

and mercy but did not suffer. Ware points out that the philosophers downplayed the passionate nature of the gods, creating a bifurcated reality between gods and mortals. Conversely, Paul celebrates God's personal, sacrificial love and holiness, demonstrated in Christ becoming human and suffering on our behalf.

The fourth section, "Kingdom" (chaps. 9–12; pp. 139–97), includes an in-depth look at 1 Corinthians 15 and the resurrection in light of Paul's context, followed by a discussion of the renewing power of the resurrection and what this means ethically. Ware discusses how Paul creates a new way of speaking about God to the Gentiles by taking the life-creating divine power of YHWH—particularly referring to the exodus event—and actualizing it through the power that raised Jesus from the dead. Ware shows how 1 Corinthians 15 has been misread due to a lack of proper perspective concerning the literary and historical context of the passage, and he makes the case that Paul proclaims the resurrection of the physical body. Ware holds that the important exegetical piece in 1 Corinthians 15 is the structure of the central portion of Paul's argument, 15:36–54. By comparing the function of a series of contrasts (p. 163), Ware observes that the mortal body perishes, and what is subject to transformation involves change in quality (rather than substance) and being "clothed" (15:51–54). This reveals two modes of existence—one prior and one subsequent to the resurrection. The perishable body, through resurrection, will partake in eternal life, and the expectation of a newly embodied life also involves a resurrection to judgment of the wicked who reject the gospel and oppose God. Ware stresses that the coming judgment confirms the victory of the creator over evil and confirms his righteous reign. The two stages of the kingdom of God—inaugurated kingdom and consummated kingdom—indicate that the power of Jesus's resurrection is already at work in the believer, a fulfillment of the OT covenant and a teaching that contrasts with the ideas of the moral philosophers (who taught that the gods were on the periphery of moral life).

The final chapters (chaps. 13–14; pp. 201–33) analyze Christian origins in relation to Paul—particularly his teaching in 1 Corinthians 15 and his teaching in relation to Peter and the apostles. Ware counters the "Christ-less" and "confession-less" ideas (that somehow Paul or the Gospel writers invented the teaching about Jesus's redemptive death and bodily resurrection) and defends the evidence provided in 1 Corinthians 15, which reveals a core set of beliefs formulated and transmitted to the earliest followers of Jesus—Peter, the twelve apostles, James, Paul, and other eyewitnesses. In the final chapter, Ware explains the difference in Paul's function as an apostle but in a manner that was not independent from the other apostles: Paul functioned as part of a core group—with Peter, James, and John—and within this core, he and Peter shared a unique status. Ware concludes that, among the common doctrine shared by the apostles in the NT, Paul's letters provide the fullest theological elaboration of these.

*Paul's Theology in Context* is enjoyable to read. The content in each section—creation, incarnation, covenant, and kingdom—builds on the others, following a theological progression, so that the reader learns Pauline concepts and theology in a way that the information can be synthesized and remembered. In addition, parts of each section contain relevant detail describing the frame of reference of Paul's

Gentile audience, giving the contemporary reader a better understanding of the uniqueness of the gospel. In a few places, more elaboration is desired (such as a more thorough discussion on the nature of “revelation” to Paul, or on other resurrection passages in addition to 1 Corinthians 15, or on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit), but this weakness has more to do with the nature of a quality “Introduction”—Ware educates the reader in a manner that creates interest for further study. He accomplishes his goal of presenting Paul’s gospel as it was presented to Paul’s hearers and in so doing provides the reader with an excellent resource. While the author writes this book for clergy, students, and laypersons, scholars will likely enjoy reading this work as well. James Ware engages relevant scholarship with persuasive, fresh insight—a valuable work for personal study or for use as a graduate or undergraduate textbook.

David R. Wallace  
Regent University, Virginia Beach, VA

*Conformed to the Image of His Son: Reconsidering Paul’s Theology of Glory in Romans.* By Haley Goranson Jacob. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2018, xv + 302 pp., \$32.00 paper.

Paul’s mention of believers being “conformed to the image of his [God’s] Son” in Rom 8:29b has rightly furnished many Christians with encouragement and assurance. The main problem Jacob addresses in this revision of her Ph.D. dissertation at the University of St. Andrews is that, although most take the phrase to reflect the *goal* of salvation, there is little agreement as to what Paul *means* by this ambiguous phrase (p. 2). Interpretations of the phrase *συμμόρφους τῆς εικόνας τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ* that take this phrase to refer to: (1) becoming “like Christ”; (2) becoming like Christ in bodily form; (3) being sanctified; (4) sharing in Christ’s suffering; or (5) sharing in Christ’s glory, all share one thing in common—they tend to assume the interpretation without clear literary and theological support (pp. 2–9). Though Jacob agrees that the thematic and textual connections with co-glorification in Rom 8:17 are important in understanding 8:29b, her thesis is that the latter refers to believers’ eschatological glory “only if *glory* is understood as something *other than* splendor/radiance or the visible, manifest presence of God” (p. 10, emphasis original).

In her treatment of Rom 8:29b, Jacob focuses on the literary and theological issues pertinent to the short phrase in question and propounds what she calls a “functional reading of Rom 8:29b,” which, though not novel (she acknowledges that this reading is adopted by Dunn, Jewett, Schreiner, Byrne, and Wright), has not been substantively supported. Because of the important link between believers’ “conformity” in 8:29b, their glorification (*δοξάζω*) in 8:30, and their co-glorification (*συνδοξάζω*) in 8:17, Jacob devotes chapters 2 and 3 to a study of the *δόξα* word group. Chapter 2 begins with a brief but important discussion of semiotics. When it comes to understanding the various uses of *δόξα* (or any word for that matter), Jacob argues, readers must distinguish between literal uses and figurative or sym-

bolic uses. In agreement with the work of Berquist and Caird on כבוד and δόξα, Jacob shows that in the LXX, with the exception of Moses's face reflecting the splendor of God, the δόξα word group is never unambiguously used of a human who is given glory such that he shines due to being in the presence of God. Instead, a person's glory almost always constitutes or is closely related to the "honor, power, wealth, or authority associated with an exalted status of rule" (p. 63).

Chapter 3, where Jacob discusses most occurrences of "glory" in Romans, is divided into three sections. First, the author considers how δόξα and δοξάζω are commonly understood in the letter by evaluating especially the work of Carey Newman. Though she praises much of his work, her main critique arises from the fact that Newman's conclusion about the meaning of δόξα and δοξάζω in Paul is based almost exclusively on his lexical use of the כבוד-δόξα word group when it is used in relation to God and thus might not apply to mankind quite as Newman suggests. Second, in order to understand how Paul uses "glory" for humankind, Jacob suggests that five important issues be kept in mind, most of them pertaining to the role of Psalm 8, Paul's Adamic echoes, and his Adam Christology. Here, she concludes that in Romans, when δόξα and δοξάζω are used for God, they primarily denote his honor, esteem, power, and governing status as Creator and King, and when they are used for humanity, they primarily reference the honor, esteem, power, and governing status of people as a result of their identity as renewed humans in the new Adam (p. 97). In the last section, Jacob outlines what she terms Paul's "narrative of glory" and concludes that in Romans, to be glorified "is to experience a transformation of status—to be exalted to a new status, one of honor associated with a representative reign over creation, crowned with glory and honor as Adam was meant to be and as the Messiah now is" (p. 121).

Since, for Jacob, Rom 8:29b is indicative of Paul's broader theology of participation, the themes of *union* and *participation* are the focus of chapter 4. For Jacob, union with Christ constitutes an ontological transformation that includes a transformed identity and status. Participation, as Jacob describes it, is the active counterpart to the passive transformation wrought by union with Christ; union with Christ leads to participation just as transformation leads to action. If *glorification* is one of the terms Paul uses to illustrate the union-participation paradigm and if the term is used in Romans as it is in the LXX, then "to receive a status of honor associated with dominion or rule implies that the person will thus bear that honor in rule; as those glorified in Christ, they will actively participate in the glorious/honorable rule of Christ" (p. 134). Lastly, Jacob considers other concepts in light of Paul's participatory theology. She concludes that *συμμορφίζω* (Phil 3:10) and *σύμμορφος* (Phil 3:21), two morphic terms she translates as "(being) conformed to," are "participatory compounds" that describe believers' participation in Christ's death and his resurrection glory. In other words, they refer to believers' vocational participation "in the status and activity of the Messiah, who embodies the vocation of humanity in Psalm 8" (p. 151).

Having concluded that "conformed to the image of [God's Firstborn] Son" (Rom 8:29) refers to believers' vocational participation with the Son, Jacob then moves to defend this conclusion from Romans itself. In chapter 5, she argues that

the designation “Son” in Rom 8:29 stands for both the Davidic Messiah (based on the echoes of Davidic royalty in Psalms 89 and 110) as well as the new Adam, the image of redeemed humanity (grounded on Paul’s use of *εἰκῶν* and *πρωτότοκος* within the context of the apostle’s Adam Christology). While Paul certainly has the same referent in mind when speaking of the Son and the new Adam, Jacob probably overstates the case when she suggests that we can equate one title with the other (p. 191). Chapter 6 largely builds on chapter 4 and presents what Jacob refers to as the heart of her argument (p. 218): that *συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ* refers to participation in the Son’s honorable status, power, and authority over creation as a result of being adopted into God’s family and thus being part of a renewed humanity.

In chapter 7, Jacob answers the question, “At what point are believers conformed to the image of the Son?” (p. 233). Contra Schreiner, Witherington, Moo and others, she proposes that glorification and “being conformed” in Rom 8:29–30 are not only future but also present realities for believers. It is not that *ἐδόξασεν* in 8:30 is an ingressive aorist, but rather that glorification occurs in two stages: glorification is a present reality on the basis union with Christ *and* will be realized fully when believers’ bodies are resurrected (p. 237). After suggesting that, contrary to traditional readings, *τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν τὸν θεὸν πάντα συνεργεῖ εἰς ἀγαθόν* (Rom 8:28) should be taken to refer to believers’ cooperation *with* God in order to bring about good in all things, Jacob concludes that glorification (i.e. the ultimate goal of conformity) is a present and future activity whereby believers participate in the Son’s role and rule over the cosmos (p. 251).

Though Jacob’s thesis is well researched and compelling, I was left wondering if her argument on the present reality of believers’ glorification would have been more persuasive had she (1) elaborated on what exactly it looks like for believers (at the present time) to bring about the redemption and liberation of creation; and (2) explained how exactly God is accomplishing this cosmic redemption from futility even now. In other words, it seems to me that at least part of the ambiguity of the phrase in Rom 8:29 she sets out to clarify remains. Nevertheless, Jacob’s thorough lexical work, detailed intertextual exegesis, and clear articulation on some of the most complex motifs in Romans, solidify this work as an important contribution to the field of Pauline theology and the study of one of the apostle’s most beloved epistles.

Andrés D. Vera

California Baptist University, Riverside, CA

*New Testament Christological Hymns: Exploring Texts, Contexts, and Significance.* By Matthew E. Gordley. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2018, 282 pp., \$28.00 paper.

This latest survey of NT Christological hymns is a continuation of Gordley’s abiding interest in hymnology in the NT and the wider context of ancient Jewish and Greco-Roman culture and literature. It offers a close examination and renewed assessment of what has often been critiqued as a “speculative” enterprise in NT

studies. Through the lens of both the Jewish and Greco-Roman context of worship and hymns, he provides fresh insights into hymnic passages in the NT.

The volume is coherently divided into six chapters. The first two lay the foundation for the in-depth examination of various passages. He begins by providing the rationale for the study at hand (pp. 8–9). The passages identified as hymns (e.g. Phil 2:5–11; Col 1:15–20; John 1:1–18) are uniquely rich reflections on the person and work of Christ and may potentially contribute to a greater understanding of the worship practices in the early church. Yet, these passages are debated with reference to their background and origin as well as their significance. Further, while hymnic studies abound, there is not a unifying work to provide “an overall synthesis ... to make sense of the phenomenon of early Christian hymns as a whole” (p. 9).

With these goals, Gordley proceeds in chapter 1 to a basic definition of worship as the “practice of affirming, proclaiming, and confessing an allegiance to God that, among other things, enables worshipers to see themselves as part of a reality that is larger than the visible reality on offer within the world in which the worshipers live” (p. 11). As such, worship is not only an affirmation of faith, but often an act of resistance to the wider cultural ideology. Within the multivalent expressions of Christian worship (e.g. baptism, the Eucharist, etc.), Gordley isolates the verbal aspect or textual concerns of early Christian worship for study (p. 14). In a helpful survey of the early centuries of Christian worship (pp. 14–20), the dominant issue in hymnic studies is clarified. While there is strong evidence that hymnody (singing of hymns) was central to early Christian worship, there is no equally clear evidence of hymnography (hymn writing; p. 18). Still, Gordley argues that even if these texts do not strictly exhibit uniform structure (as argued by Brucker, pp. 18–19) and despite a lack of evidence that these texts “represent word-for-word transcriptions of the actual prayers and songs of the early Christians” (p. 19), the general understanding of worship as an affirmation, proclamation, and confession of allegiance to God “influenced their epistolary compositions” (p. 20). With respect to various criticism against hymnic studies, Gordley makes a refreshing stand against the claim of preexisting material behind NT hymns—the identification of these texts as hymns does not coincide with an affirmation of preexistent material (pp. 23–32). The concluding pages (pp. 36–37) identify 11 characteristics of early Christian worship discerned from hymnic passages, which form the basis for analysis in chapters 3 to 6. Three features in particular direct his analysis: (1) Christological/theological emphasis not only on the veneration of Christ/God, but also on the events of Christ’s incarnation, life, death, and resurrection; (2) close adherence to Jewish psalm/wisdom tradition (with its remembrance of history); and (3) awareness of and resistance to Roman imperial ideology.

Chapter 2 locates NT hymns within the milieu of both Jewish (Second Temple Judaism) and Greco-Roman literature and culture. Christian worship and hymns hold commonality with the worship reflected in Greco-Roman hymns inasmuch as both approaches praise and worship a respective deity and ruler. Yet, Gordley notes that in the worship of Jesus, Christian hymns offered resistance against the prevailing culture of idolatry and emperor worship (pp. 48–49). Further,



in the survey of Greco-Roman literature, he finds validity for a looser definition of hymns as each hymn is tailored to an individual epistolary context (pp. 50–52). In his analysis of Greco-Roman literary categories of epideictic rhetoric and poetry, he culls out three useful features for NT hymns: (1) epideictic rhetoric fosters contemplation of divine realities; (2) poetry encourages an affective encounter with the subject; and (3) there exists a shared communal identity in the praise of God/gods or heroes (pp. 52–58). Turning to worship in Second Temple period, Gordley affirms the deep affiliation (roots) of Christian worship to Jewish tradition, especially in psalms (not only in content, but the practice of psalm composition, p. 61). Four features are noteworthy: deep connection to earlier traditions; innovation; pedagogy in contemporary context; and resistance to the wider culture (pp. 64–68). In such a way, Jewish worship simultaneously instills tradition and application for the worshippers' current context.

Three subsequent chapters engage with three primary texts: Phil 2:5–11, Col 1:15–20, and John 1:1–18. Each follows the pattern of a detailed examination of the texts in structure and hymnic literary features, followed by an identification of various features noted in chapters 1 and 2. Three issues, in particular, form his analysis: (1) the reiteration of salvific history in the life and death of Jesus, the kernel of faith; (2) the eschatological implications of redemption; and (3) the counter-cultural implications against the imperial ideology of Rome. All three function to consolidate Christian identity in worship. For each text, Gordley consistently ties the text to both the Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts as assessed in the previous two chapters.

Chapter 6 expands the analysis to other hymns or hymn fragments (Eph 2:14–16; 1 Tim 3:16; Heb 1:1–4; 1 Pet 3:18–22; various Lukan hymns [1:46–55, 68–79; 2:14, 29–32]; and Revelation 4–5). Although the three elements employed in chapters 3 to 5 do not fit every passage examined, Gordley nonetheless applies various elements gleaned from the first two chapters in his assessment.

The conclusion provides a concise summary and offers some beneficial reflections for contemporary worship. Does our worship reflect the centrality of “the cross, resurrection, and exaltation” of Christ (p. 233)? In what sense does worship engage with culture and our own identity as Christians in the world (p. 234)?

Without a doubt, Gordley offers a well-researched work, one that forges a new path in hymnic studies. His arguments are balanced in the face of historical objections to hymnic examinations. The cultural lens found with Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts provides fresh insights for further hymnic studies. In the main body of the work, Gordley explores the textual features of the three main passages with a stout scrutiny on some difficult hermeneutical issues and simultaneously provides a good broad coherence to the wider context of each text. The smaller texts receive shorter but still insightful analysis. One of the best features of the book is its central focus on Christology and the implications of that Christology for Christian identity in terms of both the present and future world.

