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BOOK REVIEWS

The Genesis Creation Account in the Dead Sea Scrolls. By Jeremy D. Lyon. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2019, 225 pp., $29.00 paper.

Jeremy D. Lyon (Ph.D., M.Div. Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and B.A. Carson-Newman College) currently serves as Associate Professor of OT and Hebrew at Truett-McConnell University. Lyon is author of *Qumran Interpretation of the Genesis Flood* (Pickwick, 2015). His literary and scholarly contributions as co-author of articles include: "A Linguistic Argument for God's Existence" (with John Baumgardner, *JETS* 58 [2015]), "Flood Tales from the Canyon" (with Bill Hoesch, *Answers Magazine* [May 1, 2016]), and author of "Dead Sea Scrolls—Timeless Treasures from Qumran," *Answers Magazine* (October 1, 2012). Lyon is also a contributor to the video *Genesis: Paradise Lost* (Creation Today, 2018).

Lyon brings a growing wealth of research and writing to his current volume. With sixteen pages of bibliography and a thirteen-page Ancient Document index, this volume is well researched. The opening acknowledgment that "this book has its genesis in the classroom" (introduction) points to a weakness of the book—its intended audience is vague. However, this volume is well researched and written in an accessible manner, making it appealing to a number of potential audiences. Overall, in my opinion, it is unfortunate that only one chapter is devoted to the author's conclusions, which tends to limit the volume's application to an already vague audience. Despite these few weaknesses, the book exhibits a wealth of scholarship on the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The first chapter briefly touches on the history of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Moving quickly from their discovery to the actual fragments themselves, Lyon notes that "six of these copies contain portions of the text from the creation account" (p. 1), thereby laying the foundation for a major focus of this book—the text of the Genesis creation account in the Dead Sea Scrolls. An additional focus of this book is the interpretation of the Genesis creation account in the Dead Sea Scrolls, pointing to the documents found in the caves that represent Second Temple interpretations. Lyon reviews the significant contributions by researchers and various scholars (pp. 3–6).

Chapter 2 focuses on the text of the Genesis creation account. Lyon notes, "The prominence of Genesis at Qumran is attested by the large number of Genesis manuscripts recovered in the surrounding caves" (p. 7). Lyon lists up to twenty fragmentary manuscripts of Genesis as the oldest known copies of Genesis. Each fragment and its content are described, and helpful parallel column charts and photographs are utilized to aid in the comprehension and processing of the data. When comparing renderings in the fragments to the Masoretic Text, noting where the Qumran fragments agree and where they variate, 4QGen is cited as one example.

Chapter 3 again utilizes helpful parallel column charts and photographs to help the reader process, comprehend, and analyze the data. When discussing the use of scribal practices and methods, chapter 3 offers valuable insights into scribal thought and understanding related to the interpretation of the Genesis text in the Second Temple era.

Chapters 4–9 focus on the Qumran interpretation of the Genesis creation account in six specific documents. Each chapter focuses on a specific document, reviewing its discovery, giving a helpful physical description, and noting the contributions of other scholars related to those documents. Content, literary style, and structure are presented in an accessible manner, and again, the use of parallel column charts aids the reader in comprehending and processing the information presented. Each document offers valuable insights into how the Second Temple period would have understood and interpreted the creation account in Genesis. The six documents are *Words of the Luminaries* (4Q504), focusing on the nature of Adam's creation, the punishment for his sin, and his ultimate return to dust; *The Paraphrase of Genesis and Exodus* (4Q422), a retelling of the opening chapters of Genesis and Exodus; *The Musar leMebin* – 4QInstruction (4Q416, 4Q417, 4Q423), the wisdom and ethical teaching; *The Meditation on Creation* (4Q303–305), a reflection on or retelling of God's creation; *The Miscellaneous Rules* (4Q265), a catalogue of community rules; and lastly, *Jubilees* (4QJub), a retelling of the creation account.

Chapter 10 is entitled "Conclusions." As previously mentioned, it is unfortunate that only one chapter is devoted to the author's conclusions. Despite the limited space devoted to the conclusion, Lyon does take time to consider the fragments of Genesis, noting, "At least nineteen, possibly twenty, fragmentary copies of Genesis were found in the Qumran caves" (p. 154). Lyon draws from several non-biblical texts key insights into interpretation of Genesis in the Second Temple period. The reader, however, is left to process Lyon's conclusions and find one's own relevance and application. I believe that *Jubilees* would have been a text on which to spend more time, given its contemporary popularity. Lastly, a series of six appendices provide translation of the six non-biblical documents, providing both the Hebrew text and the English translation.

Lyon has provided the academy and the church a scholarly resource to introduce the layman, upper-division undergraduate, and some graduate-level students to a basic overview and understanding of the Genesis fragments and non-biblical documents found in the Qumran caves.

Richard Alan Hayes
Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, IL

The Liturgy of Creation: Understanding Calendars in the Old Testament Context. By Michael LeFebvre. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019, xix + 256 pp., $30.00.

In this work, Michael LeFebvre, pastor of Christ Church Reformed Presbyterian in Brownsburg, Indiana, and fellow of the Center for Pastor Theologians, has seamlessly combined his pastoral concerns with his long-term academic interest in

the Pentateuch and produced a book packed with helpful information about ancient Israel's calendars and deep theological insights into the creation week narrative in Gen 1:1–2:3. LeFebvre's thesis is that God's creation account is to be read as a calendar narrative that instructs common Hebrew farmers on how to live as God's stewards in a cadence of labor and worship, just as the fourth commandment teaches.

The book consists of three parts, the first two of which lay the groundwork for the author's exposition of the creation narrative as a calendar narrative in the third part. Part I provides an informative survey of the Hebrew calendar in three chapters. Chapter 1 explains how the three divisions of the Hebrew calendar are closely tied to nature. Hebrew days, months, and years are directly governed by the movements of the sun and the moon. Thus, the Hebrew calendar is in harmony with God's cadence of seasons for fruitfulness. Chapter 2 discusses the "seven" groupings of three divisions in the Hebrew calendar—namely, seven-day week, seven festival months, the Sabbath year, and the Jubilee year. These "complete" sets of time provide Israel with a cadence of work and rest, which maximizes Israel's capacity to bring abundance into the land of Canaan. Chapter 3 narrows the focus onto Israel's seven seasonal festivals that were timed around the three periods of harvest. Besides being religious in nature, the seasonal festivals provided practical occasions to regulate a diversified agricultural economy of ancient Israel and to optimize labor for national prosperity.

Part II, also comprising three chapters, introduces the author's original concept of a "calendar narrative." In chapter 4, the author notes that the twenty-one dated events in the Pentateuch occur as parts of two major narrative sequences: the flood narrative and the exodus narrative. What is more, most of them fall directly on festival dates such as New Year's Day, the Passover day, Feast of Weeks, Feast of Booths, and New Moon days. After suggesting plausible reasons for the association of each of these specific festival dates to memories of redemptive history, LeFebvre suggests that those event dates are not occurrence dates but observance dates. In other words, the dates are given not to indicate the historical timing as to when they actually occurred but to instruct ancient Israelites on how to observe certain festival dates. This introduces the concept of a calendar narrative. In chapter 5, LeFebvre discusses chronological idiosyncrasies in the Pentateuch as a way of proving that event dates in the Pentateuch were observance dates, never intended to be historically accurate. Then in chapter 6, the author inquires as to why the biblical narrator omits occurrence dates and preserves only observance dates. Lefebvre finds the answer in the legal character of the Pentateuchal narrative (p. 95): dated narratives are part of the Torah (i.e. the law), and hence participate in its purpose of instructing common Hebrews, in this particular case, how to carry out festival observances.

In Part III, which comprises six chapters, LeFebvre reads the creation week account as a calendar narrative, composed so as to instruct ordinary Hebrew farmers on how to live each day of the week in a divine cadence of weekday labor and sabbath worship. The author's exegesis of the creation week account rests on the assumption that it is written in a language comprehensible to common Hebrew

workers. For instance, the phrase *tohû wābohû* ("formless and void," Gen 1:2) is understood as referring to the uncultivated wilderness that Hebrew farmers looked out over at the beginning of another workweek (p. 151). The "one place" where waters under heaven gathered together (Gen 1:9) refers to nothing other than the Mediterranean Sea in contrast to the land of Canaan where Israelites settled and farmed (p. 163). In chapters 8–11, the exegetical meat of this book, LeFebvre consistently depicts the divine creator as an exemplary farmer. He argues, for instance, that while God's creation of plant life is couched in the language of human cultivation of fields and orchards, the land animals created on the sixth day include both wild animals and the livestock Hebrew farmers are to subdue and rule. As a model farmer, the Creator cures the precreation status *tōhû wābōhû* through a two-tiered work week that centers on the two themes of fruitfulness and feasting and brings prosperity to the world. LeFebvre then discusses the implication of the divine example for Hebrew farmers. Made in the image of God, Israelites are commanded to subdue the barren world and turn it into a fruitful one for the benefit of all living creatures. LeFebvre calls the creation week account "a farmer's almanac" (p. 147). The creation week ends with God's rest, which teaches Hebrew workers how to observe the Sabbath day. Sabbath is not only a day of feasting and worship, but also a day of anticipation of the full fruits made possible by God's order of creation. Concluding his book, LeFebvre fleshes out some implications of his thesis to the current debate of faith and science. The author is opposed to allowing the Bible to influence scientific research and suggests we should respect the consensus of the scientific community even on natural origins.

LeFebvre has done a great service to the community of faith by reminding us at this time of atomic individualism and weak church of the importance of living in accordance to the life pattern of work and communal worship set by the Creator himself. Although his assertion that twenty-one dated events are all related to festival dates may be a little exaggerated, and his grouping of the creation account into one of those "dated" events needs further discussion, his pastoral and liturgical reading of the creation week will certainly serve as a viable alternative to scientific and mythopoetic readings that have so far dominated the academic, if not popular, discussions of the matter.

Koowon Kim
Reformed Graduate University, Seoul, Korea

Understanding Bible Translation: Bringing God's Word into New Contexts. By William D. Barrick. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2019, 248 pp., $17.15 paper.

William D. Barrick provides a well-balanced and insightful introductory overview to the nature and task of Bible translation. Barrick begins by appealing to well-known and accepted Greek, English, and German translations of the Bible in order to establish the need for a translation to be understandable in the common language of the people. Barrick carefully builds the core of his appeal on Scripture when he notes the need for Ezra to interpret Moses for the community returning

from exile, the need for Jesus to interpret the parable of the sower for the disciples, and the need for Philip to interpret Isaiah for the Ethiopian eunuch. Translation should produce a text that is understandable.

Barrick discusses the nature of faithful translation in chapter 3. He distinguishes between commentaries, periphrastic translations, and the translation of the actual text of Scripture, while noting the inherent danger of periphrastic expansion. Barrick's approach may be summed up in his sage statement that "sound translation principles require transferring the exact meaning of the original text into the receptor language while maintaining as much of the original wording as possible" (p. 64). Barrick wisely adopts the middle way by dispensing with complete concordance when it would lead to inaccurate contextual meaning, while at the same time following the structure of the text as much as possible. Moreover, Barrick advocates retaining the cultural, geographic, and historical aspects of the text rather than introducing anachronisms by adjusting the text with cultural substitutions (e.g. "pig" for "lamb").

Moreover, Barrick considers the need for simplicity and clarity in translation, the relation between theology and translation, different translation styles from literal to free (illustrated with Psalm 23), the challenge of the tension between understandability and remaining faithful to the text, and the nature of English Bible versions by appeal to much data. For example, he appeals to 37 different English Bible versions to illustrate both the practice and the need for simplicity and clarity in translation in discussions of Gen 1:27 and 1 John 1:9. Moreover, Barrick wisely observes that translation is not an objective science, devoid of values, when he notes the manner in which one's theological framework impacts the translation of the details. This issue emerges in passages such as Gen 12:3, when the translator must determine who blesses whom, as well as in passages such as Gen 15:15 when translating "you shall go to your fathers" and the related phrase "be gathered to his people." One's theological framework and understanding of the afterlife will affect whether these concepts are translated literally or more idiomatically as euphemisms. Barrick rightly advocates not adding foreign theological concepts to a text but rather tries to maintain the meaning the author intended. He recommends avoiding expansions, revisions, and skewing the text.

Within chapter 8, Barrick treats the question of which English Bible translation is best for use in the pulpit and for private Bible study. He limits discussion to the eight translations most likely to be chosen (KJV, NKJV, NAS, NASB, ESV, NRSV, NIV, and CSB), and evaluates them based upon translation omissions and additions, as well as lexical and syntactic alterations adversely affecting accuracy and clarity. In Psalm 23, Barrick discovers that in terms of accuracy, the CSB, NIV, and NRSV outscore KJV, NKJV, NAS, and NASB, which retain inaccurate, traditional renderings. However, further analysis suggests that Psalm 23 is an Achilles' heel for these essentially literal translations since accuracy often loses when a translation follows a traditional rendering. The further comparison of these versions in Rom 6:8–14 indicates the overall greater accuracy of the CSB, NKJV, NASB, and KJV.

In his concluding chapters, Barrick discusses the practical issues surrounding Bible translation. He notes that translators should sense a calling to Bible transla-

tion, as well as a conviction of its worth. Clues to this calling include a thirst for anything biblical, the ability to learn a second language, and both a willingness and facility for the academic training required to become a competent translator. Barrick's years on the field emerge in his observation that translators possess "a stern constitution and a sanctified stubbornness." What is more, Barrick acknowledges the difficult personalities on the field in his recommendation regarding documentation as translation progresses in order to protect the rights of revision and distribution, lest someone else hijack, revise, and begin distributing the translation without the translator or team's approval. Moreover, Barrick recommends establishing translation standards for the team as guiding principles in order to resolve disputes within the team and to maintain consistency in translation. Throughout this volume he provides helpful lists of these sound principles, which are summarized on pages 214–15. Barrick recommends involving the local church and suggests that translators should live among and work alongside members of the local community. His book closes with a call to prayer and a reminder of the enduring nature of God's word after the translators return home.

