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BOOK REVIEWS

The Harvest Handbook of Bible Lands: A Panoramic Survey of the History, Geography, and Culture of the Scriptures. Edited by Steven Collins and Joseph M. Holden. Eugene, OR: Harvest, 2019, 397 pp., $39.99 paper.

Experiencing Israel: Walking with Jesus in the Holy Land. By Tony Evans. Eugene, OR: Harvest, 2020, 144 pp., $29.99 paper.

I have been teaching online biblical geography for the Israel Institute of Biblical Studies for the last five years. Most of my students are not seminarians but regular church members from all over the world who are very interested in the land of the Bible. They want to learn how the discipline of cultural geography influences the understanding of the biblical text, and I constantly recommend books about the land of the Bible. Recently Harvest House has published two books on biblical geography that I review here.

The *Harvest Handbook of Bible Lands* is more technical, while *Experiencing Israel* is an inspirational guide to the places of the Gospels. Both of them deal with the land of the Bible but have different purposes. The *Handbook* follows the well-known structure of historical atlases of the Bible: a chronological approach to the Bible from Genesis and the Patriarchs to Paul and early Christianity. The material of the Bible is narrated in ten chapters as a linear history with addenda from archaeology and ancient historical sources alongside the narrative. Pictures of ancient artifacts and maps aid the reader to see the story with more precision, contextualizing spatially and materially the distant characters of Scriptures.

When the *Harvest Handbook* is compared with others such as *IVP Atlas of Bible History* (IVP Academic, 2006) or *A Visual Guide to Bible Events* (Baker, 2009), it is clear from its length (about 400 pages) that it offers more information than its competitors that average about half its size. Throughout the book, readers will find boxes entitled "Breakout" that feature short discussions of a particular subject (e.g., "Egyptian Map Lists," p. 115; "Rosetta Stone," p. 252). The *Handbook* also brings a more detailed discussion of subjects barely elaborated in biblical atlases, like the "architecture and infrastructure" of ANE cities (pp. 74–76) or the Greco-Roman period (pp. 254, 256–57), and "weapons and warfare" (e.g., pp. 77, 257–58, 296–97). These add to the value of the material by offering discussion on matters of ancient lifestyle with images that are often lacking in more popular biblical atlases. With contributions from different renowned scholars such as Edwin M. Yamauchi and Wayne House, the breakouts bring reputable and up-to-date information on biblical archaeology.

Readers will also find a balanced essay on the relation between scientific archaeology and the Bible (chap. 10), followed by a collection of suggested solutions to possible historical mismatch with the biblical stories (chap. 11). In this last chap-

ter, readers should read discerningly, keeping in mind that the text is one suggested solution, since the nature of the material is sensitive, not unambiguous, and could be argued otherwise (e.g., the location of Sodom). I will let the specialists in each topic addressed in chapter 11 produce a more detailed evaluation of the proposed solutions offered there. They are at least plausible and intriguing.

The quality of the *Handbook* maps could be improved. The publishers used as the basis for their maps the ones from *Accordance Bible Software* (Oak Tree Software), but the colors of the book's maps are saturated and do not portray the topography as well as those found in Carl Rasmussen's *Zondervan Atlas of the Bible* (Zondervan, 2010), still my favorite of all the atlases I know.

Tony Evans's *Experience Israel* presents a different kind of material than a biblical atlas, although it likewise pertains to the land of Israel. This is not a scholarly treatment on biblical geography or succinct explanation of the land of the Bible, although Evans explains some. Evans, a popular evangelical pastor, produced an inspirational reflection of particular places from the Gospels. *Experience Israel* is a devotional book on the life of Jesus beautifully illustrated with high-quality photographs from the land of Israel. The graphic design is well done, and the book is a pleasure to read. Christian pilgrims traveling to Israel will find in *Experience Israel* a good resource to help them reflect on spiritual lessons drawn from the land of the Gospels. Those looking for a more technical guide to the land of the Gospels will certainly benefit from Miriam Vamosh's *Daily Life at the Time of Jesus* (Palphot/Abingdon, 2001).

Harvest House has been publishing inspirational books for decades now, but recently they have added to their catalog some books on biblical studies mainly targeting nonspecialists. For those looking for a book on biblical culture, the *Harvest Handbook of Bible Lands* is a good resource. Christian pilgrims searching for an inspirational guide will find in Evans's *Experience Israel* a beautifully illustrated book.

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Old Testament Cosmology and Divine Accommodation: A Relevance Theory Approach. By John W. Hilber. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2020, 214 pp., $28.00 paper.

John Hilber's *Old Testament Cosmology and Divine Accommodation: A Relevance Theory Approach* presents a thoughtful and well-researched discussion of divine accommodation related to cosmology and provides an introduction to relevance theory. While most readers will be familiar with the former concept (that God as infinite being communicates to humans as finite beings in ways they are able to comprehend), some will be unfamiliar with the idea of relevance theory. As Hilber notes, it has received only "minor attention" (p. 2). Though not satisfying all ambiguities, Hilber has provided an important and meaningful work for specialists, instructors, and select students with a keen interest in the Genesis creation narrative.

Chapter 1 introduces relevance theory. Hilber briefly traces the evolution of hermeneutics from its emphasis upon "semantics and grammar" (p. 7) to its incor-

poration of literary criticism and cognitive/background studies. This is where relevance theory comes in; essentially, an audience anticipates the reward of a cognitive benefit for giving attention to a speaker. The speaker guides the audience to a desired meaning by issuing utterances or elements held in common by speaker and audience (cognitive environment). Upon perceiving the utterances or elements, the audience gravitates towards the most relevant meaning. When the audience's expectation for a relevant meaning is satisfied in the communicative event, the speaker's meaning is known (pp. 10–13). It is this basic contextual-inferential structure of relevance that Hilber seeks to apply so moderns can read with a greater clarity concerning OT cosmology.

Chapter 2 narrows upon the cognitive environment of the OT world. This is important to the discussion of relevance theory, given the assumption that an audience will access the "encyclopedic" information available to them through their particular cultural environment and thereby intuit a speaker's contextual clues. Particularly, if assumptions of the original OT audience can be better perceived through nonbiblical material from the OT world, modern biblical interpreters are better positioned to access the same encyclopedic information as the original audience, and this aids our interpretation. Here, Hilber demonstrates great command of the data from the ANE, and those interested in OT backgrounds will find this chapter valuable.

Chapter 3 views divine accommodation in retrospect. Hilber's general but helpful survey spans from the ancient church to the contemporary. How has the church viewed the notion that the infinite God accommodates finite humans in his communication to them? How has interpretation historically adapted to a growth in understanding of the natural world? "Is accommodation only in the manner of linguistic style, or does it also involve matters of content?" (p. 127). These are some of the pertinent questions taken up and that give way to chapter 4: "Accommodation and Relevance." Hilber states, "Relevance theory suggests that we should approach the problem [i.e., is accommodation merely in language, or also content?] from a different angle by asking more precisely what assumptions in the cognitive environment a speaker or author intends to evoke in the communicative act as part of inferred meaning" (p. 127). Upon examining samples from the biblical text, Hilber concludes, "In God's accommodative language, he allowed the potential that certain erroneous assumptions are supplied by the audience, but even if the audience mistakenly infers conclusions from these, they do not interfere with the informative intention of the utterance" (p. 152).

Hilber more fully examines relevance in chapter 5. The notable conclusion is that "the ancients [had no] expectations of relevance for natural history" (p. 157). In other words, biblical authors and their original audience's interest in cosmology was not centered on natural history, but theology (p. 182). Hilber makes a strong case for this conclusion by examining several OT texts beyond Genesis 1, arguing these biblical writers provide insight on how to interpret that text. His conclusion that OT writers and their original audiences had a theological interest, not a natural history interest, has obvious implications for modern interpretations. Hilber anticipates that some may question the validity of such a clear distinction between theo-

logical interest and natural history interest: "Reading Genesis 1 with the reflexes of the original audience means ignoring assumptions relevant to what we would call natural history or science" (p. 183). This is a valid conclusion, and it does not mean modern readers cannot explore science in relation to the OT. It does mean that OT writers were not operating with a modern scientific worldview.

This work makes an important contribution to ongoing discussions of the Genesis creation narrative. The emphasis upon the ancient competent reader's perspective is especially germane. At times, readers may question Hilber's intended audience. In places the discussion is technical and abstract (as linguistic theory tends to be), yet it purports to serve as an introduction to relevance theory. It is clear Hilber has strived to mitigate the technical nature while still conveying necessary information. In this he is mostly successful. Perhaps offering more explicit, concise, and frequent definitions particularly around relevance theory would serve those for whom relevance theory is a new idea. This difficult-to-avoid issue aside, Hilber has advanced the discussion on reading the OT through the eyes of the original audience.

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The Case for Biblical Archaeology: Uncovering the Historical Record of God's Old Testament People. By John D. Currid. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2020, 263 pp., $29.99 paper.

John D. Currid (Ph.D., University of Chicago) is Chancellor's Professor of OT at Reformed Theological Seminary. His other published works include *Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament, Doing Archaeology in the Land of the Bible, Against the Gods,* and *The ESV Bible Atlas*. He also served as senior editor for the *ESV Archaeology Study Bible*. His professional work as a field archaeologist spans decades and includes time spent excavating at Carthage (Tunisia), Bethsaida, Tell el-Hesi, and Tell Halif. Thus, it was with great anticipation that I opened his latest publication to tap into the decades-long experiences of this biblical scholar.

The author states the purpose and limitations of the book in its very first sentence. It is an "introduction, meant to be a mere door into the field of archaeology during the Old Testament period" (p. xv). Following an introduction that defines archaeology and its purpose, the book plays out in three parts. The first part, "Setting," offers a regional geographic introduction to Palestine, outlines the history of archeological inquiry in the land of the Bible from the eighteenth century to the present, introduces the concept of the tell and tell excavation, and ends with a short history of the ANE.

Part 2 is titled "A Journey through the Land." In these chapters, Currid samples an array of archaeological sites within each region of Israel. Each site is briefly exposed, taking into account its mention in the Hebrew Bible, its ANE backstory, the history of excavation at the site, signature finds, and a short reference list for additional reading.

Part 3 is called "Aspects of Society." Here, Currid dedicates chapters to various cultural categories, including agriculture and herding, water, architecture, ceramics, Hebrew language examples in the archaeological record, burial practices, and small finds. The last is a catchall category that includes artifacts made from stone, bone, wood, metal, ivory, and glass. The book also contains several appendices followed by a glossary, select bibliography, Scripture index, and subject index.

I found myself in lockstep with the author in assessing the contribution archaeology offers Bible readers. Archaeology does not have the ability to prove the Bible is true, but it can and does "confirm, illuminate, and give 'earthiness'" to the communication of God's thoughts in the Bible (p. 3).

Since I am pulling up a chair next to someone who has spent decades on this subject, I expected to grow, and I did. I experienced the most satisfaction in part 3 of the publication. Here, Currid walked me through the world of the Bible on a virtual tour of daily life. One of the real strengths of this section is the way it is organized, giving readers the chance to focus on a single cultural reality and view it across time. For example, Currid discusses the evolution of burial practices in stages between the Neolithic Age and the Iron Age. Chapter 3 offers a wonderful overview of archaeological inquiry in the land of the Bible. Tucked into appendix 3 we have a real treasure: Here the author walks us through extrabiblical references to the kings of Israel and Judah in the archaeological record. Throughout the book, the editors sprinkled in color photographs and maps that both illuminate the points being made in the text and created diversity in the page spreads.

When I was puzzled over the book's contents, it was in the chapter on geography. I would read along nodding my head and suddenly hit a description that seemed inaccurate to me. For example, Currid describes the central mountains as "blocking the rainfall from continuing eastward" (p. 16). In reality, they don't "block" but change the elevation of the air mass and so change its temperature, producing the rainfall shadow to their east. On the same page, Currid correctly observes the presence of Senonian limestone on the eastern slope of the Judean mountains, adding that it is "not permeable" (p. 16). But compared to other limestone in the wilderness (Cenomanian, Turonian, as well as silicon dioxide) it is the most permeable of the group. I also puzzled over the suggestion that the chariots of Sisera became bogged down in the Plain of Acco rather than in the Jezreel Valley between Megiddo and Mt. Tabor (p. 17).

When I felt frustrated, it was in part 2. As expected, the accuracy of the site summaries was spot on. Given the author's expertise in archaeology, I know he had more to say on each site than room to say it. Thus, I wondered why valuable space in these chapters was given to sites infrequently mentioned or absent from the Bible. I do not question their value for general scholarship, but I question the inclusion of a site like Munhata at the expense of space that could have been dedicated to sites like Dan and Beersheba.

To be sure, an introduction to any discipline of study is difficult to write, and this one even more so because of the wide range of topics it covers. So while there were moments of disappointment, my overall impression is that Currid did exactly

what he promised in the introduction—open a door into the archaeological world of the OT. Readers looking for this need look no further.

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Invitation to Biblical Theology: Exploring the Shape, Storyline, and Themes of Scripture. By Jeremy Kimble and Ched Spellman. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2020, 542 pp., $44.99.

Jeremy Kimble and Ched Spellman both serve at Cedarville University. Kimble works as associate professor of theology and director of the Center for Biblical Integration, while Spellman works as assistant professor of biblical and theological studies and lead developer of online Bible programs. In *Invitation to Biblical Theology*, the authors aim to orient the novice Bible student to biblical theology as a discipline worthy of practice in the church and the academy. Regarding the explicit purpose of the book, Kimble and Spellman write, "We seek to introduce some of the central aspects of biblical theology as a discipline, explain some of the strategic tools that are used in the practice of biblical theology, and provide a series of studies that highlight the payoff to this approach for understanding the Scriptures" (p. 9). They undertook the work by dividing the book into four sections, each of which deals with a distinct aspect of the discipline of biblical theology.

In section 1, which covers chapters 1-4, Kimble and Spellman seek to define biblical theology and explore the various biblical frameworks that make the discipline possible. Defining biblical theology as "the study of the whole Bible on its own terms" (p. 43), Kimble and Spellman limit what can be classified as "biblical theology" proper, choosing to exclude approaches marked primarily by historical-descriptive or systematic-theological concerns. For the most part, the typical approaches to biblical theology fall on the spectrum presented by Klink and Lockett's work *Understanding Biblical Theology* (Zondervan, 2012). Of the five approaches Klink and Lockett explored, Kimble and Spellman conclude that BT2–BT4 were the only approaches on the spectrum that would fall within their definition of biblical theology. Beyond the Klink and Lockett spectrum, Kimble and Spellman helpfully introduce the reader to the "hermeneutical choices" posed in the works of John Sailhamer.

In chapters 2–3, instead of proposing a particular "center" that holds Scripture together, Kimble and Spellman consider how the "tools" of the canon of Scripture, the various covenants that represent the movements within Scripture's grand narrative, and the focus of that grand narrative on displaying Jesus Christ provide the framework for the work of biblical theology. In chapter 4, Kimble and Spellman provide a helpful chapter on the character of the Bible. Specifically, they note the inspiration, inerrancy, infallibility, clarity, necessity, sufficiency, and authority of Scripture as foundational elements of the work of biblical theology.

In section 2, which consists of chapters 5–10, the authors trace the storyline of the Bible. The chapters that deal with the OT are organized around the traditional categories of the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. The NT chapters trace

the storyline from the Gospels through Acts and the Letters to the book of Revelation. Section 2 is one of the most helpful, concise presentations of the Bible's storyline that readers will find in an introductory textbook on biblical theology.

Section 3 contains Kimble and Spellman's consideration of the organizing themes of biblical theology across the canon of Scripture. Of particular interest for those familiar with debates within scholarship regarding whether a "center" can be found in biblical theology, Kimble and Spellman address the problems that arise from seeking to discover a singular theme. Rather, the authors opt for "central themes" instead of a center (pp. 237–40). After addressing the question of a center in biblical theology, the authors present tools for assessing central themes. With the tools in place, Kimble and Spellman provide chapter-length examples of thematic studies across the canon of Scripture on the following topics: God and his glory (chap. 12), kingdom (chap. 13), covenant (chap. 14), temple and priesthood (chap. 15), worship (chap. 16), messiah and atonement (chap. 17), salvation and judgment (chap. 18), the Holy Spirit (chap. 19), and mission (chap. 20). As with section 2, section 3 provides an outstanding, well-paced presentation of these central themes of biblical theology.