There are, however, some shortcomings. As much as Gordley presents a new version of hymnic studies, it is still not persuasive that the three texts (and others) can be identified as hymns, especially, without clear criteria for making this distinc-

tion in NT texts. Anomalous grammatical features and unusual vocabulary can hardly mark these texts as hymns, when such features can be found throughout the NT. Similarly, while the features Gordley isolates in the hymns are noteworthy, are these features not prevalent throughout the NT? For instance, Christology, especially focusing on Jesus's death and resurrection as the foundation for Christian identity, seems to be endemic to the entirety of the NT. While the hymnic passages may crystallize the faith in poetic terms, it is not at all clear that these texts solicit more emotive response than other passages. Further, Gordley is fairly consistent in reading resistance against Rome throughout the book. Yet, none of the three main texts explicitly has the Roman empire in view. This is not to say that Roman ideology would not have loomed large for either the authors or readers of these NT texts, but a closer examination of either Phil 2:12–18 or Col 1:21–23 seems to indicate that opposition to the wider culture is not the immediate concern. Faith throughout the NT and OT has always been counter-cultural (e.g. Hebrews 11; Lev 20:22–26). Is it not plausible that these hymnic passages simply express with concision and poetry convictions of faith evident throughout the Testaments?

M. Sydney Park  
Beeson Divinity School, Birmingham, AL

*The Letters to Timothy and Titus.* By Robert W. Yarbrough. Pillar NT Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018, 604 pp., \$55.00.

Robert Yarbrough, Professor of NT at Covenant Theological Seminary (St. Louis, MO), has produced a clearly written mid-level commentary on the Pastoral Epistles (PE) that makes another solid contribution to the Pillar NT Commentary series. In keeping with the objectives of the series, Yarbrough provides a wealth of exegetical insight while offering mature reflections on matters of theological and practical significance. Yarbrough's high esteem for Scripture and his impressive ability to communicate its timeless truth in a clear and effective manner are displayed throughout the volume.

With respect to his understanding of the historical background of the epistles, Yarbrough summarizes his viewpoints as follows: "The apostle Paul is taken to have been the author. The recipients are the Timothy and Titus mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament . . . . We leave open the question of exactly when the PE were written" (p. 68). In his defence of the authenticity of the epistles, Yarbrough laments that many scholars simply follow the lead of culture or the academic guild and relegate the PE to the sidelines, a practice that he suggests is detrimental to the church (pp. 86–90). While most academics from the West deny authenticity, he observes that the majority of the world's Christians live outside the West and generally embrace the PE as authentic, as the church has for 2,000 years (pp. 89–90). In his view, "perhaps it is the time for interpreters even in the West to grant fresh respect for 'other cultural contexts,' whether those around the world today or those of the nineteen centuries during which the PE were read as Pauline" (p. 90).

Yarbrough's defense of authenticity includes significant interaction with the work of Adolf Schlatter, whom he regards as a "significant but overlooked [figure] in the history of New Testament studies" (p. 78). As he observes, Schlatter recognized several linguistic similarities between the undisputed Paulines and the PE but was of the persuasion that the question of authorship must ultimately be determined on the basis of historical considerations. Readers interested in probing deeper in their study of the linguistic arguments commonly used to dismiss authenticity may wish to consult Jeremo van Nes's *Pauline Language and the Pastoral Epistles: A Study of Linguistic Variation in the Corpus Paulinum* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), a volume that was published during what was presumably the final stages of Yarbrough's preparation of this commentary.

While the introduction provides a brief treatment of significant historical matters that have become standard fare in biblical commentaries on the PE, Yarbrough is careful to avoid simply rehearsing matters that are covered at length elsewhere. Much of his attention is given instead to what he regards as overlooked theological motifs and other subjects he deems relevant to the study of the PE. As he explains, "The introduction to this present commentary devotes somewhat fewer pages to matters deemed preliminary, summary, or otherwise usefully pre-explanatory of the verses that make up each of the PE" (pp. 67–68). Subjects that receive greater attention include "the contribution of the PE to the historic pastoral task, the theological substance of the PE in Trinitarian perspective, Paul's exemplary and herculean effort sustained over the better part of four decades to live out his gospel convictions, key places and persons dominant in the PE as they stand written, and selected key terms" (p. 68). Although it is not possible to include a summary of each of the conclusions made in Yarbrough's exegetical analysis in a review, a cursory summary of his treatment of some of the more controversial and challenging passages contained in the Pastorals will follow.

Yarbrough rejects the conclusion that 1 Tim 2:4 anticipates universal salvation. As he explains, "Paul can hardly be taken to mean that all will, indeed, come to saving faith in Christ, or simply be forgiven in the end because God wills it" (p. 152). Further, when Paul affirms that Christ died "for all people," he simply emphasized the inclusive nature of the atonement, that is, that "Christ's ransom applies to whoever seeks it, Jew or Gentile" (p. 156).

In his discussion of passages that refer to the departure of individuals from the faith (e.g. 1 Tim 1:19; 4:1; 6:21; 2 Tim 2:12), Yarbrough appears somewhat reluctant to address many of the difficult soteriological questions that often arise. He observes that the subject "does not denote petty matters" (p. 342) and, at least with respect to 1 Tim 4:1, that the abandonment envisioned by Paul entails a departure from the teachings of Jesus and the apostles (pp. 226–27). In his discussion of 2 Tim 2:12, Yarbrough argues that those who fail to persevere "cannot expect God's approval, in this age or the next" (p. 381). Concerning those who suffer "shipwreck with regard to the faith" (1 Tim 1:19), Yarbrough suggests that it "likely has in view not primarily the act or experience or personal faith but more the substance and content of true belief affirmed and confessed" (p. 134). Noting its similarity to 1 Cor 5:3–5, Yarbrough concludes that the reference to Hymenaeus and Alexander

being “delivered to Satan” (1 Tim 1:20) was the result of a “shift from divine protection to divine discipline (with Satan as God’s agent)” (p. 136).

Building upon the work in his essay on the text of 1 Tim 2:9–15 in the compilation volume, *Women in the Church: An Interpretation and Application of 1 Timothy 2:9–15* (ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Thomas R. Schreiner; 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.; Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), Yarbrough advocates a complementarian perspective on this highly controversial passage. As he explains, the commentary does “not interact extensively with feminist exegesis,” given that he “has not found feminist hermeneutics and the exegesis it tends to underwrite a fruitful avenue toward a historic Christian understanding of Scripture” (p. 139). In response to critics of his perspective, he contends that “complementarian hermeneutics does not necessarily prevent the flourishing and ministry of women, as a nonfeminist reading of the history of the church shows, and as women ably defending complementarian understanding of Scripture have argued” (p. 143). According to Yarbrough, “Man and woman are equal in ontological standing before God, but not identical or interchangeable as to what God expects of them relative to their created sexual giftedness. Their simultaneous unity and diversity are stressed” (p. 182).

Concerning the particulars of the passage, Yarbrough observes that the prohibitions in 2:11 should not be understood as restrictive in nature but should rather be regarded as a positive affirmation that women were to be given the opportunity to learn during the church’s gathering. In a society that did not typically afford women the same opportunities to learn as men, Paul’s instruction was therefore quite progressive (p. 170). In sum, the instruction contained in 1 Tim 2:11–12 was designed for the purpose of enhancing each woman’s pursuit of the knowledge of God while encouraging good works (pp. 170–74). Nowhere in the text, Yarbrough argues, is it implied that the various stipulations were to apply only to those in Ephesus (p. 177). Regarding the meaning of *authentēō* in 2:12, Yarbrough prefers translations that suggest a more neutral or positive pastoral activity (pp. 178–79). Similarly, Paul did not call for women to be absolutely silent (*hēsychia*) in church gatherings but simply envisioned an orderly atmosphere in which “each woman’s learning potential is encouraged and enhanced” (p. 181).

Finally, the declaration that “women will be saved” (2:15) is presumed to refer to eschatological salvation (p. 186) and the reference to “childbearing” is understood as physical childbirth (p. 187). Yarbrough finds theories that look to the birth of Christ or to childrearing in general as the means of salvation to be unconvincing (p. 187). More promising, he suggests, is the view of Stanley Porter and others who have concluded that the “ascetic excess in the Ephesian setting led Paul to stress that the very activities being minimized or maligned by false teachers (marriage and domestic life generally) are actually means of grace ‘for the woman who abides in faith, love and holiness’ for ‘her salvation will come by the bearing of children’” (pp. 187–88).

While not as comprehensive in its treatment of several of the lexical, syntactical, and historical issues as some of the other commentaries popular among evangelical readers (e.g. Knight, Towner, Marshall, or Mounce), readers will be pleased to discover a clear and substantive exposition of the PE of a manageable length

(roughly 600 pp.) that is careful to avoid the placement of excessive attention on extraneous matters. The commentary is thus well suited as a textbook for graduate courses on the PE and will serve as an excellent resource for lay readers and pastors.

Benjamin Laird  
Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

*Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering in Hebrews.* By R. B. Jamieson. Society for NT Studies Monograph Series 172. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, xi + 227 pp., \$105.00.

This monograph is a “very light revision” (p. ix) of Jamieson’s doctoral thesis written under the supervision of Simon Gathercole at the University of Cambridge. It is thoroughly researched, and Jamieson’s clear writing style makes it accessible to non-specialists. The volume makes a number of significant contributions to the guild and is a “must read” for anyone studying sacrifice in Hebrews.

As the title suggests, the work addresses the relationship between Jesus’s death and his sacrificial offering in Hebrews. On the first page, Jamieson states his main thesis, which he repeats throughout the book: “Jesus’ death is not when and where he offers himself, but it is what he offers” (p. 1). The book, like the thesis, has two parts. Part 1 poses what Jamieson identifies as the broad “formal” question: “When and where does Jesus offer himself?” Part 2 asks the narrow “material” question: “What role does Jesus’ death play in Hebrews’ soteriology as a whole, and specifically within Jesus’ high-priestly offering?” (p. 1).

Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the monograph, asserting the work’s main thesis, addressing methodological questions and previewing each chapter. The main contribution of this first chapter is Jamieson’s “Taxonomy of Five Views” on the when and where of Jesus’s offering of himself in Hebrews: (1) Jesus’s self-offering precedes his entrance to heaven; (2) Jesus’s earthly self-offering is described as his heavenly entrance; (3) Jesus’s self-offering consists in his death and subsequent spiritual entrance; (4) Jesus’s self-offering consists in his death and subsequent embodied entrance; and (5) Jesus offers himself in heaven, after his resurrection. This taxonomy (summarized from his previously published article “When and Where Did Jesus Offer Himself? A Taxonomy of Recent Scholarship on Hebrews,” *CurBR* 15 [2017]: 338–68) is a significant contribution to the discussion on the *when* and *where* of Christ’s sacrifice. No one else has so clearly delineated these five positions, the scholars who support them, and how they are dependent on three variables—death, entrance to heaven, and self-offering.

After the introduction, the book moves into part 1 (chaps. 2–3), where Jamieson addresses the question of *when* and *where* Jesus offers himself. In terms of the fivefold taxonomy of chapter 1, Jamieson clearly opts for view 5. Chapter 2 aims to support this view through two main lines of thought. First, whereas views 1–4 require Jesus to be a priest before his death and resurrection, Jamieson argues that “Jesus was appointed high priest at his entrance to heaven, on the basis of the

indestructible life he obtained at his resurrection” (p. 24). If perfection at and by resurrection is prerequisite to Christ’s priesthood, then Christ’s priestly offering could not have taken place on earth on the cross but must have taken place in the heavenly sanctuary at or after his ascension. This timing is corroborated by Heb 8:4 which says that Jesus was not a priest on earth in the earthly sanctuary. Second, Hebrews relates the Levitical Yom Kippur to Jesus’s self-offering. While Yom Kippur in Leviticus 16 includes numerous rites and rituals, the description in Hebrews of Yom Kippur and of Jesus’s offering can be summarized succinctly: “enter in order to offer” (p. 36, cf. pp. 47–63). After tracing this pattern in Heb 9:24–25, 8:1–5, 9:11–14, and 9:26, Jamieson answers the question: “Where did Christ offer himself? In the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle in heaven” (p. 66). His answer to *where* already reveals his answer to *when*: “upon his bodily, post-resurrection ascent to heaven” (p. 67). With these two answers, Jamieson identifies with view 5 and along the way offers clear and compelling arguments against views 1–4.

In chapter 3, Jamieson surveys the remaining cultic portions of Hebrews (with special focus on 10:5–14) to see if a post-resurrection offering in heaven is consistent with the rest of Hebrews. These passages speak little about the when and where of Christ’s self-offering, and Jamieson notes that none of the texts challenge his view and what “time and space cues” do exist “tend rather to confirm” his view (p. 86).

Thus, part 1 answers the “formal question” of when and where Christ offers himself by locating the offering in heaven at a post-resurrection ascension. In this way, Jamieson formally separates Christ’s death from his self-offering. Since this view (view 5) is not new, Jamieson’s main contribution in part 1 is not his novel answer to the formal question but the way that his clear taxonomy and thorough exegesis allow him to address this question head on. Other scholars have affirmed this position (notably David Moffitt), but they have approached the when and where of Christ’s offering as part of other or larger arguments (e.g. resurrection for Moffitt). In contrast, Jamieson focuses on the question, identifying helpful distinctions and demonstrating consistently and persistently that Jesus’s offering is a post-resurrection offering in heaven at or during his ascension.

While part 1 formally separates Christ’s death and self-offering, Jamieson attempts to reunite them materially in part 2. After part 1, the natural question is: “If Hebrews locates Christ’s self-offering in heaven, what did his death itself achieve?” (p. 97). In chapter 4, Jamieson uses three non-cultic texts to argue for three ways that Christ’s death achieves “objective soteriological significance” (i.e. “atonement” defined broadly as reconciliation or redemption; see pp. 18–19, 97–99): Christ’s death is for or in place of the ungodly (Heb 2:9), defeats the devil and delivers children to the Father (2:14–15), and redeems from covenant sanctions (9:15–17). In these ways, Hebrews considers Jesus’s death to have soteriological significance, and Jamieson wants these texts to provide the theological backdrop for cultic conversation in Hebrews.

Chapter 5 moves from non-cultic passages to cultic passages in order to unite Jesus’s death and self-offering materially. In response to the question, “What substantive role does Christ’s death play in his self-giving to God in heaven?” (p. 126),

Jamieson argues that Jesus's death is *what* he offers to God. The chapter develops in three stages. In the first stage, Jamieson appeals to Heb 9:18, 9:22b, and 13:20 to argue that sacrificial blood does not primarily represent life but death. Sacrifice is a life-for-life exchange, and blood is the medium or currency for this exchange. Thus, blood is a metonym for death; more precisely, blood is a metonym for "the saving efficacy of Christ's death" (p. 160). In the second stage, Jamieson notes that Christ's blood is both what gives him access to the heavenly sanctuary and what is offered (9:7, 13, 19, 21, 22; 13:11; cf. 12:12). Finally, in the third stage, he argues that, if Christ offers blood and if blood is a metonym for death, then the material of Christ's self-offering in the heavenly sanctuary is his death. Christ's "blood atones not as the bearer of a force or power of life, but as currency of a life given in death" (p. 167). This conclusion is affirmed by the Suffering Servant imagery in Heb 9:28 that brings sacrificial imagery together with "sin-bearing" or "penal consequences of their sins" (pp. 169, 174).

Chapter 6 concludes the monograph by reasserting the thesis that Jesus's death is not when and where he offers himself but what he offers. It also returns to the taxonomy of chapter 1 to note not only how scholars who hold these views answer the formal question but how they typically answer the material question as well. Jamieson finds common ground in part 2 with many of the scholars he critiqued in part 1, and he critiques many in part 2 with whom he agrees in part 1. In this latter category, Jamieson differentiates his conclusions from those of David Moffitt and Georg Gäbel, who are his main dialogue partners throughout the monograph.

While part 1 contributed to the academic conversation by providing clear categories and distinctions and by offering a fresh interpretation of the relevant passages, part 2 makes a novel and substantial contribution. The main scholarly objection to the idea that Christ's offering takes place in heaven and not on the cross is the concern that it disconnects Christ's death from salvific efficacies such as atonement. Jamieson addresses this issue by connecting death and offering materially. While Jesus death is not *when* and *where* he offers himself, it is *what* he offers. Yet one cannot make the argument of *what* without *how*. The novel contribution of part 2 is the extended argument of *how* sacrifice works in Hebrews. It is a life-for-life exchange, and blood is the medium or currency for the exchange. As Jamieson notes, no scholars "who affirm a heavenly offering" have developed such an extended argument to affirm this kind of substitutionary, "life-for-life exchange" (p. 181). The *how* and *what* of Jesus's offering, then, are Jamieson's central contributions (part 2), in addition to the clarity of his discussion of and argument for the *when* and *where* (part 1).