Barrick's introduction to Bible translation will serve as a good introductory text for those exploring a potential call as a Bible translator. Throughout the volume, Barrick draws on his years of experience in providing a wide range of examples in making his points. Moreover, he draws upon a wide breadth of scholarship in presenting his views. The strengths and sound judgments of this book are numerous.

Only a couple of possible omissions were observed. First, one would expect a basic presentation or mention of the dispute between those who follow Eugene Nida's approach of dynamic equivalence and those who advocate for essentially literal translation. Barrick describes the range of translation styles in chapter 6, yet there is no indication of the high emotion or the names of scholars associated with this debate. Second, in chapter 9, mention of the academic study of phonetics, phonology, grammatical analysis, lexicography, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, and literacy, as well as the personality types who gravitate to these studies, would be helpful for those considering a call to Bible translation.

Terrance R. Wardlaw Jr.
SIL International, Dallas, TX

Sleuthing the Bible: Clues that Unlock the Mysteries of the Text. By John Kaltner and Steven L. McKenzie. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019, viii + 279 pp., $25.00 paper.

Kaltner's and McKenzie's stated goal is to offer "a training manual for wannabes, those interested in developing the skills and know-how required to become a Bible sleuth" (p. 4)—a worthy aspiration in view of pervasive biblical illiteracy in the West. Their proposal is to approach the Bible as detectives would a crime scene, examining fifteen of the most common clues, one per chapter in two main sections: (1) nine "Smoking Gun" clues that are "relatively easy to spot"; and (2) six "Dusting for Prints" clues requiring "more specialized training and a deeper dive into the

detective's bag of tricks" (p. 4). The method in each instance entails six elements: (1) an opening introduction; (2) a lineup of notorious cases; (3) step-by-step procedures for examining the clue; (4) a closing "Why This Clue Matters"; (5) a note on how the clue helps us; and (6) a casebook of other examples for further investigation.

The "Smoking Gun" clues are: (1) "The Intrusive Narrator"; (2) "The Physical Description"; (3) "The Etiology"; (4) "The Weird Social Custom"; (5) "The Inconsistency"; (6) "The Doublet"; (7) "The Echo"; (8) "The Repeated Pattern"; and (9) "The Broken Pattern." The "Dusting for Prints" clues are: (1) "The Telegraphed Information"; (2) "The Name"; (3) "The Anachronism"; (4) "The Hidden Meaning"; (5) "The Messy Manuscript"; and (6) "The Perspectival Bias."

A brief review like this is not the place to engage with the broad range of issues raised in these chapters, but several *pro et contra* matters deserve mention. The strengths of the book include the following: (1) its proper expectation that the Bible is to be investigated openly, inquisitively, bravely, honestly, and in community; (2) its respectable endeavor to introduce readers to the multidimensional nature of biblical interpretation (e.g. from textual, lexical, grammatical, literary, historical, and theological angles); and (3) its ambitious effort to bring these matters to a popular audience in a creative format.

But those strengths are seriously weakened, in my view, by a framework of modern critical presuppositions that define the authors' use of literary and other tools and thus serve to shape all the proffered methodology in ways that fragment, revise, and otherwise befog the Bible's divine and authorially-intended meaning and message.

For example, "The Clue of the Inconsistency" is one long case built on the premise that the Bible is riddled with conflicting accounts—disagreements, incompatibilities, even outright contradictions—that are never less than "mistake[s]" or "something 'wrong'" but still may sometimes provide an "opportunity" to gain important information *about the text or author* which might otherwise be missed if it were not "wrapped up in an inconsistency" (p. 74). And one upshot, they contend, is the "occupational hazard" of "question[ing] the historical accuracy and reliability of what you read in the Bible." Contradictions in the text and lack of external verification of events mean "one big thing—when we read the Bible, we can never know for sure what, if anything, really happened" (p. 75).

"The Clue of the Perspectival Bias" argues that much of the Bible is "propaganda literature," which is not "necessarily misinformation or disinformation," but it *can* be (p. 243). And the perspective that what such bias "espouses is usually not the Bible's only position on the matter in question. It's a clue that always contradicts itself." The implication, then, is that the Bible's writings are assorted compositions from competing groups with conflicting agendas.

What is more, "The Clue of the Repeated Pattern" asserts that the structure/patterning of Gen 1:1–2:3 is not so much loaded with revelatory theological weight as it is merely evidence that the writer shaped an existing creation story into a form that presented a rationale for the Sabbath. The whole purpose, they say, is only about getting people to observe a religious holiday.

At every turn, the Bible—not considered the product of divine revelation but of religious evolution—is portrayed as a patchwork of disparate, at times contradictory, oral traditions and independent sources amateurishly sewn together for questionable purposes, and the whole point of investigating these "clues" is to unravel the fabric, get to the sources behind the text as it stands, and, as best we can, try to guess *who* the authors/editors may have been and *why* they did what they did. As someone once said, it is a way of studying the Word of God out of which no word from God ever seems to come.

One distracting matter of style also warrants mention: the authors' strained efforts to come across as clever, even edgy. Perhaps the targeted audience accounts a bit for the often sophomoric tone, but it quickly becomes tiresome. The commendable aim to be conversational devolves too easily into crass, condescending, tawdry comment, maybe as part of the "street tough" cop image the book tries so hard to convey. In all, the "detective/investigation" analogy at large is often forced and off-putting.

Anyone looking for a college-level introduction to biblical interpretation for a popular audience from a perspective holding to the God-breathed, revelatory, confluent, unified, redemptive-historical character of the Bible will be better served by volumes such as Köstenberger and Patterson's *For the Love of God's Word*, or Cribb and Crisler's *Bible Toolbox*, both of which offer a much more coherent, progressively-developing approach to reading and understanding the Bible. Beyond those, one will find great benefit in works such as Poythress's *Reading the Word of God in the Presence of God* and the older but rich volume of Osborne's *Hermeneutical Spiral*.

I *wanted* to like this book. Being myself retired law enforcement, I was intrigued by the prospect of exploring the Bible as a good detective would a crime scene—surveying the setting, interviewing witnesses, gathering evidence, noting details, asking questions, determining the facts, challenging assumptions, testing theories, and putting the story together properly in pursuit of the truth. That ideal is altogether enthralling and commendable. The implementation, in *this* case, is neither.

B. Spencer Haygood Jr.
Anderson University, Anderson, SC

Joshua. By Lissa M. Wray Beal. The Story of God Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019, 454 pp., $39.99.

Lissa M. Wray Beal is Professor of OT and Chair of the Bible and Theology Department at Providence Theological Seminary in Manitoba, Canada. No stranger to writing commentaries, her strong CV includes a commentary on 1 & 2 Kings (Apollos OT Commentary, 2014), and she is currently under contract for commentaries on both the books of Ruth and Jeremiah. Wray Beal's command of the whole breadth of Scripture, both the OT and NT, is made clear in *Joshua* and enriches its encouragement to the church.

Like the other entries in the Story of God Bible Commentary series, *Joshua* makes clear at its beginning that its intended audience is both laity and clergy (pp. 13–15). The book's tone and appropriate technical level match that intention. This is not to say that an academic study of the book of Joshua should not include this commentary. On the contrary, I found myself repeatedly learning of new textual connections from the author. Wray Beal divides her examination of each section of the text into three parts according to the design of the series. The first part is "Listen to the Story," which presents the NIV (2011) translation and connects the text in question to other relevant passages of Scripture and to related ANE cultural practices and literature. The second part of each section, "Explain the Story," walks the reader through the text, making linguistic and exegetical observations. The third and final part of each section, "Live the Story," reflects on how the church has understood and applied the examined text in the past and posits how it might apply the passage presently and in the future. Wray Beal's work includes an introduction to the book of Joshua as a whole, commentary on each section of the text, and a mid-book overview of chapters 13–21, which demonstrates those chapters' important place in the overall narrative. The commentary also includes Scripture, subject, and author indexes.

In the commentary's introduction, Wray Beal briefly surveys issues such as authorship, dating, and the text's structure. I was pleasantly surprised at her short but poignant discussion of theological historiography and the differences between ancient and modern historiography. Wray Beal identifies "the primary goal of Joshua [as] a theological account of Israel's past that reveals Israel's God and his purposes and calls Israel and all subsequent audiences to faith in God" (p. 35). This helps set proper expectations for the study of Joshua. Also effective in establishing expectations is Wray Beal's acknowledgment of the interpretive challenges present in the book of Joshua and how she approaches this biblical text. "And, especially *because* Joshua presents so many difficult challenges to the reader, this commentary consciously positions itself within a churchly reading tradition. …. It is a reading tradition that engages Joshua to ask how it prepares for Christ and informs the church" (p. 20, emphasis original). This tradition is seen in her various treatments of historical ecclesiastical writings of Joshua in the "Live the Story" parts of each section. There are also helpful yet modest treatments of such topics as the ethics of warfare in Joshua, land ownership, and the identity of those who comprise "all Israel." These subjects are further addressed throughout the commentary as they come up in the text. As one might expect from the commentary's intended audience, academics will find more robust introductions elsewhere in more technical commentaries. Wray Beal finishes her introduction with a strong list of recommended "Resources for Preaching and Teaching," consisting of both academic and popular titles.

Along with its helpful introduction for laity or clergy, this commentary has several strengths. The commentary (especially in "Listen to the Story") is replete with inner-biblical connections with texts both preceding and following Joshua. Wray Beal shows clearly how Joshua builds on the Pentateuch and sets the stage for the remainder of the OT. "Listen to the Story" also demonstrates the author's

thorough awareness of ANE culture and literature and how such knowledge can round out our comprehension of the context(s) in which Scripture was written. The exegesis in Wray Beal's commentary is insightful without becoming overly technical. She shows the reader repeated words and phrases in the text (judiciously so where the NIV and Hebrew differ in nuance) and how textual features convey the book of Joshua's themes and arguments. Wray Beal rightly communicates the value of the list portions of the narrative. Speaking of Joshua 13–21, she writes, "These texts are, however, part of God's story; no less 'the Word of the Lord' than the central text of Genesis 12:1–3 or Isaiah 53. The key is in learning *how* these texts communicate that story and speak God's word. … God's hand is made evident in these 'boring bits'" (p. 290; emphasis original).

To my mind, this commentary has only one weakness of note. In more than a few cases of "Live the Story," Wray Beal engages in what she calls "figural" readings of the text for present-day application in the Christian church. Often prompting these readings are the writings of Origen; he is the most-cited author in the Author Index. Perhaps due to a lack of clear explanation on the part of Wray Beal, my own general hesitancy to engage in figural readings, or some combination thereof, I found these applications of the text (and Origen's arguments) to be less than convincing. That said, I appreciate Wray Beal's desire for the OT to inform the Christian church and the church's role in God's Kingdom. I would be remiss if I did not mention two instances of "Live the Story" I found to be particularly insightful. The first is Wray Beal's consideration of Joshua 12, a "hinge" chapter that closes the first half of Joshua and anticipates the second half. She highlights how Israel has seen God's promises fulfilled and yet must still advance in obedience to achieve possession of the land. She then compares this looking both back and forward to how the church must act as we await the fulfillment of the Kingdom which has come: "Both perspectives are necessary for the church: the powerful affirmation of God's victory won; the faithful obedience to ongoing discipleship" (p. 269). The second instance is Wray Beal's powerful reflection on the tribe of Dan's pattern of fear and distrust. Fear and lack of trust may happen in a moment once, but repeated rejection of God's ways leads to (and is) disobedience. Wray Beal rightly affirms that an antidote to such rejection is worship (pp. 349–50).

I heartily recommend this commentary to the Bible reader looking for assistance across the ever-present divides of culture and time; for the pastor looking for points of textual emphasis to share in upcoming sermons; and for the academic looking to be spurred on in consideration of inner-biblical and ANE connections. *Joshua* is a welcome addition to the "The Story of God Bible Commentary" series and to the bookshelf of anyone looking to understand better the book of Joshua in its canonical and cultural context.

D. Allen Hutchison
Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch, South Africa

ESV Expository Commentary, Volume 3: 1 Samuel–2 Chronicles. Edited by Iain M. Duguid, James M. Hamilton Jr., and Jay Sklar. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019, 1343 pp., $60.00.

This new commentary, volume 3 of a projected 12-volume series on the entire Bible using the ESV as the basic translation, expounds the four historical books of Samuel through Chronicles. It is a hefty but helpful contribution for understanding their meaning and message.

The series aims "to provide a clear, crisp, and Christ-centered explanation of the biblical text" (p. 9). In my opinion, the three contributors, John L. Mackay (deceased) on Samuel, J. Gary Millar on Kings, and John W. Olley on Chronicles admirably fulfill the stated objective. Especially to be commended is the intentional focus on a Christological reading of the OT text. This continues the ancient church tradition followed by the reformers of viewing the Bible as one overarching story of redemptive history in which the central figure is the Lord Jesus Christ. As Luther famously insisted, the exegete must pay attention to "what urges Christ." Our contributors help us appreciate how these texts do indeed point to the greater Son of David whose story is adumbrated in the storyline.

Notable for its absence, these commentaries avoid lengthy discussions of linguistic, grammatical, and syntactical issues in the Hebrew text, though it is evident all three contributors have done their homework and are well-trained in these aspects. In that this commentary series focuses on the English text and only occasionally transliterates Hebrew words and phrases, it is quite different from the Word Bible Commentary. What is more, there is sparing interaction with biblical scholarship. The omission is deliberate in light of the intended audience—pastors, church teachers, and motivated lay readers who possess limited or no knowledge of Hebrew and who wish to focus on the message, theology, and application of the biblical text. For that reason, scholars will probably pass on this series, though in my opinion, they could learn much from what is presented, and more importantly, their souls would be enriched. What we have in this series is a return to the robust biblical exposition found in the writings of Luther and Calvin, in the words of the editorial preface, "a crisply moving exposition" (p. 10). In my opinion, it is just what the doctor ordered for a spiritual tonic.