The book closes with section 4, which is briefer than previous sections. Chapters 21–22 situate the discipline of biblical theology within the respective contexts of the church and the academy. While chapter 21 is good, chapter 22 seems particularly appropriate for the readers of *JETS*, who regularly encounter the tension between serving the contexts of the church and the academy. On this relationship, Kimble and Spellman writes, "Biblical theology is never a purely academic endeavor as the study of the Scriptures involves a series of theological presuppositions and faith claims. This close relationship between the academy and the churches is one of the key features of a 'confession' approach to the discipline" (p. 435). While this is not the book's primary argument, I sincerely appreciated the reminder that a theological reading of the Bible must be a priority for all aspiring evangelical scholars. Quoting Andreas Köstenberger, Kimble and Spellman note that "believing scholarship is not only possible but in fact is more virtuous than critical, unbelieving, or supposedly objective academic work" (p. 436).

Evangelicals both need this reminder and should be grateful to witness the revival of a confessionally-tethered approach to the study of the Bible. We do not study the Bible as disinterested observers of an ancient document but as believers in the living God who has spoken to us that we might know him. The reminder from Kimble and Spellman should not be taken for granted.

In conclusion, while there are many books on biblical theology, Kimble and Spellman's work represents one of the best evangelical introductions to the topic. Even though the book's length might scare some professors away from using it as a textbook in certain settings, the authors have presented a flexible book that may be implemented in various ways. The authors present their convictions with clarity, balance, and care. In my estimation, a professor would be hard-pressed to find a

more accessible and thorough one-volume presentation on the discipline of biblical theology.

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Demons: What the Bible Really Says about the Powers of Darkness. By Michael S. Heiser. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, xii + 321 pp., $17.99.

Leading twentieth-century missiologist Paul Hiebert once considered a major shortcoming of Western contemporary theology to be "The Flaw of the Excluded Middle." If nothing else, one must acknowledge that Michael Heiser's work aims at correcting that misperception. His tenth book on a subject in which he specializes provides a welcome, long awaited, and much needed addition to our knowledge on how the Bible holistically treats the subject of spiritual principalities.

Heiser devotes the first half of his book to examining literature on that subject that would have been available to the first century Jews of Palestine. That includes a comprehensive review of the Dead Sea scrolls, deuterocanonical literature, OT pseudepigrapha, Ugaritic and Mesopotamian texts, and of course the various versions of the OT, LXX, Josephus, Philo, classic and ancient Christian literature, all in an effort to provide a worldview consistent with that of the NT authors, while noting nonetheless that the NT milieu was anything but monolithic. He discusses at length terms found in the OT and other ancient literature to describe such spiritual beings that were assumed to have inhabited both heavenly and terrestrial domains.

The author defends the position that there were essentially three times recorded in Scripture in which such spiritual beings made in the image of God were said to have revolted against God's dominion over them. The first was in the garden of Eden with the serpent (Gen 3), the second when the sons of God illicitly engaged in sexual intercourse with the daughters of men (Gen 6:1-4) spawning a race of giants (the Nephilim), and the third being at Babel when God assigned the oversight of the nations to the fallen sons of God (Deut 32:8). Heiser refutes the commonly held notion that the Satan of Job could be identified with the serpent of Genesis 3. Members of the divine counsel as depicted in Job 1–2 would not include rebellious and fallen angels, which is not to say they are not under divine purview and sovereign control. He notes the church's historical reluctance to accept a supernatural view of the Genesis 6:1-4 account as due largely to Augustine's influence in the fourth century. That the Masoretic Text has mistranslated what should be "sons of God" in Deuteronomy 32:8 as "sons of Israel" is clear from the more recently uncovered Dead Sea Scrolls. Knowing the original version of Deuteronomy 32:8, also, in my view, provides complementary supportive evidence of the supernatural perspective of Genesis 6:1-4.

Heiser musters substantial corresponding material found in the ancient Mesopotamian texts that portray an antediluvian history of society in close accord with the biblical narrative of Genesis 4-6ff. For example, in many of the Mesopotamian deluge narratives, the Akkadian term *apkallu* appears to refer to divine counselors

assigned to the same patriarchs listed in the first seven generations of mankind, that is from Adam to Enoch, with modified names but similar identities. These *apkallu* would presumably be of the same order as the sons of God of Genesis 6. Other Mesopotamian texts also translate them as watchers. This parallel, plus the apparent general awareness of those texts found in many of the writings of Second Temple scholars indicate that the supernatural interpretation of Genesis 6:1-4 had been a predominant view in the milieu of first century Judea. If so, this strengthens confidence that the biblical Nephilim encountered both before and after the deluge were indeed the semi-divine offspring of those fallen members of the divine council referred to in Genesis 6:1-4 as the "sons of God." The corrupting influences of these offspring, the Nephilim, led to the conditions precipitating the universal deluge (Gen 6:5-6). The subsequent Anakim, equated in places with the Rephaim (Josh 13:12), who lived in Palestine during Joshua's invasion (Num 13:33, Judg 1:20) and up through the period of David appear to have been their offspring as well. Heiser's major thesis is that the demons found in the NT are derived from the disembodied spirits of these Nephilim, etc., after their physical bodies died, a position that apparently has significant independent scholarly support. This presumption is based in part on their semi-divine nature, i.e., being angelic offspring and hence, not entirely subject to the constraints of mortality as are humans (Luke 10:36).

Heiser also relies on Psalm 82, where he sees the sons of God (the Most High) as the same angels corrupted in Genesis 6. Elsewhere, one of Heiser's online podcasts provides a compelling exegesis of Jesus's interpretation of that psalm (John 10:34) in which the rebelling members of the divine council, and not mere men, are its focus. Those challenging this, hence, do not undermine the author's overall thesis. That psalm interestingly also expressly states that these "sons of the Most High" (presumably fallen angels) will nonetheless die like men.

In his final section, Heiser answers a series of typical questions on popular views concerning demonology, such as "Can a Christian be demon possessed?" and "What does spiritual warfare entail?" Here he rejects the notion that exorcisms would fall into that category, preferring to understand the warfare in which Christians need to be engaged as focusing exclusively on the completion of the Great Commission in bringing the nations out of darkness.

I am appreciative of Heiser's efforts, for example, the light he sheds on such passages as 1 Peter 3:18–22 and Jude 1:6 in regard to the imprisoned spirits. There are still many questions on these and other texts that deal with this subject that remain unanswered, but Heiser has done the church a service in his attempts to answer some that have been enigmatic for too long. Hopefully his work will stimulate others to be willing at least to question some traditional views that frankly do not always make a lot of sense of the text.

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Table and Temple: The Christian Eucharist and Its Jewish Roots. By David L. Stubbs. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020, xviii + 403 pp., $40.00 paper.

David Stubbs begins his book with a discussion of the renewed interest in liturgical worship in general and the practice of the Eucharist in particular over the past three decades. For this reason, he desires to help readers understand the biblical and theological connections between the practice of the Eucharist and the metanarrative of Scripture. Stubbs finds the OT temple to be the central figure that gives meaning to the Eucharist. In his book *Table and Temple,* he argues that the covenantal life of Israel centered around the liturgical practices of the temple and that Christian worship should be informed by theological applications of OT temple practices in Eucharist liturgies (pp. 27, 46–47). Stubbs supports his argument with a figural reading of the OT, NT, rabbinic literature, and sources from the first centuries of Christianity. The result is a thought-provoking work of scholarship that is part biblical theology and part ecclesiological treatise.

Table and Temple is divided into four sections. Section 1 contains two chapters, the first of which lays out Stubbs's thesis and methodology. Chapter 2 explores various approaches to figural reading, ultimately settling on John David Dawson's figural performance approach for examining how the temple connects to the Lord's Supper. In section 2, Stubbs explores how the Jewish temple, early church celebrations of the Eucharist, and contemporary approaches to the Lord's Supper demonstrate a connection between temple and table. Section 3 is the heart of the book's argument. Stubbs dedicates a chapter to each element he identifies as forming the liturgical life of the people of God in the OT, which are "(1) the temple itself, (2) the regularized daily, Sabbath, and monthly services, and the three annual pilgrim feasts of (3) Pesach or Passover, (4) Shavuot or Pentecost, and (5) Sukkoth or the Feast of Booths" (p. 27). Each of these five chapters begins with an exegetical examination of the biblical theme, then discusses how each theme connects to the NT and the early church. Each chapter closes with a discussion of practical ways the information Stubbs presents should shape the celebration of the Eucharist in contemporary Protestant churches. The final section of *Table and Temple* is a single chapter that offers an in-depth discussion of how contemporary churches should be influenced by the connection between the temple and the Lord's table.

Table and Temple demonstrates the rich possibilities figural reading offers Christian interpreters of the Bible. Stubbs's work is informed by the figural methodologies of Richard Hays, Christopher Seitz, Austin Farrer, and, especially John David Dawson. The figural reading Stubbs employs helps him move from the five main elements of temple worship to five corresponding theological conclusions of how the figure of the temple informs the practice of the Eucharist (pp. 44–45, 341–47). Such a methodology adds to the growing body of work from Christian scholars who understand figural readings as illuminating the way in which the OT functions as Christian Scripture.

Stubbs does not give a detailed explanation of how he identifies the primary elements of the liturgical life of Israel. The three pilgrim festivals are certainly important to the worship of Israel in the OT, and Stubbs is correct that when viewed

together they reflect the past, present, and future of the people of God (p. 293). What Stubbs does not address is why these parts of the worship life of Israel are essential to understanding the Lord's Supper but not others. The same connections Stubbs makes to the festivals could be made to specific modes of sacrifice, specific roles of temple worshippers and priests, or a host of other temple practices in the OT. Additionally, other OT figures could claim centrality to the Eucharist, such as the Passover Lamb and the wine used in temple offerings.

Stubbs's discussion of the daily and weekly worship that occurred in the temple uses sources from the OT as well as rabbinic literature. Such material covers a large chronological period and the shifts in temple praxis are observed in the texts themselves. Stubbs does not give an account for the shifting ways in which people would have worshipped in the temple over the centuries, nor does he locate the OT text versus rabbinic traditions as the primary point of concern for Christian interpreters (pp. 160–76). The rabbinic sources are given tremendous authority in determining the meaning of the Feast of Pentecost and its connection to the Lord's Table. Stubbs's argument is based on rabbinic sources that propose a connection between Pentecost and the giving of the Law at Sinai. The biblical text, however, never makes this meaning explicit. Rather than downplaying this connection due to lack of biblical evidence, Stubbs brings the supposed connection between the Sinai Covenant and the Eucharist into his theological conclusions when he argues that at the table "we give thanks for and recommit ourselves to the new covenant way of Christ" (p. 345). While the sentiment is a standard part of historical understanding of the Lord's Supper, Stubbs arrives at the conclusion based on a reading that appears to be more a figural reading of rabbinic tradition than a figural reading of the OT.

One limitation of *Table and Temple* is that it does not address the broad differences between various Protestant understandings of the Eucharist. Stubbs briefly mentions his own varied experiences in denominational worship, but he does not address how some disagreements between Protestants over the nature of the Eucharist dramatically impact how they would put his fivefold meaning of the Lord's Supper into practice. Many of the recommendations Stubbs offers presuppose a liturgical form of worship. Protestants who do not follow any formal liturgical tradition in their worship may not be able to put the majority of his suggestions into practice, even if they agree with his conclusions.

Despite some weaknesses, *Table and Temple* is an excellent monograph that offers valuable insights into biblical theology and Protestant ecclesiology. Stubbs's use of figural reading demonstrates the value of the methodology. His project is a theological interpretation of Scripture that has value in both academic and ministry settings.

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The Land and Its Kings: 1–2 Kings. By Johanna W. H. van Wijk-Bos. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020, xiv + 338 pp., $25.00 paper.

Johanna W. H. van Wijk-Bos served as professor of OT at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary for forty years. She began the work for this book while still teaching there, and she dedicated the book to her former students. This work on 1–2 Kings is the final volume of a three-volume series titled "A People and a Land." The first two volumes are commentaries on Joshua-Judges (*The End of the Beginning*) and 1–2 Samuel (*The Road to Kingship*), both of which are also written by van Wijk-Bos and published by Eerdmans.

Though *The Land and Its Kings* can be called a commentary on 1–2 Kings, its format is different from most commentaries. Van Wijk-Bos tells the story of the text as the text tells it, offering explanatory comments as they relate to the key points of the narrative. The format honors the narrative genre of the text, since reading this book is similar to reading a story, and the divisions van Wijk-Bos provides have the feel of chapter divisions in a narrative. As is the case with most commentaries, readers of this book will benefit most from it if they read the book of 1–2 Kings along with this explanatory narrative guide. More advanced Bible students and readers of the Hebrew text will find the author's footnotes especially helpful, since she typically places terminological and technical information there.

Throughout the book, the author provides quotes from Hebrew Bible scholars who have written on 1–2 Kings. She often uses thought-provoking quotes as headings that summarize the contents of the passage under consideration. Then she proceeds with summaries of each story, told in the historical present tense and interweaving commentary on the text. It is clear at every point that van Wijk-Bos is reading the Hebrew text; she regularly relates helpful insights from Hebrew terminology and grammar. She is also familiar with a wide range of cultural-historical information that bears on the meaning of the text. In addition, she has read with understanding the literature on 1–2 Kings, and she refers to other voices when doing so elucidates meaning. However, her notes are understandable to readers who are not familiar with such literature or with Hebrew; even in the footnotes Hebrew words are presented in transliteration.

As van Wijk-Bos follows the story line, she refrains from arguing for or against the historicity of the events described in 1–2 Kings. She devotes her attention to the text of 1–2 Kings, not to discussions about historical issues the text raises. Many archaeological finds also illuminate the historical information in 1–2 Kings, but such finds are not van Wijk-Bos's interest in this book. She is not distracted from following the story line of 1–2 Kings. With respect to historical issues, her approach is to adopt the perspective, not of a modern critic, but of the ancient writer/editor who compiled the material and ostensibly believed its accuracy, or at least presented it to readers as accurate. Thus, van Wijk-Bos's method can be described as literary or redaction criticism, not historical criticism. For example, she tells stories like the falling of fire on Mt. Carmel, the assumption of Elijah, and the floating ax-head without comments about a "pre-scientific worldview" reflected in accounts of supernatural events. Van Wijk-Bos's concern seems to be to present

the material as it is presented in Kings. A strength of this book, then, is its treatment of 1–2 Kings as literature. The author consistently demonstrates appreciation for the narrative art of the text, and she notes features in the text such as irony, wordplay, sarcasm, repetition, and pejorative speech. Van Wijk-Bos clearly is well versed in the methods of literary criticism; readers can see the positive results of such an approach.

Van Wijk-Bos helps readers of 1–2 Kings read the stories closely. She provides thoughtful questions as she engages the text, usually falling short of offering authoritative conclusions but instead leading readers to look at what the text says and ask questions about its meaning and significance. She focuses on the meaning and application of the text in its original setting. However, she typically does not ask the question of contemporary application: In light of the truths of this text, how ought we to live?

In the preface, van Wijk-Bos refers to her "deep commitments to feminism and issues of gender and to analysis of patriarchal structures and ideologies" (p. x). In light of such a statement, perhaps it would be fair for readers to expect occasional polemics reflecting the author's ideological pre-commitments. However, that is not the case. Instead, expressions of her own philosophy are limited to giving special attention to certain passages that may relate to her "deep commitments." For example, van Wijk-Bos devotes a few additional pages to an exploration of the character of Jezebel. Her exploration falls short of a defense of Jezebel, though she does seem to compliment her with comments like, "She was a strong woman, faithful to the religion of her ancestors." She acknowledges Jezebel's "grave sins," but invites readers to interpret her "by allowing her to have the right to her sins, to be as flawed as any other character in the Bible" (p. 223). Van Wijk-Bos even compares Jezebel to David and Elisha—sinners to be sure, but also Yahwists. The author's analysis here likely aids in counterbalancing some post-biblical exaggerations about Jezebel's wickedness, such as being an icon of sexual sin.