Benjamin Ribbens  
Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, IL

*John's Letters: An Exegetical Guide for Preaching and Teaching.* By Herbert W. Bateman IV and Aaron C. Peer. Big Greek Idea Series. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2018, 441 pp., \$36.99.

Herbert Bateman has taught the NT for over three decades at various schools in and outside the United States and has authored or edited more than twenty books and academic articles. Bateman is also the founder of *Cyber-Center for Biblical Studies*, an internet resource center geared toward teaching different levels of Bible study. Bateman's co-author and former student, Aaron Peer, previously taught Greek and NT at Grace College in Winona Lake, IN, and currently serves as the pastor of Charter Oak Church in Churubusco, IN. *John's Letters: An Exegetical Guide for Teaching and Preaching* marks the fourth collaborative effort Peer has shared with Bateman.

As the title for the series makes clear, the goal for the book is to help readers discover the "big Greek idea" (or main exegetical point) of John's epistles. Every chapter is formulated around a three-pronged structure. The first prong breaks down each unit of Johannine thought into its main idea from the Greek text followed by a brief structural overview and a concise exegetical outline of the passage. The second prong consists of a clausal outline of the examined passage tracing the author's logic, with both the NA<sup>28</sup> Greek text and an English translation supplied along with corresponding key textual markers. The third prong is the actual exegetical commentary for each verse with a specific focus on semantic and syntactical considerations in each clause. Additionally, every section contains pertinent "nuggets" of set-apart commentary that provide relevant grammatical, lexical, syntactical, and theological insights helping to explain the Greek text at a deeper level.

Bateman, who serves as both co-author of the book and editor of Kregel's new line, describes the book's design as part of a "like series" (p. 12). The nomenclature calls attention to the book's three unique features that make it stand out among the proliferation of exegetical guides; that is, it acts *like* a grammatical commentary, *like* an English interlinear, and *like* an expositional commentary all rolled into one. By collating these separate elements into a single book, the work is geared toward relieving the busy pastor, the swamped professor, and the overwhelmed student of Greek—all of whom comprise the book's target audience. The book's ten-point step-by-step explanation of the clausal outlines for every Johannine passage is especially germane to the three targeted reader types (pp. 28–32).

The book's structure underscores the importance of John's thought, specifically through his use of 232 independent and 281 dependent clauses. The emphasis on clausal outlines and structures, according to the authors, "make it possible for pastors to visualize the relationship clauses have to one another in order to trace John's flow of thought and ultimately his big idea" (p. 27). Though a question may arise as to why they chose not to mention certain Johannine idiomatic *semantics* (e.g. his dominant use of present active indicatives), the authors explain they chose to highlight his unique *syntax*, specifically the apostle's distinctive usage of dependent and independent Greek clauses (p. 54). That said, vocabulary unique to John is



briefly treated (pp. 57–59) with various “semantical nuggets” interspersed throughout.

The work closes with the authors’ own English translation for each of John’s letters (pp. 412–21), a sampling of 29 different rhetorical devices and figures used by John (pp. 422–27), and a convenient index of the entire book’s various grammatical, syntactical, semantical, lexical, theological, and text-critical “nuggets,” as well as brief commentary placements (pp. 433–41).

From beginning to end, *John’s Letters* maintains its goal of underscoring the main idea of each passage in John’s three epistles, doing so by a special focus on clause and syntax. The emphasis at the clausal level provides a much-welcomed contribution to the field of Johannine studies, setting itself apart from Bible software programs and commentaries—the latter generally being restricted to English glosses, translations, or mere parsing capabilities. Because of the book’s visual layout of Johannine clauses amplified by commentary on syntax, any difficulties normally hidden in John’s flow of thought are exposed and explained. To this, there is no doubt that John structures his letters by an idiomatic use of clauses, an important Johannine register the authors do well in evaluating throughout the book (e.g., pp. 32–40). For these reasons, this work on John’s letters is immediately distinct from other notable Johannine Greek studies (e.g. Martin M. Culy, *I, II, III John: A Handbook on the Greek Text* [Baylor Handbook on the Greek NT; Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2004]; Murray Harris, *John* [EGGNT; Nashville: B&H Academic, 2015]).

Though the book’s subtitle describes it as a guide for preachers and teachers, the reader will not find any sermon ideas or homiletical outlines. The communicator of John’s letters, however, will be assisted by the main exegetical point offered for each Johannine passage as well as by the various outlines (with accompanying English) tracing the apostle’s thought-flow and by the helpful syntactical and semantic commentary. Moreover, Bateman and Peer offer many set-off “nuggets,” insightful gems that will surely aid the preacher in developing a robust biblical exposition. In this matter, the book’s subtitle is to be understood by its modifier—it is an *exegetical* guide for preaching and teaching. If still left unsatisfied, the interested preacher would do well to consult Kregel’s *Kerux Commentaries* (currently in progress) where Bateman devotes considerable attention to the actual exposition of John’s letters yielding specific homiletical ideas.

Critiques for the work are relatively minor. For one, the book is bound as a larger textbook making it a bit cumbersome. Internally, the volume is aesthetically pleasing (following a repeated structure for each chapter), but the clausal outlines can be confusing at times with only some structural markers being emphasized in bold without reason (cf. p. 28). Additionally, prior knowledge of Greek is required at many points, limiting its readership. Exegetical categories such as “gnomic imperfect” (p. 64) are simply declared then followed with theological implications without explanation as to what or why. Moreover, some Johannine *hapax legomena* are either theologically glossed or simply left unexplained (e.g. ἡ ἀγγελία as “the gospel message” at 1 John 1:5; 3:11 [pp. 76, 78], or χάρτης at 2 John 12, which is given no attention when glosses like “papyrus” or “paper” are perfectly acceptable

[pp. 372–73]). Thus, without some previous knowledge of NT Greek, the reader can at times be left to the mercy of the author's interpreted or neglected renderings.

To their credit, the authors attempt to ward off such potential criticism, disclosing their expectations for readers in the book's preface. Indeed, the reader is assumed to possess a "minimal" capability in NT Greek (p. 13) and is further encouraged to "think critically" about any interpretive decisions the authors have made (p. 59). In this regard, the emphasis on the "like" features of the book serves as an important caveat, since it reminds readers that this work is not designed as a handbook for translation (both Bateman and Peer have published other works for that specific purpose) but rather as a guide to help revive one's rusty knowledge of John's Greek (p. 32). Consequently, readers with at least two years of Koine Greek under their belt will benefit the most from the book.

These critiques are certainly outweighed by the book's positives. From embedding the "big Greek idea" into each section of the table of contents (making it a quick reference guide) to opening each chapter with the same exegetical layout focused on the syntax of the respective passage, the book serves as a helpful and user-friendly guide. In addition, it becomes a more familiar guide while working through its pages. Moreover, the brief overviews initiating each letter's historical, literary, and theological dimensions make portions of the book accessible to just about any level. The work under review is the first one published in Kregel's *Big Greek Idea Series* (the next one is expected to be on the epistle of James by William Varner), and it has certainly set the bar high. *John's Letters: An Exegetical Guide for Preaching and Teaching* is a welcomed tool for those desiring a solid new resource for Johannine exegesis.

Cory M. Marsh

Southern California Seminary, El Cajon, CA

*Jesus according to the New Testament.* By James D. G. Dunn. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019, xv + 211 pp., \$20.00 paper.

James D. G. Dunn, Lightfoot Professor Emeritus of Divinity at Durham University and one of the most respected and prolific NT scholars of the present time, has published many important commentaries, books, and essays on Christian origins. Utilizing his scholarly expertise, he has written a helpful and concise monograph that sheds light on the portrait of Jesus according to the testimonies of the NT, from Matthew to Revelation.

The book originally began with Dunn's Canterbury lectures in 2015, where he gave three lectures: "Jesus according to Jesus," "Jesus according to Matthew, Mark and Luke," and, finally, "Jesus according to John." These three lectures virtually became the first three chapters of the book, and Dunn decided to continue the sequence of the study in the order of the biblical canon in the rest of the chapters: Jesus according to Acts (chap. 4); according to Paul (chaps. 5 and 6); according to Hebrews (chap. 7); according to the Catholic Epistles (chap. 8); and, finally, according to the book of Revelation (chap. 9).

Right from the start, Dunn's methodological focus is redaction-critical, distinguishing what was originally taught and said by Jesus from how the original teachings and sayings of Jesus have been variously remembered and communicated by the early church. Chapter 1 explores: (1) the lessons learned from Jesus (e.g. his concern for social outcasts and minorities such as the poor, sinners, the Gentiles, women, and children); (2) the distinctive features of Jesus's ministry (e.g. his proclamation of the kingdom of God); and (3) Jesus's self-understanding of his mission and role (e.g. his mission and role as the Messiah/Christ). Dunn's conclusion is that "much of Jesus's message can be attributed confidently to Jesus himself," which is "rooted in good and authentic memory ... of Jesus's first disciples" (p. 25).

Chapter 2 then explores Jesus according to the Synoptic Gospels, noting the twin character of the Synoptic tradition: "the same, yet different." Dunn points out the distinct features of each Synoptic Gospel (pp. 29–50): (1) Mark's passion narrative, the unveiling of the messianic secret and puzzling ending; (2) Matthew's emphases appealing to Jewish audiences; and (3) Luke's focus on the potential of Jesus's mission for the Gentile world, especially through the anointing of the Spirit. Such differences among the Synoptic tradition are due to the fact that the oral tradition concerning Jesus was passed on and variously remembered and communicated in various forms and combinations in the Synoptic Gospels, which indicate "the same Jesus powerfully impacting different people and different situations" (p. 51).

Chapter 3, in comparison with the chapter on the Synoptics, identifies John's unique way of "bring[ing] out the significance of Jesus's ministry and his death and resurrection" instead of "giv[ing] a more or less straightforward account of Jesus's ministry" (p. 55). The fact that John, despite significant variance with the Synoptics, was preserved and became part of the NT canon "indicates that the early church recognized the importance of re-expressing the good news to reach others outside the normal circles of Judaism" (p. 73).

Chapter 4 then draws attention particularly to the developments in the earliest understanding of Jesus in the speeches and sermons in Acts. Dunn claims that these speeches and sermons reflect both Luke's reliance on earliest Christian source material implying "primitive" Christian theology and Luke's own theological concerns implying the more developed Christian theology in later Christianity. Thus, Dunn's assumption is that "Luke carefully inquir[ed] of those who remembered the earliest preaching of the Jerusalem church, and craft[ed] the sermon from these memories and from emphases that had lasted from the earliest period of Christianity's beginnings in Jerusalem to his own day" (p. 82). Again, Dunn's basic claim is that the presentation of Jesus in Acts, on the one hand, provides a core and basic proclamation of Jesus by the earliest church and, on the other hand, presents a flexible (the same, yet different) illustration of who Jesus is.

Chapters 5 and 6 discuss the distinctiveness of Paul's gospel, attempting to show how much the early development of Christian faith owes to Paul. For Dunn, it is first with Paul that "the gospel was summed up and worked out," not in terms of Jesus's teaching or ministry, but in terms of Jesus's atoning death, his resurrection as the sure promise of salvation, justification by faith, Christian faith as a daily

participation in and with Christ, the gift of the Spirit as the defining mark of a Christian, and the eschatological expectation (pp. 119–35). Further, Dunn reflects on the later Paul of the Pastoral Epistles, which indicate “more elaborate and more carefully defined convictions about Jesus,” in the form of “well-established creedal and hymnic formulae,” and such developments, asserts Dunn, “could be attributed to Paul, or at the very least to the influence of Paul” (p. 136–38).

Chapter 7 notes the distinctive or “somewhat strange” character of Hebrews (probably under the influence of the Mediterranean churches), “supplement[ing] the more straightforward portrayals of the synoptic evangelists and the more sophisticated portrayals of John and Paul” (p. 142). One of the striking elements of Hebrews for Dunn is its emphasis on the priestly and sacrificial role of Jesus, and this is perhaps, Dunn suggests, a development made in late first-century or early second-century Christianity.

Chapter 8 surveys the distinctive features of each of the Catholic epistles (e.g. James’s emphasis on the daily practicality of Christian teaching, 1 Peter’s reflection on Isaiah’s suffering servant, etc.) from which one can gain “a fuller picture of [first-century] early Christian growth and expansion than [one receives] from a traditional overdependence on Acts and the Pauline letters” (p. 158). Chapter 9 then finally examines Jesus according to Revelation, probably a late first-century work of apocalyptic and crisis literature, where Jesus is presented to the present world “as the key to making the sense of the crises confronting the churches and as at the center of the hope for a successful resolution of these crises” (p. 186).

Dunn has done potential readers a great favor, offering a comprehensive, yet concise, canonically structured overview of Jesus. He claims that all of the testimonies in the NT canon are important because they together “indicate how engaging and influential was the figure of Jesus, and how varied was the impact he made on those who became his disciples and who left us written accounts of that impact made on them by Jesus’s brief life, his death and his resurrection” (p. 187). The book helps readers appreciate the value of the diversity of the testimonies of the NT regarding Jesus.

Another strength of the book is Dunn’s ability to distinguish what is a primitive Christianity from a more developed and refined Christianity; but he also attempts to present a strong case as to why these developments were necessary for the later (second-century) church. Together these developments contribute to the fuller canonical portrait of Jesus. For instance, Dunn attributes the particular focus of the book of Hebrews on priest and sacrifice to second-century Christianity’s shift of focus to the concept of priestly ritual, and this development adds to a more sophisticated and rich portrayal of Jesus (p. 142).

However, the book displays some minor drawbacks as well. Because his methodological claim is sometimes too reliant on a redaction-critical model, or an evolutionary model, he misses out on the fact that Paul’s theology was also a derivative of the common experience(s) and theology/theologies of the early church—it is not only Paul who shaped, influenced, or innovated the understanding of the Jesus of the early church but also and rather the experiences and understanding of the early church strongly influenced and shaped Paul’s understanding of Jesus.

Dunn's presentation of a somewhat dichotomous and disconnected relationship between early Christianity and Paul seems somewhat unbalanced, especially in light of the notion of effective history (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) as a solid hermeneutical component.

Further, though the purpose of the book is to give a general overview of Jesus's portrayal, Dunn misses out on some of the distinctive features of Jesus's ministry and teaching. For example, while Dunn focuses on (somewhat) less popular topics such as "individualism" in Jesus's teaching in the Gospel of John (p. 68), he overlooks Jesus's important teachings on discipleship, church, and the end times. Similar tendencies are to be found throughout the volume. However, to be fair toward Dunn, no one is able to cover all the subjects, especially when considering that this is a rather short and concise volume.

Overall, students seeking a comprehensive, yet concise, introduction to the teaching about Jesus in the NT will benefit greatly from this work. I strongly recommend it to any student wishing to learn about what the NT says concerning Jesus.

Sungmin Park  
University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, UK

*Trinitarian Theology: Theological Methods and Doctrinal Application*. Edited by Keith S. Whitfield. Nashville: B&H, 2019, 197 pp., \$19.99 paper; and *Trinity Without Hierarchy: Reclaiming Nicene Orthodoxy in Evangelical Theology*. Edited by Michael F. Bird and Scott Harrower. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2019, 344 pp., \$25.99 paper.

Particularly among evangelicals, significant controversy exists around what is proper as theological method for forming and defining the doctrine of the Trinity. Two books provide collections of articles regarding how this fundamental Christian doctrine is best determined and, implicitly, what might be valid analogies in human social relations. While both works are 2019 publications, *Trinitarian Theology* appeared slightly before *Trinity Without Hierarchy*, the latter of which explicitly argues against Bruce Ware's position of "Eternal Functional Subordination" (EFS) within the Godhead, that is, that the Son is eternally submissive to the authority the Father. All authors claim allegiance to Trinitarian orthodoxy.

The first work, *Trinitarian Theology*, is a discussion within the newly formed Southern Baptist Professor Fellowship (2014) with contributions by Bruce Ware, Malcolm Yarnell, and Matthew Emerson together with Luke Stamps. Whitfield's introduction situates the book's development within the SBC and broader Trinitarian discussion with five central questions: (1) Is eternal subordination of the Son and the Spirit taught in Scripture? (2) Is EFS a novel theological position? (3) If EFS is affirmed, does this denote separate wills within the one God? (4) Does eternal subordination of the Son deny eternal generation of the Son? (5) Should the EFS position serve as grounds for distinguishing roles between men and women? (pp. 5–7).