The format and arrangement of the commentary lends itself to achieving the stated aim. Each commentator begins with a brief introduction that provides an overview of the book, its title, authorship, date and occasion, genre and literary features, theology, relationship to the rest of the Bible and to Christ, tips for preaching, and an outline—a concise summary of essential background information. The commentary proper is arranged as follows: an overview of the section (based on the expositor's outline) followed by the ESV text (which includes the ESV textual notes at the end of the passage) and verse-by-verse comments. Each section concludes with a response summarizing the narrative flow, drawing attention to theological themes and Christological links with the NT, and applying the text to the contemporary reader. The response section functions somewhat like the explanation portion of the WBC series, but the *ESV Expository Commentary* places much

more emphasis on typology and contemporary application. The upshot is a flowing exposition that cuts right to the marrow of the text, a godsend for pastors, teachers, and interested lay readers.

MacKay adds to the usefulness of his commentary on 1–2 Samuel with a detailed chronology of the period from Eli to Solomon and of the major events of David's life (pp. 32–33). Though exact dates are not possible, it is nonetheless helpful to have some chronological pegs on which to hang the stories of Samuel, Saul, and David. He also adds a brief, seven-item bibliography of commentaries that are written from a broadly evangelical viewpoint.

Here is just one example of MacKay's ability to apply the text to the modern reader. In the response section dealing with 1 Sam 24:1–22 (in which David spares Saul's life), he observes, "Divine providence does not constitute a divine mandate; the Word alone is normative for conduct" (p. 240). He [David] avoids taking a shortcut to achieve what God has made known as his purpose. In this he foreshadows Christ's response to the Devil's offer of 'the kingdoms of the world and their glory' (Matt 4:8)—the temptation to reach his God-appointed destiny by unauthorized and sinful means" (p. 241). Right on and right to the point.

Millar's treatment of 1–2 Kings follows the same format. He, too, includes a helpful chronology of the Israelite and Judahite kings in which he discusses briefly the problems of attempting to establish a reliable timeline for this period. He indicates his reliance upon the work of Edwin Thiele (p. 496). Millar more often than not comments on multiple verses rather than individual verses as was the case with MacKay. The upshot is that MacKay's exposition of 1–2 Samuel is nearly 100 pages longer than Millar's on 1–2 Kings, even though the respective biblical texts are approximately the same length. This is not to imply that Millar's comments are superficial; they are in fact quite good. The main reason for the shorter compass of Millar's work is the highly repetitive nature of the books of 1–2 Kings. In this regard he offers some helpful advice for preachers: "There is real value in enabling listeners to feel the recurring notes of the text. Similarly, it is both a challenge and a delight to help people to get to the stage where they recognize the importance of the repetition and begin to feel the challenge or rebuke of the fact that generation after generation repeats the same mistakes" (p. 510). Once again, right on target.

Millar concludes his commentary with "Final Reflections" in which he shares observations on the perspective needed to appreciate the message of 1–2 Kings. He draws the reader's attention to the "three horizons" of the book (p. 894); first, the people who are involved in the events themselves"; second, "those who come long after and are asking the question, 'How did we get into this mess?'"; and finally, "followers of the Lord Jesus Christ living for him today." (p. 895). He then directs the reader's attention to the ultimate figure towards whom the story points, "the only one who rules forever … the only one who can change hearts and minds, bringing us to repentance and faith … the only one who both speaks and embodies the word of truth" (pp. 897–98). Luther and Calvin would concur.

Lacking in Millar's commentary is a bibliography, which would have been helpful; I am surprised the editors did not include one. I recommend the commen-

tary on 1–2 Kings in the NAC by my friend and former colleague at Taylor University, Paul R. House.

Olley supplements his commentary on Chronicles with twenty-three tables. These assist the reader to digest a large amount of detailed and diverse information. Especially useful are the tables listing the parallel passages in Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. Compared to MacKay and Millar, Olley includes more discussion of Hebrew words and interaction with secondary literature. He also appends a bibliography of twenty-five resources that represent a cross-section of biblical scholarship including mainline scholars.

Once again, many examples of astute observation and timely application could be cited to illustrate the high quality of his exposition. I especially liked his response to a section that could easily get short shrift because of its rather tedious content, namely, 1 Chronicles 25, which deals with David's appointment of the Levitical choirs under the prophetic maestros Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun:

> Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750), the influential European composer and musical director at the prestigious St. Thomas Church, Leipzig, for twenty-seven years, said of this chapter that it was the foundation of all God-pleasing church music. Music, along with other aspects of temple service, was established by God himself (1 Chron 28:21) to proclaim his Word, with him being graciously present (2 Chron 5:13–14) (p. 1061 n. 190).

May this perspective resonate in the hearts of all ministers of music, church music directors, and praise band leaders!

I also give the larger print size, uncluttered arrangement of the commentaries, and careful proofreading high marks. The editors include a helpful Scripture index. The three expositors in this volume achieve the stated aim of the series, namely, that "the great truths of Scripture speak across space and time … and be globally applicable." (p. 10). In short, here is a valuable resource that will equip pastors and Bible teachers to understand and expound a generally neglected part of the Christian canon, a portion that speaks profoundly to the human condition and points with anticipation to the coming of the "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev 19:16).

Larry R. Helyer
Taylor University, Upland, IN

1 & 2 Chronicles. By Peter J. Leithart. Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2019, 288 pp., $35.00.

1 & 2 Chronicles is a recent installment of the Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible series. The series preface expresses the goal of presenting readers with "postcritical doctrinal interpretation" (pg. xv) of the biblical books. Peter Leithart's volume on the books of Chronicles addresses the theological presentations within the books and the connections to larger doctrinal issues within the broader text of the Bible. Leithart also connects the major theological themes with implications for

Christian thought in the contemporary setting. The work fits well within the spirit of the Brazos Theological Commentary series.

Leithart's overarching structure links the narratives of Chronicles with Israel's history from Genesis to the establishment of the monarchy (chart on p. 4). The beginning genealogies in the first nine chapters are loosely connected to Genesis, with the theme of generations leading up to Israel. Saul's death sets the stage for David to initiate an exodus of sorts by preparing the nation for proper worship located in Jerusalem. Solomon is linked to Joshua as the one who establishes worship in the land and thus initiates the time of rest in the land. The divided kingdom parallels the time of the judges. where the kings fluctuate between good and evil with the ultimate result facilitating a downward spiral. At the close of Chronicles, Cyrus, the Gentile king, establishes the new nation under Gentile kings until the coming of the Messiah. Leithart is consistent with this structure throughout the commentary, thereby enabling readers to anticipate and understand the flow of his analysis over the expanse of 1 and 2 Chronicles.

Another significant feature in Leithart's approach in the emphasis on the liturgical worship of the Levites in connection with the kings of Judah. Leithart reveals the accountability of the king to God as intimately connected to proper worship. In Chronicles, proper worship is enhanced and facilitated by the Levites alongside the priests. The permanent temple no longer requires the Levites to carry the tabernacle and instruments of worship. Therefore, they shift to lifting up praise in song rather than lifting up the tabernacle (p. 54). The connection to proper worship is not relegated to the temple and festivals but part of battle (2 Chr 20:21). The Levites defended and empowered the installation of Joash as king over Judah (2 Chronicles 23). Therefore, Leithart interprets worship and music—one could say proper liturgy—in Chronicles as the key to the nation's safety over and above armies and fortified cities. The observation of the connection between the monarchy and roles of the Levites is not new to Leithart, but his approach has a pastoral implication beyond historical and literary analysis.

The work of Gentile rulers in connection to the temple and proper worship is another feature Leithart highlights. God is the ruler of all the world, and thus Gentile rulers should recognize and support the worship of the Lord. The support of the king of Tyre and the gifts and recognition by the queen of Sheba reveal the nations helping to establish and recognize the presence and power of the Lord in Israel. Huram helps to build the temple; the queen of Sheba recognizes that Solomon's wisdom is from the Lord and gives gifts in connection to her understanding. The culmination of Gentile leaders came in Cyrus, who decreed the reestablishment of the temple and proper worship after exile.

Leithart does an excellent job of working through the text of Chronicles systematically while at the same time consistently weaving the major themes of his interpretation. The reader will find a doctrinal analysis that follows the flow and content of the narrative. Leithart also engages faithfully with literary and historical features that shape the narrator's records. The approach is a healthy balance between remaining in the focus text and bringing broader theological understanding to bear. He highlights the nuances of Chronicles but also its connections with the

larger text of the OT history of Israel looking forward to the expectation of the Messiah.

Leithart connects his interpretation to the contemporary church as both a pastor and scholar. It is clear in this and other of his works that he has both an understanding of the Hebrew text and a heart for the text to impact the local church. One example of his application to the contemporary Christian is the analysis of the speech of Abijah in 2 Chronicles 13. The speech highlights the proper worship expectations of all Israel. Leithart links the concept of proper worship with the Protestant reformation and the subsequent reality of the church to ask what proper worship in the visible church is. His interpretation and application of the passage naturally comes from the emphasis of proper worship as a major theme in Chronicles. The example is just one from the commentary but reveals the pastoral bent of Leithart's work.

Leithart's commentary on 1–2 Chronicles fits well within the series and in the larger cross-disciplinary emphasis of the last few decades. Theological and doctrinal interpretation of the Bible is a healthy and essential aspect of theological studies. The academy and the church are enhanced by both the exegetical work and the doctrinal work on the biblical texts. Leithart's commentary is a helpful addition to the existing works on Chronicles both for the academy and the pastorate.

Ben Hutchison
Colorado Christian University, Lakewood, CO

Future of New Testament Textual Scholarship: From H. C. Hoskier to the Editio Critica Maior and Beyond. Edited by Garrick V. Allen. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 417. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019, xi + 523 pp., €149.00.

This book is a collection of papers, most of which were presented at Dublin City University in August 2017 at the conference "Herman Hoskier and the Future of Textual Scholarship on the Bible." As a result, many (though not all) of the chapters interact with Hoskier and his scholarship to various degrees. Although I attended the conference, I was not one of the presenters. Garrick V. Allen, the volume's editor, organized the conference. Though space prohibits a thorough review of each chapter, it is helpful to highlight a few contributions that may be of interest to readers of *JETS*.

H. C. Hoskier (1864–1938) was a self-funded textual scholar. Born in England, he was educated at Eton College, inherited the equivalent of millions from his father, moved to New Jersey, had a successful career in banking, and "retired in 1903 to the lucrative career of textual criticism" (p. 4). For the second half of his life, he self-funded his own text-critical enterprises, moved back to the Channel Islands, and died nearly penniless. Allen notes, "Not to dissuade potential PhD students, but Hoskier is proof that one rarely gets rich on textual scholarship" (p. 6). Allen's chapter provides a brief overview of Hoskier's life and a richly annotated bibliography of his publications.

Three chapters are especially relevant for bringing heroes down from their pedestals. Advocates of the Textus Receptus and the King James Version often find an ally in Hoskier because of his sympathy toward the traditional text and opposition to Westcott and Hort. Similarly, textual criticism since Westcott and Hort has at times had an uncritical preference for Codex Vaticanus as a reliable witness to the early text of the NT.

Though Allen's annotated bibliography surveys Hoskier's lesser-known unorthodox writings, Jan Krans deals specifically with Hoskier's appeal to a psychic medium with respect to the addition or omission of ὁ θεός at Rev 21:4. Krans shows effectively (with an image of the "spirit-communication" itself) that this incident of automatic writing was a hoax perpetuated by someone who copied a modern printed Greek NT, which Hoskier all too readily accepted. For those who appeal to Hoskier's criticism of Westcott and Hort but claim doctrinal purity for defenders of the KJV, Krans's chapter could be a difficult one to swallow.

An-Ting Yi uses Hoskier's almost inhuman accuracy as a collator as a launching point for a critique of the (in)accuracy of the critical apparatus of Stephanus's 1550 edition of the Greek NT and its reception. For the Gospel of John, Yi compares Stephanus's citation of L019 ("Codex Regius," cited as η′ in Stephanus's 1550 edition) with an examination of the manuscript itself and finds that the accuracy of Stephanus's apparatus does not meet modern standards. Not only do many variants simply go unmentioned by Stephanus, but he cites L019 incorrectly at 12 of the 79 citations of the manuscript in John (6:15; 8:9, 49; 12:31; 14:22; 15:1; 16:3; 18:29; 19:13; 21:15, 16, and 17). Moreover, Yi demonstrates that readings incorrectly attributed to L019 in Stephanus's inaccurate apparatus were repeated by later editors of the Greek NT, even down to Wettstein and Griesbach who examined L019 themselves. With respect to L019 in John's Gospel, it is clear that editors and theologians who commented on textual variants in the period between 1550 and 1846 (when Tischendorf finally published an accurate transcription of the manuscript) were working from factually incorrect data that they (wrongly) assumed was true. For those who assert that the Reformers and Puritans had an accurate knowledge of manuscripts and their variants, Yi's chapter will no doubt be problematic.

Whereas Krans and Yi cast shadows on some of the heroes of the traditional text, Dirk Jongkind lowers the pedestal on which Codex Vaticanus (B03) sits. Jongkind identifies five features of B03 that point to editorial activity in its production. These are: (1) an occasional shift from καθως γεγραπται to καθαπερ γεγραπται in Romans; (2) the spelling of John with a single *nu* as Ιωανης instead of Ιωαννης; (3) the order "Christ Jesus" rather than "Jesus Christ" in Romans; (4) the absence of the article on Jesus's name in John; and (5) representing the long /i/ with -ει- even if the standardized spelling would be -ι-. These editorial elements of B03 do not reduce its text-critical value. On the contrary—they show that B03 was "copied directly or indirectly from a well-prepared text" and that this copying was done "in a controlled and precise manner" (p. 245). These editorial patterns in B03 demonstrate that editors of the Greek NT must appeal to it with some discernment in textual decisions.