However, van Wijk-Bos's analysis also seems to cause her to veer away from the perspective of the biblical writer, which is otherwise uncharacteristic of this book. The writer/editor of Kings hardly needed Jezebel to be a prostitute or temptress in order to be worthy of condemnation; she only needed to worship the wrong god, and Jezebel seems thoroughly guilty of that fundamental transgression, unlike just "any other [flawed] character in the Bible." In other words, the biblical writer does not commend Jezebel for being "faithful to the religion of her ancestors." To the contrary, Jezebel is condemned for being unfaithful to the religion of Israel's ancestors.

It is difficult to say about most biblical commentaries that they are enjoyable to read; this volume is an exception in that regard. Van Wijk-Bos writes in attractive prose, and she has succeeded in carefully engaging the text of Scripture while also thoughtfully engaging modern readers. Hence, this book will serve well as a

guide to beginning readers of 1–2 Kings, while providing enough information to make the volume helpful for all readers.

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The Mother of the Infant King, Isaiah 7:14: ʿalmâ and parthenos in the World of the Bible: A Linguistic Perspective. By Christophe Rico and Peter J. Gentry. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2020, 232 pp. $28.00 paper.

Christophe Rico and Peter Gentry have provided a thorough and thoughtful argument about the identity of the *ʿalmâ* in Isaiah 7:14. Contrary to the majority opinion, they argue that the *ʿalmâ* of Isaiah 7:14 is not merely a young woman but a virgin. Many scholars will undoubtedly approach this thesis skeptically, but they will also undoubtedly be challenged by the arguments this book advances. Indeed, the authors have provided a thorough investigation into this topic worthy of careful consideration by all interested in this important topic.

The authors divide the book into six sections with two stimulating appendices. The first two sections serve as introductions. After introducing readers to the topics, Rico discusses the meaning of *parthenos* (pp. 11–21). In these pages, Rico argues that the semantic range of *parthenos* in Archaic Greek was broad: it could designate either an unmarried young girl or a virgin. In Jewish Koine Greek, the semantic range narrowed to designate only a young virgin (p. 18). Here, Rico touches briefly on the issue of LXX Genesis 34:3 since the LXX translator has described Dinah as a *parthenos* after Shechem lay with her (Gen 34:3). Although this datum seems to derail Rico and Gentry's thesis, Rico argues this is simply another example of the Genesis translator's use of formal and classical language (p. 18).

Next, Rico presents and evaluates why many scholars restrict the semantic range of *ʿalmâ* to "young woman" (pp. 22–65). The first argument is the etymological argument. Some argue that since *ʿelem*, the comparable masculine form of *ʿalmâ*, does not imply virginity, then neither does *ʿalmâ*. Rico points out that most languages have a specific word for a virgin girl, while it is rare for a language to have a word to specifically represent a virgin boy (p. 25). Second, some argue that *ʿalmâ* means "young woman," not "virgin," because if it did, it would duplicate the word *bətûlâ* (pp. 26–30). Rico demonstrates that languages typically have multiple words to describe young females that often have up to four nuances: social status, civil state, age, and virginity. Given these details, simply because *bətûlâ* and *ʿalmâ* both refer to a female virgin does mean they are mere duplicates. Third, Rico discusses the textual problem of Proverbs 30:19 and concludes the MT is corrupt (pp. 31–42). Finally, Rico surveys medieval Jewish tradition and shows that multiple rabbinic sources interpret *ʿalmâ* as "virgin," not merely as a "young woman" (pp. 42–65).

After surveying and evaluating the arguments against his view, Rico then provides a semantic study of *ʿalmâ* (pp. 66–160). He begins this section by surveying the words that communicate the idea of "young female" (pp. 67–72). Then he dis-

cusses the musical uses of the derivates of *ʿalmâ* (pp. 72–89). Rico then discusses the Biblical Hebrew words that imply the idea of virginity (pp. 89–113). Finally, a thorough discussion of Isaiah 7:14 is presented (pp. 113–60).

In Rico's conclusion (pp. 161–68), he summarizes his main arguments and discusses in depth the issue of lexical substitution. In the end, Rico argues that both inductive and deductive approaches to the evidence yield a similar conclusion: *ʿalmâ* designates a teenage girl who is a virgin in Biblical Hebrew (p. 168).

Two very helpful appendices conclude the book. In appendix 1, Rico provides translations for several important rabbinic sources. Gentry supplements Rico's work with two textual studies of Isaiah 7:14 and Proverbs 30:19. In addition, he discusses the immediate and broader literary context of Isaiah 7:14.

This work has many strengths. First, Rico presents the counterarguments fairly. For example, he devotes more than forty pages to presenting the arguments used to defend the interpretation of *ʿalmâ* as "young woman" (pp. 22–65). There are at least two benefits to this approach: 1) It provides those less familiar with these arguments the ability to "get up to speed" on the broader arguments without reading other works. 2) It allows the reader to see the potential positives of the consensus view. Overall, his forthright presentation of the arguments and data is a helpful approach given the controversial nature of this topic.

Second, although Rico's argument is very technical, he defines his technical terms clearly. One example among many is his definition of *seme*. In a concise footnote, Rico states that "a *seme* is the smallest unit of meaning recognized in semantics" (p. 66 n 1). Due to the technical nature of the argument, he should use precise, technical language. However, this language can present a large barrier to many potential readers. Rico's careful definitions allow him to remain precise in his language while preserving a level of readability.

Third, Rico and Gentry are thorough. One example is that Rico translates several Jewish rabbinic sources germane to this discussion. Some of these sources were previously untranslated. Even if readers disagree with the authors' central claim, they will appreciate this contribution to the field.

Although this book contains several strengths, one area to improve is that the work is not easy to read. Although Rico does an excellent job of defining technical terms, he transliterates the Hebrew. Moreover, he does not always translate his transliterations (e.g., p. 74). Thus, only readers who are familiar with Hebrew transliteration will be able to work through Rico's arguments with any sense of ease. This barrier is an unnecessary hindrance for the reader, especially given the argument's already technical nature.

Overall, Rico and Gentry have provided scholars an essential contribution to what is perhaps the most debated passage of Scripture. Scholars will welcome the

thoughtfulness and thoroughness of this work, and the authors will undoubtedly convince many that *ʿalmâ* means only "virgin" in Biblical Hebrew.

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Zephaniah—Malachi. By Gary V. Smith and Timothy D. Sprankle. Kerux Commentaries. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2020, 375 pp., $32.99.

The realm of biblical commentaries has traditionally been divided into distinct categories: critical, pastoral, and devotional. While critical commentaries dominate the classroom, most have proven too technical for many preachers/teachers in the church to use with great confidence in their preparation. Conversely, pastoral and devotional commentaries—though often offering great application of Scripture to a modern context—generally lack the technical insights critical commentaries provide. The new Kerux Commentaries series seeks to bridge the gap between the critical and the pastoral by providing commentaries that offer a technical awareness with a preaching/teaching focus. In order to provide the technical awareness of critical commentaries and the homiletical thrust of pastoral commentaries, the series combines expert biblical exegetes with experienced homileticians to produce each volume in the series.

This volume comprises the last four books of the Minor Prophets: Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The authors have broken down each of the four books into sections for preaching (e.g., Zeph 1:1–2:3; 2:4–3:8; 3:9–20), and the commentary begins with an overview of these preaching sections. For each passage, Smith and Sprankle have provided the (1) exegetical idea, (2) theological focus, (3) preaching idea, and (4) preaching points/pointers. These are fleshed out in greater detail later in the commentary, but this brief overview provides a handy starting point for preachers and teachers as they prepare to teach.

The introduction to each of the four books treated in this commentary includes a number of items one would expect to find as part of any number of critical commentaries. Issues regarding authorship, place and date of writing, as well as the historical setting and occasion for writing are treated with great care to assist the reader's understanding of the book. The authors point to the biblical text when specific mentions of authorship or place and date of writing are available as confirmation of their positions while also including historical references and knowledge that would have been understood by the original audience but may be somewhat foreign to modern readers. At the same time, Smith and Sprankle also demonstrate a willingness to engage with critical scholars on some of the more debated issues in the text (e.g., date and authorship of Zechariah 9–14, later dating of the book of Haggai, and the meaning and understanding of the name "Malachi"). These introductions also include a note about the original audience of each book and its theological emphasis. At the conclusion of each introduction is an outline of the book, upon which the aforementioned preaching sections are based, as well as a

short list of resources for further reading, including commentaries, histories, encyclopedia entries, and more.

The commentary sections for each book begin with a restatement of the previous overview, and the verse-by-verse exposition is preceded by a brief section on the literary structure and theme(s) of the given passage. What is perhaps most striking about the exposition portion, particularly in comparison with other pastoral commentaries, is the attention the authors give to a variety of technical issues that aid in the understanding of the message of the prophets. For instance, the section on Zephaniah 2:4–3:8 offers a brief description of "woe oracles" (set apart in a gray text box that cannot help but catch the reader's eye), and the section on Haggai 2:1–9, which has the Feast of Sukkot as its backdrop, contains a chart of the Jewish calendar complete with the names of the Hebrew months, their length and corresponding month(s) in the Gregorian calendar, as well as specific Jewish holidays within those months and particular OT references. The section treating Zechariah 1:1–6 also includes an illustration depicting the chronology of the Persian period, listing the rulers of the Persian empire from Cyrus to Artaxerxes along with corresponding biblical events (e.g., progression of the Temple rebuild, active prophets, rulers/overseers in Jerusalem). Throughout the exposition sections of this commentary, readers will find a plethora of illustrations, brief excursuses, charts, and timelines, all aimed at producing historical awareness for greater understanding of the given texts.

In addition to the historical and contextual insights the authors provide, the exposition of each passage also highlights textual matters. Throughout the exposition, readers will find translation analyses, comparing the translations of certain words or phrases in different English versions (e.g., NASB, NIV, HCSB), as well as word analyses that highlight Hebrew words and their specific usage in a given passage. Even apart from these particular interjections into the text of their exposition, Smith and Sprankle often denote the Hebrew word behind English translations within their exposition and use it to provide greater insight into the original understanding of the passage. One such example, oft debated in evangelical circles, is the presence of *ha-saṭan* in Zechariah 3:1–2. While most modern English translations have elected to translate this "Satan," Smith and Sprankle prefer to translate this as "the Adversary" and note that the Hebrew definite article generally does not precede a person's name. They go on to note that the OT understanding of "the Adversary" was not as well developed as the NT understanding of "Satan," and therefore, one cannot simply impose all that is known about Satan in the NT onto Zechariah 3. This is simply one example of the textual insights Smith and Sprankle provide throughout their exposition.

Smith and Sprankle also delve into the homiletic approach for each passage. Following the verse-by-verse exposition, the authors provide the theological focus of each passage and a section dedicated to "preaching and teaching strategies." This section begins with a synthesis of the exegetical exposition and theological focus that precede it and is intended as a bridge to the homiletical focus at the end of each passage discussion. The authors offer a succinct "preaching idea" that can serve as the main idea of a sermon/lesson for the passage followed by a "contem-

porary connections" section in which Smith and Sprankle encourage the preacher/teacher to ask three questions of the text: (1) What does it mean? (2) Is it true? (3) Now what? The "strategies" sections also include various creative presentations such as humorous skits, suggested images or video clips, and references to other popular culture items that can be used to drive home the point of each passage. The homiletically focused sections conclude with discussion questions for a teaching setting (e.g., small group Bible study).

Overall, this commentary series offers an exciting new approach to aid biblical preaching and teaching. Smith and Sprankle have done a masterful job of combining a wealth of exegetical insights with a homiletical focus intended to make preachers and teachers of the Word better students of the Word also. While this commentary is not intended to replace more critical commentary series like Anchor Bible, New International Commentary, or even New American Commentary, one will find a great deal of historical, contextual, and textual awareness not traditionally found in other pastoral or devotional series.

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A Beginner's Guide to New Testament Studies: Understanding Key Debates. By Nijay K. Gupta. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020, xii +196 pp., $24.99 paper.

Nijay Gupta has provided an excellent primer on the key debates in the academic study of the NT. Written from an evangelical point of view in clear, engaging language with relatively brief chapters and interesting anecdotes, it is targeted for students at the beginning of their studies. It would be appropriate for either undergraduate or graduate students approaching academic study of the NT for the first time. Gupta defines his target, writing, "This textbook aims to aid the uninitiated in understanding, in a simple way, some of the most important and hotly debated issues in academic study of the New Testament" (p. xi).

Thirteen chapters present a consistently balanced, reasoned summary of the ongoing debates among NT scholars: "The Synoptic Problem," "The Historical Jesus," "The Fourth Gospel and History," "Jesus and Paul," "Paul's Theological Perspective," "Paul and the Jewish Law," "Interpreting the Book of Revelation," "Pseudonymity and the New Testament Letters," "The New Testament and the Roman Empire," "Women in Leadership in the New Testament," "Justification by Faith and Judgment according to Works," "The Old Testament in the New Testament," and "The Application and Use of Scripture."

Gupta does an excellent job of introducing each topic, defining terminology, summarizing two or more perspectives, and providing his own reflections on the key points of the debate for life and ministry. His conclusions include suggestions for how he believes the given debate might progress in the future, for instance, how studies of memory and testimony will enrich our understanding of what the Gospels are or how translation theory might illumine the use of the OT in the NT. His discussion is thorough, but he leaves enough room for a classroom lecturer to

supplement the chapter's material if desired. Each chapter ends with an ample bibliography divided into categories of "Beginner" ("basic but longer readings that will orient readers to the subject") and "Advanced" ("more technical"). Additional bibliography is included on the views presented in the chapter ("to get firsthand knowledge of a view's perspective and argumentation"), such as bibliography on the New Perspective on Paul in the chapter on "Paul and the Jewish Law" and on hierarchical male leadership and egalitarian leadership in the chapter on "Women in Leadership in the New Testament."

Gupta clearly outlines "the key problems, paradoxes, methodological issues, and questions that undergird and generate the disagreement" (p. xii). This is especially valuable for uninitiated readers who have not yet grasped the implications of the history of the biblical text and the complexities of reading ancient texts in their own historical and cultural settings that are far different from modern sensibilities and expectations. But it is also a useful resource even for those working in NT studies who don't have time to keep up with current debates in other parts of the canon or on emerging topics.

The book is judicious in the selection of topics and thorough in each discussion. But some readers may find the chapter on interpreting the book of Revelation lacking in its organization and content. After presenting the Preterist and Historicist view of interpretation, Gupta discusses the Futurist perspective, including within it a very brief description of premillennial and postmillennial views. One might expect amillennialism to be mentioned together with these two views or perhaps in the subsequent discussion of the fourth approach, the Idealist, but it is omitted altogether. In fact, millennial views should probably have been handled in their own section, since various millennial views can be found among proponents of the approaches he discusses. Furthermore, Gupta's handling of dispensationalism is too reductionistic when he writes, "Scholars who subscribe to a dispensational approach to eschatology and biblical chronology split into two main views on the nature and placement of the millennium" (p. 97). But dispensationalists also have varying views of the timing of the rapture with respect to the seven-year tribulation—pre-tribulational, mid-tribulational, and post-tribulational—eschatological positions which are not even mentioned. Instead, after mentioning the *Left Behind* series, Gupta presents four statements that argue for rejecting the idea of a rapture (p. 98). Reformed eschatology as an alternative to dispensationalism is not mentioned. This chapter would need to be extensively explained and supplemented if the book is used in an academic course. But this could provide an opportunity for the instructor to present and argue for the particular eschatological viewpoint espoused by the teaching institution.