In the first and longest chapter, Ware expounds a long list of texts and arguments for what he terms the “eternal relations of authority and submission” (ERAS), a nuanced form of EFS. Ware affirms the absolute equality of the divine nature and even the *oneness* of the divine will, yet he simultaneously argues for a distinction between the active willing of the Son and that of the Father (“hypostatic willings,” p. 137). Given “one unified divine will,” there must yet be “three distinct yet undivided inflections or expressions of willing” without which “it is difficult to imagine how the three trinitarian persons share in intimate fellowship, love, communication, and mutual support” (p. 48). Ware’s strongest point is that the only access to knowing the Godhead in itself (*ad intra*) is via revelation in time and space (*ad extra*). Therefore, the Bible’s Father-Son dynamic must inform our understanding of the distinctive roles within the eternal (immanent) Trinity itself, not merely within creation and incarnation.

In the second chapter, Malcolm Yarnell proffers that the Trinity is rich with suggestions regarding anthropology. Aligned (allegedly) with the Eastern Church Fathers, his “vertical view” affirms a “proper order within God” (p. 82). If humanity is created in the image of God (revealed as *Father* and *Son*, as well as *Spirit*), then it seems reasonable that divine relations suggest patterns for human relations. Yarnell cautiously sees parallels in the divine ordering with husband-wife relations, but he admits that the yet mysterious eschatological nature of the *imago Dei* gives pause.

In Chapter Three, Emerson and Stamps reject EFS (and Ware’s ERAS). They define their holistic theological method as “illuminated by the Spirit, rooted in biblical exegesis, governed by patterns of biblical language, shaped by the biblical economy, guided by the biblically derived rule of faith, guarded by biblically derived tradition, refined by systematic and philosophical reflection, and located within the communion of the saints” (p. 105). While the definition includes “biblical” some five times, Emerson and Stamps define the Trinity especially via the primary creeds (*regula fidei*) and historical-dogmatic reflection. A particular contention of Emerson and Stamps is Ware’s use of the term “person” as suggesting distinct centers of consciousness—a position articulated over the last four decades within social and relational Trinitarianism but ambivalent in the Nicene Fathers and largely rejected by Latin theology. Emerson and Stamps eschew any univocal relationship of gender to the transcendent divine Being but do acknowledge that such relationships seem entailed in “the economic missions of the three persons of the one God” (p. 172).

The work includes rejoinder chapters by each. Whitfield summarizes the theological models of the three positions: Ware is strongly exegetical of Scripture, and respectful of but not bound to pro-Nicene theology; Yarnell stands more centrist between Scripture and Nicene tradition; and Emerson/Stamps believe that pro-Nicene theology and philosophy are definitive for the grammar of orthodox Trinitarian doctrine today.

The longer and more academic book, *Trinity Without Hierarchy*, directly argues against EFS. Co-editor Michael Bird prefaces the work by sharply labeling Bruce Ware, Wayne Grudem, and others “Theologians of a Lesser Son” (p. 9); accordingly, “The central thesis of this book is that the evangelical consensus, in keeping

with its catholic and orthodox heritage, affirms that the Trinity consists of one God who is three distinct and equal persons, and the distinctions do not entail subordination or hierarchy” (p. 11). He labels EFS Trinitarian doctrine “quasi-homoianism” and believes it is designed to buttress gender complementarianism. Bird summarizes: “It is the conclusion of the editors, and by implication of the contributors too, that whom evangelicals believe in—or should believe—is a Trinity without hierarchy of authority or gradations of glory and majesty” (p. 21). Of the sixteen chapters, the more recognized authors include, along with Bird, Peter Leithart, Stephen Holmes, Graham Cole, and Scott Harrower (another editor of the volume). Contributors appear divided over the issue of gender complementarianism but, if supportive, believe it is an inference from non-Trinitarian texts. Some authors observe a voluntary Trinitarian subordination beginning before creation at the *pactum salutis* (Covenant of Redemption) but not an eternal subordination within the Godhead. A significant weakness of the otherwise strong volume is the lack of biographical information about the authors.

The first four chapters address the doctrine of the Trinity in the NT. Adesola Akala seeks to parse “Sonship, Sending, and Subordination in the Gospel of John,” noting John’s Gospel as a primary document in pro-Nicene Christology among fourth- and fifth-century scholars. Madison Pierce’s Chapter 2, “Trinity without *Taxis*? A Reconsideration of 1 Corinthians 11:3,” contends that “head” (*kephale*) does not always denote “authority over.” She prefers the meaning of source/origin by which Paul designates “three ordered relationships where one has preeminence over the other, but without the explicit interplay of authority and submission” (p. 53). In Chapter 3, Amy Peeler asks, “What Does ‘Father’ Mean?” in the Epistle to the Hebrews. She denies that the Father’s *initiative* in Hebrews indicates the Father’s *authority* over the Son. Rather, the Father and Son share authority and ontological sameness yet exercise this authority in distinct ways of sending and being sent. In the exceptional Chapter 4, “The Trinitarian Dynamic in the Book of Revelation,” Ian Paul demonstrates not only the shared titles, attributes, and worship of the Father and the Son but also draws together OT evidence (Isa 11:1–9 LXX; Zech 4:2, 6, 10) to affirm the “seven spirits” (Rev 3:1; 4:5; 5:6) are the sevenfold Holy Spirit, the eyes of both Yahweh and the Lamb. He concludes that, if implicit elsewhere in the NT, the equality of the Son and the Father are explicit in the Book of Revelation, with the Lamb “as the object of divine praise in his own right” (p. 105).

Chapters 5 to 12 evaluate EFS in light of “classical” Trinitarianism. In “No Son, No Father: Athanasius and the Mutuality of Divine Personhood” (chap. 5), Peter Leithart addresses the EFS position that the Father has authority in himself. He finds dubious the “one will” lens by which some reject EFS, but he contends with Athanasius that each member of the Godhead is defined by and dependent upon the other: there can be no Sonless Father nor Fatherless Son. In Chapter 6, Amy Brown Hughes highlights the Trinitarianism of the last Cappadocian: “Beholding the Beholder: Precision and Mystery in Gregory of Nyssa’s *Ad Ablabium*.” Gregory recognized the apophatic nature of speaking about God yet also the need for using language common to human experience (e.g. “Father,” “Son”). Tradition-

al terms for God may be complemented today by creative, communal terminology (but not gendered hierarchy).

Tyler Wittman's "*Dominium natural et oeconomicum*: Authority and the Trinity" (chap. 7) centers on Aquinas's insistence that authority (i.e. eternal *authorship*) is related only to order of *origin* (begottenness and procession), not intrinsic authority-submission. In Chapter 8, Robert Baylor expounds the thought of John Owen: "He Humbled Himself: Trinity, Covenant, and the Gracious Condescension of the Son." The seventeenth-century theologian believed that only with the Trinitarian *pactum salutis* before creation did the Son "freely and contingently" choose to become subordinate to the Father for accomplishing the redemption of the elect. While such a perspective attempts to take into account much of the biblical evidence that Ware and others present, for Owen such a subordination is neither innate nor eternal. Jeff Fisher explores (chap. 9) "Protestant Scholastics on Trinity and Persons," specifically the post-Reformers from 1560 to 1725. He concludes that most of them included the Son's aseity (self-existence) in the Son's eternal generation via the eternal, incomprehensible communication of the divine essence. By Fisher's analysis of post-Reformation thinkers, all functional subordination of the Son was merely economic, not eternal. Moreover, all parallels between the Trinity and human relationships were considered "unwise and dangerous" (p. 211).

Chapter 10 by Jules Martínez-Olivieri—"There Is a Method to the Madness: On Christological Commitments of Eternal Functional Subordination of the Son"—seems somewhat misplaced. He evaluates the theological methods of a diversity of recent proponents broadly grouped within EFS and alleges that, in contrast to the Nicene tradition, they conflate Jesus's human will with his divine will. He cites (p. 228) J. N. D. Kelly's principle, "where there is no difference of natures, there is none of wills either" (*Early Christian Doctrines* [5<sup>th</sup> rev. ed.; Continuum, 2000], 273). Martínez-Olivieri echoes the accusation that Trinity has been coopted for a socio-ethical complementarianism, methodologically similar to a legion of "liberal" social theologians (p. 234). He cautions against a simplistic analogy of being between divine and human personhood without adequate appreciation for Trinitarian otherness.

John McClean (chap. 11) discusses the Trinitarian theology of twentieth-century Wolfhart Pannenberg in a chapter subtitled "The Submission of the Son and the Heartbeat of Divine Love." Pannenberg rejects both the subordinationist Christologies of pre-Nicaean theologians (risking tritheism) and the unity models of Augustine, Aquinas, Hegel, and Barth (risking modalism). For Pannenberg, by contrast, Jesus's relationship with the Father demonstrates the dynamic Trinitarian love increasingly revealed throughout history and eschatologically consummated when all things are reconciled in Christ, a final state of true "unity in distinction" (p. 253). McClean finally rejects Pannenberg's theology for lack of any adequate account of divine judgment and wrath.

Stephen Holmes (Ch. 12) in "Classical Trinitarianism and Eternal Functional Subordination" argues that "the only possible definition" of the word "trinitarian" must be historical because Scripture does not use the term (p. 260). Accordingly, "Trinity" is properly defined only by the fourth-century debates and councils of



Nicaea and Constantinople, including Augustine's later interpretation. He allows that one may seek to prove from Scripture many positions including EFS, the *filioque*, or inseparable operations, but even correct biblical exegesis does not necessarily make it "Trinitarian" (p. 264): "All that is said of the eternal life of God is said of the single *ousia* save only that which refers to the relations of origin" (p. 267)—a perspective that ultimately excludes any Trinitarian relationships of love and personal communion, and certainly all theologies of EFS. Holmes assumes divine *simplicity* as absolute, the definitive lens for "orthodox Trinitarianism" (p. 271).

Graham Cole (to whom the work is dedicated) continues with "The Trinity without Tiers" (chap. 13). Rejecting both the egalitarian "socialist" Trinities of Moltmann and L. Boff as well as the hierarchical Trinitarianisms of the EFS, Cole seems to eschew any social or relational dimension to the divine life. He admits that we can know the *attributes* of God from Scripture ("There is no hidden God behind God," pp. 279–80)—but not the internal personal life of the eternal Trinity. In Chapter 14, James Gordon seeks to refute certain philosophical EFS arguments. Similar to Holmes he insists, "the Trinitarian persons are identical to the divine essence, given the doctrine of divine simplicity" (p. 296). All personal relations *ad intra* vanish. Yet, the concept of *appropriations* makes it "proper to attribute specific economic works to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit by virtue of their order of subsistence" (p. 303). He concludes that EFS proponents "fail to give proper attention to traditional Trinitarian thought" (p. 304).

Co-editor Scott Harrower closes the book with two chapters, the first (chap. 15) critiquing "Bruce Ware's Trinitarian Methodology," the subject of his Ph.D. dissertation under Graham Cole and Thomas McCall at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (later published as *Trinitarian Self and Salvation: An Evangelical Engagement with Rahner's Rule* [Pickwick, 2012]). He contends that Ware is inconsistent in his use of Scripture and equally inconsistent in his theological construction regarding Trinitarian relationships. Harrower evaluates Ware's Trinitarian theology in light of Rahner's Rule ("the economic Trinity is the immanent, and the immanent Trinity is the economic"), categorizing Ware as advocating a "strict realist reading" of "unqualified identification" between the economic and the immanent Trinity (pp. 311–12). He admits that Ware himself critiques too close of an identification of the economic with the immanent Godhead, but then takes Ware to task on his exegetical conclusions that "God's" will denotes the Father's will and, again, that only the Son could have become incarnate. In addition, he accuses Ware and Grudem of selective use of texts and a literalist application of biblical language, all the while importing complementarian assumptions into their position. In the end, Harrower's criticism that certain biblical texts actually undermine an EFS view of the Trinity is an effective argument for some readers, but Harrower himself does not provide such biblical references. His final Chapter 16, "The Intergenerational Impact of Theological Beliefs" reminds readers of the ongoing power of "theological cultures." Harrower and Bird themselves are grateful for the heritage of evangelical Anglican Leon Morris at their own Ridley College in Melbourne.

Both *Trinitarian Theology* and *Trinity Without Hierarchy* are valuable works. The first book serves especially as an accessible in-house debate among Southern Baptists, with Ware's EFS (or ERAS) position as the anchor. Readers desiring deeper EFS scholarship may refer to Ware and John Starke's edited volume *One God in Three Persons* (Crossway, 2015). On the other hand, *Trinity Without Hierarchy* directly targets the EFS position, particularly as articulated by Ware. Some of the accusations are acerbic. All contributors reject EFS as sub-Trinitarian. Yet among these authors there is a diversity of positions regarding what it means for God to be three eternal persons.

Several observations are in order.

First, the accusation that Ware and others reinvent God "to buttress complementarianism" appears dismissive (a low blow indeed) of more serious exegesis that seeks to make sense of divine personal relations within Scripture. One suspects that cultural correctness and expectations regarding social and gender relations influence all interpretations of Trinity—whether Anglican or Southern Baptist. In both books reviewed, all theologians recognize that the question of Trinity is fundamental to everything else. If the economic Trinity reflects a pattern of distinct ways of relating, then readers may ask why all implications for human relations should necessarily be rejected.

Second, if one is Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox, the ecumenical councils are generally considered infallible and absolutely definitive of Trinitarianism, rightly understood. While it is important to acknowledge the conceptualities behind the Trinitarian language of Athanasius, the Cappadocians, and Augustine (and remember: none were without their philosophical assumptions), an evangelical perspective respects and affirms the creeds but subjects all theology to Scripture. When speaking of the infinite God as rightly framed within the basic Nicene confession (A.D. 325/381), there remains a cornucopia of richness that singular or exclusivist models underappreciate. The mystery of God encourages humility and openness to alternative models that may further explore the biblical testimony. Both books reviewed ignore significant diversity within Nicene confession shared by Oriental and Eastern Orthodoxies as well as Latin and evangelical theology. Evangelicals need to be very careful with accusations of heresy.

Third, it can be argued that all revelation, including every word of the Bible, is *economic*, that is, revealed in and through creation. From Logos to Alpha and Omega, there is no passage that tells us what the Trinity is truly like beyond creation (earthly or heavenly). While texts point toward a transcendent divine reality (e.g. John 1:1), all talk of an immanent Trinity is ultimately a deduction from what is revealed. Moreover, evidences for the divine *processions* of the Son and the Spirit, as interpreted historically, are likewise exegetically fragile when projected onto the eternal divine Being—although this reviewer believes them true. To reverse the logic by insisting that a particular conception of the eternal Trinitarian ontology is absolute and therefore all economic language must conform to one particular idea of the immanent Trinity is to invert God's own self-revelation in the way he has made himself known. Whatever one makes of anthropomorphisms, the language of di-

vine self-disclosure is nearly always intensely personal, as the very language of “Father” and “Son” reveals.

Fourth, words such as “person” were in infancy and evolving in the early church. Indeed, Christian Trinitarian faith is what gave impetus to define the concept of person more fully (the Creed of Chalcedon’s *prosopon* and *hypostasis*). Insisting on oneness of the divine substance/essence (*homoousios*) served finally to exclude Arianism and Eunomianism but left largely undefined what it meant to speak of three persons. Boethius’s definition of “person” (ca. AD 523) as “an individual substance of a rational nature” resonated through Western history in many ways (both rejected and accepted), finding renewed expression in Descartes’s “I think therefore I am.” A “person” is an individual autonomous entity defined by rationality. If intellectual autonomy dominated ideas of personhood in the Enlightenment, these gave way to other psychological and social theories, and finally in the academy to pure naturalism (e.g. you are your physical brain). Developments in Trinitarian thought—whether those of Karl Barth, Vladimir Lossky, the Oxford social Trinitarianism of the 1940s, or the later social models of Pannenberg, Moltmann, L. Boff, Zizioulas, Volf, Gunton, Grenz, and others—may not entirely coincide with early church conceptualities (particularly as insisted upon by Holmes), but they are not entirely alien to an enriched Trinitarianism instructive for us today. The either/or of much Trinitarian debate would do well to recognize a certain latitude within orthodoxy’s confession of “one substance and three persons.” In my thought, the concept of the one divine nature (and one will) must simultaneously recognize in some sense three divine wills in genuine, unperturbed unity, in love, each delighting in and glorifying the other. Tensions within the Nicæan vision admit the wonder and beauty of Trinitarian mystery.

Finally, as most of the chapters argue in both *Trinitarian Theology* and *Trinity Without Hierarchy*, phrases like eternal functional subordination (EFS and Ware’s ERAS) do indeed raise questions as to the full equality of the Son (and the Holy Spirit) with God the Father. Rather than the problematic language of hierarchy, authority, and subordination, much of the difficulty is avoided by recognizing both mutuality in the Godhead and distinctive ways in which the three persons eternally relate to one another—not in a vertical paradigm but horizontal (as Bird maintains). That is, the economic Trinity does indeed imply something of the immanent Trinitarian relations, not in a hierarchical structure but in mutual fellowship that reflects the distinct dispositions of each divine person.