As the author of the 2 Thessalonians volume of the Papyrologische Kommentare zum Neuen Testament, Christina M. Kreinecker provides a glimpse at the ways papyrological evidence could be useful to NT exegesis. Kreinecker points to slave contracts as providing an alternative possibility about the status of Onesimus. Though Onesimus is often treated as a runaway slave, extant slave contracts show that the way Paul wrote about Onesimus is more consistent with the way one would write about "a truant, a slave who lingered and stayed away from home for longer than his errand could plausibly have taken" (p. 189) than a runaway. Concerning Gal 1:6–7, she writes that "Paul expresses his astonishment and irritation exactly in the style of ancient letter conventions" (p. 191). Documentary evidence about women from the papyrological record could shed more light on what Luke meant when he said that Mary Magdalene, Joanna the wife of Chuza, Susanna, and many other women ministered to Jesus and his disciples (Luke 8:2–3; p. 194).

Catharine Smith's contribution, "Old Wine, New Wineskins: Digital Tools for Editing the New Testament," may be one of the more important chapters in the volume for those looking to the future of textual criticism. Smith's chapter provides a glimpse of what some of the day-to-day labor will almost certainly look like for many future text critics by describing what is already being implemented in some text-critical circles. It is possible to speculate about where the discipline is headed in the grand scheme of things, but there can be no forest without trees, and Smith's chapter deals with these trees in the text-critical forest. The fact remains that to use digital tools for textual criticism, textual scholars must be able to communicate the hard data of transcriptions to software in a way that can be understood and interpreted accurately. Does a text critic mark line breaks in a transcription? Does one indicate the presence or absence of the Eusebian apparatus, and if so, how? Smith discusses the software and workflow used by editors of the Greek NT to solve these problems, and she gives a history of computers and textual criticism going back to IBM punch cards in the 1950s.

Other chapters in the volume are well worth reading. J. K. Elliott provides, among other things, a helpful discussion of why it is difficult to arrive at a precise count of manuscripts. Curt Niccum gives a chapter-length summary of some of the ways Ge'ez should not be cited to support Greek readings. Thomas J. Kraus explains why the Gregory-Aland numbers 0152 and 0153 are no longer used to refer to Greek NT manuscripts in his chapter on non-traditional witnesses, "Ostraca and Talismans." Peter Gurry sheds some light on Westcott and Hort's edition of the Greek NT through their unpublished correspondence. Other contributors are Juan Hernández Jr., Martin Karrer, Jennifer Wright Knust, Stanley E. Porter, Gregory Peter Fewster, Jacob W. Peterson, H. A. G. Houghton, Tommy Wasserman, Jill Unkel, D. C. Parker, Klaus Wachtel, and Annette Hüffmeier.

In all, *The Future of New Testament Textual Scholarship* is an informative book that delivers not only what its title implies but also provides helpful insight into the discipline's past. Though the individual essays do not readily form a cohesive whole, each one is well written and edited. The volume includes contributions from some of the best-known scholars in the guild today and is a necessary addition to libraries whose ranges of topics include textual criticism of the NT. Garrick Allen is not

only to be commended for organizing such a significant conference but also for seeing its many important papers to publication.

Elijah Hixson
Tyndale House, Cambridge, UK

Four Ministries, One Jesus: Exploring Your Vocation with the Four Gospels. By Richard A. Burridge. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019, xviii + 221 pp., $24.00 paper.

Richard Burridge is Dean of King's College London and Professor of Biblical Interpretation. He is perhaps best known in the academic world for his writings on the genre of the Gospels as Christian *bioi*, or Greco-Roman biographies (*What Are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography* [3rd ed.; Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018]), and on the distinct theological perspectives of the four Gospel writers (*Four Gospels, One Jesus? A Symbolic Reading* [2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994]). In the latter, Burridge begins from the image of the four living creatures in Ezekiel and Revelation—especially as depicted in the artwork found in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*—in order to portray the four Gospels, respectively, as a lion (Mark), a human being (Matthew), an ox (Luke), and an eagle (John). The present work takes up the same imagery but uses it to associate each Gospel with a particular Christian ministry or discipline. Matthew, who presents Jesus as a great Moses-like teacher, is used to symbolize the teaching discipline. Luke, with his portrayal of the compassionate and inclusive Jesus, represents pastoral care. Mark, whose narrative is dominated by the shadow of the cross, signifies the pastor's ministry in sacrifice and suffering. Finally, John, with his exalted Christology bringing together the human and the divine, symbolizes the minister's role in the divine life of prayer.

Following an introduction ("Four Portraits of Jesus' Mission and Ministry"), the book is divided into four parts, one for each Gospel: "Part I: Matthew—Teaching Good News"; "Part II: Luke—Pastoral Care"; "Part III: Mark—Suffering the Way of the Cross"; and "Part IV: John—Praying the Divine Life." Each part is then divided into five chapters, which follow a similar framework: chapter 1 of each part is narrative theology, the Gospel's portrayal of Jesus in that particular ministry role; chapter 2 introduces that particular ministry with reference to *selection for ministry*; chapter 3 is the ministry as described and affirmed *in the ordination service*; chapter 4 is the ministry *in the context of your ministry*; and chapter 5 includes guidelines on how that ministry can be *sustained throughout life*. Rather than summarizing all twenty chapters, I will provide brief examples of how the five-chapter themes are developed in the four parts.

In chapter 1 for Matthew's Gospel, Burridge shows how Matthew portrays Jesus as a supreme teacher, a new Moses who delivers mountaintop revelations (beginning with the Sermon on the Mount) and whose five discourses recall the five books of Moses. In the first chapter for Luke's Gospel, Burridge introduces the portrait of Jesus in Luke's Gospel as one who associates especially with the poor, the vulnerable, and the marginalized. This fits well with the *Lindisfarne Gospels'* depiction of the Third Gospel as an ox, a beast of burden in the service of others.

The Jesus of Mark's Gospel (part 3) is engaged in a cosmic struggle between good and evil, God and Satan. His death in Jerusalem seems by human standards to be a tragedy, but paradoxically turns out to be God's purpose in bringing salvation. John's Jesus (part 4) is all that an eagle is "high-flying, far-seeing, fierce in conflict, yet tenderly caring" (p. 128).

The second chapter in each of the four parts of the book concerns the criteria for the ordinand's selection. For part 1 (teaching; Matthew), for example, Burridge stresses the need for the ordinand to have not only knowledge of the Christian faith, but also the ability to live out that knowledge in real life and the desire to communicate that knowledge to others. In part 2 (pastoral ministry; Luke), the second chapter stresses the high demands on the minister to care for the most vulnerable members of society, to reach out across traditional dividing lines of faith and ethnicity, and to live a life of authenticity without hypocrisy. Part 3 (suffering; Mark) stresses the need not only to be patient and faithful through trials, but also to be "able to face change and pressure in a flexible and balanced way" (p. 101). In part 4, John's Gospel is drawn upon to encourage the ordinand to "'abide' in the divine glory shared between the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit" (p. 149).

The third chapter in each of the four parts is the most specific of the five chapters, providing practical guidance for the ordination service itself. The fourth chapter for each part takes themes from each respective Gospel and connects them to the daily life of the minister. For example, in part 1, Burridge discusses the high privilege and responsibility of the teacher's task. He also points to three levels of teaching in Jesus's ministry—to the crowds, to the disciples, and to individuals—to illustrate the multi-faceted roles of teaching in a minister's life.

The fifth chapter in each of the four parts concerns sustaining or persevering in that discipline or ministry. Here Burridge discusses topics such as the need to take time to pray, to read and reflect (pp. 41–42), to live a life of dependence on the Holy Spirit (pp. 83–85), to take sufficient time for rest and rejuvenation (pp. 117–20), to "know yourself" (p. 162), and to keep a spiritual journal (pp. 165–66).

The book concludes with four appendices and an index. The appendices include: (1) a list of examples of biblical calls to ministry; (2) a summary of the processes, competencies, and criteria for selection for ordained ministry (for various denominations); (3) types of liturgies and services of ordination; and (4) further reading, websites, and other resources. Burridge refers to these appendices frequently throughout the book and clearly intends the volume to be a practical and hands-on guidebook for those preparing for ordination.

The book originally arose from a set of four lectures given to ordinands in the Anglican Church at an ordination retreat for the Diocese of Peterborough in England. This setting is evident in the book's style, which is both practical and personal. Burridge writes in the second person, directly addressing the ordinand with words of guidance and encouragement. He also writes in a light, conversational style, as though personally addressing a small group of friends.

Burridge seeks to make the book useful not only for his own Anglican tradition, but for a variety of denominations, frequently quoting not only from the Theological Education for the Anglican Communion (TEAC), but also the criteria and

competencies from the United Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, the Disciples of Christ, and other denominations. As noted above, one of the four appendices provides a list of criteria and competencies for a variety of denominations and traditions.

There is much to commend here. The book is chock full of sound advice and good counsel from a wise and experienced practitioner. Anyone in Christian ministry would benefit greatly from reading it.

Two small areas of criticism I could mention. First, the organizational structure results in a fair measure of redundancy and arbitrary arrangement. Four of the chapters in each part, dealing respectively with selection, ordination service, ministry, and sustaining ministry, overlap quite a bit. I often found myself wondering why a particular topic or heading was where it was (and how to find it if I came back to the book!).

A second minor criticism is that the *Lindisfarne* depiction of the Gospels, which Burridge returns to again and again, does not seem to me as useful or heuristic as he suggests. For one thing, the identifications are quite arbitrary and different writers throughout history have associated the various living creatures with different Gospels. Mark, for example, could be associated not only with the lion with wings, but with the ox (since Jesus is the portrayed in Mark as a servant and as a sacrifice for sins; oxen are both beasts of burden and sacrificial animals), or as the human being (since Mark has the most down-to-earth and human portrayal of Jesus in the Gospels). Similarly, Matthew could be associated not only with the human figure, but with the lion (since Jesus is portrayed as the royal-Davidic Messiah in Matthew; cf. Gen. 49:9) or with the eagle (another symbol of royalty). Some of Burridge's identifications related to the *Lindesfarne* depictions also seemed to me quite odd and arbitrary. For example, he claims that Luke's writing style is much like the ox, an animal that "puts one foot in front of another rather sedately" (p. 54). Similarly, Mark's oddities make the reader uncomfortable, just as a lion makes people uncomfortable (pp. 91–92).

These, however, are small criticisms concerning a book that is not only full of wisdom but that also builds a much-needed bridge between the church and the academy.

Mark L. Strauss
Bethel Seminary, St. Paul, MN; San Diego, CA

Matthew. By Jeannine K. Brown and Kyle Roberts. Two Horizons NT Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018, xiii + 575 pp., $38.00 paper.

The purpose of the Two Horizons series is theological exegesis and reflection. Commentaries in this series seek to bridge the gap between biblical studies and systematic theology with paragraph-by-paragraph theologically focused engagement with the biblical text. NT scholar Jeannine Brown (Bethel Seminary) and theologian Kyle Roberts (United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities) provide the interdisciplinary approach of this commentary. The authors rightly assume that Mat-

thew's purposes are as much theological as they are historical and literary. A section-by-section commentary (roughly 260 pages) takes up the first half of the book. Following the commentary proper, a section on thinking theologically with Matthew engages such topics as kingdom, Christology, the Holy Spirit, and discipleship. The final section of the book consists of constructive theological engagement in which Matthew's teaching is connected to current issues.

The commentary section of the book provides a fine overview of Matthew's flow of thought, highlighted by discussion of Matthew's use of the OT. However, at times (e.g. the use of Isa 7:14 in Matt 1:22) readers may wish for more detailed discussion of Matthew's hermeneutic in relation to the original meaning of the OT citation. Through its section-by-section synthesis of Matthew's OT-based thought, the commentary presents a fine biblical theology of Matthew. Treatment of ancient sources and current exegetical debates are limited in scope, but more detailed discussions on such issues are readily available in more lengthy treatments of Matthew.

The second section of the book presents Matthew's theology from the standpoint of a conversation between biblical studies and theological studies (pp. 267–68; cf. p. 10). Although it takes its cue from Matthew's theological interests, this conversation is not viewed as "unidirectional," with exegesis leading to theology leading to praxis. Instead, these disciplines are engaged as "interpenetrating," characterized by mutual respect and curiosity rather than epistemic hierarchy. The authors intend to supply readers with an example of doing theology *with* Matthew more than a complete theology *of* Matthew.

The third and final section of the book aims at constructive theological engagement, which is described as bringing contemporary interests, methods, and concerns to bear on Matthew (p. 381). The section begins with a chapter on Matthew's distinctive contribution to the canon. Additional chapters engage current readings of Matthew, including pastoral, feminist, political, and Jewish readings. It is especially commendable that the final chapter of this section deals with Matthew and Judaism, more particularly with reading Judaism ethically in a post-holocaust era.

It is intriguing that an evangelical female NT scholar teamed up with a progressive male public theologian in writing this volume. Brown and Roberts enjoyed a collegial relationship before undertaking this project and taught a "Matthew for Theology" course together while writing it. Brown wrote the commentary section, and as would be expected, her exegetical perspectives in the commentary proper are conservative. Brown and Roberts wrote the other two sections of the book together in what they describe as a happy and productive collaborative effort (pp. 3–10). For the most part, Brown and Roberts write with one voice, but occasionally they identify their differing individual views. A case in point here is their treatment of Jesus's anguished prayer in Matt 27:46 (pp. 370–72). Both authors wish to see greater unity between Jesus and the Father in the "cry of dereliction" than many interpreters do. Brown proposes that God is not absent from Jesus, and Roberts, following Moltmann, affirms a sort of patripassionism. This discussion of Matt 27:46 anticipates the later discussion of Matthew's presentation of Christ's atonement (pp. 374–78). Here the authors emphasize problems with the penal substitu-

tion theory, accepting the critique that the theory divides the Godhead and amounts to "divine child abuse." They prefer a theory in which Jesus dies as the representative of a new community that participates in the life of the kingdom of God.