Although the book is targeted for the beginner, the reader's understanding would be deepened by some grounding in previous or accompanying knowledge of the books of the NT. For instance, it is one thing to discuss the synoptic problem in the abstract, but a deeper understanding can be reached if readers have actually read the Synoptic Gospels and experienced the issues for themselves. It is one thing to describe the use of the OT in the NT, but readers would profit from discovering for themselves how NT quotations of the OT don't always match the OT

source text. Because Gupta's book is not intended to present background knowledge of the individual NT books, for classroom use it should probably be paired with one of the standard NT introductions that cover the entire NT canon. Classroom instructors will find the book convenient for laying the groundwork for academic study of the NT, freeing time in class for digging deeper into points deemed worthy of more discussion or for activities of learning and application. The interested layperson or pastor would also benefit from this thoroughly engaging and thought-provoking book that will enhance every reader's knowledge of the academic study of the NT, perhaps answering questions readers didn't even know they had.

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The New Testament in Its World: An Introduction to the History, Literature, and Theology of the First Christians. By N. T. Wright and Michael Bird. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2019, 992 pp., $41.99.

The New Testament in Its World is a richly resourced volume that delivers an introduction to the NT with both the charm of C. S. Lewis at a fireside chat and the rigor of the best of contemporary NT scholarship. It is well-suited for the scholar-pastor, but it is equally adept at communicating effectively and engagingly with students at the undergraduate or graduate level. As a professor of undergraduate students, however, I find the book too long to be able to assign every chapter for a single semester introductory NT course.

In a snapshot, the volume is arranged in nine sections dealing with all of the NT books as well as sections on Greco-Roman and Jewish backgrounds, the historical Jesus, the apostle Paul, the formation of the canon, and textual criticism.

Part I ("Reading the New Testament") consists of four chapters that set the stage by presenting the NT as at once history, theology, and literature (chap. 1). Chapter 2 presents an explication of Wright's well-known critical realist approach to history (found in its full form in his book *The New Testament and the People of God*). Yet, although the chapter is shorter in this book, it is still quite abstract. It would have been of greater benefit to the average reader if the discussion had explored some tools, praxes, or methodologies that demonstrate how to incorporate this historical method into one's own engagement with the NT. Chapters 3 and 4 do an excellent job of introducing the reader to the concepts of the literary and theological components of the NT.

The second part ("The World of Jesus and the Early Church") covers the Jewish and Greco-Roman backgrounds of the NT (chaps. 5–7), with chapter 5 presenting a comprehensive introduction to Judaism between the Persian and Roman Empires, and chapter 6 providing a captivating overview of Second Temple Judaism. Here, readers meet with some of the most widely agreed upon fruit of the New Perspective, namely, the concept that the Jewish laws and concepts of legal purity were not, by and large, viewed as legalism ladders but instead functioned as

"boundary markers" marking out, not merely individual purity but corporate identity (p. 126). The following chapter (chap. 7) presents a concise and compelling rendering of Greco-Roman backgrounds for NT study.

Parts III and IV ("Jesus and the Victory of God" and "The Resurrection of the Son of God," respectively) span seven chapters (chaps. 8–14) and are an invaluable resource for students of the NT. As the titles might suggest to those familiar with Wright's scholarly works these chapters summarize his core ideas on the Quests for the Historical Jesus, Jesus's understanding of his own identity and vocation as Messiah and Son of God, and the nature of the resurrection as bodily resurrection understood to be a reference to "transformed physicality" (pp. 312–13), and a host of other topics. Of particular note is the clear assertion that "Jesus' bodily resurrection" refers to "a true event in history" (p. 297). The importance that such orthodox scholarship has for the health and doctrine of the church cannot be overstated.

Part V ("Paul and the Faithfulness of God") comprises nine chapters and covers the entire Pauline (and disputed Pauline) canon. This section amalgamates the core arguments of Wright's massive Pauline magnum opus *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* and more. The authors present a stunning sweep of Paul's life, theology, and literature in a way that many will perceive as more balanced than any of Wright's prior popular level works. Readers are introduced to core Pauline concepts that explain Paul's rethinking of Judaism around the Messiah and the Spirit organized under the paradigm of monotheism, election, and eschatology (see, e.g., p. 370). Orthodox, balanced, and broad, even Luther's Commentary on Galatians is quoted warmly (p. 408). Likewise, Wright's usually pointed polemic against apocalyptic readings of Paul is dialed back a bit in intensity while still managing to communicate a substantive critique that views the "apocalyptic" approach of interpreters such as J. Louis Martyn and Douglas Campbell as being "largely discontinuous with Israel's salvation history" (p. 413).

In the discussion on 1–2 Thessalonians (chap. 18) the authors are prophetic and brave in their uncompromising theological assertion that "bodies matter; maleness and femaleness matter; they are central parts of God's good creation, not disposable toys" (p. 431). Even the chapter on Romans (chap. 22) presents a balanced, notably Wrightian reading without ever appearing polemical or aggressive in its engagement with the history of interpretation on justification. This chapter constitutes the most winsome and successful presentation of Wright's views within a framework that enhances, expands, and appreciates rather than replaces or rhetorically spars with older perspectives on Paul. Still, to those who remain terminally allergic to Wright's approach to righteousness as "covenant faithfulness" in Romans, his treatment of the epistle will be objectionable even with the more integrated and ecumenical tone in which it is presented in this volume.

In the same vein, while I personally found the book's treatment of the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles to be perfectly balanced and indicative of the broad tent of global orthodox and evangelical thought, some readers might not be satisfied that one of the authors (Wright) is placed under the category entitled "1 Timothy and Titus are pseudepigraphal while 2 Timothy is authentic" (p. 536). The

book itself, however, certainly does not discount Pauline authorship, and, in fact, presents it as one of four viable and potential schools of thought on the matter.

The most notable area of critique falls within chapter 20. While it makes good structural and pedagogical sense to include Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon together within a single chapter, nevertheless this causes the space allotted to these epistles to lack in depth and scope. I would have preferred to have seen Colossians/Philemon presented together and Ephesians treated in its own chapter. As a result of the cluster grouping here, spiritual warfare (Eph 6:10–20), for example, receives only passing remarks in the form of a six-sentence summary paragraph (p. 471). This would have been a perfect spot to provide a more extensive engagement with global south theologies on the topic of demonic powers and spiritual warfare. In future editions of the book, this would be an ideal place to course-correct and provide a more suitable, comprehensive treatment of Colossians and Ephesians.

Parts VI–VII cover the Gospels, the Catholic epistles and Revelation, the formation of the canon, and a conclusion. While generally finding a balanced and comprehensive overview of the Gospels, some readers will disagree with Wright's popularized preterist reading of Mark 13. Likewise, the treatment of atonement in the Book of Hebrews may provoke a bit of controversy with its assertion that "the whole point of the sacrificial system was never, after all, about animals being killed by way of vicarious punishment. That notion has crept into Christian understandings of 'sacrifice' by an illegitimate transfer of ideas from Paul's law-court imagery" (p. 723). While this treatment of the sacrificial aspect of the atonement in the OT and NT is not, in and of itself, problematic, it would benefit from some clarification. In particular, many scrupulous readers will want to know more directly where (or if) the authors consider the theme of punishment to be operative within the New Testament's teaching on the atonement, albeit, located outside of the sacrificial metaphorical space.

In the Catholic epistles, the typically Wrightian claim that "final justification is never independent of moral transformation" (p. 745) in Wright's comments on the Epistle of James is not a problem, provided that one employs the same framework of terminology and concepts as Wright in one's approach to the doctrine of justification. For those who are not so inclined, however, the phraseology might present room for unnecessary confusion or inadvertent misrepresentation of his views. Given the propensity for scholars to misread Wright's verbiage and theological framework, greater clarity would make such comments less open to frequent critique and misunderstanding.

Whether one has been traveling the roads of the NT for quite some time or is entirely new to this path of study, *The New Testament in Its World* constitutes a special gift to the church and to the academy. It is a gift that invites readers of all levels into a deeply spiritual and satisfying saturation in the Word of God and the world in which it came to be written.

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Numismatics and Greek Lexicography. By Michael P. Theophilos. T&T Clark Biblical Studies. London: T&T Clark, 2020, xiv + 280 pp., $115.00.

Theophilos has provided an exceptionally well-researched monograph that both surveys and illustrates for biblical scholars the how and the why of a specialized topic: the study of ancient Greek and Roman coins. The aim of the volume is to encourage and equip NT scholars to explore "the implications of the numismatic material for contributions to lexicography, particularly as it pertains to linguistic features of post-classical Greek," and with attention to NT *cruces interpretationis* (p. 5). With this goal in view, the volume has two complementary parts. In the first half of the book, Theophilos explores the methodology of numismatics in some depth over four chapters, while in the second half he provides a series of case studies demonstrating the value of numismatics for NT studies.

In the introduction, Theophilos points to lacunae within biblical scholarship that ancient coins can help fill. As his title indicates, chief among these for Theophilos is Greek lexicography, a discipline in which even the most up-to-date reference works lag almost comically behind the available primary evidence. With that in mind, Theophilos rightly seeks to demonstrate the importance of adding coins to the list of ancient sources that Greek lexicons ought to incorporate. Neither does it escape Theophilos that coins are germane to numerous other research areas, such as the study of ancient social customs, archaeology, ideology, and economics. He therefore exhorts NT scholars to give them more attention as relevant and valuable sources, illustrating their relevance for this wider swath of applications.

Because numismatics exists largely within its own scholarly silo, the following three chapters orient readers to the intricacies of the study of ancient coins. Chapter 2 overviews the history of coinage, including its possible origins and early developments. It is in this chapter that the reader begins to enjoy numerous, high-resolution images of coins to illustrate the discussion, a feature that enriches the entire volume thereafter. Theophilos pays attention to physical aspects of these early coins, discussing matters of imagery, denomination, and composition. Chapter 3 then introduces several practical aspects of working with ancient coins, listing the main editions in which images of coins are published, providing extensive secondary bibliography, and explaining how to interpret entries for specific coins in such sources. For newcomers to numismatics, this chapter is a wealth of useful information. Chapter 4 goes on to discuss several critical issues in the use of ancient coins as historical and linguistic sources. These issues include the ideological purposes of coins themselves in both their imagery and text, navigating matters of the geographic distribution and social origins of coins or caches that have been discovered, and the challenges involved in dating, circulation, and fraud. Despite these many complications, Theophilos demonstrates how coins may be used as reliable evidence for study of the ancient world.

The second part of the volume contains seven chapters, each presenting a case study focusing upon a specific word, group, or phrase. These include: φίλος (chap. 5), καρποφόρος (chap. 6), νεωκόρος (chap. 7), θεός, ἐλευθερία, εἰρήνη καὶ ἀσφάλεια, Κάβειρος (chap. 8), χαρακτήρ (chap. 9), κτίστης (chap. 10), and

βασιλεὺς βασιλέων (chap. 11). For the most part, each chapter in the second half of the book introduces the reason for the word(s) studied, which is typically tied to rarity, ambiguity, or other interpretive uncertainties in the NT or the current state of Greek lexicography. Some discussion of key historical backgrounds is then provided before focusing on the numismatic evidence in terms of language, imagery, politics, and so on. Each chapter then points to implications of the study of coins for the matters raised at the outset, along with general conclusions. The volume as a whole is brought to a close by summarizing the content of the volume chapter-by-chapter and offering final statements and identification of further avenues of research.

At a general level, Theophilos has certainly achieved his goal. This volume is invaluable in terms of the kind of orientation and practical guidance it offers for those who wish to undertake numismatic research. Furthermore, the case studies provide useful demonstrations of the relevance of ancient coins in numerous aspects of biblical scholarship.

At the same time, however, not all case studies are equally convincing. In particular, it is not clear whether or how the study of ancient coins in certain chapters contributes to the task of Greek lexicography per se, as indicated in the title of the book. For example, the numismatic evidence for καρποφόρος helps "geographically contextualize" its use the NT (p. 126); the chapter on νεωκόρος mainly highlights flaws and "inaccuracies" in the numismatic research of others (p. 142); the numismatic evidence martialed for θεός, ἐλευθερία, εἰρήνη καὶ ἀσφάλεια, and Κάβειρος primarily reinforces and supports various aspects of scholarly discussions already underway (pp. 152, 163); and the chapter on χαρακτήρ identifies numerous lines of evidence, of which coins are only part, merely to conclude that the semantic domain of the word is "much more complicated" than current lexicons imply, but without any attempt to resolve it (p. 173). To be sure, the numismatic evidence is relevant for the discussions in these chapters, the research rigorous, the conclusions generally sound, and Theophilos is right to encourage others to follow his lead. But none of the conclusions in these chapters are specifically lexicographical in nature, in the sense that their findings would or should appear in future lexicons. In these chapters, numismatic research advances the discussion in an area other than lexicography. In other chapters, however, numismatic research does have specifically lexicographical contributions to make. The last two chapters in particular contain findings that will clarify and improve certain lexicographical entries with new information, rather than simply adding more citations from coins to the existing sense divisions.

The preceding observations may not necessarily constitute a weakness in the book so much as a possible weakness in its title. This volume may have more appropriately been called *Numismatics and New Testament Studies*, since in many ways its value and interest lie in areas much broader than just Greek lexicography. This approach would have positioned the book as more broadly applicable and perhaps have helped unify its emphasis. For instance, the reader gets slightly conflicting messages even in the introduction. On the one hand, Theophilos says that the book is meant primarily to demonstrate the applications of numismatic research "to NT

studies" with contributions to lexicography only a "corollary" goal (p. 3). Yet later, after discussing the many applications of numismatics for NT studies at large, Theophilos states that his concerns are "exclusively with the linguistic" (p. 6). Perhaps the reason for these dueling statements lies in the origins of the case study chapters as individual research papers that could have been more thoroughly unified in the writing up stage (see, for example, the phrase "this *paper*" on pp. 115, 126). Even so, none of this diminishes the essential value or message of the book. Theophilos is to be commended for providing a practical tool for engaging a highly specialized area of research and has painted a clear and compelling picture for more scholars to take up the task themselves. May their numbers increase.

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The Lord's Prayer and the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel. By Charles Nathan Ridlehoover. Library of NT Studies 616. London: T&T Clark, 2020, xi + 242 pp., $115.00.

In *The Lord's Prayer and the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel*, Charles Nathan Ridlehoover argues the Lord's Prayer is central to the Sermon on the Mount both structurally (as it sits centrally) and lexically and thematically (as the rest of the Sermon expounds on the requests in the prayer). The location and connections to the other parts of the Sermon clarify what the petitions might look like in the life a disciple of Jesus. In essence, the rest of the Sermon is a commentary on or expansion of the requests in the Lord's Prayer.

Though some have suggested the centrality of the Prayer, fewer have seen the lexical and thematic connections or construed them as tightly. Ridlehoover does not argue the Sermon was built and ordered around the Prayer, "but Matthew has seen and enhanced the lexical and thematic parallels with the petitions, bringing out continuity between the two texts" (p. 2). He states there is abundant evidence the texts should be read together.

He constructs his proposal by initially surveying various structures of the Sermon and arguing for the centrality of the Prayer. The bulk of the book examines the various petitions in the Prayer and their lexical and thematic connections to the rest of the Sermon. He divides it into three sections, moving from the most Matthean redacted, in comparison with Luke, to the least.

First, he examines the father ("Our Father who is in heaven"), will ("your will be done in earth as in heaven"), and evil ("deliver us from evil") petitions because these are the most Matthean. Calling on the Father in heaven entails a commitment to Sermon living as shown in prayer (5:45; 6:6, 8, 14, 15, 26, 32; 7:11), good works and righteousness (5:16, 48; 6:1, 4, 18; 7:21), and being part of God's family (5:9, 21–26). Requesting that God's will be done is related to asking the Father to help us embody the beatitudes (5:3–12), be salt and light (5:13–16), live according to God's laws (5:17–20), speak truthfully (5:33–37), love our enemies (5:45, 58), and practice righteousness (6:1, 19–21, 22–24). Asking for deliverance from evil con-

nects to avoiding slander (5:11), falsehood (5:37), retaliation (5:39), hating your enemy (5:45), and bearing bad fruit (7:17–18).