J. Scott Horrell

Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, TX

*ReSourcing Theological Anthropology: A Constructive Account of Humanity in the Light of Christ.* By Marc Cortez. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018, 304 pp., \$29.99 paper.

It is a longstanding Christian intuition that Jesus Christ reveals what it means to be truly human and that salvation encompasses conformity to Christ’s image. At the same time, there is an arguable lack of clarity surrounding the foundation and

material content of such claims. This is why Marc Cortez spoke at the LA Theology Conference in 2018. And this is why he writes. More precisely, it is why he writes *again*, given that this volume builds upon—albeit in an indirect manner—his previous title, *Christological Anthropology in Historical Perspective* (Zondervan Academic, 2016). Whereas Cortez’s prior undertaking was largely historical-evaluative in nature, *ReSourcing Theological Anthropology* is more biblical-constructive. Its overarching purpose is to generate a “thickened” description of Christological anthropology that, echoing David Kelsey, Cortez defines as “beliefs about the person which are shaped by beliefs about Jesus Christ and God’s relation to him” (p. 19).

Though this work should not be out of reach for a non-specialist readership, it will likely be of special value to undergraduate and graduate theology students. It would also be a gainful resource for those preparing to lecture (whether in an academic or catechetical setting) on Christology and anthropology. I will most certainly draw on it as a teaching resource in the years to come.

In what follows, I begin by briefly canvassing the work as a whole so as to ensure that readers come away with a reasonable sense of the book’s contents. This, in turn, sets the stage for an evaluation wherein I reflect on the volume’s strengths as well as several perceived shortcomings. This discussion concludes with one major suggestion for enhancing what is otherwise a very impressive project.

The first section of the book, comprising chapters 1–4, labors to establish a robust biblical basis for Christological anthropology. While this basis is often assumed, it is nonetheless a “claim [that] is not always entirely clear” (p. 25). In service of this end, chapter one plunges into John’s Gospel, focusing on Pilate’s description of Jesus in 19:5: *Idou ho anthrōpos* (“Here is the man”). Cortez deems this to be an example of “unconventional witness” in the Fourth Gospel, which thus carries special meaning (p. 36). In the ensuing interpretation, he contends that, in John, Jesus is not “just the return of Adam ... he is both the one who inaugurates the new creation ... and the new Adam who is the eschatological culmination of God’s plans for humanity” (p. 50). Correlative to this claim, Cortez concludes the chapter with a disquisition on the nature-grace debate (informed especially by Henri de Lubac) as it bears upon the more precise way in which humans attain their creational *telos*.

Chapter two identifies another biblical foundation for Christological anthropology in the Adam-Christ typology of 1 Corinthians 15. Of significance is Cortez’s exegetical argument (with reference to vv. 35–49) that Christ’s replacement of Adam as the new head of humanity is not merely *redemptive*; it should also be seen “as the fulfillment of God’s *creational* plans for humanity” (p. 79, emphasis added). This judgment, of course, raises questions about the purpose(s) of the incarnation. Accordingly, the chapter concludes with a fascinating excursus into so-called “incarnation anyway” (or IA) theory. IA theories maintain that the Eternal Son would have visited the world even if there had not been a fall, inasmuch as his incarnation was necessary for the accomplishment of God’s ultimate purposes for creation.

The third chapter provides an (obligatory) treatment of the *imago Dei*. Against modern naysayers such as Claus Westermann and David Kelsey, Cortez argues that the *imago* concept in fact supplies important *material* content to Christological an-

thropology. This is demonstrated by attention to the image's association—in the OT and NT—with the manifestation of divine presence. As such, Jesus is very properly called “the image of God” because he is Emmanuel. With this affirmation in mind, the chapter terminates in a rumination on whether Christ is the image of God with regard to his *eternal* or *incarnate* existence, wherein Cortez lands on the latter judgment.

Bringing the book's first principal task to completion, chapter four ventures into the Letter to the Hebrews. For Cortez, *pace* conventional interpretive assumptions, Hebrews has “a keen interest in humanity, and particularly the humanity of Christ” (p. 132). He grounds this claim in the exordium in Heb 1:1–4 as well as a perceptive explanation of Psalm 8 as it is cited in Hebrews 2. The interpretive fruits of this exegesis reinforce the clarion theme of section one; in Hebrews, too, Jesus is portrayed “as the one who reveals what it means to be truly human” (p. 142). Out of this insight, the discussion transitions into an exploration of the precise nature of Jesus's humanity. Was Jesus's human nature *fallen* or *unfallen*? Cortez's handling of this tentatively dense topic is deft and illuminating.

With chapter five, Cortez launches into his second major task. As a meditative tool, he enumerates eleven theses—pulled together from the findings of chapters 1–4—that are meant to show how Christology should inform anthropology. Several of the theses, such as the first, ratify commonly held Christian intuitions: “Jesus is the unique revelation of what it means to be truly human” (p. 169). Thesis nine brings a qualifier to this claim, rightly insisting that even while Jesus reveals what it means to be human, there can “be no direct move from Christology to anthropology” (p. 184). Other theses, like number two, wax philosophical: Jesus's humanity is ontologically fundamental for all other humans. Of note is the fact that Cortez is careful to avoid any sort of metaphysical appeal to a universal human nature in this assertion: “the eternal Son just *is* the paradigm of humanity” (p. 172). By and large, Cortez's theses recognizably distill the key exegetical conclusions of the first four chapters. One exception seems to be thesis seven: Christological anthropology must “pay close attention to the concrete particularities of Jesus's existence” (p. 181). Given that this principle is especially relevant to chapters 6–7, its lack of explicit grounding in chapters 1–4 is somewhat curious.

With an eye to the eleven theses, the final three chapters constitute case studies on anthropological reflection in the light of Christ. Chapter six concentrates on Jesus's *maleness*: how is “Jesus normative for all humans in light of the fact that he is male?” (p. 190). Here Cortez earnestly engages with a selection of feminist misgivings as well as the concept of gender essentialism. His dexterous handling of many sensitive issues provides an example worthy of emulation. Chapter seven turns to questions of race, with special attention to Jesus's Jewishness. For theologians such as Willie Jennings and J. Kameron Carter, racism is fundamentally a Christological problem. In response to this indictment, Cortez turns his concentration to James Cone and Virgilio Elizondo in considering how Christology might instead serve to ameliorate racism. Among other gains, this reflection reminds that great care must be taken (thesis nine) when drawing anthropological conclusions from the particularities of Jesus's historical existence (thesis seven). Chapter eight considers the

nature of human death. While the Bible clearly regards death as a punitive ramification of sin, a number of modern theologians have argued that death may also in fact be “intrinsic to the creaturely condition of humanity” (p. 237). In exploring this possibility, Cortez plumbs the legacy of Karl Barth who, on Christological grounds, rejected the intrinsic link between death and judgment. While extolling Barth “as an excellent model of thinking Christologically,” Cortez ultimately finds his position to be ambiguous (p. 256). Having recently given a paper on Barth’s theology of death, I was particularly keen to examine this section wherein I happily encountered a sensitive appraisal that drew my attention to a Barthian inconsistency that I had previously not noticed (pp. 252–53).

This book has many virtues, three of which I am especially inclined to mention. First, there is its structure and composition, both of which serve to facilitate (rather than hinder) understanding on the part of the reader. Cortez consistently shows himself to be not only a supple but also a thoroughly ordered thinker. His organizational skills are complemented by a capacity for fluent prose as well as an adept use of everyday illustrations (often comical—Cortez assigns blame for any errors to his doctoral students; p. 13!) to navigate the theological densities of Christological reflection. None of this should insinuate that *ReSourcing Theological Anthropology* is simplistic. To the contrary, it models that rare combination of deep, rigorous thought with lucid articulation. Cortez, it seems to me, writes out of a desire to teach and inform more than to impress. Yet, in the end, impress he does.

Second, a recent monograph stated that theology finds its *foremost* subject matter in reflection on the practices and patterns of speech of the Christian community. Refreshingly, this is not the outlook that Cortez holds, inasmuch as his project is a (laudable) instantiation of *sola Scriptura*—as classically understood (exemplified by Iain Provan’s *The Reformation and the Right Reading of Scripture* [Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018]). Cortez’s volume is firmly *directed by Scripture* without being *against tradition*. On the one hand, it not only assumes the authority of the Bible but also exhibits its immense theological fertility. On the other hand, it makes apt use of the tradition in channeling this fertility. This is repeatedly demonstrated in chapters 1–4, all of which connect exegetical themes with some of the great, historical conversations surrounding Christology. In this arena, the scope of Cortez’s theological consultation speaks for itself: his sources range from Ian McFarland and Rosemary Radford Ruether to Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory the Theologian, Julian of Norwich, and Thomas Aquinas. In short, *ReSourcing Christological Anthropology* is among the finest examples of *sola Scriptura* theologizing that I have encountered in the last few years.

Third, Cortez is successful (and persuasive) in his purpose. He means to give his readers a deepened grasp of the relationship between Christology and anthropology. This he does. Yet he does not merely provide an “information download” or a set of overly tidy conclusions. Rather, his discussions include sufficient detail for intelligent readers to make assessments that may vary from his own. I am also convinced that his work has a capacity to profit different types of readers. For those new to Christology and anthropology, Cortez offers an accessible introduction that is attuned to many of the key issues and debates in current scholarship.

For those who have prior familiarity with these topics, the volume simultaneously provides a welcome refresher, replete with an array of seasoned insights that are poised to stimulate further reflection on its subject matter.

Notwithstanding its many virtues, there are a couple of minor shortcomings to briefly mention. The first pertains to what might be a slight inconsistency. As Cortez acknowledges at several intervals, when dealing with Christology and anthropology, one is inevitably drawn into the orbit of metaphysics. A case in point is the concept of human nature. Ancient Christian theology carries an interpretation of human nature that is largely unintelligible to modern believers with nominalist sensibilities. At a formal level, Cortez seems comfortable with modernity and therein eschews the need to posit “the idea of a universal human nature” in making sense of Christ and his salvific achievement (p. 172). Even so, he elsewhere seems to faintly admit a notion of human nature that hearkens to older (premodern) conceptions; an example is his evaluation of the differing views about whether Christ possessed a fallen or unfallen nature. While Cortez concedes early on the project’s inability to substantially treat such issues (p. 24), a bit of additional attention to the concept of nature might be apropos. If he were to engage this with his characteristic proficiency, we would be well served.

I also finished with a misgiving towards the notion of empathy operative in Cortez’s discussion of Christ’s fallen nature (pp. 157–65). The gist of this discussion is that Jesus, if he is to truly be our merciful High Priest, must be in full solidarity with *our exact experience* of being human. Otherwise, Jesus is merely pretending to identify with us and therein cannot be said to properly empathize with fallen humanity. Although this outlook resonates emotionally with me (as with most people born after 1980, I am a product of the so-called “culture of authenticity”), I believe we should scrutinize the “maximalist” theory of empathy it posits. What degree of empathy is required to show mercy? I do not have to have nearly drowned in order to feel *bona fide* pity and show genuine mercy by jumping into the water to save a drowning person. In like manner, should we presuppose that Christ’s capacity to show us mercy is contingent on his full, *exact* identification with every aspect of our fallenness? I think not. I also worry that such an outlook can induce us to compromise other essential Christological commitments: a savior like us in *every* respect is no savior at all. All this to say, on some occasions—to use the idiom of psychology—we may need to be (gratefully) content with Christ’s *sympathy* towards our condition.

Without wanting to be small-minded in the face of such a superb enterprise, in concluding I would like to propose one area for its potential enhancement. Although Cortez consistently engages the wider Christian tradition amidst his deliberations, one facet of this broader inheritance is conspicuously absent: voices from the Reformation era. The fact that Luther is referenced but twice (pp. 16, 176) and Calvin once (p. 21) is indicative. There is no reason to surmise that this omission was calculated, but it could nonetheless imply that the doctrinal ruminations of the Reformation era are insignificant to Cortez’s subject. Perish the thought! This slice of the tradition would have been well worth consulting.

To give an example, I turn to Cortez's evaluation of the "incarnation anyway" theory (pp. 83–98). In pondering the notion of IA, he provides a solid introduction to three recent advocates, rehearsing the proposals of Marilyn McCord Adams (incarnation as a means for God to unite everything in the Son), Edwin van Driel (incarnation as God's vehicle for elevating humanity to a level of goodness transcending that of original creation), and Oliver Crisp (incarnation as a basis for establishing the union with God for which humans were designed but which they cannot attain on their own). Following this review, he charts several general critiques of IA theory.

Without taking issue with the existing content of this discussion, I would suggest that this is a facet of his work that would be well served from attention to an early Protestant debate. Specifically, I have in mind the dispute precipitated circa 1550 by Andreas Osiander, who proposed his own form of the "incarnation anyway" theory (see Timothy Wengert's "Coming to Terms with Forensic Justification," in *Calvin and Luther: The Continuing Relationship* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013]). Osiander's version of IA was grounded in a peculiar interpretation of the *imago Dei*, which he understood as a reference to the image of the promised Messiah. In its time, this assertion that the Son would have incarnated irrespective of the fall met with no uncertain misgivings. One leading critique came from Johannes Bretschneider. Another came from no less than John Calvin.

For both respondents, Osiander's advocacy of IA was seen to be eccentric and dubious. More importantly, it was seen to precipitate formidable theological problems. For Bretschneider, Osiander's proposal split a key clause of the Nicene Creed, implying that the church could speak of Christ coming "for us" and "for our salvation" as if these were *two separate causes* for the incarnation. In Calvin's eyes, IA threatened Christ's priestly office: "Surely if he had not come to reconcile God and man, the honor of his priesthood would have fallen away, since a priest is appointed as an intermediary to intercede between God and men" (*Institutes* 2.12.4). It should be evident that the Osiander crisis bequeathed the church some profitable resources for grappling with the prospect of IA. It also reminds us that what Cortez appears to regard as a benign proposition (pp. 84, 98) was, in the context of the Reformation, contentious. In sum, just as his reflection on Jesus's gender is bolstered by the legacy of Nyssen (pp. 198ff), so, too, his evaluation of IA might have been enhanced by attention to the critical responses that IA elicited in the context of early Protestantism.

It has been said that the best books are those that do not merely inform but, more than this, stir readers to inform themselves. Such a statement adheres nicely to *ReSourcing Theological Anthropology*. This is a book that spurs contemplation and inquisitiveness. Perhaps of greater consequence, it is a book that displays a mode of anthropological reflection that is properly *theological*. The value of such an example cannot be understated in a context wherein such discussions—lamentably including those within the church!—are often entirely beholden to purely sociological or scientific accounts of personhood. For this very reason Cortez's offering is timely and stands as a very promising guide amid the increasing intensity of cultural and ecclesial debates surrounding personhood and human identity. *ReSourcing Theological An-*



*thropology* should be received with a level of attention that is proportional to the thoughtfulness of its author.

Roger L. Revell  
Selwyn College, Cambridge, England

*Invitation to Church History: World* and *Invitation to Church History: American*. By John D. Hannah. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2018 and 2019, 586 pp. and 462 pp., \$47.99 and \$49.99.

The recent publication of a thoroughly researched and beautifully produced set of textbooks on church history, in two volumes, may well serve as the magnum opus of John Hannah, a longtime professor at Dallas Theological Seminary. Hannah holds the titles of Research Professor of Theological Studies and Distinguished Professor of Historical Theology at the seminary. In the interest of transparency, I should note that he is also the man who first exposed me to the full sweep of church history twenty-five years ago when I was a new and impressionable graduate student at DTS.

This set is trustworthy in its scholarship and godly in its tone. The two books take the unusual approach of bracketing off American church history into a distinct volume. This makes good sense because this field of study represents Hannah's primary area of scholarly expertise, so it allows him to delve deeper into his specialized knowledge. The *World* volume traces church history from the ancient period until modern times, yet it does not touch on the history of Christianity in the United States. This subject is reserved for the *American* volume, which is not construed as a "Volume 2" but as a separate (though related) book about a distinct topic. Such an approach might be useful for Christian high school, college, and seminary courses that focus on American church history. The students could purchase only one textbook at the \$50 price point. However, students in courses that discuss the entire span of church history will need to buy both volumes in order to cover the American context. Strangely, the price for the two-volume set from Kregel is higher than the combined price of the individual books. It seems like buying the set should bring a discount instead.

The *World* volume begins with the early church and traces Christian history to the postmodern era in fourteen chapters. Its five major historical divisions are: The Ancient Church (AD 33–600); The Medieval Church (600–1500); The Church, the Reformation, and Early Modern History (1500–1650); The Enlightenment and Late Modern History (1650–1900); and The Postmodern Period (1900–Present).