As the authors note (p. 382–83), they engage a diverse array of current voices in the third section. They distinguish their hermeneutic of sympathy from the hermeneutic of suspicion utilized by many of their conversation partners (pp. 409–12). This means they wish to read Matthew "with the grain" and privilege Matthew's thought as canonical Scripture over current thinking. Nevertheless, and perhaps inevitably, the treatment of current issues in the last section appears to be more progressive than the exegetical work found in the first section. The remainder of this review will address a few aspects of the last two sections of the book.

As is often noted, Matthew stresses Jesus's teaching about a radically egalitarian community (see e.g. Matt 18:1–5; 19:23–26; 20:25–28; 23:8–12). In their chapter on Matthew's contribution to NT theology, Brown and Roberts summarize Matthew's egalitarian "values" well (pp. 396–98). There is no doubt that Jesus in Matthew teaches and models the worth of all people and the value of service over status. However, unless we entirely banish the notion of office from the church, some sort of structure or hierarchy is necessary. Any such "hierarchy" must be based on giftedness and functionality, not on false values of greater intrinsic worth or higher socioeconomic status. Brown and Roberts may be extrapolating Matthew's teaching about Christian community into the current complementarian-egalitarian debate in a facile manner. Similarly, they may be a bit too eager to apply their understanding of Matthew's teaching about the Trinity to this current debate (398–404). In any event, as a recent publication indicates (Michael Bird and Scott Harrower, eds., *Trinity Without Hierarchy* [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2019]), the debate over the Trinity as a model for male-female relationships in marriage and church ministry continues.

"Reading Matthew Politically" (pp. 485–505) is another helpful chapter, yet one that will be controversial in the minds of some. Brown and Roberts serve their readers well with their discussions of the temple tax passage (Matt 22:15–22), the political realities in and behind Matthew's narrative, and Jesus's political actions in Matthew. Yet to identify Jesus as a refugee (p. 502) seems to equate or fuse ancient and current horizons simplistically. Immigration is a complex problem today, and Matthew's teaching about hospitality (e.g. Matt 25:31–46) is certainly crucial for Christians who wish to engage the problem. Although the authors acknowledge that their lack of expertise in immigration policy leaves them with no specific Matthew-based suggestions to solve the problem, they nonetheless grab for low-hanging politically-correct fruit when they call for the rejection of "exclusionary suggestions" such as building walls and excluding entire religious or ethnic groups. Sincere followers of Jesus have different views on politically-charged matters like these, and the authors would better serve their readers with a more nuanced discussion of the relationship between the Christian personal ethic of hospitality and the duties of political leaders to maintain the safety and stability of their nations.

It is commendable that Brown and Roberts conclude the book with a chapter on "Reading Judaism Ethically in the Post-Holocaust Era." The choice of this topic

to conclude the book is quite appropriate, given Matthew's Jewish emphasis. It is also not a surprising choice, given the careful and nuanced way in which Brown addresses key Matthean texts on Judaism (e.g. 5:17–48; 21:43; 23:37–39; 27:25) in her commentary section. In this final chapter the authors interact with Jewish scholars such as Amy-Jill Levine and Daniel Boyarin as they focus on Matthew's portrayal of purity issues, the Jewish leaders, and responsibility for the death of Jesus. Their use of the model of "differentiation" (frankly acknowledging distinctions while pursuing conversations and relationships) is a helpful approach to this issue. I do wish, however, that the authors had responded directly to Levine's statement to the effect that to say "yes" to Jesus is to say that Judaism is not right or true (cited on p. 522).

To sum up, Brown and Roberts provide a very helpful overview and synthesis of the first Gospel. For this alone the book merits wide use. The book's engagement with current thinking in the third section provides much added value and distinguishes this commentary from most of the other scholarly commentaries on Matthew available today. It is a relatively small matter that I or other readers will not always agree with the particulars of Brown and Roberts's engagement with current issues. What does matter is that the authors' approach in such engagement should encourage their readers to do likewise, whether those readers agree with the authors' conclusions or not.

David L. Turner
Grand Rapids Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, MI
Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, MI

The Appropriation of the Passover in Luke-Acts. By Dany Christopher. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/476. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018, xiv + 253 pp., €69.00.

"Exegetical maximalism"—the practice of deriving great significance from limited evidence—is encountered all throughout biblical studies but seems particularly endemic to the study of Luke-Acts. There is perhaps something about the grandeur and artistry of Luke's project—from shepherds to shipwrecks; from prologues to parallels—that beckons scholars of all stripes to come and find subtle treasures buried deep in his words.

The book under review is in this tradition. A revised doctoral dissertation completed at the University of Durham in 2016, Dany Christopher's *The Appropriation of the Passover in Luke-Acts* invites the reader to come and mine the depths of Luke's double work for references to the Passover, thereby recognizing it as a subtle yet significant Lukan theme. Christopher argues that Luke alludes to the Passover not haphazardly but at strategic points throughout his narrative, deftly tying together the themes of Passover, passion, and parousia. Recognizing this influence promises no small reward. According to Christopher, the Passover theme is a major means by which Luke expresses his theology of the death of Christ—a point at which Luke's theology, so some have claimed, is deficient. Although Christopher

makes, on the whole, a reasonable case for at least some of the influence he proposes, the book leaves unaddressed some critical hermeneutical and methodological questions.

The book comprises seven chapters. In the introductory chapter, Christopher introduces the thesis and reviews the scant literature on the topic. He also clarifies the scope: the target is references to the Passover meal and rescue story in Exodus 12–13, as opposed to the exodus more broadly. The proposed methodology is standard narrative criticism augmented by redaction (or "composition") criticism, which draws insights from comparisons with Mark and Matthew. A concluding section on the criteria for detecting literary allusions could have been strengthened by more interaction with recent criticism of such criteria.

Chapter 2 explores the Passover theme in the OT (using the LXX) and selected Second Temple Jewish literature (including Jubilees, Ezekiel the Tragedian, Pseudo-Philo's *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum*, the Wisdom of Solomon, Josephus, and Philo). Christopher points out three elements of the Passover that are repeatedly emphasized throughout these sources: time markers (such as mention of "Passover," or the date, or "that night"), mention of the Paschal victim and the significance of its blood, and the Passover meal. Christopher will argue that these three elements also show up in Luke's use of the theme. The survey is comprehensive, and the analysis is sound. (Qumran literature is not included in the analysis; a note explaining this omission would have been welcome.)

Chapters 3–6 are the exegetical heart of the book. Chapter 3, focusing on the Last Supper, is key to Christopher's argument, since this is the place where the presence of Passover is the clearest. Christopher notes that the three Passover features found throughout the Second Temple literature are present in Luke as well: time markers, details surrounding Jesus's betrayal and death, and the motif of sacrifice, all of which point to the significance to Jesus's death as a Paschal sacrifice. Overall, I agree with Christopher's analysis even if inevitably (here and elsewhere in the book) some of the proposed links are stronger than others.

In chapter 4, Christopher looks for Passover links in Luke's infancy narrative (Luke 1–2)—not just in the account of Jesus at age twelve in Jerusalem (during the Passover), but also in Zechariah's hymn and the birth narrative of Jesus. While I agree with Christopher that the account of Jesus at age twelve constitutes a sufficiently clear link to the Passover (which also points to Jesus's death), some of the other evidence (e.g. reference to "firstborn" and shepherds "watching" flocks "by night") seems tenuous (and this is coming from a confirmed exegetical maximalist!). An additional problem is that neither here nor elsewhere does Christopher grapple with the question of Luke's fidelity either to his sources or historical events. In other words, whether or not there are references to the Passover in these passages, Luke may have written what he did not out of an attempt to allude to the Passover but simply because his sources testified that events happened that way.

In chapter 5, Christopher attempts to demonstrate connections between the Passover and the *parousia* by looking at two passages: Luke 12:35–40 (the faithful servants and the returning master) and Luke 17 (the signs of the coming kingdom). The payoff in making the connection is that, if true, Luke uses the parousia to tie

together the themes of the *parousia*, the Passover, and the passion of Jesus, further elucidating the meaning of Christ's death. Here as elsewhere, Christopher places great weight on specific words and phrases (such as περιζώννυμι ["gird the loins"; Luke 12:35] and παρατήρησις ["observation"; Luke 17:20]) and their potential tie-in to the Exodus.

In chapter 6, Christopher turns to Acts. After beginning with observations on the well-known parallels between the "passions" of Jesus, Peter, and Paul, Christopher mines Peter's near-death in Acts 12 and Paul's in Acts 27 for allusions to the Passover. In Peter's case, this comes in the form of explicit time markers (e.g. Acts 12:3–4) as well as other, subtler links. Concerning Acts 27, Christopher traces a Passover allusion through the motif of rescue on the fourteenth day (Acts 27:27, 33) and Paul's Eucharistic-like meal (Acts 27:33–36). In addition, for both of these episodes, the historical question once again intrudes: If the time markers mentioned (Passover, fourteenth day/night) are when the events occurred, or were reported to have occurred, was not Luke constrained by the dictates of his discipline to report them as he did? Let us recall that for one of these (the sea journey), Luke is present in the story as an eyewitness.

In the concluding chapter, Christopher summarizes the findings and emphasizes the theological payoff of the study: "Whenever Passover is present, two other themes are not far behind—the passion of Jesus and the message of salvation" (p. 208).

Christopher has certainly aimed a spotlight on an underrecognized Lukan theme. The cumulative weight of the evidence indicates that Passover is more important to Luke than previously recognized. Christopher's exegesis is strong and handled well throughout, even if one disagrees with some of the specific conclusions. Furthermore, the theological payoff is considerable: If correct, the book makes a valuable contribution to Lukan theology concerning salvation and the death of Christ.

Naturally, one's assessment of Christopher's case will depend to a large degree on the assessment of the exegesis at each point along the way. As already indicated, in my view some of the Passover connections are clear, while others simply are too subtle. Yet beyond the point-for-point exegesis, a maximalist approach such as this raises some crucial hermeneutical and methodological questions worthy of further exploration. The first of these, the question of history and Luke's fidelity to his sources, has already been raised.

The other—and far knottier—question concerns the issue of subtlety. How can this be undergirded methodologically? This issue simply cannot be ignored so long as scholars continue to produce maximalist arguments. While this issue cannot be adequately be addressed in a brief review, I propose two suggestions. First, scholars forwarding subtle arguments might attempt to make, as it were, a clear case for Lukan subtlety: to present evidence for the clearest instances, backed by scholarly consensus, where Luke seems to be subtly interacting with the OT or other sources. Second, help might come from a philosophical construct such as Bayes's Theorem that serves to establish some "prior probabilities" for what we

might be led to expect in Luke. However, whatever solution is employed to ground subtlety methodologically, the effort would certainly be salutary.

No doubt the venerable tradition of "exegetical maximalism" in Lukan studies will continue. A profitable direction such studies might take would be for scholars at every level to grapple seriously with the hermeneutical and methodological issues raised by handling subtle evidence, and to at least make an attempt toward grounding subtlety methodologically. By so doing, we can be sure that the treasures we find are the genuine article.

Mark S. Giacobbe
Citylight Church, Philadelphia, PA

Configuring Nicodemus: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Complex Characterization. By Michael R. Whitenton. Library of NT Studies 549. London: T&T Clark, 2019, xii + 170 pp., $114.00.

There can be an assumption in modern biblical studies that bases interpretation primary at the level of the text, that is, at the level of written words. Michael Whitenton suggests that, since Werner Kelber's *The Oral and the Written Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), "a tide change is perceptible" in approaches to early Christian literature (p. 3). Since early Christian literature, including the Gospel of John, was arguably "written to be delivered orally before a largely illiterate audience," there is work to be done on "the effects of the oral-aural exchange between a lector/performer and his or her audience members" (p. 3). This is the nature of the contribution Whitenton intends to make in his book, with a specific examination of character and characterization. In his own words, "the field is white for the harvest of new insights and approaches that blend ancient rhetoric and poetics and research from the contemporary cognitive sciences regarding the way the minds of ancient hearers worked. The payoff would be an [interdisciplinary] approach to characterization true to ancient theory and practice, as well as contemporary theoretical and empirical research" (p. 4). Whitenton's approach is to examine how characters in John were "perceived through hearing in a performance" rather than "studying a written manuscript" (p. 8). More pointedly, this study's focus "has more to do with an audience's experience of a narrative than an author's intention in constructing it" (p. 8). Before an assessment of Whitenton's approach and its results, a summary of the book is in order.

After an introductory chapter (summarized in the paragraph above), chapter 2 examines "Characterization, Cognition, and Ancient Listeners." This chapter provides the methodological foundation upon which the rest of the study and its analyses are grounded. Whitenton begins by arguing for the relevance and usefulness of the cognitive sciences. His argument is based on the following: "fundamental cognitive processing has changed very little over the past several millennia because it is based primarily in very ancient, biologically (rather than culturally) constrained processing" (p. 11). This "universal hardwiring" allows modern readers to understand more effectively the inferences and judgments of first-century Mediterranean audi-

ence members. The interpretive payoff of this interdisciplinary approach is an understanding of how readers form "bonds of identification with characters" (p. 53), which serves to advance the study of ancient characterization.

Chapter 3 explores "Relevant Prototypical Characters," that is, character types and schemata that provide heuristic lenses for reading and interpreting Nicodemus as a character. After examining the portrayal of Nicodemus in John (chaps. 3, 7, and 19), Whitenton examines Theophrastus's *On Characters* and compares overlapping character "stocks" or prototypes. Whitenton proposes that two types match the characterization of Nicodemus: the obtuse man and the dissembler. The obtuse man is the idiot, "surprisingly dense and stupid. When one would expect him to understand he does not; he disappoints even the simplest expectations" (p. 61). The dissembler is the trickster, "He conceals his true feelings … is evasive, noncommittal, and … deceiving" (p. 66). These prototypes become for Whitenton "a framework for characterization based on the way people understand others and … potential characters" (p. 77), and they assist an interpretation of Nicodemus as a character.