Second, he looks to the kingdom ("let your kingdom come"), bread ("give us this day our daily bread"), and forgiveness ("forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors") petitions. Though these are found in Luke, they have distinctive Matthean elements. Praying "your kingdom come" implies embodying the kingdom ethics in the beatitudes (5:3–10), fulfilling the law and prophets (5:17–20), seeking the kingdom and righteousness (6:33), and preforming the will of God (7:21–23). The bread petition is a request to rely on God for daily sustenance (6:25–34; 7:7–11) and may be echoed in the disciples hungering and thirsting after righteousness (5:6; 6:19–21). The forgiveness petition requests to repair broken relationships as God has repaired relationships (6:14–15) which means acting mercifully (5:7; 6:14–15), seeking reconciliation (5:21–26), resisting retaliation (5:38–42), loving and praying for enemies (5:43–47), and avoiding unnecessary judgment (7:1–5).

Third, he concludes with the Name (hallowing God's name) and temptation ("lead us not into temptation") petitions. Though these are not distinctive they also link thematically with other elements in the Sermon. Hallowing God's name entails doing good works before men (5:16; 7:21–23), being honest (5:33–37), and performing God's law (7:21–23). The temptation petition is explained in the Sermon by the avoidance of exerting ruthless power (5:11–12), retaliation (5:38–42), hating enemies (5:43–47), the allure of earthly treasures (6:19–21), greed (6:24), and other such items.

Ridlehoover argues his thesis well, and it would be hard to walk away from this study without seeing the Sermon as some sort of commentary on the Prayer and the Prayer a summary of the Sermon. Whether one agrees with all of the thematic and lexical connections is another matter, but my sense is that Ridlehoover would be pleased if one saw the Prayer and Sermon as integrated and mutually interpreting.

Those who question how much "editing" Matthew does may not be convinced by Ridlehoover's argument. Comparing Lukan and/or Markan material with Matthew's, however, makes it hard to sustain the argument that Matthew is not a careful editor of the Jesus material, and it shows that Matthew's Gospel is, arguably, the most structured of all the Gospels. Ridlehoover's monograph also provides an up-to-date survey of how to interpret the petitions and interacts fairly with other scholars. Much debate exists on how to understand the requests in the Lord's Prayer, and I found myself appreciating Ridlehoover's balanced stance on the debates.

I did wonder, given the assessment of Matthew as such a systematic writer, why the petitions and their connections are found at random in the Sermon, as Ridlehoover argues. Additionally, Ridlehoover interacts with other scholars who identify a more systematic link between the petitions and the Sermon and raises good critiques of their proposals, but it left me questioning whether there was more to do on this front. I also wondered if some would object that connections between the Prayer and the rest of Sermon may be apparent simply because they are contained within the same section of Matthew. Could one do a similar study with

the beatitudes (5:3–12) or antitheses (5:21–48)? Ridlehoover rightly shows, however, that the Prayer sits more centrally in the structure than these other subsections.

Ridlehoover is a clear writer, but he also has the tendency to give a summary of the plan and summary of the evidence in every subsection. This is necessary at times, especially toward the beginning and end of chapters, but it was done too generously and ended up being distracting. Even in academic writing the advice not to "tell" but instead "show" proves valuable.

Overall, this is a helpful contribution to studies on the Lord's Prayer and the Sermon on Mount, with a unique focus on the interrelationship between the two.

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Jesus as Teacher in the Gospel of Mark: The Function of a Motif. By Evan Hershman. Library of NT Studies 626. London: T&T Clark, 2020, viii + 190 pp., $115.00.

If Mark refers to Jesus as "teacher" at a proportionally higher rate than Matthew and Luke, why is there so little teaching content found in the Gospel? In an adapted version of his doctoral thesis completed at the Graduate Theological Union under the supervision of Jean-Francois Racine, Evan Hershman sets about the task of showing that Mark "draws upon the well-known cultural commonplace of the itinerant teacher but does so for distinct narrative and rhetorical purposes that are not simply equivalent to the various historical and literary parallels" (p. 2). Hershman is a scholar of the NT and Christian origins whose work particularly focuses on the Greco-Roman context of early Christianity.

The volume begins with a survey of the current state of discussion. One of Hershman's primary interlocutors is Vernon K. Robbins's *Jesus the Teacher: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Mark* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984). Hershman affirms Robbins's emphasis on the *form* of Jesus's teaching. In this case, *form* refers to the repetition of two themes in Mark: (1) In comparison with Jewish prophetic literature, Jesus speaks as a prophet like Isaiah/Jeremiah and Elijah/Elisha, and (2) In comparison with Greco-Roman literature, Jesus gathers disciples to teach. Hershman agrees in part with Robbins's assessment but sees one major flaw with Robbins's approach. While elevating the role of form in his comparative analysis, he ignores the actual content of Jesus's teaching in Mark's Gospel. Hershman also gives attention to the work of Burton Mack and Robert Fowler, although both authors only tangentially focus on Jesus as a teacher in Mark. Hershman's survey is pointed in areas and, unfortunately, abbreviated, given the lack of attention by scholars to the subject.

After upending the typical assumptions about Jesus's depiction as teacher in Mark's Gospel, Hershman provides some notes on methodology, sources, and chapter order. The volume's plan is simple with only three chapters situated between the aforementioned introduction and a conclusion. The first chapter analyzes three texts for comparison with Mark. The selected texts are the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon, the *Discourses* of Epictetus as recorded by Arrian, and Philostratus's *Life*

of Apollonius of Tyana. The careful reader will immediately realize the lack of Jewish comparisons in Hershman's analysis. As Hershman helpfully points out, Jewish precedents do not refer to teachers and their teachings in the same manner as Mark's Gospel. On the other hand, the Greco-Roman texts portray particular teachers as lawgivers and philosophers. These Greco-Roman comparison texts and Mark's Gospel also share attention to "teachable moments," but differ in style, form, and purpose. The Greco-Roman texts have a tendency to propose a "teaching program," but Mark's Gospel decenters its pedagogy from content and emphasizes the "overwhelming authority of Jesus" (p. 70). Chapters 2 and 3 expound on these differences. Hershman specifically turns his attention to Mark's purposes. He argues that the portrayal of Jesus's teaching in the Gospel is Mark's means of (1) advancing the plot, (2) creating a Christological depiction of Jesus, and (3) speaking to the concerns of the Gospel's audience (p. 73). Chapter 2 analyzes Mark 1–8 while chapter 3 analyzes Mark 9–16. Particular attention is focused in chapters 2 and 3 on individual passages that describe Jesus's teaching ministry. Hershman analyzes what is being taught and in what manner.

Hershman accomplishes his stated goal—he provides a thorough analysis of Jesus as teacher in Mark's Gospel. The study shows the intricate relationship in Mark's Gospel between Jesus's teaching and Jesus's authority. Hershman does an excellent job of working through the apparent paradoxes in Mark's Gospel of Jesus as a teacher but without direct evidence of his actual teaching. Also helpful in this study is the defining of key terms and themes at crucial junctures of Hershman's argument. Examples include his treatment of "general aims" of ancient education (pp. 23–26) and "authority" (pp. 74–85). These explanations serve as a necessary backdrop for his argument in general and descriptors for Jesus's ministry in particular.

At times, Hershman appears to jettison history for Mark's rhetorical flair. He critiques those who see Mark's writing as pointing to historical realities, or "what really happened" (see his assessment of Bock on p. 3). In his presuppositions, he states, "we assume here that the author of Mark is a creative author, not merely a reporter of historical 'facts' or inherited tradition" (p. 17). Hershman prefers a final form reading that is unencumbered by authorial "oversight and clumsy editing." While his method is decidedly composition criticism, his language is antagonistic towards even a perceived tension between history and literary prowess. Interestingly though, he does provide some tentative suggestions for the implications of his study for Mark's historical and social context.

Regarding the "kingdom" in Mark, Hershman comments: "At Mark 1:14–15, we are informed in a summary statement what the chief topic of Jesus's ministry *supposedly* was: the kingdom of God" (p. 69, emphasis mine). He follows with a series of observations that supposedly acknowledge the inexact language throughout Mark on the nature of the kingdom (pp. 69–70). For example, the kingdom is "near" and "not far from." Hershman reads the nearness of the kingdom as suggestive that the kingdom is coming of its own volition, without human effort. However, "not far from" insinuates that the kingdom is something human beings reach or attain. Hershman suggests that this type of ambiguous language argues against a

definition of the kingdom in Mark's Gospel. I think this conclusion is unfortunate, given that the kingdom is linked with the good news in 1:14–15 and echoes the very beginning of Mark's writing. Mark's Gospel begins with an introduction to Jesus Christ as the good news and successor to John the Baptist's ministry (vv. 1–8) in fulfillment of the prophet Isaiah. The nearness language in verse 15 is describing the presence of the kingdom in Jesus Christ himself. On the one hand, the connection of the kingdom with Jesus's presence concurs with Hershman's insistence that Jesus's teaching is centered in Jesus himself and his authority in Mark's Gospel. On the other hand, it makes the kingdom central to the Gospel regardless of Hershman's perceived ambiguities.

In conclusion, it is important to note that the suggested criticisms are minor and do not detract from Hershman's overall case. The book is a solid case study on an important topic. Its attention to this aspect of Jesus's ministry is a welcome addition to reading the Gospels carefully and illustrating the impact of Jesus's teaching ministry. It is also helpful to see a proper comparative study in action. Hershman is careful to argue for similarities and highlight differences when comparing the Greco-Roman texts to Mark's Gospel. As Hershman points out in his introduction, attention to Jesus as a teacher in Mark's Gospel has long been ignored with very few exceptions. My hope is that the following volume will begin to remedy this absence and provoke new and exciting studies in this regard.

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History, Biography, and the Genre of Luke-Acts: An Exploration of Literary Divergence in Greek Narrative Discourse. By Andrew W. Pitts. Biblical Interpretation 177. Leiden: Brill, 2019, xvi + 235 pp., $119.00.

This typically handsome Brill volume has been long awaited as the revised version of doctoral research done by Pitts under Stanley Porter at McMaster (2008–2015) and his work on gospel genre, including his Achtemeier Prize-winning essay (SBL 2015). Since then, Dr. Pitts has undertaken new research responding to that discussion, which is greatly appreciated. I welcome this volume as a significant contribution to the debate about gospel genre, and I appreciate how Pitts has sought to respond to previous critiques: this book is a major development of both his SBL paper and his original dissertation. Whether this is enough to convince his critics or establish his case remains to be seen.

As Pitts notes right at the start, the Achtemeier 2015 debate stressed his need to "look more closely at literary theory" and to develop a proper methodology for his arguments about the genre of Luke-Acts. This "dramatically influenced the direction" of this book (p. xi). His opening chapter, "Genre and Method in Luke-Acts Research," provides a concise summary, looking at the modern "consensus" about the Gospels' biographical genre, questioning whether "Burridge's work did account for a kind of paradigm"; this means a "paradigm shift" (as Pitts says a little later) away from "the *sue generis* theory of the Gospels genre" [*sic*]. Thankfully,

Pitts's discussion does spell Bultmann's Latin phrase, *sui generis*, correctly three times in the following pages, with seven instances of three different incorrect ways (pp. 5–10). This does not inspire confidence, since good communication, especially in genre studies, requires attention to detail.

Pitts repeats his Achtemeier critique of my using Wittgenstein's family resemblance theory following the genre literary theorist, Alastair Fowler. Pitts says that, while this provides "detection criteria" for shared family features, it does not have sufficient "disambiguation criteria" for how works differ. He reprints my genre map from *What Are the Gospels?* (p. 64), together with his revised version in which the areas of overlapping *shared* features between *bios* and other genres are described—oddly—as "disambiguation criteria" for *differences*. I welcome Pitts's response here and on p. 41, defining these terms more sufficiently, citing in both places my *What are the Gospels?*, 3rd/25th anniversary edition (Waco, TX: Baylor, 2018, pp. I.76–77), although surprisingly this edition does not appear in his bibliography, which references only 1992 and 2004. However, I still do not understand why the *shared* overlapping features are "how genres *differ* (disambiguation)" (p. 15, my italics).

To undergird his genre theory, Pitts uses the "Sydney School of Linguistics," drawing especially upon Michael Halliday, who has not featured much in biblical scholarship, with the notable exception of Pitts's supervisor, Stan Porter, hence why Pitts turns to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) for genre theory. Pitts draws upon the work of J. R. Martin and David Rose, Halliday's colleagues at Sydney, which was originally concerned with pedagogy for Australian schoolchildren, with particular interest in postcolonialism and in promoting aboriginal children's development.

J. R. Martin defines genres as "staged goal-oriented social processes" (p. 19). Unfortunately, the water is quickly muddied by SFL jargon, using words like "genre agnation" for relationships between genres (even though "agnation" means sharing lineage through the father, through its Latin roots), which are measured along "clines" as a scale or spectrum (as in decline and incline), while "topology" describes the proximity of different genres, and "typology" distinguishes between different genres. These concepts enable Pitts to explore "typological agnation analysis" for genre differences, "topological agnation analysis" for genre likenesses, as well as the "proximity," "elasticity," and "blurring" of genres which he prefers to the clusters of generic features, exemplified in the work of Sean Adams and myself. The omission of any discussion of Wilhelm Kroll's "Kreuzung der Gattungen" or L. E. Rossi's "mistione dei generi" is regrettable (see *What Are the Gospels?*, pp. 54–57). From "feature clines," Pitts develops eight "genre agnation scales": focus, participant identification, initiations, commencements, self-identification, genealogies, time management, and authentication strategy (pp. 47–48).

Chapter 2 identifies a representative corpus of "samples for the Greek historical and biographical genres," which includes nine histories, and a range of biographical works that Pitts views as either "predecessors" or "collected" biographies, leading to the "nothing short of staggering conclusion" that if the gospels are individual Greek βιοι, then they are "literary innovations … quite ahead of their time"

(p. 71). I am not convinced that earlier examples of Greek βιοι, such as Satyrus, or Xenophon's *Agesilaus* (which Pitts does not consider, curiously, preferring the *Cyropaedia*) can be so easily dismissed.

The following chapters discuss his eight "genre agnation scales," two per chapter: focus and participant identification (chap. 3), initiations and commencements (chap. 4), self-identification and genealogies (chap. 5), and time management and authentication strategies (chap. 6). Space does not permit us to handle them in detail here, but, in each case, Pitts concludes that the "genre agnation clines" are closer to Greek history than to βιος.

The concluding chapter draws these themes together, considers the literary unity of Luke-Acts and argues that the result of this consideration of "genre agnation scales" is that "Luke-Acts gravitates more in the direction of the historical side of the spectrum of Greek prose discourse than the biographical side" (p. 167).

Pitts ends, as he began, answering the critique about a proper literary theory of genres for his claim for an historiographical genre of Luke-Acts. Again, he criticizes Fowler's approach of family resemblance seen through generic features and claims that Fowler's model "passed from the scene almost as quickly as it emerged." Instead, Pitts asserts that "J. R. Martin represents one of the most well-developed recent accounts of genre" (p. 165). Actually, Martin's cited works are all 1992, 1993, and 1997, though he co-authored *Genre Relations: Mapping Culture* with David Rose in 2008.

These claims that Martin represents the "most well-developed recent account of genre" and that Fowler's model "passed from the scene" are curious, not least in the light of John Frow's handbook, *Genre*, in the key "New Critical Idiom Series," generally acknowledged to represent the "current state of the discipline of literary studies." Although first published in 2005, it was fully revised for its second edition in 2015. Significantly, Frow is Professor of English at the same University of Sydney, where J. R. Martin is Professor of Linguistics and David Rose is Director of "Reading to Learn"; it is also where Michael Halliday founded the Department of Linguistics in 1976. And yet, despite being in the same university, Frow's handbook on the "current state" of genre studies has no mention of Martin or Rose, and one note that "what Halliday calls linguistic register" is "roughly equivalent" to genre (pp. 16–17, and see the glossary, p. 174). On the other hand, Frow's chapter 3 on "Literary Genre Theory" follows a similar path to that mapped out in the first edition of *What Are the Gospels?,* where he reaffirms Fowler's two main contributions of the levels of mode, genre, and subgenre, and also his account of the "life and death of literary forms" (pp. 55–78), both of which are missing in Pitts.

Despite his enthusiasm for Sydney, Pitts has only one passing reference to Frow (p. 12 n. 62), who does not even discuss the SFL "genre agnation" model. I also contacted biblical scholars in Australia about Pitts's espousal of this approach: only two had even heard of Martin and Rose, of whom one alone was interested, though suggesting that Frow is much more influential. So I am not convinced that Pitts has remedied the lack of literary theory of genre here, however interesting this approach from educating schoolchildren to read may be. Similarly, while the structuralist Jonathan D. Culler has five books in the bibliography, he is only mentioned

once (at second hand) to criticize my "heavy dependence" upon him (pp. 17–18 n. 78); however, his important work on literary theory is never discussed or evaluated.

The book ends with a bibliography and index, though here too there are issues which undermine confidence. The list of Primary Sources and Critical Editions are mostly Loeb editions, while other scholarly critical editions which include commentaries, as well as critical editions and commentaries on biblical books, all appear under Secondary Sources. I am disappointed with the range of scholars and texts used or cited in the bibliography: as well as the baffling absence of Graham Stanton, the failure to discuss authors on genre, like Helen Bond, Edward Klink, Michael Licona, Christopher Bryan, Warren Carter, Andrew Lincoln, and Philip Alexander, is notable (merely listing some in the bibliography is insufficient).

Another regrettable feature, noted already, is the poor editing of English language and spelling, which lets down the handsome production. I do not understand why Brill apparently does not employ copy-editors like other publishers, but instead relies upon the author to produce the final text. I know one Brill author who spent hundreds of pounds of her own money to employ proper copy-editing. Although this volume is better than previous Brill volumes edited by Pitts, it has too many basic errors. Elementary grammatical solecisms include the spelling of the possessive of "it" as both "it's" (meaning "it is") and (the correct) "its" within a few lines of one another (p. 171). Acts' "citation densities" (0.42%) is "nearly reviling Herodotus" (0.45%) presumably "rivalling" (p. 173)? Pitts seems uncertain whether the significant Luke-Acts scholar is Richard PERVO or PREVO: his *Hermeneia* commentary of 2009 appears under **both** names in the Bibliography (pp. 207 and 209), while his influential *Profit with Delight: The Literary Genre of the Acts of the Apostles*, surely crucial for Pitts's topic, is accredited only to 'Prevo' on p. 209—while 'Pervo' alone appears in the Index.

In his analysis of "Greek History Genre," Pitts calls the monumental work of Thucydides the *Archaeology*, while actually this term refers only to the opening section (I.2–1.19) of his *History of the Peloponnesian War* (p. 52). Furthermore, all the references in the Index to Thucydides are actually labelled as "Herodotus" (although placed between "Tacitus" and "Xenophon"), mixing up book and chapter numbers going up to 138.6, and including the authorship of *Val. Max*, and the various *Vitae* (*Aes; Arist; Eur; Soph; Sec*) still under the bold heading of **Herodotus** (a.k.a. Thucydides, pp. 229–230).

In a book on the genre of ***Luke***-Acts, there are only twenty-one references listed to Luke's Gospel, twelve to chapter 1, and seven to chapters 2–3. Luke 24:47–53 is referenced only as anticipating Acts, while Luke 4:16–19:44 is referred to as "a long stretch of text in the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus" (p. 142)! When Pitts ignores practically the whole of Luke's narrative in the gospel from 4:1 to 24:26, it is hardly surprising that he does not see its biographical genre. While I accept that Luke is the author of both books, as in the modern hybrid "Luke-Acts," it is surely crucial that the ancients clearly distinguished them. There is no manuscript evidence where Luke is followed by Acts. In the earliest canons, they are separated by Mark, while the later canonical order of Jerome always has John's gospel in between. This, coupled with the four-fold collections of the gospels, is

clear evidence that, whatever genre the other three gospels were, Luke was included with them, and was interpreted in the same way by the church fathers and down through the centuries. It is hard to imagine Luke and other biblical writers using SFL and genre agnation in what they intend to write and how they expected it to be understood.

Conversely to Pitts's proposal of an historiographical genre, various established experts, like Craig Keener and Helen Bond, and younger scholars like Mike Licona, Sean Adams, Edward W. Klink III, Justin Marc Smith, Daniel L. Smith, and Zachary Lundin Kostopoulos have further developed this biographical understanding of the gospels, although others like Eve-Marie Becker, Elizabeth Shively, as well as Pitts, have confronted it more head on. Thus, it does not yet seem that the time to abandon biography has arrived. Indeed, instead, the biographical approach to the Gospels continues to be refined and extended. Where will it go next?

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To Cast the First Stone: The Transmission of a Gospel Story. By Jennifer Knust and Tommy Wasserman. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019, xix + 440 pp., $45.00, cloth.

The story of the *Pericope Adulterae* (PA) in John 7:53–8:11 continues to touch hearts and raise questions. This book supplies the most recent and exhaustive treatment of the disputed passage. The authors have published previously on textual issues in the NT. Jennifer Knust is a professor at Boston University School of Theology. Tommy Wasserman is a professor and academic dean at Ansgar Teologiske Hogskole in Norway (and editor at http://evangelicaltextualcriticism.blogspot.com).

The book commences with two short sections. The first section is an introduction that whets the reader's appetite for the journey. The PA is widely known in art, literature, film, and public discourse, yet its textual instability has never been forgotten. The second section conveniently lays out the plan for the book. The authors determine to trace the remarkable history of the PA not simply along the lines of textual transmission but of interpretation as well.

The study is then structured in four parts with a total of eight chapters. Part I ("A Case of Textual Corruption?") consists of the first chapter. The authors trace the textual history of the PA through tracing the history of textual criticism itself. The critical editions of the Greek NT that arose in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries intended to correct transmission errors. The PA (and Mark 16:9–20) was exhibit "A" in these efforts. The conclusion of modern scholarship was to overturn the Textus Receptus and the PA that was attached to it. The chapter relates the most recent studies produced on the story, including defenses of the Majority Text, the PA as uncanonical yet still historical, and the PA's rejected transmission due to prevailing patriarchalism. The questions raised in these recent studies are answered in the remainder of the book.

Part II ("The Present and Absent *Pericope Adulterae*") covers chapters 2–4. In chapter 2, Knust and Wasserman relate how the circumstances that surrounded Gospel production in the first few centuries led to the PA's insertion into the Gospel of John. Gospel sayings were loosely cited and rarely attributed to a specific book. Copyists were careful in their copying, but there was no overarching institutional oversight that controlled the content of particular texts. Scribes copied the texts, editors improved them, and readers passed them around. Early Christians considered the PA sacred. Thus, the story continued to be copied and was eventually interpolated into the Gospel of John. The authors assert this was due to "the active shaping of gospel traditions and books by the communities that received them" (p. 51).

Chapter 3 discusses whether or not the PA was purposefully suppressed in transmission history. The "chapter demonstrates that the outright deletion of a significant block of text like the *Pericope Adulterae* from a written Gospel book would be surprising, if not impossible" (p. 97). Evidence to support this claim is found in the editorial and literary objections to any deletions, and the scribal customs of preserving texts even if they regarded them as spurious. Chapter 4 continues the question of possible suppression. Was the PA deleted because of its radical content? The sexual misconduct of women was a common censurable topic. Moreover, the woman showed no repentance. Again, the answer to the question of suppression is "highly unlikely." For example, Susanna confirmed the popularity of stories with similar plots. And the *Didascalia* (third–century book on how to live the Christian life) included the story which assumed the woman was forgiven and reformed.

Chapters 5–6 form Part III ("A Divided Tradition? The *Pericope Adulterae* East and West"). The preservation and presentation of the PA in early medieval manuscripts, preaching, and art confirms that the story was never a peripheral issue. Chapter 5 analyzes the story in the Fourfold Gospel tradition. The significant Greek Bibles of the fourth and fifth centuries (Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Alexandrinus) left the story out. Eusebius was aware of the story from Papias, yet he apparently decided not to place it in his Eusebian Canon Tables. Didymus the Blind was aware of the story "in certain Gospels." But these were not canonical Gospels. Rather, Didymus was referring to apocryphal Gospels. Thus, in the East the story continued to be well known but not necessarily associated with the Gospel of John.

The PA's history in the Latin West fills chapter 6. Unlike the hesitancy found in the East, Ambrose, the Vulgate, and Codex Bezae validated the PA. Jerome and Augustine accepted it as Johannine. The story entered the Gospel of John in the West, but in Greek, not Latin. Thus, by the end of the fourth century, the PA was present in John in both Greek and Latin. It was not present in the "best" or "earliest" manuscripts, "but it was there in some, and that made all the difference" (p. 247).

Part IV ("Liturgical and Scholarly Afterlives of the *Pericope Adulterae*") completes the study with two chapters. Chapter 7 traces the developing story into late antiquity. Paratextual notes, chapter headings and summaries, and annotations in the Old Latin and Byzantine texts reveal the story's lasting influence. Again, the

Old Latin resources highlighted the story, whereas the Greek considered it more marginal. Significantly, the passage received *kephalia* and *capitula* that were attached to most Byzantine copies. The story became "a treasured pearl" with its own title ("about the adulteress") and its own chapter number (10).

Knust and Wasserman agree that the PA originated in Greek, was inserted into John in the Greek-speaking West (in the first half of the third century), and gradually moved to the East, where it achieved dominance through the Byzantine copies, liturgy, and art. They agree that the story should be set off in some way, as UBS does with double square brackets. However, they desire to correct the conception that this automatically marks it inauthentic. The Byzantine manuscripts used obeli and asterisks, which "recalled the story's transmission history in a way that preserved its enduring value within an expansive Byzantine Gospel tradition" (p. 305).

In chapter 8, the authors bring readers up to the PA's reception in early medieval liturgy. When the passage was given the third Saturday of Lent, it gained even more fame, particularly in the Carolingian and Ottonian periods. The PA was depicted in luxurious copies of the Gospels. Meanwhile, although the story remained less prominent in Byzantine tradition, it was still featured on the feast days of female sinner saints and read in penitential contexts. In sum, the story has pivoted around debates on the meaning of "the gospel," the implications of textual change, and the nature of God's mercy.

The bibliography is one of the most valuable additions to this book. It is over sixty pages (pp. 345–409), and divided into lists of papyri, other manuscripts, primary sources, Bible editions (the only English editions, however, are the Orthodox Study Bible and CEB; more versions would have been interesting and helpful), early modern commentaries, reference works and electronic resources, and secondary resources. Certainly, the recent work by Matthew R. Crawford (*The Eusebian Canon Tables: Ordering Textual Knowledge in Late Antiquity* [Oxford University Press, 2019]) would have been incorporated in in their bibliography and discussion in chapter 5 if it had been available. The indexes (pp. 411–40) are divided into Scripture and other ancient writings, manuscripts, and subject.

The strength of this study rests with the authors. Their strengths (Wasserman as textual expert; Knust as historical expert) complement their collaboration. They have worked, presented, and now published over a decade's worth of analysis. They presented in 2014 at a symposium at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. This led to articles contributed in D. A. Black and Jacob C. Cerone, eds., *The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research*, LNTS 551 (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016). Together they have produced the most the comprehensive treatment on the PA to date. NT professors will find this a necessary book to read.

Finally, a work of this size was refreshingly and surprisingly typo free. The typo on page xvii prepared me for the worst, but other typos made escaped my attention. *To Cast the First Stone* answers the mistaken perception that the PA was a marginal issue or a suppressed story. On the contrary, it was a beloved story that

illustrated Christ's mercy. It afforded different audiences the opportunity to incorporate the story into their contexts.

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The Hope of Israel: The Resurrection of Christ in the Acts of the Apostles. By Brandon D. Crowe. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020, xvi + 256 pp., $30.00.

Among the beliefs of early Christians that would have seemed strange or even absurd to first-century Greeks and Romans was the belief that Jesus, a Jew from an insignificant village in Galilee, rose from the dead after being crucified outside the gates of Jerusalem. Beliefs such as this were regarded by many, to use Paul's language, as "foolishness" (1 Cor 1:18, 23). This "foolish" conviction was not an obscure superstition maintained by only a small number of believers but was a central component of early Christian proclamation. Without a resurrection, Christianity dissolves into little more than a system of ethical principles or a misguided eschatological movement based on the teachings of a false Messiah.

Brandon Crowe's latest work, *The Hope of Israel*, cogently demonstrates that the resurrection is not simply an event recorded in the Gospels but is also a major focal point of the Book of Acts. Throughout the volume, Crowe demonstrates that "the resurrection of Christ is one of the major emphases of Acts, which unifies and provides coherence for the theology of Luke's second volume" and that "Luke presents the resurrection of Christ as a singular turning point in the accomplishment of salvation that ushers in the age of the exalted Messiah" (p. 5). The volume does not focus extensively on historical and literary matters (genre, authorship, sources, etc.); Crowe's concern, rather, is the theological significance that Luke places on the resurrection of Jesus. Crowe divides his study into two major units, each of which contain four chapters. The first half of the volume provides exegetical insight regarding several central passages that make reference to the resurrection while the second half addresses the ways in which Luke emphasizes the resurrection's theological importance (p. 6). A brief summary of the individual chapters will follow.

Chapter 1 functions as an introduction to the entire volume. Crowe discusses recent scholarship on the subject of the resurrection in Acts and articulates the major objectives of his study. As he observes, he is not the only contemporary scholar to address the role of the resurrection in Luke's writings. "Plenty of studies have noted the theological importance of the resurrection in Acts," he writes, "yet fewer have provided a sustained and integrated consideration of Luke's contribution in light of the scope of biblical and systematic theology" (p. 14). Kevin Anderson's *"But God Raised Him from the Dead": The Theology of Jesus' Resurrection in Luke-Acts* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2007) is perhaps most comparable to the present volume. Anderson and Crowe have similar objectives, though Anderson's focus is much broader. He evaluates the role of the resurrection in both the Gospel of Luke and Acts and treats a number of Second Temple Jewish writings. Crowe,

on the other hand, focuses specifically on "the centrality of the resurrection of Christ in Acts and its theological implications" (pp. 6–7).

Chapters 2 through 4 examine several speeches and addresses made in Acts that make allusion to or emphasize the importance of the doctrine of the resurrection. In chapter 2, Crowe demonstrates how "the resurrection is central to the Petrine passages in Acts" (p. 46) and how Peter connects the promise of the Holy Spirit to this event and to various prophetic passages contained in the OT. With regard to Paul's addresses (chap. 3), Crowe notes that the speeches such as those delivered in Antioch and Athens "are not isolated examples of resurrection preaching, but are representative of the sort of message that Paul would have consistently delivered in a variety of contexts" (p. 73). Crowe also contends that Paul's defense speeches emphasize the reality of Jesus's resurrection and that Paul's emphasis on the resurrection was consistent with the OT hope (p. 74). Summarizing the speeches of Paul, Crowe writes, "it is clear that the resurrection is not simply one event among many but is the quintessential way that Scripture is fulfilled and is the means by which Jesus as Messiah is Lord of all" (p. 86). Finally, chapter 4 considers the speeches of Stephen (Acts 7:2–53), James (Acts 15), and those of lesser-known figures such as Philip. Crowe's treatment of the various speeches makes a compelling case that the resurrection was not a belief emphasized only occasionally or by only certain Christian leaders but was a central feature of early Christian proclamation.