I found it noteworthy that despite this volume being subtitled *World*, it devotes no attention to Christian history outside of the Mediterranean basin and Europe. This choice is reasonable in one sense; not every book has to tell every possible story that could be told. Yet it also means the textbook is misnamed, for it does not address global Christianity. No mention is made of the Oriental Orthodox Churches or the Assyrian Church of the East, even though those groups penetrated into Africa or all the way across Asia at very early times. Even in the modern era,

when world travel became possible and Christianity grew into a truly global religion, Hannah focuses solely on the European context. Worldwide missionary efforts receive hardly any treatment. The saga recounted in a book like Philip Jenkins's *The Lost History of Christianity: The Thousand-Year Golden Age of the Church in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia—and How It Died* is absent here. Instead, Hannah's narrative line moves from the Roman Empire to medieval Europe, from the Protestant and Roman Catholic Reformations to the Enlightenment, from religious liberalism to modern Christianity in Europe, and concludes with the contemporary worldview of postmodernism. This is the story of Christianity in the West. It is, of course, an important story. Arguably, it is the central storyline of church history. But it is not the whole story. Perhaps the volume's subtitle should reflect this?

Unlike some church history sets which are consecutive, the *American* volume does not try to pick up where *World* left off; rather, it stands alone as a textbook in its own right. That said, it does repeat the same wise and insightful front matter: a dedication, preface, prologue of relevant Scriptures, and a substantive historiographical introduction. Identical graphics are even used in these sections. This repetition indicates that the two books are not necessarily meant to be read in tandem; each one needs to contain this content in case the other is never read. The *American* volume is slightly shorter than *World*, though not by much; this allows for a thoroughgoing treatment of the American religious experience.

As in the prior volume, Hannah divides the story of church history in the United States into distinct units along a timeline: The Colonial Years (1600–1770); the National Era (1770–1880); Modern Times (1880–1960); and the Postmodern Period (1960–Present). In the two chapters that make up the final unit, Hannah again does not address the global context, despite the titles “World in Transition” and “Churches and the Struggle for Relevancy.” The former chapter is about Western philosophical worldviews, not the evangelization of the world; the latter deals with how American evangelicals have grappled with postmodernity. I thought that the focus on the Acts 29 church-planting network and the “Emergent Church” felt like inconsequential topics in light of what could have been discussed as church-historical developments over the last twenty years. A large color picture of Rob Bell did not seem like the right way to end Hannah's masterful two-volume *oeuvre*.

The product quality of the *Invitation to Church History* volumes is excellent. They are well deserving of textbook adoption from a publishing standpoint. The trim size is hefty, the covers are a sturdy printed case, and the paper quality is high. The indices are helpful, and there are numerous glossaries of important terms in each book. Color photos and graphics abound; and those of us (the number is large) who have had Dr. Hannah as a professor can see in the charts on his pages the same PowerPoints—or in my case, the overhead transparencies!—that he once used to teach us these principles and periodizations in the classrooms of Dallas Seminary. My only critique from a product execution perspective was that the editors allowed some typos and stylistic inconsistencies to slip past.

*Invitation to Church History* would serve well as a textbook replacement for the popular *The Story of Christianity* volumes from Justo González, or Bruce Shelley's *Church History in Plain Language*. The new offering has the same readability as those

books but with a higher-quality feel. In this regard, it is similar to Zondervan's recent completion of its two-volume set *Church History* by Everett Ferguson, John Woodbridge, and Frank James. However, professors who wish to assign a book with a greater global focus might choose *A Global History of Christians* by Paul Spickard and Kevin Cragg or the new *A Global Church History* by Steven Cone and Robert Rea. Of course, Hannah's set does not only have to be adopted as a formal course text. Because of its Western focus and easy-to-grasp flow, it would be well suited for historical studies in a local church or Sunday school setting, for a home-school context, or for American readers who are simply interested in their story as a follower of Christ.

At its heart, *Invitation to Church History* is a teacher's invitation to greater understanding of an important subject. Hannah is a veteran communicator, and his winsome classroom style, honed over forty years of instruction, comes through on these pages. As he himself says, "The treasure of a teacher is not found in professional activities; it is found in his or her students" (*World*, 5). These books are not simply concerned with names, dates, and facts; rather, a master teacher is sharing his life's vocation.

This pedagogical passion comes through in Hannah's insightful introduction to the meaning of church history, in his skillful storytelling, and in his postscript that addresses "What is Really Happening?" Hannah's answer is this: The sovereign God is working out his will through his people in each and every age. Christ alone is Lord over human events. Through this useful and accessible set of textbooks, a new generation of students—whether young or old—will surely be awakened to the grandeur and majesty of "his story" in church history.

Bryan M. Litfin  
Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL

*Christian Reflection in Africa: Review and Engagement.* Edited by Paul Bowers. Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Langham Global Library, 2018, 784 pp., \$79.99.

This important volume should be in all college and seminary libraries. It is also a valuable resource in personal libraries for those researching in fields like biblical studies, theology, church history, missions, and related domains in light of the epochal shifts toward Christian confession that have taken place in Africa in recent generations.

An explanatory line on the book's title page is helpful for conceptualizing what it contains: "Reviews of Contemporary Africa-Related Literature Relevant for Informed Christian Reflection in Africa." That casts a wide net, but to cover Africa it needs to: we're talking about 54 countries (over a quarter of all the countries in the world), over 1.2 billion people (the US population is less than a third of billion), and over 40 percent of the world's Protestants (the US has about 12 percent). Given all that, plus the fact that within a couple of decades the majority of Protestants in the world will be in Africa, developments there in Christian thought deserve

more attention in the West than they commonly receive. This book is an important tool for redressing current neglect.

The bulk consists of 1,200 concise reviews of books and articles. A general inspiration and model for these reviews was the UK print journal, now defunct, *Theological Book Review*, well known in seminaries of the majority world, for which it was actually intended. The purview of *Christian Reflection in Africa* extends back to 1986, with more emphasis on more recent publications. Nearly 60 pages of indices help access these pithy single-paragraph reviews, which are ordered by authors' last names. The author index (13 double-column pages) helps identify major players judged by number of publications. With seven or more listings are Samuel O. Abogunrin, Jan H. Boer, Bénézet Bujo, John W. de Gruchy, Mary N. Getui, Paul Gifford, Gerrie ter Haar, Laurenti Magesa, Jessie N. K. Mugambi, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, John S. Pobee, Kenneth R. Ross, Lamin Sanneh, Aylward Shorter, Ernst R. Wendland, and Gerald O. Wise.

Surveying the authors permits a pair of observations. First, by virtue of their country's cultural heritage and universities, South African writers are a dominant presence. Their publications are often as much Western (and especially European) in orientation as reflective of Africa in a wider sense—South Africa at about 58 million people contains just 5% of the people on the continent. The South African contribution is extensive and noteworthy. But it understandably often reflects a very different perspective from the outlooks found in works by non-South Africans.

Second, some important writers happen to have few works listed. One is Philip Jenkins (##518–19: *The Lost History of Christianity* and *The New Faces of Christianity*). These two books (in the wake of *The Next Christendom*) pioneered a still-developing historiography that dwarfs the importance of any number of other works reviewed. They are comparable in influence to Mary Lefkowitz's *Not Out of Africa: How Afrocentrism Became an Excuse to Teach Myth as History* (#632). This book appearing in 1997 played an important role in checking fanciful claims advanced by African American writers and their allies that "the principal philosophical and cultural contributions of ancient classical Greece to modern Western culture were actually pilfered from black Egyptian civilization in Africa" (p. 375). Lefkowitz singlehandedly and decisively demonstrated otherwise.

Another example is John S. Mbiti, with only two entries (##690–91: *Bible and Theology in African Christianity* and *Introduction to African Religion*). But as #691 states, "Mbiti has often been termed the 'father of African Christian theology'" and is "among the most prolific Christian writers on the continent, with more than 400" publications to his credit. *Christian Reflection in Africa* happens to include only two; most of Mbiti's books appeared before 1986, the year when coverage of the book under review begins. Another example is Tite Tiénou (##464, 793, 1097: two co-edited books and his own *The Theological Task of the Church in Africa*). Tiénou was the academic dean of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School near Chicago for a decade; he is representative of influential scholars and writers of the African diaspora whose significance may be more considerable than this time frame permits.

The point of the preceding paragraph should be underscored: *Christian Reflection in Africa* covers fully the major works of the scholars who published books in

the 1986–ca. 2013 timeframe. But some scholars important for understanding African Christian reflection are more important than their books from that timeframe indicate. Academic writers like Andrew Walls and Lamin Sanneh who have accentuated Africa in highlighting the burgeoning global footprint of Christian presence are conscientiously covered, because more of their major works appeared in the 1986–2013 span.

A second index covering 35 pages lists all the works reviewed in alphabetical order by title. This is useful for browsing and taking the measure of contents in large gulps rather than sipping one's way through the book a laborious page at a time.

The third index covers subjects and may be the most useful of all. It is only eight pages long, but double-columned. As a starting point for research, it is a real timesaver. For example, "African Initiated/Independent/Indigenous Churches" contains four lines of entries—so, dozens of works to consult. There are often careful distinctions in evidence, as in separate entries for "AIDS in Africa" and "AIDS, Christian response to." Or note the three separate slots for "biography," "biography, African Christian," and "biography, missionary."

But such distinctions also call for thoroughness by the user: "Islam, in Africa" (p. 779) contains a different set of references from "Christianity and Islam" (p. 776). And neither of these entries contains the works found in "Sharia, Islamic" (p. 781) or under "Muslims, Christian witness to" (p. 779). Important studies on Boko Haram are found in none of the entries above but under "violence, Christian response to" (p. 782). In any subsequent edition Boko Haram probably deserves its own entry because as a movement it is responsible for the slaughter of more Christians in Africa over recent generations than any other entity with the possible exception of Sudanese forces, especially under the now-deposed Omar Bashir. But Boko Haram is more consolidated and organized than the Sudanese forces have been over the decades stretching back to the mid-twentieth centuries. (The Rwandan massacres should be seen as ethnic and not as persecution of Christians per se.) Similarly, there are separate listings for "African diaspora" and "African diaspora, Christian" (p. 775). Users who consult any portion of the subject index should at least browse the whole thing to make sure they aren't missing important sources.

All 1,200 books reviewed in this volume appeared in the first 30 issues of the review journal *BookNotes for Africa*, which began publication in 1996, supported in various ways at various times by ECWA Theological Seminary Jos (JETS) in Nigeria, George Whitefield College (GWC) in South Africa, the Theological College of Central Africa (TCCA) in Zambia, and the Evangelical Theological College (ETC) in Ethiopia. The reviews have been lightly re-edited. Paul Bowers, managing editor *BookNotes for Africa* throughout its history, informs me that this publication will terminate later in 2019 with its fortieth issue. Some 400 more reviews have appeared since *BookNotes* 30. The good news is that the publisher is considering a second edition of the book under review, expanding it by the 400 reviews that appeared in *BookNotes* 31–40.

My impression of the utility of this book is captured (though not exhausted) in the editor's perceptive commendation (p. xiii), which deserves quotation:

For the attentive, committed reader, consulting any sequence of pages in this collection could quickly bring the same gratifying discoveries that are the lot of those who rejoice in browsing along the shelves of a quality library or bookshop. To read through any ten or twelve pages here is immediately to experience acquaintance with the diffuse panorama both of Christian presence in Africa, and of the African context itself – a range of acquaintance difficult to encounter by any other means. For those willing not only to use this volume to locate specific resources, but as well to have horizons expanded, one's range of knowledge extended, and all this reviewed with informed Christian sensitivity, merely reading review after review through any section of this volume could prove endlessly enticing and fulfilling.

Among other impressions I would add the following four: (1) If there is a second and expanded edition, my preference would be to include not only the list of reviewers (pp. 783–84 in the current volume, listed selectively and somewhat unusually in alphabetical order by their first names) but also their respective initials at the end of each review. *New Testament Abstracts*, for example, furnishes this information, and it can be important in gauging what to make of a review. In #695, for example, the reviewer faults the book *Tough Tests for Top Leaders* for “a strange theological framework.” The reviewer concludes that the book’s “usefulness feels partially marred by an approach that seems hermeneutically questionable.” If reviews are going to be aggressively evaluative, their authors ought to be identified.

Also, an expanded edition should consider including a Scripture index.

(2) The majority of the reviewers come from North America, the UK, or Europe. But it should be noted that virtually all those reviewers who are not from Africa have actually served at length in Africa. These were not merely visiting lecturers to the continent; they have had Africa-based careers, and most would have been serving in Africa under African leadership. Also nearly all reviewers African or expatriate have been involved in theological education on the continent, and most have earned doctorates. These factors lend *Christian Reflection in Africa* authenticity and accuracy in its portrayal of books and their relevance to African settings, all the more because perhaps 300 of the reviews are by ethnic Africans.

(3) As reported above *BookNotes for Africa*, the source of this book, is about to close its doors. This is a pity and should not be allowed to happen if avoidable. “Priceless” might be hyperbolic, but “extremely valuable” is not when it comes to describing the content of this book. Some years ago I needed to bone up on Nubian Christianity; I wish I had had something like this as a resource. The same goes for any number of topics that one might wish to delve into and take stock of African viewpoints regarding. I know of nothing comparable. The need for the service *BookNotes for Africa* provided will increase, not decrease, in years to come. For now this book (especially in an expanded edition) will meet the need. But not for long. What church/es, agency, or academic coalition will step into the breach?

(4) Most fundamentally, I want to commend this book for the foundation it provides for a better approach in coming years to a truly global perspective on the Christian faith. By this I do not mean standard Western approaches applied with due rigor to phenomena all over the globe. I mean perspectives informed in at least

rudimentary ways by Christianity on the ground in the myriad places it is flourishing like never before. This book is only one tool for meeting that goal. But when it comes to Africa (and to the dozens of subjects visible in Africa like few or no other places), it is indispensable for range of coverage and critical sympathy for the primary subject matter: Christianity in Africa and issues germane to it.

My theological study took place in the 1970s and 1980s. At that time no one viewed ministry or biblical interpretation or theological reflection in “missionary regions” to be of much relevance for theological education at all. That day is still with us, sadly, in too many Western centers of theological education. Perhaps that is one reason formal theological education is on the ropes in much of the West. It has connected too tenuously and formally (if at all) with the burgeoning church elsewhere and its return (in many cases) to the Bible read in ways, and with a fervor and costly integrity, lost even in Bible-believing circles in places that used to send missionaries to Africa.

This book is an entrée to renewal in Christian thought, living, and ministry. It is too recent to be included, but an example of resources out of Africa for challenging and upgrading Christian faith and understanding everywhere is Martin Mosebach’s *The 21: A Journey into the Land of Coptic Martyrs*—yes, the men in orange jump suits beheaded on a Mediterranean beach by jihadists. Worldwide, over two hundred Christians die daily because of their faith, many in Africa—some 90,000 each year. Scholars, Christian leaders, and students everywhere will benefit from more exposure to the storm center of such commitment and valor—as well as much fluff and excess that calls for critique and correction, in part because it was imported from our shores. Because we didn’t repent then, maybe we will now.

This book will enhance such awareness and response as present and reported on the great and increasingly Christian continent of Africa. For *JETS* readers, it deserves to be underscored that this volume gives voice to the evangelical wing of African Christianity and seeks to set forth a broadly evangelical take on the published intellectual life of the continent. In that sense it attempts on a small scale for African evangelicalism what *Books & Culture* was attempting to do in North America. Hence, the attention to all sorts of literature, including many secular titles.

Furthermore, from the start, the book’s reviewers and promoters (like editor Paul Bowers) were seeking to open a place at the table (and a place in the bibliographies of global academia) for the considerable number of younger African evangelicals beginning to publish academic titles. They would otherwise have been at risk of going unnoticed (or trashed: see the unfortunate review by John Pilch of Kabiro wa Gatuma’s *The Pauline Concept of Supernatural Powers: a Reading from the African Worldview* [Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2008]) in *CBQ* 73.2 [2011]: 371–73).

It is much to this book’s credit to have been able to feature some of the leading voices of recent African evangelical scholarship: Sam Abogunrin, Femi Adeyemi, Sunday Agang, John Azumah, Daniel Bourdanne, Tibebe Eshete, Musa Gaiya, Jehu Hanciles, Joe Kapolyo, John Karanja, Jacob Kibor, James Kombo, Sam Kunhiyop, Abel Ndjerareou, Sam Ngewa, Zac Niringiye, and others. We will be

hearing more from them and those they influence in years to come, in part precisely because of *Christian Reflection in Africa*.