Chapter 4 returns to the Fourth Gospel, with the intention of "Configuring Nicodemus in John 3:1–21." After summarizing both the context of Nicodemus in John 3, but also the ambiguous nature of the character of Nicodemus, Whitenton examines the prototypes of the obtuse (fool) and the dissembler as a means of reconciling the often-interpreted ambiguity. In the end, Whitenton proposes that the dissembler is the most likely match, not merely because of stock characteristics, but also because of his negatively perceived affiliation with the Jewish religious leadership. As Whitenton summarizes the analysis, "Despite his seemingly genuine praise and claims to misunderstanding, Nicodemus seems up to something else" (pp. 102–3). Through this lens, Nicodemus is not best interpreted as misunderstanding Jesus but as rejecting him.

Chapter 5 continues with an examination of Nicodemus, specifically "Stability and Development in Nicodemus's Character in John 7 and 19." Whitenton argues for a character development in John 7 in which Nicodemus is to be viewed more positively; even more, "he now seems to be dissembling on Jesus's behalf" (p. 113). This is made more explicit in John 19, where "Nicodemus's final appearance serves as something of his coming out as a Johannine disciple and provides a model for certain audience members to follow" (p. 115). Based upon Whitenton's analysis, Nicodemus has moved from noncommittal to a believer, or from a deceiver to a disciple.

Chapter 6 offers a summarization of the "Rhetorical Function(s) of Nicodemus," specifically considering the "rhetorical pressures exerted by the dynamic characterization of Nicodemus" (p. 119). Whitenton suggests that the audience identification with Nicodemus, at least initially in John 3, would have involved humor. As a rhetorical function, humor "acts as an antidote to resistance and feelings of hostility. Laughing makes people feel better and mutes their impulse to provide counterarguments thus increasing their openness to persuasion" (p. 135). The humorous impulse in John 3:1–10 increases the rhetorical effectiveness of the message in John 3:11–21 in the response of the reader.

Finally, chapter 7 offers a short "Conclusion," in which Whitenton lays out the intentions of his monograph. One is methodological in nature: "to carve out a place at the table for audience-oriented, cognitively based, and rhetorically sensitive readings of characters" (p. 137). A second is interpretive in nature: to offer a fruitful examination and reading of the character of Nicodemus in the Gospel of John. A third and final one is pedagogical: "In this book, I have argued that, in our fervor to devise a set of 'rules' for reading narratives, we have lost the dynamic nature of characterization," that is, readers have failed to read as "actual readers" (p. 138). Regarding this third intention, Whitenton hopes his students, as well as the actual readers of his book, become better readers of readers.

Michael Whitenton's *Configuring Nicodemus* has several features to commend it: a wonderful example of an interdisciplinary approach in biblical studies, an impressive exploration in the study of narrative characters and characterization, and a creative evaluation and interpretation of the Nicodemus passages in the Gospel of John. Any "actual reader" of this book gains a healthy education in contemporary approaches to character studies, as well as in the application of the cognitive sciences to a biblical text. In general, several helpful insights are given to the Nicodemus texts that are useful for any interpreter of the Gospel of John, even if that interpreter is unconvinced by the methodological preferences applied.

Without denying the above commendations, a few concerns can also be raised. First, the benefits of an interdisciplinary approach like this seem to be outweighed by the risks. Not only does this approach require the proper application of one (foreign) discipline to another, but it assumes a beneficial relationship in practice. At the level of method, the innovation the cognitive sciences might seem to yield for interpreting the character of Nicodemus, drawing reliable data from which to make determinations of "actual readers"—and not even the actual text—is more difficult than this study seems willing to assume. One even wonders how useful cognitive studies really are for the study of the Bible. Whitenton admits this exact concern himself in the second sentence of his introduction to his method in chapter 2: "some may question the utility of cognitive research" (p. 11). For me, his one-sentence response is simply not convincing. At the level of practice, I was unconvinced that the prototypes of "the obtuse" or "the dissembler" provided an actual harvest of insights. In brief, the parallels were not nearly as parallel or productive as suggested. In the end, the Nicodemus character appeared more useful for the cognitive sciences than the other way around.

Second, it is worth asking which disciplines are most suitable to survey and explain the biblical text. To be fair, such a question might be asking a more fundamental question about the nature (genre) of Scripture and the most appropriate ways its contents and subject matter should be handled. Can the cognitive sciences and their insights into how ancients processed information properly handle, let alone improve upon, what the theological "sciences" have already established to be most useful for interpretation? This concern need not lead to some form of naïve biblicism or deny that the text needs to be read afresh for every generation and with all the common-grace tools available. Yet it is right and proper to ask how the tools are properly aligned to the trade and its tasks. I am aware that this concern is

loaded with "confessional" assumptions, even preferences, but I worry that too often, at least in the academy, confessional bents are either minimized or fervently denied. A dissertation may be rewarded for such an approach, but a disciple should not be.

Even with these concerns, students interested in characterization, in interdisciplinary approaches to the Bible, or simply in fresh thinking about the Johannine account of Nicodemus, will find much of benefit in Whitenton's *Configuring Nicodemus*.

Edward W. Klink III
Hope Evangelical Free Church, Roscoe, IL

Reading Acts. By Joshua W. Jipp. Cascade Companions. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2018, vii + 160 pp., $17.60 paper.

Joshua Jipp, Associate Professor of NT at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, has written this book as one of the latest entries in the Cascade Companions series. The slim volume serves as an accessible introduction to the book of Acts. Because of its purpose, the survey includes "Questions for Further Reflection" at the end of each chapter, but only minimal footnoting. *Reading Acts* could serve as an ideal companion for personal or group study of Acts, or as supplemental reading in an undergraduate survey course.

Jipp adopts Lukan authorship as the working model: "while Lukan authorship of our text is not *certain*, it remains the most likely and plausible suggestion" (p. 2). Concerning genre, the book of Acts "is certainly a story or narrative account with all of the expected literary features such as plot, characters, setting, tension, and narrative resolution" (p. 3). At the same time, Acts narrates historical events, so that it may rightly be considered "some version of ancient historiography" (p. 7); "Luke has shaped his sources and traditions into a clear, coherent, and entertaining historical account of the creation and expansion of the early church" (p. 7).

The book of Acts provides a window into Jesus's continuing work (Acts 1:1) from his heavenly location, through his chosen apostles and witnesses (p. 17). God expands the early mission into new territories and among new people groups. He also protects the church from both external and internal enemies. God's "sovereign plan for the church cannot be stopped" (p. 19). A "hermeneutical transformation" has taken hold within the apostles through the promised Spirit, so that they understand Jesus's death and resurrection, the Hebrew Scriptures, and God's sovereign plan in a new light (pp. 26–28). Divine activity, however, remains "often ambiguous, and, hence, mandates human interpretation" (p. 24; cf. p. 79).

While the church does not replace Israel, the twelve apostles (including Matthias) "constitute the nucleus of the new leadership over Israel as God's people" (p. 40). The Spirit confirms the authority of the apostolic witnesses through signs and wonders (pp. 60, 70). Most Israelites remained in unbelief, but a fairly large remnant turned to the Messiah in repentance (p. 59). Jipp highlights the mass conversions of Jews within Acts, beginning with the three thousand converts at Pentecost

(Acts 2:41, 47) followed by thousands more in Jerusalem (Acts 4:4; 5:14). Jipp estimates that "tens of thousands" of Jews may have become Jesus followers by the time of Acts 21:20 (p. 48). Moreover, he underscores the reference to a "large number" of priests responding in faith (Acts 6:7; p. 61). One could supplement his case by adding the reference to a cohort of "believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees" (Acts 15:5).

In Jipp's view, the resurrected and ascended Jesus is enthroned in a position of heavenly rule "from where the messianic king reigns over his people, judges his enemies, and extends the sphere of his dominion" (p. 43). Jipp views Jesus's exaltation as "the fulfillment of God's promises to David to seat one of his descendants upon his throne" (p. 44). James's speech in Acts 15, with its inclusion of "rebuilding" and "restoring" language, thus reflects the fulfillment of promises made to David (p. 84). In Jipp's understanding, the "reality that attends [Jesus's] life, death, and resurrection is named the Kingdom of God" (p. 99). The Spirit's present work reflects a foretaste of "the times of refreshment," the anticipated coming "time of universal restoration" (Acts 3:19–21). Whether one agrees with Jipp's interpretations of the kingdom and the Davidic promises, one can heartily echo that "Jesus is Lord of all" (Acts 10:36; p. 81). The resurrected and exalted Christ rightly demands that all turn to him (p. 101). However, the book becomes slightly redundant in its discussions of the perceived links between the Spirit, the kingdom, and the prophesied Messianic blessings (cf. pp. 42–47, 53–56).

In chapter 6, Jipp turns his attention to Paul's ministry. He interprets the Damascus road experience not so much as a conversion but as "a call to mission" (p. 86). Jipp then summarizes "primary characteristics of Paul's missionary journeys" (p. 87). He reminds readers that Paul is portrayed not merely as a church planter but also as "a pastoral model" with continued concern for his churches (p. 102). Moreover, Paul is depicted as "a faithful, Torah-observant Jew" (p. 114). The Jews within the final chapters of Acts, however, believed that Paul was opposed to the Jewish people, Law, and temple. Chapters 21–26 thus contrast two distinctive ways of defining faithful Judaism—one centered upon the Torah and the temple, and the other focused upon the resurrected Messiah (p. 116).

The content of the volume seems somewhat unbalanced, relative to the material in the Book of Acts itself. Pages 31–105 cover Acts 1–12 (and 15), while pages 106–132 discuss Acts 13–28. In other words, the study favors the first half of Acts. As a result, and as reflected in the "Scripture Index" in the back of the volume, chapters 23–25 of Acts are given cursory attention. Rather than summarizing the three apologetic speeches in chapters 22–26, Jipp summarizes the major themes (p. 117). He explains that the three speeches reflect the characterization of Paul as a prophet (p. 124). Paul insisted that he believed the Hebrew Scriptures and that his opponents were the ones who did not recognize the messianic referent in Jesus of Nazareth. Jipp does not develop the apologetic nature of the Pauline speeches, as a defense not only of Paul's personal ministry but also of the nascent Christian movement vis-à-vis the Roman governing authorities. Jipp does insist that the acceptance of the Christian message within Acts was not a spiritual reality alone, but rather accompanied "real political and economic consequences" (p. 97).

Jipp's overview naturally closes with the final two chapters of Acts. He discusses how chapter 27 is dominated by "nautical imagery," which appeared elsewhere in sea travel adventures within Greek-Hellenistic literature (p. 123). Jipp interprets the language of the sailors being "saved" through shipwreck not merely as a physical rescue but as a metaphor for Gentile salvation (p. 125). The episode thereby functions as a confirmation that Paul was "an agent of God's salvation" (p. 125). Finally, chapter 28 ends with "elements of both narratival openness and closure" (p. 131).

A brief postscript considers the basic elements of a theological reading of Acts, focusing on the essential identity and core practices of the church (p. 134). The section on "the practices of the church" describes Christian witness, hospitality, and communal sharing (pp. 138–39). Baptism briefly surfaces (p. 137), but the breaking of bread and prayer do not appear. Prayer, however, is manifestly a repeated theme within the book of Acts. The vocabulary of "pray/prayer" appears more times in Acts than in any other NT book, followed closely by the Gospel of Luke. For Luke, prayer was one of the integral "practices of the church."

Jipp's study abounds with interesting insights. For example, Stephen implicitly charges the Jewish leaders of turning the Jerusalem temple into an idol (p. 64). Stephen describes the temple as something "made with human hands" (Acts 7:48), a phrase repeatedly used of idols in the Hebrew Scriptures (p. 64). When Stephen perceived Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father, he saw "the glory of God," precisely the glorious phenomenon that Jews looked for in the temple in Jerusalem (p. 65). Moreover, while many Jews anticipated all the nations *streaming to* Jerusalem to worship, Acts portrays the gospel *going forth from* Jerusalem to all nations (p. 69).

In the past, Jipp has done extensive research on the theme of hospitality in Acts, and his expertise illuminates this study. Several of the episodes in Acts reflect the Greek tradition of "theoxeny," in which households or towns welcome humble strangers who turn out to be divine beings in disguise (p. 127). While the reader might expect the Maltese natives to treat the shipwrecked passengers and crew inhospitably (Acts 28), they prove to be "idyllic hosts" who show "extraordinary hospitality" (pp. 127, 129–30). By contrast, Paul's enemies are portrayed as "rabidly inhospitable" (p. 92). Thus the "inhospitable synagogue" is contrasted with the "hospitable household," resulting in expressions of household salvation (p. 93). In Acts, "the house, not the synagogue, has become the locale for the reception of the Christian message and base of Paul's mission" (p. 92).

According to Jipp, Acts is the "canonical glue" that joins "the Old Testament and the New Testament, Jesus and his apostles, Peter and Paul, and the Gospels with the Apostolic Letters" (p. 10). Jipp mentions that Peter and Paul represent "the church's apostolic foundation" and "the central characters and agents upon whom the church was built" (p. 1). Nevertheless, his study could have related more of the paralleled characterization of the two apostles within Acts. This apostolic correspondence is a Lukan means of depicting Paul's Gentile mission as on par with the Jewish outreach of the Jerusalem apostles. Furthermore, Jipp never fully addresses the selective nature of Acts—why Peter receives full billing, yet apostles such as Andrew, Bartholomew, Matthew, and Thomas disappear from the "Acts of

the *Apostles*" after 1:13. Nevertheless, such lacunae are understandable in view of the condensed nature of the survey. Notwithstanding the limitations, Jipp manages to pack a powerful punch within this bantam weight volume.

Paul Hartog
Faith Baptist Theological Seminary, Ankeny, IA

Illiterate Apostles: Uneducated Early Christians and the Literates Who Loved Them. By Allen R. Hilton. Library of NT Studies 541. London: T&T Clark, 2018, 181 pp., $39.95 paper.

Allen Hilton is former Assistant Professor of NT at Yale Divinity School. Currently, he serves as a consulting theologian at Pinnacle Presbyterian Church, Scottsdale, AZ. He is the founder and leader of House United, a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing together people from different sides of political, religious, and racial divisions for the common good. The following volume is Hilton's contribution to the ongoing discussion of the literacy of Jesus and his guild. Following on the heels of Chris Keith's studies concerning Jesus's illiteracy (*Jesus' Literacy: Scribal Culture and the Teacher from Galilee* [London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2011] and *Jesus against the Scribal Elite: The Origins of the Conflict* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014]), Hilton turns his attention to the illiteracy of the apostles and their influence in the early church.