Following his examination of several speeches in Acts, Crowe proceeds in chapters 5 to 8 to "draw out more systematically what Luke sets forth in narrative form" (p. 105). In chapter 5, Crowe effectively demonstrates that, for Luke, the resurrection "marks the great transition of redemptive history from Jesus's humiliation to his exaltation" (p. 107). The chapter considers several of the ways in which the resurrection ushered in a new eschatological age, and, in the process, changed the function and relevance of institutions such as the temple (pp. 116–120) and the law (pp. 120–24).

Chapter 6 provides a helpful balance to the previous chapter by emphasizing the significant continuity between the various ages of redemptive history. While the resurrection inaugurated a new eschatological age, the subject of chapter 5, Crowe emphasizes in chapter 6 that God's people have always experienced forgiveness of sins (pp. 132–36) and justification (pp. 136–40) through the completed work of Christ. Crowe further concludes that "if there is justification and the forgiveness of sins already before the resurrection of Christ, then the Holy Spirit must have been active with respect to the application of salvation (*ordo salutis*)" even before the resurrection (p. 142). Some readers may not fully embrace Crowe's understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit or the nature of salvation prior to the incarnation of Christ, but he has made a compelling argument that there is, to a significant degree, both continuity and discontinuity between the periods governed by the Old and New Covenants.

With regard to the overall structure of the volume, it might have been beneficial to reverse the order of chapters 5 and 6. This would have allowed Crowe to discuss matters of continuity between the various periods of redemptive history

before considering the epochal nature of the resurrection. In the current arrangement, chapter 6 ended with a somewhat anticlimactic observation that the major difference between the age before and the age after the resurrection is simply that "the Spirit is now poured out more effusively" (p. 146). While Crowe does conclude in the previous chapter that the resurrection was, in fact, a remarkable eschatological event, his emphasis on the theological significance of the resurrection seems to lose force as a result of the present structure of the volume.

In chapter 7, one of the more profound chapters in the volume, Crowe demonstrates how the resurrection serves as an apologetic for the truthfulness of Scripture. It was widely recognized that NT authors such as Luke refer to a number of OT passages in order to defend the necessity of the resurrection and the fact that it was anticipated by the prophets. What is also true, but not as widely recognized, is that the reality of the resurrection points to "the truthfulness of Scripture and … God's faithfulness to his covenant promises" (p. 173). In sum, Scripture provides evidence for the necessity of the resurrection while at the same time the reality of the resurrection provides evidence for the trustworthiness of Scripture.

Finally, chapter 8 considers "the role of Acts in the emergence of the New Testament canon and the possibility that Acts plays an indispensable role contributing to the coherence of the canon" (p. 175). Although the chapter provides insightful reflections on the canonical function of Acts, some readers may find that portions of the chapter do not naturally build upon the previous chapters and that they are only loosely related to the various exegetical and theological matters discussed throughout the volume.

Despite the minor issues noted above, Crowe has successfully produced an accessible and well-researched treatment of the centrality of the resurrection in the book of Acts. In addition to insightful exegetical observations of a number of passages in Acts, readers will benefit from Crowe's keen theological reflections relating to the resurrection and the role that the resurrection plays in Luke's narrative.

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Paul and the Giants of Philosophy: Reading the Apostle in Greco-Roman Context. Edited by Joseph R. Dodson and David E. Briones. Forward by John M. G. Barclay. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019, xiv + 177 pp., $22.00 paper.

Paul and the Giants of Philosophy attempts to put the apostle Paul in conversation with ancient philosophers. The premises of this book are that Paul and the ancient philosophers are attempting to answer some of the same basic questions about human nature and experience and that understanding the philosophical thoughts of the ancient world will help us understand Paul better through comparison and contrast, regardless of the extent of actual interaction or dependence. John Barclay's forward captures well the value of the book: "Every comparison requires some points of similarity to make it worthwhile, some common ground to make the conversation interesting. But what often emerges at the same time is an aware-

ness of difference, and to think carefully about such differences is to expose the underlying assumptions and deep cultural narratives at play beneath the surface of the conversation" (p. x). The approach of this edited volume is careful and well-reasoned in that it does not present Paul as either entirely dependent on or entirely independent of the surrounding thought-world.

The editors helpfully establish their ground rules. They are not claiming that Paul knew of each Greco-Roman (GR) philosophy or that he was influenced in every case by the same stream of thought. In some cases, they are putting Paul in conversation with someone, the likes of whom Paul might never have encountered, in order to understand Paul with greater clarity. The discussions of GR philosophy are intended to be very brief introductions that invite readers to further research. Paul's Jewish upbringing was not sealed off from GR influence, and at some points his actual interaction with GR philosophical ideas is more likely than others. We do not know the extent of Paul's understanding of and engagement with GR philosophy, but we do know that Paul and philosophers sought to answer some of the same basic questions about life. This is also a book that is primarily about Paul. Paul's writings get to determine the relevant questions, and the endeavor is undertaken primarily to understand Paul better.

Each chapter begins by finding a topic of common interest between Paul and an ancient philosopher: Paul and Epictetus on Suffering; Paul and Philodemus on Therapy for the Weak; Paul and Aristotle on Friendship; Attitudes on Slavery in Paul and Seneca; Individual and Community in Paul and Epictetus; Paul and Plutarch on Faith; Paul, Cicero, and Seneca as Letter Writers; The Good Life in Paul and the Giants of Philosophy; Paul and Seneca on the Modern Myth of the Pure Gift; Life and Afterlife Among Paul and the Philosophers; Heavenly Visions in Plato, Cicero, and Paul; Paul and Seneca on Suffering; The Apostle among the Philosophers and Poets; The Challenge of Comparing Paul with the Giants. The chapters are 10–15 pages long, with each containing a 2–4-page summary of the philosopher's thoughts on the topic, a 2–4-page summary of Paul's thoughts, and 2–4 pages of interaction between the two. Each chapter also provides a helpful table of comparison and recommendations for further reading in both primary and secondary sources.

The trained philosopher, which I am not, will likely object to some of the content in the very brief summaries. Similarly, at some points I would argue for a slightly different understanding of Paul's position. A two-page summary of Paul's view of suffering or friendship, for example, will inevitably be slightly unsatisfying, but it is intended to promote the dialogue. And we should not criticize the authors for not writing a longer book. This book does not introduce the reader to the complete philosophical system of any one philosopher or even the overall theology of Paul. It examines specific and isolated comparisons between Paul and a philosopher on one particular subject. The reader needs to be reminded of what the authors are not doing. They are not saying that that this philosophical line of thought informs and explains Paul's theology. They are putting Paul in conversation with other ancient authors, irrespective of their actual influence and interaction. Each

reader will find specific chapters more or less interesting, depending in part on the topic of comparison.

While it is not possible to summarize all fourteen chapters in this review, a helpful window into the approach and variations in the book is to look at the two chapters on suffering. In chapter 1, Dorothea H. Bertschmann compares Paul and Epictetus on suffering, and, in chapter 12, Brian J. Tabb compares Paul and Seneca on suffering. Bertschmann narrows her focus to a single question ("Can suffering be an instrument to turn us into more ethical people?"), and Tabb more broadly discusses these authors' understandings of the overarching purpose of suffering. Their chapters have many similarities in the description of suffering in the Christian life (among them, foundational belief in the value of the suffering of Christ, the calling of Christians to suffer, and the hope of the resurrection), but the chapters have different emphases determined in part by the philosophers to which they are comparing Paul. Bertschmann argues that Paul and Epictetus both view suffering as unnecessary for ethical growth but having the potential "to activate one's 'true me'" (p. 18). A major difference is that Paul acknowledges sufferings as real, and they are to be endured in the hope that suffering will ultimately be overcome for good. One criticism of Bertschmann's chapter is her assumption that because Paul does not explicitly state that suffering can be God's means of forming character in his children, he must not have believed it. This has the potential effect of putting Paul out of step with other NT texts such as Hebrews 12:3–11 (cf. p. 17). Tabb notes a number of similarities between Paul and Seneca on the purpose of suffering, particularly in that suffering reveals true character and the sufferer should look to other sufferers as models to imitate. Tabb helpfully highlights Paul's distinctive view on suffering as having a Christological and missiological design. "He proclaims a suffering Savior, and he personally portrays the reality of this message by suffering like Jesus" (p. 151). Because Bertschmann focuses on the element of personal character development in suffering, she omits the aspect of mission that is central to Tabb's chapter. We can also notice a nuance between these Stoics in that Epictetus argues that suffering is not needed for ethical growth and Seneca argues that "sufferings are the classroom where the would-be sage learns to be good" (pp. 152–53).

With the limitations that the editors have established, the book accomplishes its purposes of providing an abbreviated introduction to Paul and a variety of philosophers on a series of topics. Most volumes dedicated to comparing Paul and another ancient thinker are much longer, more technical, and less encompassing. This is an introduction, and the reader should receive it as an invitation to further study. One strength is that this work places concepts in the larger thought of the author. This approach is much more valuable than an all-too-common approach with word studies in which an author finds a word used by both Paul and a philosopher and makes conclusions without reading the broader context of the philosopher. The summary charts, while necessarily simplified, clarify the points of similarity and difference. The editors' claim that comparison is clarifying proves true, even if one reads Paul slightly differently than the authors.

Paul and the Giants of Philosophy is accessible, engaging, and well-written. I found myself eager to read the next chapter, even as I (like most readers will) read some chapters more eagerly than others. The book offers an introduction to ancient philosophical thought for those who are not primarily interested or trained in philosophy. While every chapter might not catch the eye of every reader, there is helpful information for everyone interested in the study of Paul. Because no one can be an expert on Paul and each of these philosophers, I found the book to be both a helpful introduction to a philosopher and a concise summary of Paul's view on the topic. It will be especially helpful for giving students a window into the thought-world of the ancients and seeing Paul's similarity and novelty.

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The Canonical Paul, vol. 1: *Constructing Paul*. By Luke Timothy Johnson. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020, xiv + 385 pp., $50.00.

Big books on Paul are all the rage these days. Do we really need another one, or in this case, *two*? Maybe not. But when Luke Timothy Johnson, Professor Emeritus of Emory University and my former dissertation director, who is well known for his careful historical, exegetical, and theological work *and* his creative willingness to ask big questions and give big answers, is writing the big book on Paul, one can be sure of finding oneself reading old texts with new lenses. The book does what a standard introduction to Paul and his letters should do, but it does so from the standpoint of one who self-admittedly *loves Paul*: "Paul has always been for me personally the true heart of the New Testament and the framework for my self-understanding as a Christian. I read and have always read Paul as passionately as a neurotic might read Freud or Jung. I seek in his letters the best understanding of my own commitment to the risen Lord Jesus" (p. 2).

Johnson argues passionately for including all thirteen letters ascribed to Paul upon which to develop his framework for "constructing" Paul. By construction, Johnson refers to the scaffolding and raw materials that will allow readers to engage in responsible interpretation of specific Pauline texts and problems (p. 13). The actual reading and interpretation of the Pauline texts is promised for the second volume. Again, one of the distinctive features of the book is his argument that we should attend to the "canonical Paul" (instead of the popular "historical Paul" of the academic guild). Why? "Because they represent the apostle who has been read and interpreted by the church, not only until the start of the nineteenth century—when the authenticity of letters was first questioned—but even until today. The canonical Paul is the lectionary Paul, the preached Paul, the Paul of theology among those not captive to the dogmas of historical criticism" (p. 13).

Johnson divides the first volume into three parts. In Part 1 ("Preliminary Scaffolding"), he takes a look at the sources and historical evidence upon which he will build his arguments. The first chapter ("Assessing the Sources") places the most important evidence about Paul on the table for consideration, including the

letters ascribed to him in the NT, early church testimony, the Paul of the Acts of the Apostles, and the apocryphal letters and writings. Here he also discusses the origins and arguments proffered by those who questioned Pauline authorship of some of the "Pauline" letters. The arguments developed in the mid-19th century are the same arguments used today by many to determine whether a letter is authentically Pauline: historical fit, style, the nature of the opposition or opponents, church structure, consistency in "Pauline" theology. Johnson brings all of these arguments into question and argues, instead, that two significant elements are missing. "The first is the candid admission that the premise of a uniform Pauline 'core' is wrong, together with the acknowledgment of multiple clusters within the canonical collection, groups of letters bound together by common style and theme, yet noticeably distinct from other groups" (p. 40). Secondly, he argues that we are missing "a theory of composition that more adequately accounts for such unity and diversity than the conventional appeal to the passage of time or a theory of development that is theologically driven" (p. 41). In chapter 2 ("Paul's Life and Apostolic Ministry") we are treated to something of a first look at some of the major features of Paul with respect to Pauline chronology, biography, theology, and style of ministry. The third chapter ("The Pauline Correspondence") is where Johnson puts forth his major arguments for treating all thirteen letters as authentically Pauline. When all of the Pauline data is assessed, Johnson says that the letters are better divided into Pauline "clusters" rather than dividing them up into Pauline and non-Pauline. These clusters are Romans and Galatians; 1 and 2 Corinthians; 1 and 2 Thessalonians; Ephesians and Colossians; the Pastorals; Philippians and Philemon. Space prevents me from providing all of his arguments, but two of the most significant are his appeal to the ability of ancient authors to write in different styles and registers and his claim that there simply is no common Pauline theological core with which to measure whether a letter is authentic or pseudonymous.

In chapter 4 ("Paul's Place in Early Christianity"), Johnson shows that Paul is indeed a creative voice within the earliest years of Christianity but that he is by no means its founder; rather, he "shares and interprets the language and perceptions of the Christian movement antecedent and contemporary to him" (p. 104). With respect to Paul's opponents, there is not a unified movement against which one can assess the authenticity of Paul's letters either; rather, the diversity of these opponents shows us the ongoing attraction of Judaism and the temptation toward religious elitism amongst Paul's converts.

Part 2 ("The Materials") situates Paul's letters with respect to his ancient context, particularly addressing matters of Judaism (chap. 5), Scripture (chap. 6), and Greco-Roman culture (chap. 7). Johnson argues that Paul is best viewed as a "Prophetic Jew" who speaks as the mouthpiece and representative of the Messiah. Paul's letters show us one who consistently worked to discern and interpret the ongoing activity, speech, and presence of the risen Messiah. This conviction has significant consequences for how Paul approaches and interprets the Scriptures of Israel. Whether Paul quotes Scripture or not, at every point the Scriptures pervade his thinking and argumentation; yet Scripture is consistently viewed through Jesus's death and resurrection. The symbolic world of Torah, then, is authoritative but is

rightly understood only through the risen Messiah. With respect to Greco-Roman culture, Johnson looks at Paul's potential influence from and relationship to *paideia*, rhetoric, philosophy, and religion. All of Paul's letters bear the hallmarks of deliberative rhetoric in that they attempt to persuade Paul's churches to take a specific course of action. While Paul shows significant differences from ancient Hellenistic philosophy, Johnson argues that they are both remarkably similar in their vocation and passion to produce moral transformation.

In Part 3 ("The Elements") Johnson contributes four essays that are loosely connected and start to engage aspects of the Pauline epistles with more detail. One of the most important essays in the book is chapter 8 ("The Claims of Experience"), wherein Johnson works through all of the Pauline letters to show how they demonstrate that Paul is "an existential thinker, who is driven by powerful experiences of, well, power, to interpret and reinterpret his symbolic world—above all the world imagined by Scripture" (p. 194). Foundational to Paul's interpretation of these experiences is his conviction that the resurrection of Jesus is not only a past event but even more is an existential reality here and now. "When we appreciate the way in which the fundamental reality of the resurrection serves as an experiential foundation for all of Paul's teaching, and weave that experience into the texture of other ordinary and extraordinary experiences of Paul and his readers to which all the canonical letters bear witness, we come closer to grasping the reason why Paul's letters appear so filled with energy and tension, and why they remain so compelling and challenging even to readers today" (p. 223). In chapter 9 ("Convictions, Myths, Symbols, and Metaphors") Johnson works through such convictions of Paul as belief in the one God of Israel, God as gift-giver, and Scripture. He examines central symbols and myths such as the cross, bread and wine symbolizing Christ's body and blood, and the Spirit. Johnson also works through some of the major metaphors Paul draws on to communicate to his churches and shows how they stem from such conceptual fields as the economic, kinship, forensic, and cultic. In chapter 10 ("Paul's Voice—Philemon") Johnson provides a preview of his second volume, which will focus on reading the individual compositions of Paul; here he demonstrates what this looks like with respect to Philemon and shows how its connections to Ephesians and Colossians indicate how a short personal note made its way into the Christian canon. The final chapter ("Paul, Oppressor or Liberator?") notes the ways in which Paul's theology has often been employed for oppressive ends; Johnson, however, argues that Paul is "the most liberating rather than the most oppressing voice within the canon" (p. 274). More specifically, Johnson argues that Paul's "letters advance a radical vision of human life that is grounded in the experience of God's presence and power in the empirical world, a vision of life that offers an authentic liberation—not at the level of social arrangements but at the level of existence itself."

Luke Timothy Johnson is one of the most creative voices within biblical scholarship. As a result, whether he is challenging the consensus on Pauline authorship, emphasizing the significance of Paul's experience of the risen Jesus, or simply engaging Paul at a deeply existential level, Johnson's book is not your typical Pauline theology or introduction to Paul. Reading books like this will force even mature

scholars to give more careful attention to what they think they know about Paul; for intermediate and advanced students, the introduction provides the necessary groundwork for more detailed interpretations and readings of Paul's letters. I find Johnson's emphasis on the ongoing significance of Jesus's resurrection for Paul's theological discourse to be of incredible importance and worthy of more attention. I expect he will change the minds of few regarding Paul's authorship of the disputed Pauline letters, but it is good to have his arguments here in an easily accessible format.

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Paul, a New Covenant Jew: Rethinking Pauline Theology. By Brant Pitre, Michael B. Barber, and John A. Kincaid. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019, xvii + 304 pp., $35.00 paper.

Paul, a New Covenant Jew is something of an innovation in a field that has long been dominated by scholars of a Protestant persuasion. Brant Pitre, Michael P. Barber, and John A. Kincaid present, as Catholic scholars, a new foray in the study of Pauline theology. By self-consciously approaching Paul from this theological perspective, the authors do their readers a service, allowing them not only to follow along more clearly, but also to look at a contemporary discussion through fresh eyes. What Pitre, Barber, and Kincaid mean by "a Catholic perspective" is that they have two primary emphases that have been neglected by Protestant scholarship: a liturgical angle and a "both-and" approach that "has the potential to *integrate* seemingly disparate positions on topics such as Paul's relationship to Judaism, his apocalyptic outlook, his Christology, his theology of atonement, his view of justification, and his theology of baptism and the Lord's Supper" (p. 9, italics original).

In the first chapter, this "both-and" approach comes to the fore as the authors discuss the place of Paul in relation to Judaism. They helpfully review the discussion on Paul's identity and relationship to Judaism under three broad categories: Paul as a "former Jew," Paul as an "eschatological Jew," and Paul as a "torah-observant Jew" (pp. 11–38). The authors propose instead that Paul should be seen as a "new covenant Jew," a category deriving from Paul's understanding of himself, based on Jeremiah 31, as one of the "ministers of a new covenant" (2 Cor 3:6). This definition incorporates several aspects of the previous views, yet forges a new path in describing the continuities and discontinuities of Paul with the Judaism of his day. To view Paul as a new covenant Jew, as Pitre, Barber, and Kincaid argue, makes sense of his relationship to the law and to the people of Israel and explains his standing as a convert—not to Christianity—but to the new covenant in Jesus. In this way, they conclude, "the faith and practice preached by Paul can be fittingly described as *new covenant nomism*" (p. 63), wherein one enters by grace and stays in by obeying the law of Christ, empowered by this same grace.

In chapter 2, the authors explore the theme of Paul and Apocalyptic. The authors note the division in current outlooks on Paul's apocalypticism: the first camp,

which emphasizes Paul's apocalypticism as the revelation in Christ of a complete change between the old and new ages of the world, and the second camp, which portrays Paul in greater continuity with Jewish apocalyptic expectations, concentrating on Christ as the key to the consummation of the history of salvation. Once again, they propose that a both-and approach can unite the understanding of a completely new revelation, yet not wholly unexpected, but somehow foreseen in the expectation of a new covenant. This unified perspective is traced through Paul's eschatology, angelology, cosmology, and messianism.

Chapter 3 homes in on Paul's Christology. Three questions drive the chapter: "(1) What does Paul mean when he speaks of Jesus as the 'Christ'?" (p. 95), "(2) What exactly does Paul mean when he refers to Jesus as the 'Son of God'?" (p. 95), and "(3) How does Paul reconcile his identification of Jesus as 'the Lord' (*kyrios*) with his Jewish confession of 'one God' (1 Cor 8:6)?" (p. 96). To answer these, the terms "Christ," "Son," and "Lord" are each explored through several texts in order to build an argument that Paul, through his new covenant perspective, saw Jesus as the Divine (and Preexistent) Son of God, a human *and* heavenly Messiah.

Chapter 4 begins with another seeming antithesis: the grace of salvation as a gift is also described in Paul as a redemption. In other words, how can atonement be at once a gift of God and a redemption in which a price must be paid? The first half of the chapter draws from John Barclay's *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), so that salvation is described as a spontaneous gift that comes with expectations of further self-giving on the part of the believer. In the second half, they explain that this gift, as part of the new covenant, is at the same time inherently connected to an atoning sacrifice, which pays a price, but does so freely and out of love, not out of necessity.

The penultimate chapter deals with the primary watershed between Roman Catholic and Protestant scholars: justification. Within the new covenant framework for understanding Paul, it is argued that the ministry of the new covenant (2 Cor 3:6) is a ministry of righteousness (2 Cor 3:9). Drawing from Jeremiah 31:31–34 and Ezekiel 36:26–27, Paul would be explaining that this righteousness must be a "cardiac righteousness" (pp. 172–74), that is, a justification that is both legal and moral. Through the new covenant, believers are unified with Christ by faith and in his faithfulness, which enables their own faithfulness. Thus, "justification comes through an ontologically real divine sonship that involves three key realities: *cardiac righteousness, baptismal initiation, and conformity to Christ*" (p. 207, italics original).

The sixth and final chapter unites Paul's explanations of the cosmic nature of salvation with the resurrection of the believer. As they anticipate the resurrection, believers in Christ suffer with him and with one another presently such that they have a true communion in the body of Christ. According to Pitre, Barber, and Kincaid, this participation in Christ's body and suffering is a participation in sacrifice, which is epitomized in the Lord's Supper. By comparing 1 Corinthians 10 with 1 Corinthians 11, they argue that the Lord's Supper, as a new covenant sacrificial meal that precedes the resurrection, initiates the new creation itself.

The subtitle of the book is *Rethinking Pauline Theology*, and the authors certainly urge both scholars and students of Paul to do exactly that. There are many things

to commend in this book. While few readers will agree with every argument presented in the book, the authors write clearly with strong biblical and theological assertions, solidified by an irenic examination of other views. It is clear throughout that the authors are appreciative of and indebted to the contributions of Protestant and Jewish scholars on Paul, while still holding to a Catholic view. One of the primary and recurring arguments throughout the book is that Jeremiah 31:31–34 and Ezekiel 36:26–27 are key texts through which one can interpret Paul's own understanding of his Jewishness. In this way, the authors stress the importance of understanding Paul in the cultural medium of early Judaism *and also* in Christ, providing a strong theological principle for Paul's continuities and discontinuities with his fellow Jews.

A weakness of the book, however, is a lack of rationale for its presentation. The reader is left wondering why the book has a chapter on the Lord's Supper but not on baptism. Or why, given the emphasis on the new covenant in Paul, there is no chapter on Paul's pneumatology (cf. Ezek 36:26–27; 2 Cor 3:6, 8), especially when there is one on his Christology. There is a chapter on the cross and the atonement, but the resurrection is only slightly touched upon in the chapter on the Lord's Supper. No doubt, the authors contribute to the scholarly discussion, but gaps in some areas harm the unity of the book.

Naturally, a Protestant reader will find several points of disagreement in *Paul, A New Covenant Jew* since, as the book progresses beyond chapters 1 and 2, its arguments and theology become increasingly more Catholic. However, such a reader will most likely be surprised by an even greater number of points of contact and agreement. In this, Brant Pitre, Michael P. Barber, and John A. Kincaid have succeeded in their goal to further instigate ecumenical dialogue. Because of this fresh approach to Paul, the authors contribute solidly to Pauline theology in their formulation and development of Paul as a "new covenant Jew," and identify clear gaps and exciting avenues for further study in Paul's theology.

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Vox Petri: A Theology of Peter. By Gene L. Green. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2019, xxi + 485 pp., $49.00.

Gene Green writes in the preface to this book that his relationship with the Apostle Peter began over forty years ago with his 1979 Aberdeen dissertation, "Theology and Ethics in 1 Peter," and Peter and the letters bearing his name have been an important part of his ministry and research ever since. In the present volume he further develops that relationship by attempting to hear Peter's voice in the Gospel of Mark, in the Petrine speeches in Acts, and in 1 Peter. The basic thesis of the book is that "Peter was foundational for Christian theology and that his voice is indeed recoverable" in the NT, and the "focus" of the study is "those texts which can be traced back to the 'Simon of history,' who is the real figure behind the 'Peter of faith'" (p. 98).

The foreword by Michael Gorman summarizes the book's importance, and the author's preface provides the context out of which the book developed. In his introduction ("Peter—The 'Lost Boy' of Christian Theology") Green surveys the book's argument: Peter's voice can be heard in the first telling of the Jesus story in Mark, in the speeches in Acts, and in 1 Peter; however, he sets aside 2 Peter. He explains that he holds "lightly" his own arguments for the Petrine authorship of 2 Peter and that there is a "unique set of critical problems" concerning 2 Peter's contribution to Petrine theology (p. 2). Therefore, because of the "depth of the controversy surrounding its [2 Peter's] authenticity" he does not include it in his study of Peter's theology (pp. 96–98). He also emphasizes that he sees Peter as a "theological innovator," that there is a "Petrine primacy" with respect to theology in the NT, and that Peter's theology is "*foundational* for the church" (pp. 2, 4, 6, italics original).

In chapter 1 ("Sources for a Petrine Theology") Green clarifies the parameters of his study. In addition to 2 Peter, he omits the Pauline testimony regarding Peter and the memory of Peter in the early church. This chapter also contains an overview of recent works on Peter's life and teaching that discusses other authors' positions concerning the accuracy of the picture and voice of Peter in the NT. Green seems to position himself between the minimalist and maximalist approaches with those who steer a middle ground and critically examine the historical evidence concerning Peter. He concludes that in the NT "we hear faithful witnesses who allow us to recover the *ipsissima vox* of Peter, although not necessarily the apostle's *ipsissima verba*." He believes there is an epistemologically credible witness regarding Peter in the NT from which we can construct an outline of his teaching.

The critical methodology he employs to study the Petrine material in the NT is the topic of chapter 2 ("The Testimony of Peter"). This substantial, wide-ranging chapter of 82 pages is the heart of Green's argument; in it he develops the category (or genre) of "testimony" or "testimonial knowledge" as a critical methodology and "epistemological category" that is appropriate for studying the NT witness concerning Peter (p. 20). The uniqueness of testimony is the way it combines witness with some interpretation of the event by the one bearing witness, who is participating in the event. The witness's participation in the event is considered to be a "marker of credibility" (pp. 28–29). Green has sections on the testimony of Peter as related to the Gospel of Mark, the Acts of the Apostles, and 1 Peter. He argues that the testimony of Papias, Justin Martyr, and others concerning Peter's influence on Mark is reliable and can be accepted, and he supports this with evidence from contemporary authors, especially Richard Bauckham, and from the Gospel of Mark. Mark wrote his gospel so that it conveys the Petrine perspective, and readers hear the *vox Petri* in it.

In introducing the testimony of Peter in the eight speeches attributed to him in the Acts of the Apostles, Green discusses the study of reporting speeches, as well as deeds, in ancient historiography. His discussion here is helpful and provides a good introduction to the nature of the speeches in ancient literature, and especially in Acts. Although all history involves a subjective element and some authors took unwarranted liberties, such is not necessarily the case, and the accepted stand-

ard was not to sacrifice truth for rhetorical effect (p. 57). We should expect nothing less of an author like Luke, who describes his approach to historical writing in Luke 1:1–4. We can be confident that he "holds to his sources, which provided testimony, yet he shapes that which was handed down to him in order to present his theological understanding of the events and speeches that have transpired"; we can say that every speech attributed to Peter in Acts "summarizes Peter's words" (pp. 70–71).

With regard to the testimony of Peter in 1 Peter, the early testimony supports authorship by the apostle, and none of the evidence against apostolic authorship is convincing. The most powerful argument against authenticity of the letter is the Greek style of the letter, and Green feels that argument can be answered by Peter's use of a secretary or amanuensis to help translate for him or to help Peter with his Greek. He argues that the wording in 1 Peter 5:12, "By Sylvanus … I have written briefly," is more naturally understood to indicate Sylvanus was involved in the composition of the letter than in delivering it (p. 91). But even if Sylvanus was not Peter's secretary, it is likely Peter employed someone to help him in the composition. Furthermore, according to 5:13, the church "in Babylon" (Rome) and Mark also send their greetings to the recipients, thus suggesting there was an "authorial community" (pp. 5, 93) involved in the composition of 1 Peter. Peter would have approved of the content of the letter before it was dispatched, and his voice was mediated by those who wrote on his behalf, so the *vox* in the letter would be Peter's.

Thus, the three sources that Green works with to hear the *vox Petri*—Mark, the speeches in Acts, and 1 Peter—all "bear the marks of others who were involved in their composition," involving interpretation of Peter's testimony (pp. 98–99). His testimony involved his reporting of history and the interpretation of that history by the various authors who recorded his testimony and by Peter himself, who participated in giving the testimony and in the final draft of the documents in which his testimony was recorded. The interpretation of the events belongs to the witness, and in Green's words it "would be a quixotic exercise" outstripping the available evidence to attempt to separate out the "'real Peter' from the interpretive notes" (p. 100). Instead, Green's approach is to summarize Peter's theology in Mark, in his speeches in Acts, and in 1 Peter, and then look for "common threads running through the literature associated with Peter, which will allow us to hear the particular theological contribution of the apostle" (p. 100). There is some repetition from chapter 2 in the following chapters, and it might have worked to put the discussion in this chapter on the testimony of Peter as related to the Gospel of Mark, the Acts of the Apostles, and 1 Peter in the following chapters.

The remainder of the book, chapters 3 to 8, contains two chapters on each of these three presentations of Peter's theology. For example, chapter 3 introduces "The Gospel of Mark and the Testimony of Peter," and it focuses on the audience of the Gospel of Mark, since "testimony always includes interpretation and audience awareness" (p. 107). Then chapter 4 develops "The Theology of Peter in the Gospel of Mark," starting with the theological framework of "God's New Exodus" and "The Gospel Epic," and then developing different theological themes found in

Mark. Green's discussion of theological themes in the Petrine material is helpful and often rich, and he is probably at his best when discussing 1 Peter. In the final chapter, "*Vox Petri*–Peter's Theological Contribution to the Church," Green summarizes the points of convergence in the theology of Mark, the Petrine speeches in Acts, and 1 Peter, which "brings us to the heart of early Christian theology as elaborated by Peter, the Rock" (p. 401). The commonalities include the following themes: the plan of God, the new exodus, the person and work of Christ, the agency of the Holy Spirit, the salvation of God, the Christian community, the last things, and the honorable way of life.

Anyone working on the theology of Peter will need to consult this unique work. In his introduction Green recounts that when he told Professor I. Howard Marshall about this project "he became quiet and thoughtful, then responded in his inimical way: 'Can't be done!'" One wonders if Professor Marshall might respond differently if he were able to see Green's final product.

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