Robert W. Yarbrough  
Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO

*Christian Worldview*. Translated and edited by Nathaniel Gray Sutanto, James Eglinton, and Cory C. Brock. By Herman Bavinck. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019, 140 pp., \$24.77.

We now have an English translation of Herman Bavinck's philosophical tract, *Christian Worldview*. The original Dutch text of this philosophical gem has gone through three editions: 1904, 1913, and 1927. The English translation is based on the second edition. I know the Dutch text well. I am grateful to Nathaniel Gray Sutanto, James Eglinton, and Cory C. Brock, who have now accomplished the task of translating and editing this tract.

I am a committed Roman Catholic theologian, teaching, researching, and writing within the normative tradition of confessional Catholicism, and thus in the light of Catholic teaching. However, I am a Catholic with roots in the evangelical and Reformed traditions, particularly Dutch neo-Calvinism (Kuyper, Bavinck, Berkouwer, and Dooyeweerd). I received a Ph.D. in philosophy in 1981 from the Free University of Amsterdam. I am a member of the almost twenty-five-year-old American ecumenical initiative, *Evangelicals and Catholics Together*. Accordingly, I am also an ecumenical philosophical theologian engaged in the work of receptive ecumenism. That means I am listening attentively to the writings of fellow Christian theologians from other traditions of reflection and argument. Receptive ecumenism means that "Dialogue is not simply an exchange of ideas. In some way it is always an 'exchange of gifts' . . . . Dialogue does not extend exclusively to matters of doctrine but engages the whole person; it is also a dialogue of love" (John Paul II, *Ut Unum Sint*, 1995 Encyclical, §§28, 47). In my judgment, Bavinck's philosophical tract is a gift to the church, in particular to her intellectual life.

In his 1962 intellectual autobiography, *The Philosopher and Theology*, Catholic philosopher Etienne Gilson wrote regarding the future of Christian philosophy: "The necessary condition to insure the future of Christian philosophy is to maintain the primacy of the Word of God, *even in philosophical inquiry*. I am tempted to say, above all in matters of philosophical speculation" (pp. 228–29). We find a similar accent on the primacy of God's Word *in philosophical inquiry* almost four decades later in John Paul II's 1998 encyclical letter *Fides et Ratio* (§§76, 81–83). This philosopher-pope affirms the notion of Christian philosophy, which is, according to John Paul, "the art of philosophizing in a Christian manner; namely a philosophical reflection that is vitally conjoined to faith" (*Fides et Ratio*, §76). This art is excellently practiced in Bavinck's tract.

Indeed, I take Bavinck's tract to be an essay in Christian philosophy rather than just a Christian worldview, because his essay argues the case for a theoretical view of the totality—God, man, and the world—in dialogue with the philosophical



tradition and contemporary philosophy rather than just being a pre-theoretical, biblical perspective of that totality. It is unmistakable that Bavinck's tract is a "highly philosophical, Christianized neo-Platonism in the tradition of Augustine and Aquinas" (Albert Wolters, "On the Idea of Worldview and Its Relation to Philosophy," in P. Marshall, et al., eds., *Stained Glass* [University Press of America, 1963], 14–25). Of course, both the worldview and the philosophy "are *in the root* absolutely united with each other, even though they may not be identified," as neo-Calvinist philosopher, Herman Dooyeweerd (1894–1977) correctly notes (*A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, 1:128). Bavinck and John Paul agree about the Christ-centered root of their philosophizing. "The Truth, which is Christ, imposes itself as an all-embracing authority which holds out to theology and philosophy alike the prospect of support, stimulation and increase (cf. *Eph* 4:15)" (*Fides et Ratio* §93).

In this connection, most significant is John Paul's thesis that the Word of God itself establishes certain requirements that philosophical inquiry may never neglect and within which it must operate if it is to be a philosophy that is "consonant with the Word of God" (*Fides et Ratio*, §81). There are three requirements: (1) rehabilitating the intellectual virtue of wisdom and a corresponding notion of teleological rationality; (2) a realist notion of truth and a corresponding epistemic realism, that is, a capacity to attain knowledge of the truth about reality; and (3) the indispensability of metaphysics in understanding the creation and man's place in it.

Bavinck fulfills all these requirements in his epistemological, ethical, and metaphysical reflections. His philosophical tract consists of three chapters with specific foci: the first on epistemology, the second on metaphysics, and the third on ethics. Because both his epistemological and ethical reflections presuppose a metaphysical basis, it makes sense to organize my discussion of the philosophical tract under the three requirements stated above by John Paul II.

First, then, Christian philosophical inquiry has a *sapiential task*, which is "the gathering together of human knowledge and action, leading all to converge towards a final purpose and meaning." That is, "To be consonant with the Word of God," John Paul adds, "philosophy must rediscover its *fullness of wisdom* in searching for the final and most all-embracing meaning of life" (*Fides et Ratio*, §81). "In Sacred Scripture are found elements, both implicit and explicit, which allow a vision of the human being and the world which has exceptional philosophical density. Christians have come to an ever deeper awareness of the wealth to be found in the sacred text" (*Fides et Ratio*, §80).

Regarding the sapiential dimension of intellectual inquiry, Bavinck distinguishes between science (in the broadest sense) and wisdom, arguing that "the human mind does not stand still [in science]. It is not satisfied with [a scientific understanding of the truth] but strives ... toward a comprehensive wisdom" (p. 48). Indeed, he argues that the denial of metaphysics by materialism, naturalism, and scientism—that the natural sciences give us the whole truth and the ultimate truth about man and the world—"does not quench [the human mind's] thirst for truth, it eagerly stretches out toward the source of wisdom" (p. 49). Bavinck adds, "The distinction between wisdom and science does not, however, sever its connection with ... truth [that is,] with knowledge of reality" (p. 50). Indeed, he explains,

“truth is the indispensable good for our cognition and thus the goal of all science [*wissenschaft*]. If there is no truth, gone with that, too, is all knowledge and science” (p. 33).

Now John Paul, like Bavinck, is persuaded that philosophical inquiry is currently laboring in a *sapiential vacuum*. Says Bavinck, “Wisdom itself [has] to assert its rights again and claim a place in the field of human knowledge” (p. 48). Her place has been denied by those who claim that in respect of the ultimate question regarding the final and universal meaning of life, there is no attainable answer. The search for meaning is, in David Hume’s graphic phrase, “totally shut up from human curiosity and inquiry” (David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* [1748], section IV, part 1; in L. A. Selby-Bigge, ed., *Hume’s Enquiries*, rev. P. H. Nidditch [Oxford: Clarendon, 1975], 30). Regarding Hume’s notion of instrumental reason, John M. Rist correctly writes: “Hume can be shown to be wrong *only if reason is teleologically oriented*, not if it is the mere capacity to analyze and describe neutrally. If we refuse to move to a more teleological account of reason, we are left in the hole where Hume has dumped us” (*Real Ethics: Reconsidering the Foundations of Morality* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002], 144). Hence, human reason is, on this view, reduced to instrumental reason, depriving reason of any real concern for the knowledge of ultimate truth, first principles regarding knowledge of God, man, and the world (*Fides et Ratio*, §§47, 61).

By contrast, John Paul argues, the knowledge of first principles “determines the foundations and limits of the different fields of scientific learning, but will also take its place as the ultimate framework of the unity of human knowledge and action, leading them to converge towards a final goal and meaning” (*Fides et Ratio*, §81). This knowledge “is all the more needed today because the immense expansion of humanity’s technical capability demands a renewed and sharpened awareness of the ultimate goods.” “If these technical instruments lack any sense of being ordered to something greater than a merely utilitarian end, they could appear to be inhuman,” adds John Paul, “and turn themselves into potential destroyers of the human race” (*Fides et Ratio*, §81). Against an instrumentalist conception of reason, John Paul, as well as Bavinck, then, accept a teleological conception of reason where the dynamism of reason is ordered to the goal and attainment of truth.

Accordingly, Bavinck argues that the search for wisdom is such that it “seeks to press through to ‘first principles’ [*prima principia*]” (p. 50). These are not just first principles respecting the different branches of human learning: “religion, ethics, law, history, language, culture, and so on.” Rather, the nature and task of philosophy is such that “it seeks for the final ground of all things and builds a worldview thereon” (p. 50). In this connection, Bavinck urges us to understand that “Christianity is the only religion whose view of the world and life fits the world and life. The idea of Christianity and the meaning of reality belong together like lock and key: they make sense together” (p. 28). Taking the Christian faith as his starting point, one of Bavinck’s first principles is “that the world is grounded in wisdom and reveals wisdom in its whole and in all its parts (Ps 104–24; Prov 3:19; 1 Cor 1:21)” (p. 51). Indeed, he adds, “all truth is understood in the Wisdom, in the Word, who was in

the beginning with God and who himself was God. The one who denies this Wisdom undermines the ‘foundation’ [*fundamentum*] of all science” (p. 47).

This conclusion brings us back to John Paul II who writes in a similar way: “The fundamental conviction of the ‘philosophy’ found in the Bible is that the world and human life do have a meaning and look towards their fulfilment, which comes in Jesus Christ. The mystery of the Incarnation will always remain the central point of reference for an understanding of the enigma of human existence, the created world and God himself” (*Fides et Ratio*, §80). In particular, he adds, “Christian faith comes to our aid and provides us with the concrete capacity for realizing the fulfilment” of this dynamism of the intellect ordered to truth (*Fides et Ratio*, §33). Only a teleological conception of human rationality is consistent then with the basic conviction of the biblical worldview. Challenging both philosophy and theology, their work corresponds “to a dynamism found in the faith itself” and that the proper object of their enquiry is “the Truth which is the living God and his plan for salvation revealed in Jesus Christ” (*Fides et Ratio*, §92).

Second, then, this conception of philosophical inquiry presupposes a *realist account of truth* and hence, says John Paul, “the capacity of man to arrive at the *knowledge of truth*,” that is, “to come to a knowledge which can reach objective truth by means of the *correspondence between thing and intellect (adaequatio rei et intellectus)*.” (*Fides et Ratio*, §82). Put differently, he holds that truth is such that if a proposition is true, then what that proposition asserts is in fact the case about objective reality; otherwise, the proposition is false. This is a correspondence theory of truth, a non-epistemic one, because truth hinges not on justification but on the world, reality. As Francis Schüssler Fiorenza explains: “This definition, originating with Aristotle, has come down to us through Isaac ben Israeli and Thomas Aquinas.” He elaborates: “*Veritas est adaequatio (convenientia, correspondentia) intellectus et rei.*” “Truth is the adaequation, (the coming together or correspondence) of understanding and reality.” (Fiorenza, *Foundational Theology*, 272–73; the quote within the quote from Aquinas is from *Summa Contra Gentiles, On the Truth of the Catholic Faith*, vol. 1, ET [Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955], 59.) Furthermore, adds Fiorenza, “In a correspondence theory of truth, to claim that an assertion is true is to claim ‘that what is said has actually said things as they are actually are; it has stated a fact.’ When what is stated corresponds to the facts, then, the statement is true” (Fiorenza, *Foundational Theology*, 272; the quote within the quote is from Alan White, *Truth* [Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970], 128).

According to Bavinck, “the final question [is], whether there is truth, and [if so,] what it is” (p. 33). Bavinck is a realist about truth. That makes him a fellow traveler with John Paul II who holds to philosophical realism about truth. For a realist, it is the world or objective reality that is the external foundation of knowledge. Similar to Aquinas, Bavinck replies, “the concept of truth” is that “of ‘conformity of intellect and thing’ [*conformitas intellectus et rei*], a correspondence between thinking and being” (p. 33). In other words, “All knowledge consists in the conformity of our consciousness to the objective truth” (p. 48); “The truth is objective; it exists independently of us” (p. 132). The realist notion of truth is, according to Bavinck, implied by the Christian faith. Indeed, it “shows its wisdom pri-

marily in this, that it knows and preserves truth as an objective reality, which exists independent of our consciousness and is displayed by God for us in his works of nature and grace” (pp. 33, 47).

Moreover, propositionally being the case about objective reality means that it is absolutely, objectively, and universally true. A proposition is absolutely and objectively true when it is true not only for those who believe in it—that is relativism—but equally true even when it is rejected. This means that a proposition is true regardless of whatever anyone thinks about it. Truth is universal in that “if something is true then it must be true for all people and at all times” (*Fides et Ratio*, §27). In other words, John Paul urges, it makes no sense to claim that truth varies with epistemic context. Yes, the judgments we make about truth may vary, their epistemic status, but truth itself does not change. In his own words, “Truth can never be confined to time and culture; in history it is known, but it also reaches beyond history” (*Fides et Ratio*, §95). Bavinck echoes this conviction: “If all [truth, normativity] is resolved in the process [of history], then the absolute character of the ideal norms of truth and falsehood of good and evil, of beauty and the ugly could no longer be maintained, because ‘a truth for today or tomorrow is an absurdity; what is at all true counts for all time, or rather, it has no connection to time at all’” (p. 99).

Bavinck, then, explicitly rejects relativism about truth: “Relativism ... wants to know of no fixed norms and claims to be concerned with and to speak of only the concrete, the historical.” Then Bavinck argues that relativism is self-referentially incoherent: “But it makes the relative itself into the absolute ... . The worst is not that it comes into contradiction with itself by doing so (because this contradiction is present from the beginning, toward skepticism, and toward itself); acknowledging and justifying itself as truth, it takes over the standpoint of the absolute. [Wilhelm] Windelband rightly says of this, ‘Whoever proves relativism destroys it’” (p. 102). In sum, the judgment of relativity cannot be applied to the judgment of relativity itself without self-contradiction; for the belief that truth is relative means that there is no such thing as objective truth.

Now the question about the nature of truth is distinct from that about the best way of reaching it. In other words, we must distinguish the epistemic conditions under which I come to know that something is true from the conditions that make it true. Bavinck raises the former question: “What is the origin, the essence, and the limit of human knowledge [*kenntnis*]? The fact is certain that of ourselves and without coercion, we presume a world that exists outside us, that we seek to make it our mental property by way of perception and thinking [*denken*], and that acting thusly, we also suppose that we should obtain a certain and trustworthy knowledge of it. But on what grounds does this faith in a reality that is independent from our consciousness rest, and what guarantee is there that our consciousness—enriched through observation and thinking—corresponds to the world of being [*zijn*]?” (pp. 31–32).

It is important to note here that the realism of the truth seeker as a whole does not *first* stand in need of critical justification before he can then actually arrive at knowledge. That is precisely the modernist methodological approach of “meth-

odism” or a Cartesian “critique of knowledge.” Bavinck affirms the fiduciary roots of rationality such that he assumes from the outset that the knower has some knowledge of reality. This is followed by critically inquiring into the grounds of how this knowledge is possible, distinguishing true from false claims. Still, our critical reflection always depends on what we know, and therefore critical epistemology is, therefore, a reflexive epistemology.

Bavinck makes this post-Cartesian reflexive epistemology clear in the following quote: “Accordingly, each person proceeds spontaneously on the basis of the conviction that the objective world exists outside him and that it exists as he has come to know it in clear perception. Doubt does not arise in him. Only when he later tries to give an account of the reasons and grounds on which he can proceed in such a manner can doubt emerge concerning the justification of his action.” Again, restating his post-critical epistemology, he concludes: “Another issue is that a spontaneous act of faith underlies the acceptance of the reality of an external world and our trust in the truth of sense perception, a faith whose scientific credentials cannot be proved under the scrutiny of the sharpest reflection. Here whoever does not want to begin with faith but demands sufficient proofs bars himself from the way of science and has set his foot on the slippery slope of skepticism . . . . The one who does not trust knowledge until he has been able to control that which is outside himself makes an impossible and absurd demand of knowing, precisely because knowing is always—and can never be other than—a relation between subject and object. As soon as one or both falls away, there is no more knowing” (pp. 33–35).

In these passages we find expressed Bavinck’s rejection of the Cartesian tradition. Regarding the harmony between knowing and being, Bavinck breaks with the egocentric predicament of philosophical modernism in which the isolation of the self and the world from each other are taken as the epistemic starting point. On this view, the individual is an enclosed consciousness containing ideas in the mind that are the direct object of our conscious awareness and from which inferences are drawn about what the real world must be like. Bavinck criticizes epistemic modernism as a “misstep [that] has already been taken with the claim that we know nothing immediately beyond our own sensations [*gevaarwordingen*] and representations [*voorstellingen*]. Whoever speaks this way has already been caught in the snares of idealism and cannot free himself by any reasoning.” In other words, “any reasoning” is going to be circular because “the very same reasoning would apply to all the evidences one would want to bring forward for the reality of the outside world and for the trustworthiness of sense perception. No law of cause and effect can release the one who accepts the principle and starting point of idealism from the Circassian Circle [*toovervirkeel*] of his representations; out of one representation he can only deduce another, and he is never able to bridge the chasm between thinking and being, by reasoning” (pp. 34–35).