To readers of the Gospels and Acts, it is no surprise that a group of lowly fishermen would not know their "letters." This fact is recorded in several places in the NT and reiterated by some of the early church fathers. Hilton does not focus his energy on this aspect of the apostles, though. Instead, Hilton is much more concerned with how, in spite of their illiteracy, the apostles exhibit confidence in the face of adversity and astonish their detractors. This sort of confidence on display is not defined by loud vibrato or perplexing words, but rather, the disciples speak in a way that defies their own illiteracy.

Hilton divides the book into two parts to accomplish his task. In part 1, Hilton turns to the cause of criticism directed toward the apostles. Chapter 1 begins with the acknowledgement that early Christians were illiterate, as were most in the Greco-Roman world at the time. Historically, literacy was assumed among scholars because of the prolific work of Homer and others. With the introduction of the oral model of hearing ancient texts, the paradigm shift began. Scholars began to see that many of the ancient works were written to be heard and not read. This shift prompted a reexamination of literacy rates, which eventually gave way to a new consensus that only 10–20 percent of the populace possessed literacy skills. Yet, if most were illiterate, why were Christians the ones whom the cultural elite chose to criticize?

To explain this situation, Hilton turns in chapter 2 to ancient attitudes towards the illiterate in general and Christians in particular. Through the eyes of Lucian, Galen, Celsus, Caecilius, Justin, and Athenagoras, a picture is painted regarding illiteracy and its main criticisms. In each of these cases, the inabilities of Chris-

tian are noted whether by critique (Lucian, Galen, Celsus, and Caecilius) or defense (Justin and Athenagoras) and their resulting effect on Christianity. From this analysis, it becomes clear that the Christians are not being targeted specifically for their illiteracy, but for their circumventing of the "educational process" dictated by the educated elite. A proper education leads to being able to pontificate on subjects reserved for philosophers. Yet, Christians were speaking on issues of metaphysics, ontology, eschatology, and morality despite their "un-education."

In chapter 3, Hilton details the progression of education in the Greco-Roman world. In this chapter, he is examining what qualifies as "uneducated" and why the disciples may have received the title of ἰδιώτης. When starting an education, one would begin with the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Reading began as the process of memorizing letters, phrases, and eventually sentences. Next, a student would progress to secondary education. During this time, the learner would learn the poets. Through readings of Homer and Virgil, one would begin to grapple with the mechanics of language. In addition to these emphases on language, the student would begin to engage with the greater Greek and Roman culture. Learning maxims and proverbs from the poets and facets of Greek and Roman culture also included a moral component. This inclusion focused on the instilling of virtues. The last segment of the student's education would be honing the skills of speaking, thinking, and living well. This level would be considered the highest levels of the educational rung. One would progress from secondary school to one of three options: a medical apprenticeship, rhetorical school, or one of the philosophical schools. After establishing this educational pattern, Hilton proposes that the accusations against the early Christians were not primarily concerned with their illiteracy, but rather with their "skipping" of steps in the education process. In other words, these Christians have upset the social order by doing things well beyond their education and class. They live moral lives and even pontificate on matters reserved solely for philosophers.

In part 2 of Hilton's study, he moves from the broad analysis of Greco-Roman educational structures and the disciples' place within that structure to a specific analysis of these dynamics in the book of Acts. Hilton's primary text is Acts 4:13–14:

> Then, as they observed the audacity (παρρησίαν) of Peter and John and yet realized (καταλαβόμενοι) that they were illiterate men (ἀγράμματοι) and not appropriately educated for this behavior (καὶ ἰδιῶται), they began to marvel (ἐθαύμαζον) and to recognize that the two had been with Jesus; and seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, the Sanhedrin could offer no refutation.

He begins chapter 4 with an analysis of παρρησία. Hilton concludes from an overview of the term's usage in parallel texts that the word describes courageous and audacious speech in the context of disputes. After defining the term, Hilton explores the social dynamic of παρρησία as a part of Acts 3–5. In chapter 5, Hilton begins to argue for the virtuous nature of παρρησία. To make his case, he offers a reading of Luke's narrative against a philosophical backdrop. By situating the text

in a philosophical framework, the use of παρρησία becomes even more obvious. The uneducated disciples are displaying the "virtual equivalent of courage in the defiant Cynic-Stoic ethos established by early Imperial philosophy" (p. 148). Yet, this time the detractors are not the Roman philosophers, but the Sanhedrin who are assuming the mantle of the educational elite. The disciples' παρρησία is effectively schooling their educated counterparts. This "education" of the apostles is addressed in chapter 6. Hilton argues that the courage of the disciples is "taught" by the power of the Holy Spirit and the example of Jesus. Evidence for the Holy Spirit is replete throughout Luke's twofold narrative (Luke-Acts), but Hilton appeals to the parallel of Luke 20 for evidence of Jesus's example. The texts share several key terms and parallel themes. Luke's mention of the disciples' illiteracy in Acts 4 only elevates the audacity of their "education."

Among the many notable characteristics of this volume, perhaps one of the best features is Hilton's writing style. He is not burdened by the unspoken rule of academia to avoid colorful language. He uses adjectives and adverbs freely and uses them well. Although I am not sure, it appears that the narrative that Hilton tells prompts the use of endnotes. The research is there, but not in a manner that causes the reader to check the notes constantly. Hilton weaves together the stories of ancient education and the disputes of Acts 4. There is even a section of the book in which a fictional character, Sophia, works through her letters, the poets, and the philosophers. By using an inventive and careful style, Hilton produces a very readable monograph that truly flows.

Another enjoyable aspect of the volume is its focus. Hilton centers his inquiry on the dynamics of Acts 4. He provides the proper background on ancient education and records an encyclopedic panorama for understanding the key words in the narrative (ἰδιώτης, παρρησία, and θαυμάζω). The signposting always brings the reader back to Hilton's central thesis even when tangential issues are introduced to round out the main argument. One element of the argument that is less compelling is the appeal to Socrates as a backbone for Luke's philosophical emphases. Given Luke's preference for comparisons/contrasts, it seems fitting that the contrasts between the disciples and Sanhedrin are stark enough without an appeal to Socrates and his detractors. Barring this small reservation, the book is brilliant and convincing. Readers interested in ancient educational models, the "education" of the apostles, and narrative readings of Luke-Acts will find this to be a must-read.

Charles Nathan Ridlehoover
North Raleigh Christian Academy, Raleigh, NC

Preaching Romans: Four Perspectives. Edited by Scot McKnight and Joseph B. Modica. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019, vii + 191 pp., $20.00 paper.

In *Preaching Romans: Four Perspectives*, Scot McKnight and Joseph Modica offer an edited volume of essays that introduces pastors and interested laypersons to the four current Christologically focused interpretive frameworks for understanding Paul's letter to the Romans. The book is divided into two primary parts: the first

half is dedicated to an overview of the four perspectives, while the second half is dedicated to twelve short sermons on Romans, prepared with the various perspectives in mind. As with any edited volume, it is impossible to review each essay; instead, I offer a brief note on the four summarized perspectives, followed by some general comments on the sermons.

Stephen Westerholm offers the summary of the traditional "Lutheran" perspective (or "Reformed" perspective, as it is also referenced in the book). He highlights Paul's emphasis on the "universality of human sinfulness," which thus implicates Jews and Gentiles alike, the "inadequacy of 'good works,'" the atoning work of Christ on the cross as forgiveness for sins, and the redemptive work of Christ as a gift of God through grace by faith. As Westerholm himself admits, most readers will not find a "trace of novelty" in any of his interpretations of Romans. His presentation of the "Lutheran" perspective is nonetheless important, not only as a perspective held by many excellent scholars, but also as a more familiar baseline on which readers can compare and contrast the other three presented.

In addition to editing the book, Scot McKnight offers the essay on the New Perspective on Paul. He helpfully notes the background to the New Perspective, beginning with E. P. Sanders and clarifying the various iterations offered by Wright, Dunn, and others along the way. McKnight traces the New Perspective reading through Romans, all the while helpfully demonstrating where the issues between Jew and Gentile stand just behind the text. Perhaps most helpfully, he points the reader to the social issues that arise as a result of the perspective, particularly those surrounding race, ethnicity, and the reconciliation of humanity. McKnight also highlights several intersections between the New Perspective, these social issues that arise in the text, and how the issues can be incorporated into sermons that impact the listening church.

While many readers will know the Reformed perspective by heart and potentially have some familiarity with the New Perspective, many will be introduced for the first time to the apocalyptic perspective in this book. Though perhaps a bit too theoretical for the lay person at times, Douglas Campbell carefully walks the reader through the nuances of epistemology that stand behind the apocalyptic reading of Paul. In particular, Campbell offers seven "stages" of an "apocalyptic road through Romans," each of which tells the apocalyptic story that informs Paul's understanding of the deliverance brought by the death and resurrection of Christ. Here the reader unfamiliar with the apocalyptic reading will be able to see most clearly just how different this reading is, at least from its "Lutheran" counterpart.

Finally, Michael Gorman lays out the participationist perspective. As with McKnight and Campbell, Gorman traces the scholarly backgrounds to the perspective, beginning with Sanders and Schweitzer, as well as the literary backgrounds, from the OT through Second Temple Judaism. According to Gorman, the participationist perspective is a wholistic one, as it brings together both the soteriological aspects of Paul's words in Romans as well as Paul's oft-overlooked emphasis on sanctification. Gorman walks the reader through the various passages of Romans, noting along the way how participation in the life of Christ, the gospel narrative, and the Trinity are the theological thread woven throughout the letter.

Westerholm, McKnight, Campbell, and Gorman are current champions of the four perspectives on Paul and, as such, they masterfully summarize the fine points of each perspective as it pertains to a reading of Romans. Anyone familiar with the four readings knows this is no easy feat. While the sermons that follow offer pastoral applications from Romans, the four essays are the place where the reader is most likely to gain new insight into Romans. That said, the degree of insight to be gained is possibly dependent on the reader's previous awareness of the many multifaceted conversations regarding the intersections of the perspectives with one another and with Romans. This is perhaps the greatest weakness of the first half of the book. Because the four essays are written independently of one another, unless the reader is already familiar with the basic arguments of the perspectives, pinpointing their similarities and differences might prove challenging. Campbell and Gorman explicitly note how the apocalyptic and participationist readings intersect with one another. Otherwise, all other comparisons throughout the essays are implicit and understandable only if the reader has ears to hear. In the concluding section titled "Implications," Modica emphasizes how the four perspectives all need each other, but—perhaps other than Gorman's presentation of the participationist perspective—the essays do not give this impression.

Additionally, unless the reader is already familiar with the perspectives on some level, they may not see the ways in which the apocalyptic reading, the New Perspective, and the participationist reading each challenge the more traditionally held "Lutheran" understanding of the gospel according to Paul in Romans. While the sermons offered in the second half of the book assist in moving the needle one step closer, the church's understanding of the person and work of Jesus Christ according to Paul in Romans may remain first and foremost about the penal substitution offered by Christ on the cross and only secondarily about God's role in bringing about the reunification of the family of God (New Perspective), deliverance from a hostile power for the agents of God (apocalyptic), or the fullness of life for those baptized into the life of the Trinity (participationist).

A major highlight of the book is the collection of instructive and inspiring sermons. Three sermons are offered for each perspective, and all twelve present insights into Romans that most people in the pews have never considered. The sermons are perhaps most helpful in the way they both teach and preach from the text of Romans—an essential in today's Western culture of biblical illiteracy. Instead of sermons concocted primarily of superficial topics and supplementary anecdotes, they stand as examples of how a sermon can be crafted to communicate difficult theological questions, rich biblical truths, and impactful implications that are not communicated merely in a three-step "go and do." They demonstrate how biblical and theological literacy matters for the Christian life: with a Reformed reading, one is reminded of the renewing power of Christ in the lives of the guilty as the One who justifies and forgives; with an apocalyptic reading, the Christian ethic is no longer about doing what is right or wrong but about the individual decision to participate either in the realm of good or the realm of evil; with the New Perspective, the believer is reminded of the oneness of the family of God, a family united by Christ through faith; and with the participationist perspective, the Christian life

becomes about participation in the life of the divine through the paradoxical participation in the death of Christ. The homiletical insights presented in the sermons will supply anyone preaching on Romans with innumerable biblical and theological implications to communicate to their congregations.

This book is a helpful resource for an interested lay person, a student, a pastor, and even a Pauline scholar. With the four essays that summarize the perspectives, the sermons that challenge the reader to consider the theological implications of the perspectives for the life of the Christian, and the recommended reading at the end (though, unfortunately, one that consists almost entirely of books dedicated to discussions on the New Perspective), every reader will find something informative and inspiring.

Haley Jacob
Whitworth University, Spokane, WA

Speech-in-Character, Diatribe, and Romans 3:1–9: Who's Speaking When and Why It Matters. By Justin King. Biblical Interpretation Series 163. Leiden: Brill, 2018, xiii + 333 pp., $134.00.

In this published version of his doctoral dissertation supervised by Bruce Longenecker and accepted by Baylor University in 2016, Justin King attempts to solve the long-running debate over what words can be attributed to Paul and what ones to his interlocutor in the particularly cryptic dialog in Rom 3:1–9. Since Rudolf Bultmann's 1910 dissertation (*Der Stil der paulinischen Predigt und die kynisch-stoische Diatribe*), scholars have recognized Paul's use of the ancient practice of diatribe in this passage, meaning Paul carries on an interchange with an imaginary interlocutor. Yet Paul provides no overt identification of who speaks when. How then does one identify what portions of the dialogue belong to Paul and what to his interlocutor?