Finally, Bavinck restores the right of existence of metaphysics within the realm of human knowledge. In particular, he affirms the theological necessity of metaphysics in *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, 1:574 (*Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 1, *Prolegomena*, 605): “The split between the Christian religion on the one hand and metaphysics

(etc.) on the other can neither be clearly conceived nor practically executed. History has repeatedly demonstrated this fact in the past and again shows it today [1895]. For to make such a split somewhat possible, all the above schools [of theology] are compelled to form a one-sided and incomplete picture of the gospel of Christ.” Bavinck notes that that the right of existence of metaphysics was denied when positivism banished metaphysics and left us with a truncated rationality such that faith and theology, too, were banished.

Metaphysics buttresses the realistic epistemology that explains how it is that man’s mind is fit to grasp the reality of things as they really are. In short, there is a correspondence between subject and object, knower and known, as a consequence of the Logos (Col 1:16), the Word of God, through whom all things were created (John 1:3). The Logos is the foundation of all knowledge. The human mind’s capacity for knowing the structures of reality, discovering and recognizing the Logos in things, including social structures, as I shall show below, is grounded in “the same Logos who created both the reality outside of us and the laws of thought within us and who produced an organic connection and correspondence between the two” (*Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, 1:556 [*Reformed Dogmatics*, 587]). Bavinck elaborates: “Knowledge of truth is possible only if we begin with the fact that subject and object, and knowing and being, correspond to each other. This fact stands firmly in the immediate awareness of all people and is accepted—consciously or unconsciously—by all who still believe in truth and science. It is science’s task to explain this fact, but if it cannot do this, it will then, on pain of [epistemic] suicide, have to leave the matter untouched. And it will be capable of explanation only if it allows itself to be illumined by the wisdom of the divine word [*Goddelijk Woord*], which sets on our lips the confession of God the Father, the Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. This confession is not only the first article of our Christian faith but also the foundation and cornerstone of all knowledge and also the foundation and cornerstone of all knowledge and science. Only with this confession can one understand and uphold the harmony of subject and object, of thinking and being” (p. 38).

Furthermore, Bavinck gives a theological-metaphysical grounding to this correspondence between thinking and being, knower and known, by going back to an infinite intellect. Bavinck’s ontology epistemologically grounds the structural principles in the Logos and metaphysically in the divine ideas in God himself; he is, then, a theistic realist about truth. There exists an indissoluble relation between reality, truth and knowability, not in the human mind, but rather in God’s divine mind, with his knowledge being alone the foundation of how things really are. Truth and knowledge of truth coincide in God: “If the world can be the content of our knowing, it must itself be clear and distinguished by thought beforehand.” Of course, he is referring here in this passage to divine thoughts. “Only as all things are from the ‘foreknowledge’ ... of God are they altogether a ‘manifestation’ of his thoughts. The *universalia* are *in re*, for they existed *ante rem* in the divine consciousness [*bewustzijn*]” (p. 45). In other words, these universals are an embodiment of the thought of God in the world and, in the light of the Logos, the human mind has the capacity for grasping them.

Bavinck continues: “The world would not be known to us if it did not exist, but it would not exist if it were not thought of beforehand by God. We know the things because they are, but they are because God has known them . . . . The *universalia in re* move over into our consciousness along the path of sense perception, then through the thinking activity of the ‘mind’” (pp. 45–46).

Furthermore, “According to the Scripture,” says Bavinck, “ideas have no objective, metaphysical existence outside God, but rather exist only in his divine Being. They contain not only the general concepts, the types and form of the things, but the thoughts of God regarding everything that will come into existence without the smallest exception in its time” (p. 79; inexplicably, the English translation says the opposite of the Dutch in *Christelijke Wereldbeschouwing*, 56). Furthermore, Bavinck makes clear that the divine ideas precede the divine will. Still, “being does not follow from thought alone.” He explains: “Against intellectualism, voluntarism stands its ground on the basis that not the thought but rather only the will can be the *principium existendi* [principle of existing] of things. Ideas can be the *causae exemplares* [model causes], but being alone can be no *causa efficiens* [efficient cause]. The word must be joined by the deed, generation must be joined by creation, wisdom must be joined by God’s decree, in order to grant a real existence to what existed eternally in the divine consciousness as an idea (pp. 78–79). This doctrine avoids, as Robert Sokolowski explains, “the alternative between natures arbitrarily constructed and natures determined independently of God.” He adds, “‘What things are’ retains its necessity because the essences of things are the ways *esse* [existence] can be determined, but *esse* subsists only in God, so the basis for the determination of things is not distinct from him: it is his own existence. The potentiality for there to be various kinds of things is to be placed, not in any material or foundation distinct from God, but in God himself” (*God of Faith and Reason*, 45).

Bavinck identifies three fundamental principles that provide a definitive and unitive framework for such inquiry: *principium essendi*, *principium cognoscendi externum*, and the *principium cognoscendi internum*. First, God is the essential foundation of all existence and knowledge (*principium essendi*) because he is “the first principle of being.” Bavinck adds, “present in his [God’s] mind are the ideas of all things; all things are based on thoughts and are created by the word.” Second, “the world is an embodiment of the thoughts of God; it is ‘a beautiful book in which all creatures, great and small, are as letters to make us ponder the invisible things of God’ (art. 2, Belgic Confession). . . . Accordingly, the created world is the external foundation of knowledge (*principium cognoscendi externum*) for all science.” Third, what grounds the power of the human mind that enables man, at the very moment of perceiving things, to form the basic concepts and principles that would guide him further in all perception and reflection? Bavinck answers: “The Logos who shines in the world must also let his light shine in our consciousness. That is the light of reason, the intellect, which, itself originating in the Logos, discovers and recognizes the Logos in things. It is the internal foundation of knowledge (*principium cognoscendi internum*)” (*Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, 1:183–86, 205–7).

This conclusion brings us to the final dimension of Bavinck’s thought, namely, unity and diversity in the unfolding of created existents, each fitted to unfold in

accord with its own divinely established ends. In addition, Bavinck affirms, in company with Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas, the doctrine of divine ideas: the archetypal ideas or forms in God that are the exemplary causes according to which things are created and normed.

John Paul II laments hearing about “the end of metaphysics” (*Fides et Ratio*, §55). He regards an “anti-metaphysical” philosophy to be inconsistent with one of the three indispensable requirements of the Word of God for a truly Christian philosophy. In other words, a scriptural philosophy requires a “truly metaphysical philosophy” in order to provide “the metaphysical interpretation of things: in truth and beauty, in moral good, and in other people, in being, and in God” (*Fides et Ratio*, §83). Bavinck agrees: “Already in nature and history we cannot proceed without metaphysics: truth, goodness, and beauty lose their absolute character if they do not have their ‘archetype’ [*Urbild*] in God” (p. 123). At the root of this metaphysics is the doctrine of creation. Bavinck stands against naturalism and its corresponding idea of materialism that affirms everything that exists, including man, is just the chance product of matter in motion. In this connection, Ron Gleason’s summary of the four characteristics of a Christian life and worldview, as Bavinck understands it, fills out the metaphysical and epistemological structure sketched above. This life and worldview, states Gleason correctly in his biography of Bavinck’s thought (*Herman Bavinck*, 481),

1. “Acknowledges both the unity and the diversity in the created order.”
2. “It teaches that the entirety precedes the parts; the unity precedes the diversity.”
3. “It proceeds from the notion that it is the idea that the organism animates and dominates the distinct parts. Bavinck elucidates this thought with the help of a Christian philosophy that has transformed the Platonic-Aristotelian doctrine of the idea.”
4. “Finally, and this is very crucial for Bavinck’s theology, the primary characteristic of the organic approach is its ‘teleological definiteness’ of thinking that allows both for development and a purposeful order.”

In regard to this last point, Bavinck elaborates on the integration of order and development, linking it to an account of the dynamic unfolding of created existents: “The organic worldview is, therefore, finally teleological through and through . . . . This teleology is in no way at all at odds with the causal link that we notice everywhere in nature and history . . . . Teleology is at odds not with the causal but rather with the mechanical view, because it knows no nature but the bodily, no substance but the material, no power but the physical, and therefore also no cause but the mechanical. It wants to compress the richness of the created in its own single, dauntingly narrow-minded [materialistic] system, even as the creation shows itself in its endless variety of substances and powers, of causes and laws . . . . All these different created things, with their different substances, ideas, powers, and laws, are—according to the organic view—taken up in one great whole and are subservient to an ultimate goal” (pp. 89–90).

These last couple of sentences express the crux of Bavinck’s thought regarding a dynamic order of divinely created existents, each fitted to unfold in accord



with its own divinely established nature and end: “Whoever says development says plan and law, direction and goal . . . . Development is . . . an organic, teleological concept. For that reason it can only receive its full due on the basis of creation, which grants the world its being and which at bottom and in principle is what it has to become. Aristotle already understood that becoming exists for the sake of being, not the reverse. There is *becoming* only if and because there is *being*” (Bavinck, “Evolution,” in *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 118). As to this last sentence, he clarifies in *Christian Worldview*, “From becoming there is no transition to being, if not for the fact that being itself is the underlying ground of becoming” (p. 102).

I would add to Gleason’s list three more features constitutive of a Christian life and worldview, according to Bavinck. First, Bavinck stands against *anti-realism*, for example, Kantian transcendentalism. “The intellect is here, according to Kant himself, ‘the legislation for nature’” (p. 43). On this view, explains Bavinck, “the human being forms . . . a nature, which has no objective reality but has its existence only in the human mind” (p. 127). For the sake of fairness and clarity, Bavinck appreciates that Kant argues for the legitimacy of *a priori* moral judgments that are grounded in “the absolute, unconditional validity of duty.” Hence, “Kant performed an outstanding service for morality of his day” (p. 97). Still, adds Bavinck, “the question remains whether [Kant] succeeded in giving morality a new foundation” (p. 97). The new foundation was human reason rather than the order of creation or an objective moral law. When human reason was historicized, many concluded that “the sense of duty and the moral law had gradually formed in [man], just as the fact of the great difference that exists between humans and peoples of one time and of another conclusively proves: the human, as a moral being, was a product of his environment” (p. 98). Kant’s view leads to moral historicism. This moral anti-realism undermines the objective reality of the moral law, given Kant’s dualism between theoretical and practical reason, between nature and freedom. Says Bavinck, “As such, when the world in its entirety taught him nothing about God, Kant was forced to look for the basis of morality in human nature and to make the human being into his own lawgiver” (p. 107). He adds, “It is this autonomy and anarchy that the Christian worldview resists with all its strength. According to it, the human being is not autonomous but is always and everywhere bound to laws that were not devised by him but that are prescribed to him by God as the rule of his life” (p. 128). Thus, Bavinck’s metaphysics of law embraces the idea of a culture-transcendent Law, a natural law, of “logical, ethical, and aesthetic norms [that] deserve absolute validity.” He explains the objective reality of the diversity of laws and their theistic foundation: “If truth, goodness, and beauty are goods worth more than all the treasures of the world, then they cannot thank the human—for whom law was made—for their origin. There is only a choice to be made between the two: the norms of true and false, of good and evil, of beautiful and ugly emerged slowly in history by evolution, but they are not absolute, and while they are true and good today, tomorrow they may be untrue and evil; or they have absolute and immutable being, but then they are not products of history—they merit a transcendent and metaphysical character, and because they cannot float in the sky, they have their reality in God’s wisdom and will. This same divine wisdom that

thought and knew the world before she created it, that by this thinking granted reality to things and truth to our intellect, also determined the norms for our knowing and willing” (pp. 108, 127–29). Bavinck has clearly made his choice for the latter.

Second, Bavinck is a *personalist*. Speaking of the “mystery of personality,” he cites the German neo-Kantian philosopher, Otto Liebmann (1840–1912), who held that man is a unique and unrepeatably person—“wholly original, only existing once” (p. 117). In this connection, we can understand Bavinck’s positive response to the question as to whether there is “a place for a personal, self-subsisting, and free acting person?” (p. 93). Yes, “the intellect and the will, reason and the conscience, temper and passion, the heroic and the genius, all these factors lie hidden in the personality” (p. 117). Furthermore, Bavinck recognizes the person as the self-conscious cause of action, as a real being and a cause of his own actions, and as the efficacy proper to man in becoming good or bad: “In the will a psychic causality is at work that differs from physical causes not by degrees but in essence. The freedom of the will does not exclude causes but is opposed to all such causes that combat its own nature. Whether we understand this distinct nature of the will is another question, but it is a reality just as much as that of matter and force” (pp. 117–18).

Bavinck addresses the relationship of being and becoming in the chapter on “becoming and acting.” There he gives us a glimpse of his understanding of the relationship of freedom and the law. Bavinck does not defend a pure version of deontological ethics. Of course, there exist moral absolutes—exceptionless moral norms—that have an obliging force rather than a mere aspiring force. The moral order of the world, says Bavinck, “accepts no appeals to our powerlessness and ignorance, has no appetite for excuses or facile explanations, and will not settle for good intentions or solemn promises; it does not negotiate with the conscience. But it demands that we all, *without exception*, always and everywhere, in all circumstances of life, conform ourselves to its command. Truth, goodness, and beauty lay claim to the whole person and never release us from its service. The human being must follow the moral ideal and be perfect, as is the Father of humanity, who is in heaven, [and he must be this] not merely at the end of a long maturation but now, in the moment, and always” (p. 95; emphasis added).

Still, moral norms reveal to us “a world not of obligation [*moeten*] but of belonging [*behoren*], of ethical freedom and choice” (p. 94). If I understand him correctly on this point, Bavinck does not understand the law in a purely heteronomous fashion. A heteronomy of morality would mean, according to John Paul II, “a *heteronomy*, as if the moral life were subject to the will of something all-powerful, absolute, extraneous to man and intolerant of his freedom. If in fact a heteronomy of morality were to mean a denial of man’s self-determination or the imposition of norms unrelated to his good, . . . such a heteronomy would be nothing but a form of alienation, contrary to divine wisdom and to the dignity of the human person” (*Veritatis Splendor* §41). Bavinck’s view of freedom and law is that of—in the words of John Paul—“*theonomy*, or *participated theonomy*, since man’s free obedience to God’s law effectively implies that human reason and human will participate in

God's wisdom and providence." Elsewhere Bavinck writes, "The heteronomy of law and the autonomy of man are reconciled only by this theonomy" (*Philosophy of Revelation*, 1908 Princeton Stone Lectures, p. 208). There exist, then, character, virtue, and, yes, love. Love interiorizes the truth, goodness, and beauty of the law: "You shall love the true, the good, and the beautiful with all your soul; and you shall love God above all else and then your neighbor as yourself" (p. 95). Finally, human liberty under the light of reason and under law. "Confirm thy soul in self-control, Thy liberty in law!" These are memorable lines from "America the Beautiful" that fit the core of Bavinck's thought.

Third, what is the relation between creation and redemption, creation and re-creation, in short, nature and grace? "Creation and re-creation are acts of God in time, but at the same time, they are embodiment of his eternal counsel" (p. 54). Bavinck explains: "This same divine wisdom that created the world also re-creates it, and this same divine energy that makes things that exist persist also leads them to a firmly established conclusion. The plan for salvation is sealed within the plan for creation" (pp. 113–14). Christ is the fullness and mediator of all revelation, the revelation of creation and redemption. "Salvation presupposes [creation] revelation, and revelation has salvation as its goal, or rather, salvation is itself breaking in from the hidden counsel of God and making itself a part of the history of humanity. Although revelation has this soteriological content, it is a restoration, and not an annihilation, of God's creative work, which was corrupted by sin. Revelation is a work of reformation. In re-creation, the creation is restored in all its *formae* and *normae*: the law in the gospel, justice in grace, the cosmos in Christ" (p. 114).

At its core, this, too, is the vision of John Paul II on the relation between creation and redemption. Indeed, this is how the late philosopher-pope John Paul II describes the church's mission of evangelization and, in fact, "the purpose of the Gospel," namely, "'to transform humanity from within and to make it new.' Like the yeast which leavens the whole measure of dough (cf. *Mt* 13:33), the Gospel is meant to permeate all cultures and give them life from within, so that they may express the full truth about the human person and about human life" (John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, §95).

In conclusion, Bavinck's Christian philosophical tract is an essay in creative retrieval, in *ressourcement*, looking back to the authoritative sources of faith, Scripture, in particular, but also tradition, which includes the theological and philosophical tradition, for the sake of revitalizing the present intellectual life of the church and culture. As Kevin Vanhoozer correctly notes, "To retrieve is to look back creatively in order to move forward faithfully." In this respect, Bavinck revitalizes epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics in the early twentieth century, but I dare say that his Christian philosophical tract still has much to teach Christian scholars in the early twenty-first century.

Eduardo Echeverria  
Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit, MI