King's contribution addresses this methodological conundrum head on. Scholars have attempted to identify who voices questions and responses based on their examinations of ancient diatribe. By way of contrast, King contends that our sources for diatribe provide no unified portrait of its practice. As a result, the study of diatribe itself cannot provide a conclusive answer; the sources are too disparate. King argues, however, that diatribe makes use of a second rhetorical activity, speech-in-character, which does offer effective controls for identifying a speaker. Speech-in-character requires that speech be appropriate to the speaker's character. When a speaker is not specified in context, an identification can be made by matching words with the character of possible speakers. The interpreter of Rom 3:1–9 must therefore examine how Paul characterizes himself and his interlocutor up to this point in the letter. On that basis, one can discern which elements of the dialogue belong to whom.

King's opening chapter defines the problem and its significance, outlines his methodology, and previews the argument that follows. The argument itself is broken down into three major parts. Part 1 (pp. 15–97) examines speech-in-character

in rhetorical handbooks and the *Progymnasmata*. After summarizing his findings, he then looks at multiple examples of speech-in-character in Paul in order to demonstrate Paul's familiarity with the practice. In part 2 (pp. 101–59), King turns his attention to diatribe. As with speech-in-character, he examines multiple ancient authors but with a particular focus (as one might expect) on Epictetus.

King devotes part 3 of his argument (pp. 163–293) to his study of Romans itself. He begins by reviewing and assessing what he labels the "traditional" (chap. 8) and the "rescriptive" readings (chap. 9) of Rom 3:1–9. Traditional readings "script" the dialogue by having an interlocutor voice the questions beginning at 3:1 ("Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision?"; NRSV) and by having Paul respond to each. As the term indicates, "rescriptive" readings offer a different arrangement of the dialogue. There are two major reconstructions within this category. First, as in traditional script, Stanley Stowers attributes the questions of 3:1 and 3:9 to the interlocutor. But he argues that the intervening questions were posed by Paul to the interlocutor. Neil Elliott takes Stowers's arguments further, contending that the questions throughout belonged to Paul, thus reversing the traditional script in its entirety.

After highlighting the strengths of both readings, King concludes that these interpretations fall short in two areas. First, neither resolves significant exegetical problems within these verses. To name but two, questions remain about Paul's puzzling use of μή with interrogatives and about the specific nature of the Jewish advantage in question in 3:1. Second, both rescriptions appeal to their analysis of diatribe. However, as noted above, the varied nature of diatribe results in scholars drawing widely different conclusions based upon study of the same evidence. Hence, tighter methodology is required.

In chapter 10, King launches into his examination of Romans itself by walking the reader, passage by passage, through his interpretation of Romans 1–2. King finds a thematic emphasis on ethnic universalism in these chapters. For example, Paul's call extends to all peoples and God's gospel goes both to the Jew and to the Greek. Thus God and Paul are ethnically impartial.

Paul's interlocutor first appears at 2:1 by means of Paul's charge against one who judges the people subject to God's wrath just described in 1:18–32. This person stands under the same indictment Paul has just laid out for these (ethnically underdetermined) people, since it is an act of idolatry to attempt to usurp God's role as judge. King summarizes Paul's characterization of the interlocutor through the end of Romans 2 under five points. The judge is (1) hypocritical; (2) refuses to worship God in an ethnically impartial manner as demanded by the gospel; (3) believes "Jewish status and νόμος possession and observance" place one in the right with God; (4) believes that status gives one an advantage over others at judgment; and (5) stands subject to God's condemnation. King does not believe this imaginary interlocutor represents his audience in Rome. Rather, consistent with the practice of diatribe, the interlocutor serves an educational purpose enabling Paul to teach particular issues to his Roman auditors.

In chapter 11, King turns his sights to Rom 3:1–9. King argues that the question of 3:1 could be a leading question posed by Paul that forces the interlocutor to

admit to holding biases. Or the interlocutor could be interrupting Paul with questions about the implications of what Paul has just argued with regard to Jews in Romans 2. Yet King finds that the response in 3:2 ("Much, in every way." NRSV) could only be voiced by the interlocutor. Given the characterization of the interlocutor (and of Paul) in the preceding chapters, only the interlocutor could claim that Jews have an advantage to this degree. To assert that Paul voices these words, claiming an advantage for the Jews, puts him at odds with all he has argued so far in the letter and would thus be out of character. However, according to King, they belong perfectly in the voice of the interlocutor. Thus, the question of 3:1 belongs to Paul and the response in 3:2 to the interlocutor.

From this starting point, King rescripts Romans 3:1–9 along the lines of Neil Elliott. The questions of 3:1, 3, 5a, 7, and 9a are leading questions spoken by Paul. The dialogue ends with 3:9b where the interlocutor, now fully persuaded by Paul's argument, finally agrees with Paul that Jews have no advantage at judgment. Paul then states the conclusion both agree upon in 3:9c, "both Jews and Greek are all under Sin" (King's translation; p. 270). In the remaining pages (pp. 274–93), King examines how his scripting of 3:1–9 makes sense within the argument of the letter as a whole. He concludes with a brief, five-page recapitulation of his argument throughout.

The care with which King conducts his investigation and the clarity with which he presents it stand out. His chapter introductions skillfully link what he has previously argued to what he is about to undertake before mapping what lies ahead. His chapter summaries lucidly draw together key conclusions and look ahead to what comes next. In spite of the thicket of exegetical issues, I never found myself wondering what King was arguing or where he was going with that argument. I also appreciate how carefully the author embeds his reading of 3:1–9 within the context of the letter as a whole. This surely constitutes one of the many strengths of this volume. To attempt an interpretation of these difficult verses in isolation from the argument of the letter as a whole will guarantee failure.

Yet, a few questions remain. King anchors his reading of the script in his identification of the interlocutor as the speaker in 3:2. However, this is not the only way to read Rom 3:1–2 in a manner consistent with Paul's characterization of himself and of his auditor. In Romans 2, Paul deconstructs any supposed "advantage" Jews (or "religiously-Jewish" people) might have, particularly in relation to eschatological judgment (2:6–11). In Rom 2:17–29, Paul even redefines the practice of Jewish circumcision, a point explicitly picked up in the question of 3:1. By the end of Romans 2, the interlocutor as defined by King could well be imagined asking somewhat incredulously that, if what Paul has just argued is true, then is there any advantage in being a Jew (as the interlocutor supposed). That response would be in keeping with the interlocutor's character. Paul, in character, could then respond in verse 2 that an advantage exists, it is just not what the interlocutor thinks. The only meaning supplied to the "advantage" in 3:2 is possession of the oracles of God. Nothing is said about eschatological judgment. In this script, Paul responds in verse 2 fully within character by denying any advantage at judgment based on Jewish ethnicity. Obviously, much more needs to be done to justify this scripting of the

dialog. My point is simply that the imaginary dialog partners can be identified differently than King does, while also keeping both "within character."

By building his argument on new methodological foundations, however, King has now provided the strongest argument yet for this rescription of the dialogue in Rom 3:1–9. Future scholarly work must take his work into consideration.

James C. Miller
Asbury Theological Seminary, Orlando, FL

A New Testament Theology. By Craig L. Blomberg. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018, xxii + 769 pp., $49.95 paper.

Writing a NT theology is tricky. Pen one too soon, and you may show your ignorance. Wait too long, and you may never finish. After years of teaching and scholarship, distinguished scholar Craig Blomberg has chosen an appropriate time to tackle this challenge.

Blomberg argues that "fulfillment" is a suitable integrating theme for the NT. He follows this theme "chronologically" throughout the NT writings, showing how every book displays that Christ fulfills the OT promises, inaugurating the messianic age. Blomberg concedes that strong arguments can be made for other central themes. That is why he has chosen to call his work *A New Testament Theology* rather than *The Theology of the New Testament*.

Blomberg takes a conservative approach to his NT chronology. He dates the NT documents within the first century and holds to the authenticity of the letters attributed to Paul. Yet, he chooses to separate the Pastorals from Paul's corpus, so as to explore the possibility that Luke was the apostle's amanuensis or scribe, who was given generous freedom in composing 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. This permits Blomberg to note connections between the Pastorals and Luke-Acts. His chronological outline proceeds as follows: (1) Jesus; (2) the earliest church; (3) James and Jude; (4) Paul; (5) Mark; (6) Matthew; (7) Luke-Acts; (8) Pastoral Epistles; (9) Hebrews; (10) 1 and 2 Peter; and (11) Johannine literature.

In his initial chapter, Blomberg argues that Jesus ushers in the promised kingdom. Blomberg takes an "already-not yet" view of Jesus's reign. This position is common enough among scholars. What is uncommon is Blomberg's emphasis on the social ramifications of the arrival of the kingdom. He contends, for example, that Jesus's parables speak to the poor, the vulnerable, the marginalized, and the outcast in a way not witnessed in the OT (e.g. Luke 18:1–8). He argues that parables like the unjust judge (Luke 18:1–8) support working for social justice and that the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37) "models justice and compassion across national, ethnic, and religious boundaries" (p. 55). Blomberg's emphasis on the social implications of Jesus's reign is a welcome addition to a field that has normally shied away from such discussions.

Blomberg's chapter on the earliest church follows the narrative of Acts. With the arrival of the Spirit, the early church had the impetus to take the message of Israel's Messiah to widening audiences. As followers were added, the church helped

the poor and needy, selling their goods and sharing with those in need (Acts 4:34). Blomberg makes this observation "despite some scholars" who are "uncomfortable with anything in the Bible that even hints at socialism" (p. 132). Our modern political sensibilities should not bias us against such a faithful reading of Scripture. What unfolds in Acts is not socialism: It is the church living out the kindness the Torah calls God's people to extend to the poor and destitute, only now enabled by the Spirit (Deuteronomy 15).

Acts also provides evidence that early Christian communal meals bore witness to the fact that the kingdom dismantles barriers between rich and poor. Blomberg argues that such meals "would have been one of the great attractions of the new Jesus movement" (p. 134). We should add that even today Christians who gather at the Lord's table despite social class differences can still be powerful witnesses to a world longing for the kind of "unity" and "equality" that only the kingdom will bring.

Although the early letters of James and Jude do not overtly announce the dawning of the kingdom, Blomberg argues that these letters do provide evidence that the new age has arrived. James 1:25, for instance, says that "the perfect law gives freedom," which echoes Jeremiah's new covenant prophecy about a coming time when God would put his law in the minds and hearts of his people. The shift in eras is also evident in Jas 2:5 with the promise that the poor will inherit the kingdom. Jude also shows evidence of the new age, warning believers to stay clear of false teachers who will be judged at Christ's second coming.

Blomberg's chapter on Paul's letters provides a short overview of how the apostle's writings show that Jesus fulfills the OT promises, inaugurating a new era in salvation history. Paul's "already-not yet" view of the kingdom carries over from Jesus and the earliest Christians. Blomberg then spends the bulk of the chapter on themes that show the transformation of Paul's thought, such as his Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology.

Within his discussion of ecclesiology, Blomberg points out the unity of Jew and Gentile that existed in the Pauline churches. Quoting Love Sechrest, he notes that Paul was creating a "completely new ethno-racial particularity" (p. 276). The implications he draws for United States churches are noteworthy: "It would mean whites surrendering some of their 'white privilege' to express their 'interdependence and mutuality in Christ,' with Blacks embracing a 'kingdom-building' rather than 'nation building' identity in the church" (p. 276). Whatever we think of his implications, we must reckon with Blomberg's observation that "the unity of Jew-Gentile, and therefore the unity of disparate people groups or races in the church of Jesus Christ, is a central emphasis of Pauline ecclesiology that today's church ignores to its detriment" (p. 276).

His analyses of Mark, Matthew, and Luke-Acts convincingly show how fulfillment is woven through these writings. Mark, for instance, immediately demonstrates that the OT promises are now being fulfilled (1:15). Matthew's emphasis on fulfillment is more pronounced than any other Gospel or NT book, displaying how Jesus accomplishes the Law and Prophets (5:17–20) and all righteousness (3:15). Luke-Acts, likewise, shows that Jesus fulfills OT promises, such as the coming

servant of the Lord (Luke 4:18–21) and everything written about the Son of Man (Luke 18:31).

The Pastorals to the Johannine literature continue to highlight that Jesus fulfills the Scriptures (John 5:39). The entire grand narrative of the NT anticipates the culmination of the kingdom in Revelation. According to Blomberg, the eternal state—the new heavens and earth, the new Jerusalem—will arrive after a thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth (Revelation 20). Following this, there is the complete fulfillment of the promises to Israel now given to Jewish and Gentile believers. Blomberg remarks that his view aligns with historic premillennialism, holding that believers will live through the tribulation, unless they die or are killed during this period. Even those who disagree with his eschatology will have to reckon with his cogent argument for historic premillennialism.

The weakness of Blomberg's work is the same as that of every chronological approach to the NT: An accurate chronology depends on a precise dating of the sources. In addition, we know how precarious authorship arguments can be. Are we really sure that Mark wrote before Matthew? Or has the church been right all along in contending that Matthew wrote before Mark? Are critical scholars willing to gamble on the assumption that Paul's followers, or a Pauline school, composed letters such as Ephesians and Colossians? Is Blomberg reasonably certain that James and Jude were the earliest canonical Christian writings, enough to justify their treatment before Pauline writings such as Galatians and 1 Thessalonians? In view of the trouble with precise chronological dating, is there not a better approach to writing a NT theology? Assuming that one is able to justify the order of the NT books, would it not be better to follow the theme of fulfillment in canonical order?

All things considered, Blomberg's work is an example of fine scholarship, successfully arguing that fulfillment is a central integrating theme of the NT. If the OT looks forward to the "fulfillment" of the promises to Israel and Jesus "fulfills" the promises in the NT, extending them to Gentiles, then Blomberg's proposal is valid, providing a strong cohesive theme for the Scriptures. He also shows humility in conceding that this is one of several possible central topics. That is the kind of modesty we hope to find in a senior scholar, showing evidence of years of theological and spiritual maturation. We should applaud Blomberg's timely achievement. It is the work of a seasoned scholar that will benefit the church and academy for many years to come.

Miguel Echevarria
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC