

BOOK REVIEWS

Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson, eds., Reclaiming the Bible for the Church, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, xii + 137 pp., \$13.00 (pbk).

This book is a collection of addresses delivered at a conference in 1994 sponsored by the Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology and the American Lutheran Publicity Bureau. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson introduce the conference theme, "Reclaiming the Bible for the Church," as being motivated by a crisis of biblical authority and interpretation in the church. This crisis, they explain, is the result of the historical critical methodology used by biblical scholars to produce conclusions about Scripture that undermine the faith of the church.

Nine leading theologians speak to the causes of this crisis and propose solutions. Brevard S. Childs discusses a three-fold challenge to the authority of Scripture: 1) modern hermeneutics questions whether any ancient text can have determinative, much less authoritative, meaning for today's readers; 2) modern explanations of Christianity in terms of sociological forces blunt the witness of Scripture; and 3) the separation of the Old and New Testaments and the study of their parts in isolation from the whole has rendered them void of lasting significance.

Karl P. Donfried identifies the roots of the crisis as a hermeneutical issue, stemming from interpreters who misappropriate Scripture by using a hermeneutic alien to its purpose and function. By using anti-supernatural epistemological assumptions and ignoring the meaning originally intended by the ancient author, many modern interpreters abstract the meaning of biblical passages to the point that the interpretative enterprise is idiosyncratic and self-serving. The authority of Scripture is lost, particularly in moral issues, when the only meaning of the text is what it means to an individual who views him or her-self as the final arbiter of meaning and significance.

Several contributors propose solutions to the crisis by identifying an interpretive context in which Scripture should be read and applied that is more congenial to the nature of the church. Roy A. Harrisville suggests jettisoning not the methods of modern biblical scholarship but the presuppositions of Troeltsch's historical monism from which that methodology developed. He observes two characteristics of modern biblical scholarship that render Scripture ineffective: the hermeneutic fallacy of denying an extra-textual reference to Scripture and the refusal to encounter the biblical text as a life-changing testimony.

Alister E. McGrath proposes that we must recover a context within which Scripture is read and studied that avoids the failures of both fundamentalism, which in his opinion refused to heed modern culture, and liberalism, which allowed itself to be overwhelmed by it. He suggests this can be achieved by rediscovering Christian identity and the church's reason for being, and by subordinating academic study to those purposes.

Elizabeth Achtemeier observes that the church is grossly ignorant of a knowledge of redemptive history, and therefore fails to relate the individual passages of Scripture to the whole. Her solution to reclaiming the authority of Scripture is to use redemptive history as the context in which to study the Old and New Testaments

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together as the voice of the living God. God's sovereign presence in history now makes the story of redemptive history found in Scripture both personal and relevant for readers today.

Robert W. Jenson points out the oddity of the thought that the Bible must be "reclaimed" for the church, since the Bible actually exists only within the community of faith. When studied outside the context of faith using methods hostile to faith, the texts of Scripture are reduced to artifacts of the ancient Near East, and hence cease to be "Bible." Therefore, he suggests a hermeneutic is needed that is rooted in the church's liturgy, devotion, catechism, and homiletical practice.

Along the same lines, Thomas Hopko points out that critical studies of Scripture produce bankrupt results because the dogmatics of the Church, formed over centuries of Scripture study and use, are deliberately ignored by today's critical approaches. Because of the very nature of the Bible, he argues that dogmatics must enter into exegesis if Scripture is to be rightly understood and applied.

Aidan J. Kavanaugh proposes that the proper hermeneutical context for hearing the Word of God is within the liturgy of worship, which has been so widely abandoned by the modern church. He suggests that the "liturgical dysfunction" of the church may well be the major reason for the "biblical dysfunction" within the church.

Thoughtful Christians will find the issues and answers presented in this book to represent a wide spectrum of viewpoints. Each of the writers propose an interpretative context of Scripture that they believe is more appropriate than the context assumed by modern historical criticism. Canon, redemptive history, catechism, homiletics, dogmatics, and liturgy are each suggested as a more appropriate hermeneutical context.

Many readers might agree with Jensen, who observes that if anyone has allowed the Church to lose the Bible, the responsibility is with the clergy and "churchly scholars" within, not the "secular" scholars without. Clergy and scholars of faith have responsibility for biblical scholarship that reflects both intellectual integrity and Christian orthodoxy. This is no small task in today's academic and ecclesiastical climate.

The challenge of doing biblical studies, hermeneutics, and theology in the climate of modern scholarship is certainly an important issue for the church today. This collection of essays clarifies the predicament of the authority and interpretation of Scripture in the church today. However, the problems must be kept in perspective. The challenges of modern scholarship are not problems for the Lord Jesus Christ, whose written word nevertheless inexorably calls to Himself readers in every generation.

Karen H. Jobs, Westmont College

Elouise Renich Fraser and Louis A. Kilgore, Making Friends with the Bible, Scottdale, PA and Waterloo, Ontario: Herald Press, 1994, 168 pp., \$9.95 (\$14.20 in Canada).

Here is a book written by an Eastern Baptist Seminary professor of systematic theology (Fraser) and a pastor of a Presbyterian church (Kilgore). Growing up in Christian homes, the authors found that over the years the Bible gradually lost its luster,

relevance, and vitality in their lives. They identified the nature of this growing and alarming problem as the need to learn "how we relate to the Bible." The book represents the solution they discovered. They were treating the Bible as an enemy rather than a friend. In this popular and readable book Fraser and Kilgore present how they went about becoming reacquainted and, indeed, friends, with the Bible, and they invite the readers to join them in their journey of discovery. They use the metaphor of "making friends" to help veteran (or even novice) Christians establish the Bible once again in the position it ought to have in their lives.

Part I starts with their analysis of the problem. Christians may hide from the Bible because they blame it for not living up to their expectations. Others idolize the Bible, some protect it from having its proper place in their lives or from its detractors, while still others distance themselves from its teachings. Christians often seek to hide from the Bible because they view it more as an enemy than a friend. This part of the book concludes with a section designed to refute these fallacies and assert that the Bible is not an enemy but a friend.

Part II, the bulk of the book, constitutes the authors' procedure for making friends with the Bible. After informing their readers about what to expect when their friendship with the Bible begins to deepen, the authors outline their seven-step process. The steps are (1) Focus first on myself, not on the Bible; (2) Accept my limitations as good; (3) Accept the Bible just as it is; (4) Accept the reality of my distorted understanding; (5) Accept that the Bible won't always seem to be my friend; (6) Include others in the process; and (7) Count on God's presence in this process.

An admirable feature of this section--and indeed the entire book--is the wealth of illustrations and examples. Written in the first person, the book allows readers to look over the authors' shoulders and peer into their hearts to see up close their personal engagement of the Bible in their lives. Readers can identify with the authors, seasoned--we might even say, "professional"--Christians who are still working and struggling to make the Bible relevant to their lives and ministries. This is encouraging and helpful to any who may have allowed themselves to drift away from the Bible, or subsist on only second-hand contacts with its readings. It is all too easy for Christians to allow preachers or other Bible "experts" do their Bible study or thinking for them. This little book appeals for a better course, one in which all Christians see the Bible as "user friendly," a book written by God to his people and which they ought to take and relate to personally, as a friend.

Part III consists of three examples from the journals of the authors--two from Fraser and one from Kilgore. They talk the readers through the entire process. They omit, however, any comment on steps (6) and (7), strangely, I thought, claiming that when writing the book neither was involved in any group study that included the three texts they decided to include in this part. Why not figure out a way to select texts that would illustrate the entire process? And why not help the reader see how God could be involved in the process?

Though the goal and spirit of the book are admirable, I must confess to a bit of uneasiness about one element of the method the authors propose. Perhaps they simply reflect the spirit of the times, but I question their starting point. Their system asks the one who would become friends with the Bible to start by identifying his or her

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situation right now. Then, “choose *any passage* from the Bible that seems to form a unit” (p. 66; my emphasis). Next, after listing items that stand out in the chosen text (we are not given any criteria for what might “stand out”), the student is advised to compare this list with the items from his or her personal situation identified at the outset. Are there connections? We are told not to be discouraged if there is not connection, but “when you’ve gotten in touch with yourself, you’ll begin to see connections” (p. 66). What?

My concern is the potential narcissism that makes the human reader rather than the divine author the starting point. Ought we start with ourselves or with what God has to say? But potentially worse, I am concerned about the underlying hermeneutics that drive the authors’ approach. Is *any passage* relevant to my current situation? And if I can only get in touch with myself, I’ll see it? Ought I approach Bible study so randomly--any text will serve as well as any other? What is the authors’ view of the Scriptures? Isn’t the Bible God’s revelation, and our objective to discover the meaning that God has conveyed? Should we not start with Scripture and its meaning, and only then seek to discover what relevance or application *that meaning* has to our current situation?

I am concerned that for some unwary but eager Bible students this approach could encourage a kind of Ouija-board use of the Bible in which any text can mean anything they want it to mean. It could aggravate the all-too popular tendency of some people to assert, “What this text says to me is, “.....,”” proceeding to make the Bible say something its authors never intended to say at all. I doubt the authors would condone this view of Scripture, for when they discuss the nature of the Bible they urge a reading that takes seriously both the Bible’s humanness and its status as God’s word (see especially pp. 76-86). But at the end of reading the book I was left with the impression that the human reader’s role in Bible study had more prominence than the divine author’s role.

For example, they encourage the readers to accept the limited resources they might have when studying Scripture: whatever Bible version is at hand, perhaps a Bible dictionary, and not much else. The authors rarely encourage Bible students to secure additional resources to further increase or enhance their understanding of its message. The essence is, accept yourself where you are, for the Bible will meet you at that place. Certainly that has some merit, but there is also the place--particularly for more mature Christians who are certainly a large percentage of the intended readers of the book--for expending the effort to secure more resources for unpacking all the Bible has to offer.

William W. Klein, Denver Seminary

John Glynn, Commentary and Reference Survey: A Periodical Buyer’s/Study Guide 2/2, Box 438, Norton, MA, 02766, 1997, 82 pp., \$4.95.

This is a useful survey of some 600 commentaries and a similar number of reference works. They are topically organized and ranked according to the author’s perception of their relative worth, supplemented by other bibliographies and reviews. There is also a useful section entitled “Building a “Bare-bones” Personal Reference

Library," with suggestions for lay people, seminary and Bible college students, and pastors. Useful for church and seminary libraries. David Baker

David J. A. Clines, ed., The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew, Vol. I: Aleph, Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993, 475 pp.

The appearance of this volume is truly a momentous event in Old Testament studies. As everyone who has worked on Biblical Hebrew knows, the field has been in desperate need of a thorough and complete replacement of the standard, and long-venerated Brown-Driver-Briggs (Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1907], hereafter BDB). Editor Clines has speculated on what dictionary users want and need: an alphabetical dictionary, English translations accompanying all Hebrew words, comprehensiveness (listing a particular text under one or another semantic heading), help with difficult verb forms; and an English-Hebrew index (p. 10). This beautifully bound volume bodes well for the likelihood that the series in general will meet the demand.

Students, particularly, will appreciate the alphabetical listing of words, rather than listing by roots as in BDB. For example, <sup>ʔ</sup>met, "truth," is on p. 328 with no explicit connection to its root <sup>ʔ</sup>mn until the end of the entry, p. 332, where a note directs the reader to <sup>ʔ</sup>mn and other cognates. In this way, the listing of the entries is more similar to that of Holladay (William L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971] than to BDB, and will make this new tool more user-friendly for beginners.

DCH will also be praised for the way it lists the various idioms in which a particular word or phrase is used. In this way, DCH is more comprehensive than other lexicons currently available. A helpful cross-referencing system at the end of each entry uses arrows to direct the reader to cognate roots (nouns if the entry is a verb, and verbs if a noun).

However, the editors have made the curious decision to omit any references to cognate Semitic languages. They list both theoretical and practical reasons for this decision in the introduction (pp. 17-18). First, theoretically, "data about the meaning of cognate words in Akkadian and Arabic, for example, are strictly irrelevant to the Hebrew language." Though this statement is true to a degree, it is also somewhat misleading. It is certainly true in today's hermeneutical climate that meaning is determined by the use of the Hebrew word in its immediate literary context, and not by etymology *per se*. But that is not the same as being "strictly irrelevant" to the meaning of a Hebrew word used in the Old Testament. The editor's selection of Arabic as an example is contrived to buttress the misconception, since it is the most irrelevant of the Semitic languages for Old Testament studies. But Akkadian is unquestionably informative in several interesting cases, and Ugaritic is certainly critical for determining the meaning of many Hebrew terms.

Second, practically, the editors aver "there is evidence that the significance of the cognates has been systematically misunderstood by many users of the traditional

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dictionaries.” But the abuse of cognates in the past is not a legitimate reason to ignore etymological connections. Undoubtedly, the naiveté and simplicity of Old Testament studies 50 or 80 years ago needed correction. The field’s over-emphasis on word studies and etymology is well documented, and I make no appeal to go back to the excesses of the past. But surely the decision to jettison obvious etymological parallels is just as mistaken. The corrective pendulum has swung too far in the opposite direction. For example, is it not of value to observe the fact that Ugaritic offers a parallel to the Hebrew word **ʾadam**, “Adam” (p. 129), and that the Ugaritic term can mean “people” as well as “humankind”?

Indeed, the editors argue later in the introduction that a new Hebrew lexicon is greatly needed today because of the new archaeological discoveries at Ugarit and Qumran (p. 24). This is certainly true, and the contributions of these two finds are without dispute. The editors have included much new and helpful information on each Hebrew word’s use in the Dead Sea Scrolls found at Qumran. But this makes the decision not to include any of the Ugaritic materials seem all the more curious. The Ugaritic parallels have been equally informative about many Hebrew words, especially in poetic passages, where Ugaritic parallel word pairs have illuminated numerous obscure references in the Old Testament. Would it not have been consistent to the editorial inclusion of Qumran parallels, and helpful to all readers of the lexicon to make brief notations of the Ugaritic cognates? Scientific study can never determine beforehand what connections may be important in one’s research. But it appears the editors of this helpful new lexicon have nonetheless made the decision to omit all such references, which I fear is a mistake. I for one would have preferred to maintain a brief etymological listing, even at the risk of furthering misuse of the comparative practices, and even though our enthusiasm for the usefulness of such a list has been modified.

I have used the DCH in my teaching and research, and have found it to be helpful, but not decidedly so. The volume is thorough, but it could have been more informative. All lexicons must to some degree engage in a certain amount of interpretation. But DCH is a bit more like using a list of categorized references, with little interaction or interpretation. In short, the lexicon beautifully meets its intended objectives as defined and designed by the editors. Unfortunately, those objectives are, I believe, too limited to mean the DCH will be the kind of contribution to Old Testament studies it could have been otherwise. Bill T. Arnold, Asbury Theological Seminary

Frederic Clarke Putnam, A Cumulative Index to the Grammar and Syntax of Biblical Hebrew, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996, xii+338 pp., \$34.50/24.50.

The author, a professor at Biblical Theological Seminary, is to be thanked for his labors in this volume. In order to help students of the Hebrew text, Putnam goes through the Hebrew Old Testament in Jewish canonical order providing references to where each verse is discussed in any of the following: H. Bauer and P. Leander, Historische Grammatik der hebräische Sprache (rep. 1962); G. Beer, Hebraische Grammatik (1915); G. Bergsträsser, Hebräische Grammatik, 29<sup>th</sup> ed. (Rep. 1962); C. Brockelmann, Hebräische Syntax (1956); A.B. Davidson, Hebrew Syntax, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (1901); W. Richter, Grundlagen einer althebräischen Grammatik (1978-80); J.C.L. Gibson,

Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar and Syntax, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (1994); E. Kautsch, Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar (1910); B.K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax (1995); E. Jenni, Lehrbuch der althebräischen Sprache (1981); P. Joüon, A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew (1991); F. Rosenthal, A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic (1968); W. Schneider, Grammatik des biblischen Hebräisch (1974) and R.J. Williams, Hebrew Syntax, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (1976). For seminary and college libraries as well as those of serious Bible students.

David Baker

C. L. Seow, A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew, Revised Edition, Nashville: Abingdon 1995, xii + 366 pp., \$35.95.

While the essential division of topics and order of presentation remain unchanged, this revision offers several distinct advantages over the first edition (1987). The deductive method adopted in the original is now more fully supplemented by inductive paths of learning as well, particularly through the earlier use of the *Biblia Hebraica*. From the second lesson, the exercises conclude with passages from the Hebrew Bible which the student is to read out loud, and from which the student is to translate as much as he or she recognizes; by lesson seven, this component of the exercises includes grammatical notes which allow translation of whole passages of Scripture while building some familiarity with forms which will only be encountered in the deductive, grammatical discussions much later. Seow has thoroughly revised the exercises: they now include more parsing and production of specific forms and continue English-to-Hebrew translation through lesson 20 (a very helpful tool for reinforcing a student's working grasp of Hebrew grammar). Seow has included fewer of the short, verse-long exercises from the Hebrew Bible in order to make room for translation of larger blocks of text with the help of notes.

Seow has abandoned his earlier classification system of the Hebrew verb (G, H, D, N, etc.) in favor of the older system which is still used by most standard reference works (Qal, Pi'el, etc.). While this may be a step backwards in terms of comparative linguistics, it certainly is a relief to the student who must move between the textbook and the lexica and commentaries. The text now includes five helpful excursions absent from the original: an introduction to using the Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon (which gives immediate application to the abundance of rules learned in lessons 4 and 5 regarding changes in Hebrew words with weak radicals); a discussion of reading markers in the Masoretic text; a discussion of the two systems of verb classification ("G" versus "Qal," etc.); an orientation to Hebrew Reference Grammars; anomalies of Hebrew Poetry; and a brief introduction to the *Biblia Hebraica*, with its critical apparatus and *Ketib-Qere* (discrepancies between consonantal forms and their vocalization, e.g., in the appearance of the Divine Name).

In addition, the book has been set in a larger, more pleasant typeface, and Hebrew examples and paradigms are presented more clearly and boldly -- two not altogether insignificant features for those who will have to live with the book for two or three quarters! Seow has also improved his presentation of the grammar, which is now more carefully visually organized. The revised edition of Seow promises to be a fine tool for language instruction. It is designed for the classroom, but the new presentation

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puts it closer within the grasp of the enterprising independent student.

David A. deSilva

Ian Young, Diversity in Pre-Exilic Hebrew, Forschungen zum Alten Testament 5, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1993, xv+256 pp., 158.00 D.M.

This is an extremely important book. The author, who teaches in the department of Semitics at the University of Sydney, sets out to develop a new model for understanding the phenomenon of the Hebrew from the biblical period. He makes the argument that biblical Hebrew is a continuation of an earlier literary language which held a position of authority in Syria-Palestine, and that the Old Testament contains material from an earlier, pre-exilic period than that posed by many contemporary scholars.

The evidence is presented in six chapters. The first (“Diversity in the Origins of Hebrew”) looks at Hebrew’s predecessors and its history up to the period of the monarchy. The author suggests that it is as early as this period that the official “Standard Biblical Hebrew” comes into its own. “Hebrew in Its Environment” looks at its relationships with Phoenician, Moabite, Edomite, Ammonite, the dialect of Deir Alla (a non-standard dialect similar to but distinct from both Aramaic and Phoenician), Aramaic, the Philistines, and possible loan words from Greek and Persian and their chronological significance. As for the last point, the author suggests that statements as to the presence of these as indicators of a post-exilic date have not followed a demonstrable methodology with academic rigor.

In “Social and Chronological Stratification in Pre-Exilic Hebrew,” Young looks mainly at the later part of the Hebrew spectrum, late biblical and Mishnaic Hebrew, since its contradistinction in scholarship from the standard form of the language necessitates its own clear definition.

“The Hebrew Inscriptions: A Linguistic Classification” seeks to see how the previously articulated proposal concerning a standard Hebrew early in the first millennium stacks up against evidence from outside the Bible. Young discusses dating inscriptions, and then looks at those from Siloam (tunnel and tomb), Khirbet El-Qom, Lachish, Arad, Wadi Murabbaat, Samaria, Tel Qasile, Beth Shean, Gezer, Kuntillet Ajrud, Yavneh Yam, and Khirbet Beit Lei.

“Diversity in the Bible” points out the lack of uniformity within a text which claims a textual history spanning centuries. Such a diversity would be more astounding for its lack than its presence. He looks at grammatical criteria and archaic biblical Hebrew (early poetic texts such as Ex 15), Job, Proverbs 30-31, Ecclesiastes (a grammatically unique work separated from both standard and late Hebrew), the Song of Songs (an early piece which, along with the Song of Deborah in Judges 5, is in a northern dialectic), and other indications of dialectical variation.

“Pronunciation” looks at the difficult area of a reconstruction without native informants. Young brings in evidence from Amarna, Egyptian, and Ugartitic sources, as well as that from the Masoretic Text and other early witnesses.

As can be seen from this brief overview, the book is technical and takes care and some competence in Hebrew to read with most profit. It is accessible to those



without the languages, however, since all foreign words are presented in transliteration. A necessity for seminary and university libraries, Young will challenge all interested in Hebrew to make sure to analyze the evidence, basing statements concerning dates of texts on it rather than some other criteria. David Baker

Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period: Vol. I: From the Beginnings to the End of the Monarchy*, and *Vol. II: From the Exile to the Maccabees*, Trans. by J. Bowden; Old Testament Library; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994, 740 pp.

The appearance of these two volumes in the Old Testament Library series is wonderful news for English speakers who are interested in Old Testament research, and find that their German is rusty. Rainer Albertz has made important contributions to the study of ancient Israel's religion, but until now they have been available only in German. These two volumes are the translation of his monumental *Religionsgeschichte Israels in alttestamentlicher Zeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992). In the process of producing this prodigious piece, Albertz states that he worked through all the books of the Old Testament and reviewed "countless scholarly findings in almost every field of Old Testament study, not only in the history of religion and theology, but also in archaeology, history, social history and literary criticism over the whole extent of the canon and a period of more than a thousand years" (p. vii).

Albertz's work is an important step to a growing movement in Europe and North America, which with his work has now begun to come into full fruition. I refer to the new emphasis on the history of Israelite religion. Since the turbulent 1960's significant paradigm shifts have occurred in many areas of theological studies, and these shifts are clearly reflected in biblical studies. The intense interest in a specifically biblical theology approach waned during that decade and many have referred to the "death" of the Biblical Theology movement. Concurrent with its demise, if it should even be called such in light of several important works on topics related to biblical theology in the 1970s and 1980s, was a renewed interest in the history of ancient Israelite religion. Albertz's contribution will become one of the definitive works on this topic for many years to come.

He begins with a helpful survey of the history of religions approach from Gabler to the present (1:1-12). Here Albertz illustrates the different issues involved in the two disciplines; Old Testament theology as opposed to a history of Israelite religion. It was Vatke who first produced a genuine historical account of Israel's religion (1835), using especially Hegel's philosophy of history. But the field was not fully developed until Wellhausen and his students (especially during the closing decades of the nineteenth century to the First World War). Albertz describes the collapse of work done on Israelite religion since the period between the World Wars. The influence of Karl Barth's theological attack on the *religionsgeschichte Schule* and its tendency to undercut theological work had profound consequences for the study of Israel's religion. In fact, the Biblical Theology movement replaced, for all practical purposes, the history of Israelite religion as an Old Testament discipline.

Though the Biblical Theology movement has lost its prestigious position in

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Old Testament studies, the history of religion approach continues to struggle to distinguish itself from theology. Albertz offers a seven-point program for a new conception of the history of Israelite religion (I:11-12). Though well said and interesting, there is really little new here. He includes the usual calls for more comparative sensitivity to the ancient Near Eastern materials, and more attention devoted to the exilic and post-exilic periods (which indeed he has done in the second volume). His real contribution to the discussion is his emphasis on sociological implications for the study of Israelite religion. His history of ancient Israel's religion transcends the normal historical categories of chronological distinctions (pre-monarchic, monarchic, exilic and post-exilic religion). As in his previous work (*Persönliche Frömmigkeit und offizielle Religion: Religionsinterner Pluralismus in Israel und Babylon* [Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1979]), Albertz discusses two "foci of identity" in ancient Israel: the family and the people (I:19), which brings together two different strata of Israelite religion. The main stratum of "official religion" functioned in regard to the wider group, and the substratum of "personal piety" related to the individual in the smaller group of the family. To this he has now added a third level, the local level, or the village community, which functioned sociologically between the level of the family and that of the people or state. Thus he refers to an "internal religious pluralism" for this socially conditioned stratification within the religion of Israel. All of this is in addition to the standard sociological observations concerning Israel's religion, such as reform groups like the prophets or Deuteronomists (I:19-21).

This approach is quite novel and presents an interesting avenue for future research. However, Albertz's application of these methods has a vitiating effect on the biblical traditions in a number of cases. For example, Albertz takes the patriarchal traditions of Genesis 12-50 as products of Iron Age I (ca. 1200 BC), and states that the differences between patriarchal religion and later normative Yahwism can be explained sociologically. The patriarchal stories related the beginnings of the people from the aspect of family history, and the religious conceptions here are forms of personal piety, not Yahwism of the wider group of the tribe and people. So the traditions of Genesis went by what they knew of and thought important about the family piety of their own time (that is, pre-monarchic and early monarchic periods). These narratives reflect the religious conceptions of the smaller family groups of Iron I, which were more or less monolatrous, though far from Yahwism (I:32). What we may know of as "patriarchal religion" is not therefore the faith of Israel's ancestors of Middle Bronze I, as is often assumed (ca. 2000-1800 BC), but is actually the faith of the smaller social group during the judges and early monarchic periods of Israel's history (I:28-29).

Concerning this impressive reconstruction, we can simply paraphrase Elijah and raise the question: "Where is Baal?" As Gordon Wenham has demonstrated, the complete absence of Baal from the patriarchal tradition points to its antiquity. We know from the famous Ugaritic Baal Cycle that the Canaanite storm god Baal took over from the leading god El in the west Semitic pantheon in the second half of the second millennium BC. Yet he is never mentioned in the patriarchal narratives of Genesis! As Wenham concludes: "This is intelligible if the patriarchal tradition originated before about 1500 BC, but not if it comes from later times" ("The Religion of the Patriarchs," in *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives*, ed. A. R. Millard & D. J. Wiseman [Winona

Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1983/Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 1980], 194). It seems unlikely that Iron Age tradents writing about their hypothetical ancestors of a long ago period could have omitted references to Baal, and his threat to normative Yahwism.

Albertz then combines a sociological approach with some of the "assured" results of German scholarship on the history of Israel in general. He refers to the faith of a "liberated larger group," which was one group of what was later to become Israel. This group had been an economically assimilated but socially declassed group of foreign conscripts to forced labor in Egyptian society under the Ramessides, whose solidarity had been undermined by state measures (I:45). Israel's Yahweh religion arose in the liberation process of this group. Yahwism had originated in Midian and been given to Moses by Jethro/Reuel (perhaps related to the Shasu of Edom). Sinai traditions were later added to this Yahwism. Various Midianite tribes (and now the Exodus group) participated in a Yahweh cult at a mountain sanctuary in the frontier area between Edom and Midian (I:54:55). This Yahweh was a storm-god not unlike Baal/Hadad of Syria-Palestine. This reconstruction contradicts the connections of the American archaeological school with Canaanite El (Albright, Cross, and others).

Concerning the "religion of the pre-state alliance of larger groups," Albertz proposes a "Digression Model" for the emergence of early Israel, which is a modification of Gottwald's "revolution" model. With the coming of the Sea Peoples, and the loss of Egyptian power in Palestine, Canaanite city states encountered economic collapse. Marginal groups of Palestinian culture left cities in search of economic freedom. "It was the farming and shepherd population of Palestine which had freed itself from its dependence on the city aristocracy that formed the tribal alliance of 'Israel'" (I:72). The Exodus group arrived and made unifying contributions in the area of religion. Yahweh became fused with El and thus the god of Israel, the God who defended the oppressed and resisted domination (I:76-79).

Like similar recent reconstructions (Mark Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel* [San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990], 147-152), Albertz emphasizes heavily the religious role of the monarchy. The older scholarly consensus assumed the settlement of the Israelite tribes was the momentous event after which early Yahwism entered into an ideological conflict with Canaanite fertility religion which lasted for centuries. But Albertz argues the establishment of the kingdom and its consequent social changes posed the decisive challenge to Yahwism. The rise of an Israelite kingship theology transformed Yahwism. The God of the pre-state alliance was a God of liberation from state oppression and was opposed to all forms of domination. The Davidic-Solomonic kingship theology made him a God who guarantees state power, with its new mechanisms of oppression of both alien peoples (David's wars of expansion) and of its own society (forced labor, I:116-122). This conflict led to the prophetic challenges during the last half of the monarchy, and eventually to the "first systematic synthesis of Yahweh religion," by which Albertz means the Deuteronomic reforms (I:105). Hence after three hundred years, the Yahwism of the pre-state period gained the upper hand over the state religion.

Albertz states in the preface that the volumes are intended as a "textbook for students, clergy, teachers and interested lay people" (p. viii). Though this is a valiant effort and will no doubt be used widely by scholars working on this topic, it is not likely

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to find wide acceptance in school, church and synagogue. Like so much in biblical studies today, the evidence of the biblical text and the self-claims of the text are suppressed in favor of the scholarly consensus on the traditions of ancient Israel. Albertz has masterfully and skillfully joined the march, and will find a place as a major contributor to the history of research on Israelite religion.

Bill T. Arnold, Asbury Theological Seminary

Adele Berlin, ed., Religion and Politics in the Ancient Near East, Bethesda, MD: University Press of Maryland, 1995, 150 pp.

This volume comprises a collection of eight short essays (all originally presented as papers at two separate conferences) which explore the intersection of religion and politics in the literature and societies of the ancient Near East. The contributions represent case studies on the topic and address a wide range of subject matter.

Only three of the essays deal with religions and cultures outside the scope of Judaism and Christianity: "The Sun, the Moon, and the City of Ur," by Mark E. Cohen; "Some Reflections on Mesopotamian Witchcraft," by Tzvi Abusch; and "State Gods and Private Religion in the Near East in the First Millennium B.C.E." by Muhammad Dandamayev. The rest address topics which deal primarily with the study of the Bible or the history of Judaism and Christianity: "Biblical Literature as Politics: The Case of Genesis," by Gary A. Rendsburg; "Biblical Literature as Politics: The Case of Samuel," by Marc Z. Brettler; "Men as Angels: The Self-Image of the Qumran Community," by Devorah Dimant; "Rabbis and Public Prayers for Rain in Later Roman Palestine," by Hayim Lapin; and "In the Blinking of an Eye: The Christianizing of Classical Cities in the Levant," by Kenneth G. Holum.

In the latter group, the essays by Brettler and Holum stand out. Brettler argues that 1-2 Samuel were written to advance the legitimacy of the Davidic kingship by contrasting Saul's base conduct with David's regal behavior and by presenting various incidents in which David's kingship is acknowledged or acclaimed. Holum takes on a different matter altogether and addresses the issue of conversion in late Antiquity. Focusing on the Levant, he asserts that Christian evangelism in urban areas followed the pattern of the evangelization of tribal groups; the conversion of a city's citizens rapidly followed the conversion of its leaders.

The essays are related by little more than the general topic indicated by the title; the book will be most useful to those interested in the subject matter of one or more of the individual contributions.

L. Daniel Hawk

J. Day, R. P. Gordon, H. G. M. Williamson, eds., Wisdom in Ancient Israel: Essays in Honour of J. A. Emerton, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

As a fitting tribute to J. A. Emerton, the longtime Regius Professor Hebrew at Cambridge University, Wisdom in Ancient Israel reflects his special interest in biblical wisdom literature. The twenty-three articles in this Festschrift, contributed by colleagues, former students, and leading Old Testament and Semitic scholars, survey an

extensive range of sapiential topics, including the biblical texts, ancient Near Eastern parallels, wisdom literature in post-biblical Judaism, and the interpretation and theological use of wisdom literature.

In the best tradition of British scholarship, the essays in this volume provide lucid reviews of previous research as the context for their fresh contributions. Consequently, the chapters provide two distinct but interrelated benefits for the reader. For students, the articles develop in a concise, but comprehensive, fashion useful summaries of the scholarly discussions of the major issues in the study of biblical wisdom literature. For scholars, the summaries are also a helpful review, but each article pushes the frontiers of knowledge into areas of promising investigation. This combination of emphases reflects the model which Professor Emerton himself has given in his numerous publications.

A brief review of Wisdom in Ancient Israel cannot adequately introduce each of the chapters. This has been done, however, in the excellent introduction by the editors of the volume, who capably define the salient contributions of each essay. Readers new to wisdom literature especially will be well served by their clear summations of the theses of the entries.

Although the editors do not state so in explicit terms, this volume is by its format a tribute to one of the most significant contributions of Professor Emerton's scholarly career. Through his numerous years as editor of the SOTS monograph series, the International Critical Commentary series, and Vetus Testamentum, he has served the guild of Old Testament scholars by compiling, editing, and publishing scores of volumes of ground-breaking research. By using the genre of a collection of essays, the contributors have recognized and affirmed the immeasurable devotion to the furtherance of Old Testament studies which has motivated so much of Professor Emerton's work.

As one of Professor Emerton's many students, I would add my voice to the chorus of gratitude which resounds in this book. This volume, with its comprehensive grasp of the key areas of research, careful attention to textual and philological detail, judicious and well-supported conclusions, and grace in expression, is an apt reflection of the intellectual rigor and literary excellence which are so characteristic of the man whom it honors.

Daniel J. Estes, Cedarville College

Richard S. Hess and David Toshio Tsumura, eds., "I Studied Inscriptions from Before the Flood": Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1-11, Sources for Biblical and Theological Study, Vol. 4, Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 480 pp., 1994.

This is the fourth volume to appear in Eisenbrauns' series "Sources for Biblical and Theological Study" edited by Ashland Seminary's David W. Baker. The title is a direct quote from King Ashurbanipal of Assyria (669-627 BC), whose personal "library" included texts on creation and the flood. His fascination and enthusiasm for ancient literature illustrates that our own interest in these topics is not a modern phenomenon.

The volume is a collection of the most thought-provoking and stimulating studies on the Bible's theologically important Primeval History, Genesis 1-11. After

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three introductory chapters written by editors Hess and Tsumura, the book presents studies in two parts. Part One contains articles using the comparative approach, reading the Primeval History in light of texts from the ancient Near East. The editors believe such an approach “initiates the student to the world outside the text” (p. xi). Part Two presents seminal articles using literary and linguistic approaches, which the editors state will “introduce the reader to the world within the text” (p. xi). The result is one of the most important collections of essays to appear in many years for students of Genesis. The volume includes indexes of authorities, ancient sources, and biblical references, all of which are important inclusions in a composite volume of this nature.

The volume opens with a survey of the comparative work on Genesis 1-11 over the past century and a half, by editor Hess. The author succinctly surveys the significance of the relatively new field of Assyriology for our understanding of Genesis 1-11. From the initial and widely heralded discovery in 1847 of Ashurbanipal’s library with its copy of the flood story (later identified as tablet XI of the “Gilgamesh Epic”) to a brief discussion of the new texts from Ebla, Hess deftly culls the most important Assyriological insights for the Primeval History. This is a helpful survey, thorough with regard to the connections between Babylonia and the Hebrew traditions in Genesis 1-11. It may surprise readers that in a chapter devoted to “Comparative Studies” in a volume on ancient Near Eastern parallels to Genesis 1-11, this opening chapter contains no references to the important Egyptological parallels contained in the Heliopolis version of the Pyramid Texts, the Memphis Creation Story, or the Instructions of Merikare. This is particularly surprising since these sources contain the closest parallels to creation by divine  *fiat* , or decree (compare the Memphite theology), and the reception of the breadth of life from the gods (compare Merikare).

Of the many important articles reprinted so conveniently here, a couple bear special mention because of their relevance for readers of this journal. First, D. J. A. Clines’ “Theme in Genesis 1-11” (pp. 285-309) is an important statement of his views of the Primeval History as a radical expression of God’s grace. Clines has taught us in other writings that the theme of the Pentateuch as a whole is God’s determination to save Israel in spite of her propensity to sinfulness. Likewise, the Primeval History is about more than the spread of sin or the undoing of creation. Even here, the editor/compiler of Genesis teaches that no matter how drastic humankind’s sin becomes, God’s grace is sufficient to deliver from the consequences of sin.

The second article I would choose for special attention is Phyllis A. Bird’s important article “‘Male and Female He Created Them’: Genesis 1:27b in the Context of the Priestly Account of Creation” (pp. 329-361). This article should be required reading for everyone in the church today concerned about the current debate over so-called “complementarianism” versus “egalitarianism.” Bird’s contribution is the most balanced available on the important biblical anthropology and theology detailed in Genesis 1-3. Against more radical readings of Genesis 1:27, Bird argues that this first creation account makes no statement of shared dominion between the sexes, or even any word about the distribution of roles, responsibility or authority. Rather, Genesis 1:27 explains that sexuality, as differentiation of the sexes is intended for procreation. But she goes on to argue that the passage also needs to be read in the larger context of Genesis 2-3. When read adequately, the whole complex portrays a biblical anthro-

polity that implies a “partnership of equals, characterized by mutuality of attraction, support and commitment” (p. 360). The book’s editor/redactor therefore presented an anthropology that traced the deterioration of an originally egalitarian model to one of submission and recrimination. Companionship in Genesis 1-2 became competition in Genesis 3. Sin’s consequences reached and tarnished one of the essential characteristics of human identity, the distinction between male and female. Conflict between them is therefore the consequence of the fall.

There are many other valuable contributions in this volume, some made available in English for the first time. In sum, this volume continues the laudable service rendered by the series. Since such volumes seldom reap economic benefits for editors or publishers, all of us committed to serious academic research on the Bible are greatly indebted to them for this service of love.

Bill T. Arnold

Edwin C. Hostetter, *Nations Mightier and More Numerous* (BIBAL Dissertation Series 3), N. Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL Press, 1995, xiii + 172 pp.

Biblical scholarship is giving increasing attention to the ways that ancient Israel developed its identity as a people. Hostetter makes a fine contribution to this topic by examining the lists of pre-Israelite peoples scattered throughout the Old Testament. In particular, he is concerned with how these lists functioned to shape an ethnic identity and to lay claim to the acquisition of territory.

After a review and evaluation of previous studies on the lists, the author undertakes a comprehensive examination of the lists (which he denotes “enumeration lists”). He first identifies all the lists and explores each in terms of their content (those nations listed) and contexts. Since the lists are imbedded in other forms of literature, special attention is devoted to a discussion of each list’s literary context and principle of classification. Text critical issues are also addressed, since many of the lists attest variant readings in the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch.

The core of the study consists of two chapters which elaborate what can be known of the peoples which appear in the lists. Seven of the nations appear in standardized lists (Amorites, Canaanites, Gergashites, Hittites, Hivites, Jebusites, and Perizzites) and are the subject of one chapter. Hostetter here brings together citations both from the biblical text and from extra-biblical sources in order to understand each nation’s derivation and geographical location. More important, he offers insight into how the names are used and explains why some of them (i.e. Amorites and Canaanites) are employed both in a narrow sense (as ethnic markers) and more broadly (as designations for the peoples of the land). The following chapter applies this procedure to an analysis of the other pre-Israelite peoples found in the lists (Amalekites, Kadmonites, Kenites, Kenizzites, and the various subgroups of the Rephaim).

Hostetter completes his study by employing the data to explain the lists’ variations, purposes, and development. He concludes that the variations in the lists have more to do with matters of usage than structure and that the lists were compiled during the reigns of David and Solomon to legitimize the acquisition of land from the indigenous peoples. The arguments of the book are summarized in a brief final chapter.

This book represents a thorough treatment of the topic. Hostetter teases about

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as much information as possible from relevant biblical and extra-biblical sources, and his conclusions are carefully drawn, if necessarily speculative at many points. The more interesting question of the role of these lists in the construction of Israelite identity is not fully addressed and will require a more direct application of anthropological and sociological methods. Toward this end the book makes a solid contribution.

L. Daniel Hawk

Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., The Messiah in the Old Testament, 256 pp. Jeffrey J. Niehaus, God at Sinai: Covenant and Theophany in the Bible and Ancient Near East, 426 pp. Tremper Longman III and Daniel G. Reid, God is a Warrior, 224 pp. Michael L. Brown, Israel's Divine Healer, 462 pp. All 4 books are: Studies in Old Testament Biblical Theology, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995.

Some book reviews are hard to write. This is one of them.

Why? Here is a new series, designed to promote an unashamed evangelical approach to biblical interpretation. All the authors are evangelical, learned, and write with clarity. So they ought to be books which one could welcome and commend without reservation. The problem is that I cannot so commend them.

It might be that the problem lies in me. Certainly, after reading Kaiser and Niehaus, I found myself reflecting on important difference between “evangelical” faith and scholarship as generally found in Britain (and Europe and Canada?), and that in the USA. Historic suspicion, and division, between “evangelical” and “non-evangelical” (“liberal”, or whatever) is, I think, rather sharper in the USA than in the UK. Or, to put it differently, many evangelicals in the UK increasingly sense that the lines of battle may need to be redrawn. I thus find myself as a British scholar out of sympathy with some of the assumptions and approaches of Kaiser and Niehaus (which I deeply regret, for they so clearly write from faith, for faith). Yet by the time I had read all 4 books it seemed clear that the problem is not one between evangelicals in the USA and elsewhere, but rather between evangelicals themselves anywhere. For Brown produces work which explicitly from the first page (defense of historicity is not a basic issue) crosses lines which Kaiser and Niehaus will not cross, and he reconstrues the problems of interpretation accordingly. What then is evangelical biblical interpretation?

Part of the difficulty in reviewing four books from the same evangelical series is thus the difficulty of generalizing, because the books can be so different. Walter Kaiser is the most senior and best known of the four scholars. He reformulates some of his known work on promise and prediction, and reads the Old Testament as an unfolding of “direct messianic predictions” from Genesis 3:15 onwards. Engagement with modern scholarly literature is minimal (unlike the other 3 books), presumably because it is of so little use for the kind of agenda to which Kaiser works; apart from referring to his own other works in the area, his most common references are to such 19<sup>th</sup> century scholars as Hengstenberg and Franz Delitzsch-Mowinckel merits one footnote reference, and even that does not mention his major work, *He that Cometh*.

Niehaus shows great erudition in discussing the Old Testament and ancient Near Eastern texts, and prompted me to various reflections. First, if one asks (to put it crudely), “How can you appeal to ANE texts to substantiate the OT, if you consistently



disbelieve what those texts say about their gods while you consistently believe what the OT says about its God?", Niehaus has a ready answer (though it takes a little digging out) in terms of a potentially profound hermeneutical model: "... the OT data reveal the true archetypes and thus aid in our understanding of the ancient Near Eastern mythological distortions of the same" (p. 154n); yet this is never elaborated and justified in its own right, as it needs to be. Secondly, Niehaus' suggestion that the account of Creation in Genesis 1 "was passed down from Adam through many generations to Moses, who then cast the narrative into its present form" (p. 152) surely obscures the real hermeneutical problems which are posed by any account of Creation or Revelation. Thirdly, Niehaus' account of theology as that which "is meant to tell us facts about God-as opposed to human guesses about him" and which is a "study of the nature of God" (p.45) is admirable in principle, but by setting up "human guesses" as a man of straw simply evades the genuine difficulties inherent in speaking truly about God and in understanding the human mediation of divine revelation.

*God is a Warrior* sets out most of the biblical material in both OT and NT related to its theme, and refers to most the significant modern scholarly literature (though with limited interaction). Yet, surely rather oddly, there is no discussion whatever of the sheer difficulty most modern readers have with this aspect of scripture. People who want to believe in the authority of scripture regularly stumble here. It is hardly a sign of unfaith to ask "How could the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ sponsor *herem* in which non-combatant women, children and animals are to be put to death?" To ignore the question, and thus perhaps imply that it is not a real question, is surely to encourage the common reaction of people who overthrow the authority of scripture (and often abandon faith) altogether. To fail to provide help here is dereliction of duty.

One way of trying to articulate the difficulties. I feel with these three books is that none of them engage seriously with the hermeneutical question of what it means to live by the truth of scripture in our modern context (although, of course, they all presuppose the life of faith). With regard to God's keeping his promises, revealing himself and entering into covenant with people, or engaging in warfare on earth, *how could one know how to recognize the same God doing the same things today?* If, for example, God is a warrior, was God for or against American involvement in Vietnam? And *on what basis, by what criteria*, would one affirm or deny it? To put it differently, there is a danger of making the Bible rather like "heritage"-attractively packaged, clearly explained, a good place for an outing (in the car, or in the mind)-but something which is so different from the world that one usually inhabits that one may be tempted to leave it behind with a sigh: "It was so nice for them-God spoke and acted clearly-but it's not like that for us, with our endless disputes and political wranglings". Or, to put it differently again, it is one thing to write for a Christian subculture where certain assumptions are made, and certain hard questions are not asked (or are discouraged); it is another to write for a missionary context, in which Christians must engage effectively with their world.

Brown is different from the other three because he does relate his biblical study of divine healing to contemporary issues. He is also less defensive than the others- he shows that Christians can listen to, and learn from, what others are saying, and in so

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doing can enrich, rather than diminish, their understanding of scripture and of faith. His own personal pilgrimage has clearly helped here: Conservative Jewish background, teenage embrace of a hard rock and drugs culture, Pentecostal conversion, continuing asking of hard questions. There is perhaps a hint of something-is it complacency? is it excessive acclimatization to evangelical subculture?-in the other three writers which is lacking in Brown. Whatever it is, if it is definitive of evangelical identity to be missionary to the world in which we live, Brown writes in a way which is more likely than that of the others to commend evangelical faith to those who do not yet have it.

It is thus difficult to assess the value of the series as a whole on the strength of these first four volumes. This is in part because of the differing understandings of what evangelical understanding of scripture entails, and of what theology is. I am disappointed that I can only enthuse about one of the four books. But if subsequent writers will more explicitly relate their study of scripture to contemporary life, the great potential of the series may yet be realized. R. W. L. Moberly, University of Durham

Rolf P. Knierim, The Task of Old Testament Theology, Method and Cases, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995, 603 pp.

R.P. Knierim begins with the proposal that the OT contains a *plurality of coexisting* theologies. This notion underscores the entire enterprise of OT theology. The danger of atomization in plurality is met through historical exegesis, while also the holistic dimension is not lost, for the plurality of the whole represents a "semantic homogeneity." He objects, however, to seeking tradition-historical thematic-theological meaning in which the whole is something in addition to the texts, as well as to seeking a final juxtaposition of traditions on the same synchronic level in the canon. Plurality renders inadequate all singular themes for understanding the unity of OT theology. The focus of discussion must be the substantive issues of the theologies and the *relationship* of those theologies, rather than the tradition histories or the canon.

The danger is that pluralism may mean chaos or harmony: mutually exclusive or mutually inclusive theologies. For example, although he says that all theologies affirm YHWH as the one and only God, the explications of those theologies differ. The question is whether the diverse witnesses reflect YHWH's oneness "in the richness of his manifestations" or whether they reflect many YHWH's or "different gods." Consequently, monotheism is no longer self-evident. Therefore, he hopes to show that the structure of pluralism itself is monotheistic (i.e., by examining the correspondence of the OT theologies themselves). He asks whether there are criteria based on priorities for determining if there is any aspect that dominates all others, and proposes the central aspect of YHWH's oneness and exclusivity. Yet, YHWH's manifold relationship to the realms of reality is a plurality (qualitative and quantitative), and the substantive task of OT theology is interpreting this relationship between YHWH and reality (the semantic hierarchy in which priorities exist). He thus proposes to organize OT theology under the universal dominion of YHWH in justice and righteousness as the *modes* of YHWH's universal relationship with the world (cosmic, national, and individual). The

fundamental theological criterion is YHWH's universal dominion and the fundamental task of OT theology is the interpretation of YHWH's universal dominion.

His precisely worded and eloquently reasoned proposals for OT theology in Ch 1 are met with three engaging responses (W. Harrelson, W.S. Towner, and R.E. Murphy) which draw the interested reader into the discussion very nicely. Following his own well reasoned evaluation of these responses (esp. on Murphy's objections to systematization in the Hebrew Bible) is a thoroughgoing interpretive methodology for OT theology that sets the stage very well for application in his sweeping treatment of numerous major themes relevant to OT theology in topical and exegetical essays which display a breadth of knowledge alongside careful exegesis and precise expression (e.g., on revelation, the cosmos and history, food, land, and justice, letter and spirit, Israel and the nations, Ps 19, Ex 25:1-9, hope, spirituality, science, the composition of the Pentateuch, etc.). Although these essays were written over the span of several decades, they do, as he intends, reflect an overall focus as well as an openness in approach.

Knierim's attempt to find a programmatic OT theology is admirable in light of the widespread fragmentation resulting from traditional-historical approaches. He seeks to avoid both fragmentation as well as overly rigid strictures of a "central" theme approach. The criteria he proposes derive from the OT itself and make relative the choice between tradition-historical, canonical, or thematic approaches, as long as the "theologies" are subject to those criteria. He makes the important point that "The question is what are our criteria for a theological reading of the Bible, not whether a critical assessment of its theologies is important" (p. 16).

Knierim's description of the OT theologian's function as a systematizer is also welcome in light of widespread disparagement of such (R.E. Murphy), although it is not self-evident that true plurality of theologies can be thus systematized, nor that he fully escapes his own objection to a "central" unifying theme or holistic approaches. That is, a further question is whether the criteria of universal dominion in justice and righteousness, which he has chosen as "normative," are sufficient to account for the full array of the OT and its theology, and whether the assumption of multiple theologies is rather a circular proposition, for the perceived plurality may be presupposed by the conclusions of tradition-historical assumptions, whereas the complexity of OT theology does not necessitate plurality. That is, it is not a foregone conclusion that OT theology consists of a plurality of theologies, nor that the criteria Knierim proposes to correlate such "theologies" in terms of "theological priorities" is adequate. Theological complexity may rather reflect the dynamism of the primary subject, God himself, not plurality. While there is the inherent impossibility of a comprehensive OT theology, its complexity allows for a theological unity and holistic reading of polarity of motifs as reflecting depth and breadth of understanding (e.g., comprehension and complementarity of immanence/transcendence in YHWH's meeting and dwelling presence), not underlying theological polarizations in tradition-histories. The notion of YHWH's presence is not as he says "fundamentally pluralistic," but rather it is fundamentally dynamic and multiplex. Although he rightly notes that tradition-histories and their transmission are an unsuitable criterion for evaluating the theologies, it is uncertain that such theologies can themselves be delineated apart from tradition-

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historical categories, nor as he asserts that de- and *reconceptualization* of those traditions resolves their intrinsic problem of potential contradiction or residual theological tension. The latter is a perennial problem that may indicate that both the texts and their theologies do not convey a plurality of theologies underlying a final (canonical) "layer" of historical datum, but rather complex, dynamic, and complimentary approximations about YHWH and his redemptive purposes in this world in a canon that is theologically coherent and linguistically cohesive. This coherence/cohesion poses an ongoing challenge to proposals of identifying tradition-histories which themselves are presupposed by the characterizations of those histories. In other words, a plurality of competing/complimenting theologies relies on a proposal that the underlying traditions/theologies are self-evident when in fact they rely for identification on tradition-historical presuppositions. Stephen T. Hague, Carlisle, PA

Jeffrey Kah-jin Kuan, Neo-Assyrian Historical Inscriptions and Syria Palestine: Israelite/Judean-Tyrian-Damascene Political and Commercial relations in the Ninth-Eighth Centuries BCE, Jian Dao Dissertation Series 1, Bible and Literature 1, Hong Kong: Alliance Bible Seminary, 1995, xxiii+281 pp.

This thesis, written for Emory University under the direction of John H. Hayes, looks at international relations, political and commercial, in the ancient world. The periods and people covered, as evidenced by the title, are of great import for the student of the Old Testament, since this is the period of the United Monarchy and the fall of Israel. The intriguing aspect of it for biblical students is that its primary source evidence is drawn from contemporary Assyrian documents, supplemented by other sources including the OT, rather than using the latter as the starting point. Primacy of Assyria in providing source evidence is appropriate, since its presence as the major world power in the period under discussion provided a major catalyst for the fluctuations in international relationships throughout the entire area.

The book is divided into five chapters, looking sequentially at materials from the reigns of the Assyrian kings from Shalmaneser III (858-824 BC) through Shalmaneser V (726-722 BC), showing that the time period indicated by the title is somewhat misleading. Texts are generally presented in transliteration and translation, with accompanying discussion. Transliteration and translation are not always present in the discussion of smaller units being discussed, so those without facility in Hebrew and Akkadian will find portions of the material hard going. The concluding chapter, in which nine distinct phases of international relations during the period are delineated, is accessible to all. This work of primary research is well-done and will serve as grist for further historical and theological milling before it becomes of direct use to the church. Popularization must be based on serious scholarship such as this, and the volume will find a worthy place in seminary and research libraries. It is an auspicious start for this new series of serious theological scholarship produced by Asians.

David Baker

James L. Kugel, In Potiphar's House: The Interpretive Life of Biblical Texts, San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1990, 286 pp.

This book offers a fascinating study of the ways that biblical narratives were expanded and explained in early rabbinic exegesis. The first half of the book focuses on midrashic (interpretative) elaborations of the Joseph story in order to identify exegetical motifs and procedures, while the second applies these observations to early interpretations of Genesis 4, Psalms 137, and Leviticus 19:17-18. In the process, the author takes the reader on an exhaustive tour of early Jewish texts, with forays into early Christian and Islamic literature. What sets this study apart from others of its kind (which examine these texts as a way of understanding the communities that produced them) is Kugel's interest in the task of interpretation itself. The interpretation of biblical narratives is essentially a retelling of the stories, and a large part of the retelling involves filling in gaps or explaining obscurities in the sacred text. Kugel's careful and creative discussion of early midrash illustrates the influence that these gaps and obscurities have on subsequent interpretation. His exploration of the texts reveals a dynamic process in which particular exegetical motifs or explanations lead eventually to more comprehensive questions, to a wider interaction with biblical texts, and eventually to established interpretive traditions. Christianity and Judaism share a common set of narratives in the Old Testament, but they also share certain traditions about how to understand them. Kugel's work on rabbinic exegesis therefore offers many points of correspondence with conventional Christian exegesis of biblical narrative. This book can therefore be read with profit not only because it introduces a way of reading the Bible that will be unfamiliar to most readers of this journal, but also because it prompts the reader to think critically about the perspectives and procedures of his or her own interpretive community.

L. Daniel Hawk

Victor H. Matthews and Don C. Benjamin, Social World of Ancient Israel, 1250-587 BCE, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1993, xxiii + 327 pp., \$24.95.

The authors, professors at Southwest Missouri State and Kino Institute of Theology in Phoenix respectively, have elucidated the background of the Old Testament through individual (Matthews, Manners and Customs in the Bible, Hendrickson; Benjamin, Deuteronomy and City Life, University Press of America) and joint (Matthews and Benjamin, Old Testament Parallels: Law and Stories from the Ancient Near East, Hendrickson; Matthews and John Walton, The IVP Bible Background Commentary, InterVarsity) publications. This is a welcome addition to this type of study, which has become deservedly popular of late among students of Scripture.

Rather than dividing the life of Israel up into chronological sections, as the title dates might lead one to expect, they look at different social functions within Israelite society. First is a chapter on "Anthropology and the Bible" which highlights some of the features which distinguish Israel's society from our own, necessitating this

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type of study. They also very briefly introduce the field of anthropology and its history, specifically as it impinges on biblical studies.

The volume itself is split into two main sections, looking at Israel as a village society and later as a state society. These each are split into five subsections, each consisting of one to three chapters. These are: I. The village- village politics: the father, the mother; village economics: the farmer, the herder, the midwife; village diplomacy: the host and the stranger, the chief, the legal guardian; village education: the wise and the fool; II. The state-state politics: the monarch, the virgin; state economics: the priest, the slave; state diplomacy: the prophet; state law: the lawgiver; state education: the storyteller.

The volume concluded with an abbreviation list, a very useful bibliography running to 56 pages, and indexes of literary and social scientific terms, modern authors, and ancient sources.

There is much in the volume which will be intriguing and enlightening for the reader, especially as this sort of sociological analysis applied to the Old Testament is relatively new. Aspects of the text will be enlivened and understanding of them enriched.

The volume must be used with caution, however. The author's view of the historical accuracy and reliability of the text is not conservative, nor is their use of the evidence from outside Scripture. Also, bold statements are made without any Scriptural evidence at all. For example, the authors claim that by setting a newborn firmly onto the ground "midwives reenacted with Mother earth the parturition she had just completed with the human mother. Earthing affirmed the widespread belief that before entering the womb of its human mother, newborns gestated in the soil, rocks, trees, plants, flowers, rivers, and springs (Ps 139:15...; p. 72). This reading of a biblical metaphor in light of some sort of New Age goddess belief does not serve the understanding of scripture at all well.

In spite of such caveats, readers of this journal will be challenged and stimulated by a judicious reading of this book, which could find a place on the shelves of pastors and teachers, as well as some church libraries.

David W. Baker

Victor H. Matthews and Don C. Benjamin, Old Testament Parallels: Laws and Stories from the Ancient Near East, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., New York: Paulist, 1997, xiv + 384 pp., 19.95.

This volume goes through the Old Testament in Protestant canonical order providing English translations of texts which are thought to be illustrative of the biblical material. These come from Egypt, Canaan, Asia Minor and Mesopotamia. Each text has its own brief introduction, and then has biblical texts of relevance noted throughout the translation. Black and white line drawings are also usefully scattered throughout the book.

The book concludes with history outlines for Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Israelites, a bibliography of the cited texts and picture sources, and a useful index of biblical passages which not only gives the page where the biblical text is cited, but also the name of the parallel text and the nature of the parallel offered. The index itself has

thus become in itself a useful reference tool. Recommended for college and seminary libraries, as well as those serious about understanding the Old Testament in its literary and cultural world.

David Baker

J. Gordon McConville, Grace in the End: A Study of Deuteronomistic Theology, Studies in Old Testament Biblical Theology, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993, 176 pp., \$18.99.

The author, an expert on Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings), teaches Old Testament in Cheltenham, England. Here he addresses the issue of the theology of these historico-theological books.

McConville first traces the development of an idea of a Deuteronomistic collection among modern scholars, as well as debate over the date of Deuteronomy itself. He argues for a unified understanding of the book, where law and grace mesh rather than clash, one of the arguments previously used to suggest a textual evolution. He shows the ties that bind the books of the Deuteronomistic History together, among them its theology. This consists of a picture of God who reveals himself through history by means of election and covenant, where grace is shown on the part of God on the one hand, and adequate response (ethics) is expected by the people on the other.

This volume is useful and readable and should be in seminary and college collections. Its relatively high price for a small format paperback will probably lead preachers and teachers, who will find matters of use in it, to consult it rather than purchasing it.

David Baker

D. Brent Sandy and Ronald L. Giese, Jr., Cracking Old Testament Codes: A Guide to Interpreting the Literary Genres of the Old Testament, Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1995, pp. 323., (pbk).

Cracking OT Codes is founded on the premise that "the codes embedded in the literary forms of the Old Testament are indispensable to correct interpretation" (p.3). That is to say that one must place an OT text into the context of the type of literature (genre) to which it belongs in order to read it correctly. This book was written by evangelical scholars for the general-level Christian audience in order to help that audience to understand the OT better by: 1) introducing the reader to the key characteristics of the different genres found in the OT, 2) giving the reader guidelines for interpreting those genres, 3) modeling the use of those guidelines by showing how to read a specific text, and 4) directing the reader to further resources (p.2). This work consists of fourteen chapters. Three chapters discuss introductory matters. Ten chapters, each devoted to one type of literature in the OT, follow the four-point format stated above and frequently also provide information about parallel usage of the genre in the ancient Near East. The final chapter moves to general application.

Much could have been done to strengthen this book. There are conflicting definitions among the authors, different kinds of "reading guidelines" (prescriptive versus descriptive, general versus particular), guidelines that range from excellent to poor, models of application that do not follow the author's own guidelines, and

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statements that assume a specialized audience (e.g. statements that assume a knowledge of Hebrew). Moreover, significant problems arise in relation to the scope of the book as delineated in the first chapter.

In Chapter 1, "Literary Forms of the Old Testament," Giese identifies for the reader three overarching forms found in the OT (prose, poetry, and prophecy--a combination of prose and poetry) under which he derives ten genres. He lists under prose: narrative, history, and law; under prophecy: oracles of salvation, announcements of judgment, and apocalyptic; and, under poetry: the laments and praise of psalms, and the proverbs and "other" nonproverbial forms of wisdom literature (pp. 18-19). Although those ten genres are treated in the book, most significantly the book does not introduce the reader to those three primal, overarching forms, prose, poetry, and prophecy! Further unaddressed, but significant issues also arise: What is the difference between prose and narrative, and between narrative and history? How is "other" wisdom (nonproverbial) a genre?

Of the ten chapters devoted to the OT genres, I would highly recommend four, because they were written for the general-level audience, were clear and informative, gave good guidelines, and modeled those guidelines: "Narrative" (Kaiser), "Apocalyptic" (Sandy and Abegg), "Lament" (Longman), and "Non-Proverbial Wisdom" (Hill). The chapters that could create moderate difficulty for the reader are: "History" (Merrill), "Praise" (Barker), and "Proverb" (Hildebrandt). Those chapters most likely to present the greatest difficulty or confusion are: "Law" (Averbeck), "Oracles of Salvation" (Van Gemeren), and "Announcements of Judgment" (Butler).

Cracking Old Testament Codes addresses a "gap" in books available for the general reader who holds evangelical presuppositions. There is a need for such literary guides to the OT that describe the genres of the OT and provide instruction for reading those genres with greater understanding. Although having certain weaknesses, Cracking Old Testament Codes will help to fill that gap.

Rodney K. Duke, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC

Emanuel Tov, Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, Minneapolis: Fortress/Assen-Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1992.

This ground-breaking volume will probably change henceforth the way Old Testament scholars do textual criticism. Every student of the Old Testament is to some degree or another interested in the textual data available, which consists of ancient Hebrew scrolls, medieval Hebrew manuscripts, and the ancient translations. This volume introduces the reader to the question of "how to relate to the multiplicity of differences between the various sources of the biblical text" (p. xxxviii). This excellent introduction to the topic is unique in several respects. Tov has decided to devote attention to the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew scrolls from the Judean Desert (popularly known as the Dead Sea Scrolls) as the most important sources for investigating the biblical text. At the same time, he devotes less attention to the Aramaic Targums, the Syriac translations, and the Vulgate because these are quite close to the Masoretic Text and are therefore of less importance for textual criticism. One of



his objectives is to make the point that the Masoretic Text and the biblical text are *not* identical; the first is merely a representative of the other, and takes its place alongside other sources that reflect the biblical text. Professor Tov argues against the view that there existed at an early stage "various pristine texts," which had equal status. Instead, he believes there existed one original text of the biblical books from which the rest derived (pp. 164-180). But it is no longer legitimate to assume that MT is the best witness to that original text.

This volume, which is certain to become a standard work in the field, has nine chapters. After an introduction, Tov discusses the textual witnesses for the Old Testament, and presents a history of the text. Tov has been one of the pioneer scholars to recognize the significance of the so-called Dead Sea Scrolls, and the impact of these texts from the Judean Desert is felt in his presentation. This is followed by chapters on copying and transmitting the text, the aims and procedures of textual criticism, evaluating readings, textual criticism and literary criticism, conjectural emendation, and critical editions of the Old Testament. Tov includes a liberal use of examples to illustrate his points, a feature that is the result no doubt of producing this volume over many years of teaching. His contribution is also distinctive for his extensive attention to the relationship between textual criticism and literary criticism (chapter 7).

Of interest to readers of this journal will be the innovation of Professor Tov regarding the definition and nature of modern textual criticism. He assumes that we can no longer simply take the local text approach, exemplified best in Frank Moore Cross's three tradition theory - Babylonian (MT), Egyptian (LXX), and Syro-Palestinian (Samaritan Pentateuch) - all three families of which developed independently from the others during the fifth to third centuries BC (pp. 185-186). Since Qumran provided attestation of all three traditions within the confines of Palestine itself, such a local text families approach is precluded. We can no longer assume the three witnesses to an early original composition. Instead, Tov speaks of a "textual plurality" that characterizes the last three centuries BC (p. 191). He suggests that the group of texts that became the Masoretic family was preferred in temple circles. These proto-Masoretic texts were usually conservative in nature, allowing few changes (sometimes called nonvulgar texts). Some of these were preserved with great caution by groups who also used them in the liturgy. Others allowed themselves the freedom of making changes and corrections, sometimes called vulgar texts. These less precise texts were in general use by the people (pp. 192-193).

Tov believes the task of modern textual criticism is to reconstruct as far as possible the *Urtext*, by which he means "the completed literary composition which had already passed through several written stages and which stood at the beginning of the process of textual transmission" (pp. 17-18, and cf. p. 177). The text critic focuses on scribal transmission and not necessarily literary development, though his or her work will impact the research on such development. This has implications for those with a high view of Scripture and who have a doctrine of biblical inspiration. It has become increasingly clear due to our current canonical approaches that the process of canonization for Old Testament books was not counciliar (as at Jabneh, or Jamnia as it is sometimes called). Instead, the Old Testament canon appears to have been

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intentionally edited and consciously inscripturated, either in the time of Ezra, or perhaps during the early Maccabean period (on this, see my review of the recent contributions of David N. Freedman in *Ashland Theological Journal* 27[1995], pp. 140-143). Our doctrine of inspiration will have to veer away from traditional authorial approaches, and consider this final edition of the Old Testament canon as the inspired revelation from God, just as modern text critics seek to reconstruct this "original text" rather than earlier authorial autographs (pp. 180-197).

Finally, a word regarding style. The author, as one might expect for a leading textual critic, is extremely meticulous and detailed in his methodology. But this is not always a trait that transfers easily to one's writing style. If you also consider the fact that this volume is largely a revised and enlarged edition of Tov's original book in Hebrew, the outcome is a book difficult to read. Nonetheless, the publishers have provided us with a beautiful volume that will replace all others on this topic. Tov is to be congratulated on changing the way we approach Old Testament textual criticism.

Bill T. Arnold, Asbury Theological Seminary

Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990, paper rep. 1996, 580 pp., \$29.99.

The author, professor of history at Miami University in Oxford, OH, is a leading scholar of the period of which he writes here, with seventeen of his own works cited in the bibliography. The reprint does not seem to have been modified, at least as regards bibliography, since all sources are at least a decade old.

The people, places and religion discussed in the book are important for understanding the post-exilic history of Israel. Yamauchi explores all of these areas in great depth in what is undoubtedly a standard text in the field. Adding to the usefulness of the volume are numerous black-and-white photographs, maps and artists' reconstructions. The book should be in seminary and college libraries, and students of history and culture will find it useful and understandable. David Baker

Gale Yee, ed., *Judges and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995, vi + 186 pp.

Most interpreters have been taught to read the Bible with historical questions in mind. (Who wrote this text? In what context was it written? What historical reality does it reflect?) But new approaches have appeared, asking different kinds of questions. (What social or cultural perspectives does this text encode? Whose interests are being served by it? How is this narrative configured?) Addressing these questions, and thereby breaking out of conventional modes of interpretation, can lead to a greater appreciation of scripture's depth and relevance, but tracking the maze of new theories and methods can be fraught with confusion and frustration.

The essays in this volume, a companion to the well-known *Mark and Method*, introduce many of these new approaches with remarkable skill and clarity. The essays (with the exception of the first, which provides an overview of scholarship on Judges)

follow a two-part scheme. Each begins with a concise, readable explanation of a particular approach which details presuppositions, objectives, and method. This is followed by the application of the approach to a certain text or aspect of the book of Judges. A select, annotated bibliography concludes each essay. Thus, Richard B. Bowman introduces Narrative Criticism and examines God as a character in Judges, Naomi Steinberg employs social-scientific criticism to elucidate the significance of kinship in Judges 9, J. Cheryl Exum explores the stories of women in the book from a feminist perspective, David Jobling applies structuralist criticism to the three stories which take place at the fords of the Jordan, Danna Nolan Fewell ponders issues of textuality, power, and truth through a deconstructive reading of the story of Achsah, and Gale A. Yee undertakes an extrinsic and intrinsic ideological analysis of Judges 17-21.

This is a book well worth reading, not only because it introduces new methods of interpretation, but also because it will deepen the reader's appreciation for an often-neglected biblical book. Through these essays, Judges is revealed as a rich, though disturbing, reflection on the motivations and brutal consequences of the human lust for power. For these reasons, Judges and Method will surely enrich and provoke its readers; for many it will become an invaluable resource.

L. Daniel Hawk

Michael Wilcock, The Message of Judges, The Bible Speaks Today, Downers Grove/Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1992, 175 pp., \$11.99.

\_\_\_\_\_, The Message of Chronicles, The Bible Speaks Today, Downers Grove/Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1987, 288 pp., \$14.99.

Tom Gledhill, The Message of the Song of Songs, The Bible Speaks Today, Downers Grove/Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1994, 175 pp., \$12.99.

This series is one which deserves to be known and used by preachers and teachers. Its goal is articulated in the series title, in that it seeks to present the message of Scripture for its hearers of today.

Wilcock is an Anglican (Episcopal) clergyman in England, having previously taught pastoralia at a seminary there. Gledhill is by training a physicist who now teaches biblical languages and Old Testament in Wales, previously having taught in Nigeria, Turkey, Uganda, Malawi and Kenya. The interest of both of the place of biblical teaching in the church around the world is evident in their books. They know that background knowledge on the biblical text, while necessary, is not sufficient, so they bring the message to a very practical level. Even sensitive issues such as human sexuality and eroticism vs. pornography, or tragically flawed leaders of God's people such as Samson, who serves more as warning than example, are not avoided but acknowledged and studied.

Each volume reprints fairly lengthy text portions (Wilcock from the RSV, Gledhill, the NIV) and then comments on each section rather than each individual verse. It's a pity that so much space which could have been profitably used for further insight from the authors is sacrificed to the biblical text, which all readers will no doubt have

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at hand anyway. The series should be in seminary, college and church libraries, as well as on the desks of pastors and church teachers. David Baker

H. G. M. Williamson, Ezra, Nehemiah, Word Biblical Commentary 16, Waco: Word, 1985, lii+417 pp., \$29.99.

John E. Goldingay, Daniel, Word Biblical Commentary 30, Waco: Word, 1989, liii+351 pp., \$29.99.

First the reviewer must apologize to authors and publishers for such a tardy review of two such fine volumes. The authors are currently Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford University and Professor of Old Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary respectively, and both are authorities on the books on which they comment.

Williamson has published extensively on the post-exilic period and its texts, being an advocate of distinguishing between the Chronicler and the author of single work of Ezra-Nehemiah. He does an admirable job of introducing the books and the historical and theological issues surrounding them. He introduces various purported sources for the books (the historical sources behind Ezra 1-6; the Nehemiah Memoir [Neh 1-7; 12:27-43; 13:4-31] by Nehemiah himself; the Ezra Memoir [Ezra 7-8; Neh 8; Ezra 9-10] by Ezra himself; and other supplemental sources) and proposes a history for the composition (primary sources written contemporaneously with the events; combination of these sources [c. 425BC]; the later addition of Ezra 1-6 [c. 300BC]).

The bibliographies, current up to about 1984, are an important source for students of the text. While an Old Testament commentary, Williamson does not hesitate to cite New Testament texts, over seventy citations being included in the scripture index. The volume should be among the first consulted by those doing a serious study of these two books.

Goldingay has a more theologically challenging task before him, since Daniel has had a history of varied, and often mutually exclusive, interpretations applied to it. He in fact sets out to save the book from three different approaches: one which thinks that arguments dealing only with historical placement in the sixth or second centuries BC is interpretation; one which makes the book a series of children's stories; and one which sees it only as pointing to contemporary events in the Near East. Rather he sees it needing to be interpreted on its own terms, but in a way which makes it relevant and needful for a believer's life and belief today.

Due to the special nature of the book, Goldingay spends twenty pages on discussing the history of interpretation. In spite of the length of this section, some, e.g. Dispensationalists (who are much more numerous in the US than in the author's native Britain), will undoubtedly feel that their view is not adequately represented.

Apart from the single introductory section, Goldingay wisely places all other such material after the commentary proper. This approach (a characteristic also of the Believers Church Bible Commentary) allows the reader to enter immediately into the text itself, not being sidetracked into important but secondary issues. Those who care to dig further can find discussions of form (a combination of story and vision), links

with other OT traditions (history, wisdom, prophecy), structure (with several different simultaneous streams including chronological [reigns of 4 different rulers], linguistic [two languages] and literary [a book-wide chiasmus]), origins (Persian diaspora for the stories, 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC Jerusalem for the oracles), and theological significance (highlighting God's interaction with the world in its history, his kingdom, human life under varying circumstances, leadership).

A useful commentary for understanding the book in its own biblical and ancient Near Eastern world which, along with Williamson, could find a place in all seminary and college libraries, as well as on the shelves of serious pastors and teachers.

David W. Baker

Billy K. Smith and Frank S. Page, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, The New American Commentary, 19B, n.p., Broadman and Holman, 1995, 304 pp., hb., \$27.99.

This volume, like all of the other contributions to this series, presents a conservative evangelical approach to the biblical text and is based on the NIV. While attempting to provide studies grounded in serious scholarship, the series also aims at providing sound exegesis for ministers and laypersons. Smith, who comments on Amos and Obadiah, is provost and dean of the faculty at New Orleans Baptist Seminary; Page, a Baptist pastor in Atlanta, discusses Jonah.

This work should prove to be useful to its intended audience. Both authors do a commendable job in surveying much scholarly opinion on relevant textual and theological issues and then defending their own particular options. A particularly good illustration of a sensitive and informed dealing with the data is Page's treatment of the genre of Jonah (pp. 209-219). Occasionally, however, the interpretive choice is left a bit unclear (note, for example, Smith on the difficult phrase "a pair of sandals" in Amos 2:6 and the rhetorical impact of the enigmatic 3:12). At the same time, the solutions on certain textual problems consistently reflect their theological convictions (for instance, debates on the authenticity of passages, such as Amos 9:11-15 and Jonah chapter 2). Smith ascribes the authorship of the book of Amos to the prophet himself and dates Obadiah to after the fall of Jerusalem; Page defends the historicity of the Jonah account, but remains somewhat open on the issue of authorship. The predictive passages of hope at the conclusions of Amos (9:11-15) and Obadiah (vv. 19-21) are taken by Smith as still awaiting complete fulfillment, but he is vague as to in what manner he envisions how that process will unfold.

The authors deal with the theological messages and purpose of these three texts and seek contemporary applications; a pertinent map appears at the beginning of the commentary for each of the books; footnotes make referencing of sources quick and easy; and indices of topics, persons, and Scripture passages round out the volume.

These observations notwithstanding, this commentary cannot serve as a scholarly reference tool. Its limitations, however, are probably explained by the series' designated audience and its theological strictures. Significant sources in other languages (German, French, Spanish) are conspicuous by their absence in the discussion and footnotes; the authors appear to circumscribe their sources to a select group of fairly

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recent English commentaries and journal articles. Missing, too, is interaction with sociological approaches (which are of particular import for the systemic concerns of Amos) and studies on the Book of the Twelve (that wrestle with the canonical placement of the Minor Prophets). Some important literary studies are handled in Page's exposition of Jonah, but few on Amos surface in Smith's offering. Some readers might also be frustrated by the uniform conservative evangelical tone that can lead to predictable exegetical and theological decisions. For others, of course, this characteristic will prove to be a case for its virtue.

These final comments are not meant in any way to detract from the potential positive value of this volume. It will well serve the evangelical pastor and layperson desiring a solid mid-level commentary on these prophetic books from within that theological current.

M. Daniel Carroll R., Denver Seminary

John R. Kohlenberger III, Edward Goodrick, and James A. Swanson, The Exhaustive Concordance to the Greek New Testament, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995, xv + 1056 pp., \$49.95.

Pastors and Scholars alike find concordances to be indispensable resources for lexical studies of key words in a given passage. It is, of course, best to conduct this sort of study using the original language as the basis for the search. An English-only concordance will list under one entry (e.g., "gift") texts which actually use a variety of different Greek words (e.g. δῶρον, χάρις, χάρισμα); further, it will not include all the texts in which a single Greek word appears (e.g., πίστις) under a single heading, since different English equivalents are chosen in different contexts (e.g., faith, belief, trust). Concordances like Young's *Analytical Concordance* help bridge this gap for those without any knowledge of Greek, but are rather awkward to use. Those who have studied enough Greek to be able to recognize the key word they wish to study further will certainly appreciate this new volume from Zondervan.

This new Exhaustive Concordance offers many advantages over its competitors, such as the long-revered *Concordance to the Greek New Testament* by Moulton and Geden and the *Handkonkordanz zum griechischen Neuen Testament* by A. Schmoller. It provides fuller contexts for each entry, seeking to offer the complete sense unit in which a word appears. This often results in two lines of context (in very small print), which is a great gain over the usual six or seven words of context in other concordances. The key word is highlighted in bold print for immediate identification. Many entries point the reader to other words in the same family, and include lists of important phrases (with references) in which the key word appears (helping one narrow down the search if one is interested in, say, Paul's use of πίστις Ἰησοῦ or ἐν Χριστῷ). The Concordance is based on the UBS<sup>4</sup> text, and diligently notes variants between this text and the Greek text followed by the NIV. Unfortunately, it was un-able to take the step of concordancing the important variants in the textual apparatus.

There have been a few losses in this volume. The Moulton-Geden *Concordance* provides the Hebrew text beside the Greek wherever the OT is being cited by an NT author, which was a useful aid. The older volume also included context lines

for more prepositions, which was often helpful in looking at the sometimes wide range of usage over which Greek could stretch a preposition. In Kohlenberger, a number of these are now relegated to an appendix with only lists of reference. Nevertheless, the new *Exhaustive Concordance* promises to be the most thorough and helpful concordancing tool for students of the New Testament currently available, and at a significantly lower retail price than its classic competitor. David A. deSilva

C. Spicq, Theological Lexicon of the New Testament, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994, 3 vols., \$99.95.

Among the plethora of dictionaries and lexicons of the Bible or one or other of the Testament, Spicq's stands out from the crowd in several respects. First it represents the fruit of Spicq's many years of work on the NT, both detailed exegetical work and work on the theology of the NT. Secondly, other similar works (such as the three volume New Inter-national Dictionary of NT Theology edited by Colin Brown) involve a variety of scholars with a variety of viewpoints writing in a variety of styles with a variety of results. Spicq's work reflects one mind, one style, but also the limitations which come with this sort of approach--namely one person cannot know all that is needed to be known in lexicographical matters. Like Kittel's mammoth dictionary, Spicq provides us with much collateral data, examining word usage in the papyri, Greek and Roman literature, and a host of Jewish writings including the Qumran material. The readings of key terms like "love" and "faith" are judicious and usually uncontroversial.

In terms of the form of the work, it is very reader friendly. It uses only English in the text, or transliteration, but in the notes we find the original languages. It provides more than adequate bibliography up to about 1990. All in all this work can be highly commended. If one had to choose between this work and the Dictionary edited by Colin Brown and published by Zondervan, my preference on the whole would be for this work, because of the unevenness of some of the material in Brown's series.

Ben Witherington, III, Asbury Theological Seminary

Clinton E. Arnold, The Colossian Syncretism, WUNT 2.77, Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1995, xii + 378 pp.

The debate about the nature of the teaching countered in the letter to the Colossians seems to be never-ending. For a time the Gnostic-syncretistic option seemed to sweep all before it, as exemplified by Eduard Lohse's fine commentary. Then the alternative of a teaching thoroughly Jewish in character, as argued for particularly by Fred Francis, began to command increasing assent. Recently, however, the pendulum has swung back the other way, with syncretism again being promoted as the most obvious explanation for the Colossian 'false teaching', and different individuals drawing attention to particular elements within the suggest syncretistic mix-Pythagoreanism, middle Platonism or Cynic philosophy. Arnold's new work contributes to the resurgence of the syncretistic hypothesis.

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This is truly a tour de force - in both the positive and the negative senses that the phrase can bear. The author of *Ephesians: Power and Magic* understandably attempts to demonstrate how much our knowledge of magic and of the veneration of angels in the folk religion of Lydia and Phrygia sheds light on one of the key phrases in Colossians. To be more precise, his central thesis is that the 'worship of angels' (Col 2:18) 'refers essentially to a magical invocation of angels, especially for apotropaic purposes' (p. 10).

On the positive side he is able to demonstrate a veneration of angels which took place in the context of magic, that the angels of Judaism played a significant role in Jewish magic, and that there was invocation of angels in Asia Minor. The gathering of data here is most useful and impressive.

On the negative side, however, Arnold reaches his conclusion that Col 2:18 'represents the practice of invoking angels for protection, help, and deliverance' (p. 103) before he has begun to look at Colossians itself - puzzling and disturbing step for any exegete to take. Moreover, as so often with the tour de force, the developing argument makes several crucial transitions without sufficient care - from 'invocation' to 'veneration' (it begs more than one question to assume that Col 2:18 refers to the former), from private devotion/superstition (amulets) to worship publicly approbated, from evidence gleaned from a single synagogue (Dura Europa) to the Colossian synagogue in the first century, from late (magical) texts to first century practice (but the disallows similarly late Hekhalot texts), from uninformed and unsympathetic accusation (cf. Juvenal) to affirmation, and most question-begging of all, from a syncretism which incorporates Jewish elements to Jewish syncretism.

Similarly tendentious is the argument regarding 'entering in' (also in 2:18), since none of the attested uses gives credibility to the sense 'entering the things he had seen'. The whole thesis, going back of Dibelius, that 'entering in' is a technical term for initiation into a mystery cult is thinly based and overstated.

More disquieting is the selectivity of the evidence drawn in from Colossians. Little or no attention is paid to the clear implication that Colossians lays claim to the categories of Jewish identity (particularly 1:12, 2:13 and 3:12), or to the fact that the points at issue are characteristic Jewish concerns and indeed central to Jewish distinctive self-understanding - circumcision (Col 2:11 is *not* the only reference), food and purity laws and festivals (the shadow of what was to come) - or to the Jewish character of the clear parallels in Galatians (not least the *stoicheia* and festivals). Arnold nowhere seems to ask the significance of the talk of 'disqualification' in what he sees to be the key passage. But given the above evidence, the obvious answer is that the Colossian Jewish synagogue regarded the Gentile Colossian believers as disqualified for the Jewish heritage to which they laid claim.

In short, the volume will be most valuable for the comparative material which it has collected. But the claim that this material illuminates Colossians has to read in too much to the text itself, while at the same time ignoring the features of the Colossian philosophy most clearly illuminated by the text itself.

James D. G. Dunn, University of Durham, ENGLAND



David A. deSilva, Despising Shame: Honor Discourse and Community Maintenance in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995.

Despising Shame is David deSilva's 1995 Ph.D. dissertation, written at Emory University and published in the dissertation series of the Society of Biblical Literature. It is a rigorous and insightful application of sociological and rhetorical criticism to the Epistle to the Hebrews. The impetus for this study was deSilva's observation that the language of honor and shame, an axis for evaluation behaviors and values, is richly represented in Hebrews but under-appreciated. The author of Hebrews, deSilva argues, made use of this language to reinforce certain commitments in his readers and to persuade them to disregard the negative evaluations of their Greco-Roman culture. The chief strategy used to achieve this was the construction of an "alternate court of reputation" by which alone the addresses are to determine their community's values.

Honor and shame as "pivotal values" of the Mediterranean world have been the topic of recent research by biblical scholars, classicists, and anthropologists. In his opening chapter deSilva sketches the history of this research as it pertains to New Testament interpretation. He shuns the extravagant claims made by some of the pioneers of honor/shame research that such study can, for example, enable the interpreter to see, think, and value just as the ancients did. Honor and shame are not necessarily the all-important categories for understanding ancient texts. Moreover, the measure of their importance must be established by a thorough investigation of those texts, not by facile applications of anthropological models. The method and the model must always answer to the data. DeSilva's keen awareness of both the benefits and the hazards of his method, safeguard his research against some of the criticisms leveled against less cautious studies.

Hebrews has long been recognized as one of the most highly rhetorical compositions in the New Testament. In chapter two deSilva briefly discusses the artistry and forms of argumentation in the epistle before turning to the specific category of honor/shame as a means of persuasion in dominant cultures. A survey of ancient rhetorical handbooks, chiefly Aristotle, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and Quintilian, shows that considerations of honor and shame figure prominently in theoretical discussions of rhetoric. Designating a course of action as honorable or its opposite as shameful could be a powerful means of persuasion. Turning from theory to specific examples, deSilva devotes the remainder of chapter two to an analysis of selected speeches and ethical essays. Speeches of Pericles, Dio Chrysostom, and Josephus serve as examples of how honor/shame language was employed in specific rhetorical situations to reaffirm common values and commend certain actions. Ethical writings such as Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, (pseudo-) Isocrates' AD Demonicus, and Jewish wisdom literature, similarly used honor/shame rhetoric. Thus in both theory and practice, deSilva shows how dominant cultural values, whether military courage, civic support, marital fidelity, or Torah observance, were enforced by appeals to the noble and the dishonorable.

Chapter three shifts the focus to minority cultures. A society will often contain competing cultures, particularly smaller minority cultures that are at odds with the dominant group. As examples deSilva offers the writings of certain Greco-Roman

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philosophers and Hellenistic Jews. The former (represented by Plato, Seneca, and Epictetus) typically constitute a *subculture*, persons who share the values of the dominant group but insist that those values are more fully embodied by the philosopher's community than by the masses. On the other hand, Jewish minority cultures, particularly those pitted against an aggressive dominant culture, tend to be *countercultural*, affirming a set of values *not* shared, and even ridiculed, by the dominant group. Literature such as Ben Sira and 4 Maccabees, addressing situations of intolerant Hellenization, used the rhetoric of honor and shame to commend fidelity to traditional Jewish practice and to discount the judgments of the dominant society.

The foregoing is preparatory to the examination of Hebrews in chapters four, five, and six. Chapter four considers how the author of Hebrews redefines by way of example what is honorable and shameful. DeSilva's discussion especially highlights the final chapters of the epistle in which Jesus is said to despise the shame of the cross, Abraham and Moses reject security and status, the martyrs and marginalized of 11:32-38 esteem faithfulness above life itself, and the very recipients of the epistle in their earlier experience had joyfully endured abuse and despoliation.

Chapter five, perhaps the most insightful of all, considers the alternative to faithful adherence to the minority culture's values, namely, exchanging divine favor for divine wrath. DeSilva applies a patronage or benefactor/client model of social relations to the epistle. This becomes a valuable tool for conceiving the roles of God, Christ, and the believing community in Hebrews. God is the gracious benefactor: the Christians are the clients; and Jesus is the broker ("mediator" in Hebrews' terms) between the two. As God's broker, Jesus enjoys uniquely high status and offers access to God's presence and salvation. Since God has acted in utter fidelity and generosity, for the clients to respond in any way other than gratitude toward their patron and similar generosity toward one another would be to invoke their benefactor's wrath. This model provides a new way to understand Hebrew's harsh warnings against apostasy (especially 6:4-8 and 10:26-31). In addition, the model provides a concrete social context for understanding an abstract term such as "grace." God's grace is a disposition to act beneficently towards God's clients.

Chapter six, entitled "The Construction of an Alternate Court of Reputation," is now anticlimactic. Much of it has been anticipated in chapters three, four, and five. It reiterates how the addressees are to disregard the evaluations of the dominant culture. God is the final judge of what is noble or ignoble, and the Christian community is God's earthly counterpart. The honor of the community is closely linked to the honor of Christ. Only distrust in God and failure and to heed the word spoken through God's Son will truly bring a person into shame.

In a final chapter deSilva summarizes his conclusions, chief among which is the idea suggested by the book's title: Hebrews uses honor discourse extensively and does so to maintain the solidarity of a Christian community in a hostile environment.

It is difficult to find anything of import on which to criticize a book so soundly conceived and thoroughly executed. There is an excessive number of typographical errors, always a liability in a series with a streamlined publication process. But they are quite minor and pose no hindrance to understanding. Slightly more

problematic is the bulk of the book. A strict editing might have reduced its length by, say 10%, with no loss to the argument. Repetition is a good pedagogical technique and generally an aid to the reader, but excessive repetition can be wearisome. Occasionally deSilva errs in this direction, particularly in introductory and concluding sections that sometimes reiterate at excessive length the basic ideas of the book. But the intellectual precision of the book overcomes any disadvantage in its bulk. DeSilva is a valuable writer, but an intelligent one, who generously repays the reader who perseveres.

Finally, a welcome aspect of this study, in addition to its methodological rigor, is its theological significance. Despising Shame is unmistakably a dissertation, with all the technical data, presuppositions of linguistic expertise, and bibliographic barrage that dissertations entail. But there is much fruit in this volume for the people in the pews, and a popular edition of Despising Shame could make it accessible to them. The Church at the turn of its second millennium (particularly in the United States) needs to recapture its sub- and countercultural identity and learn anew a seek honor in doing the will of God and to despise the verdict of shame that an increasing secular society has reached concerning our commitment to the Crucified One. N. Clayton Croy, Decatur, GA

Philip F. Esler, ed., Modeling Early Christianity: Social-scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context, London and New York: Routledge, 1995, xv + 349 pp., \$24.95.

Commentators and scholars have long been aware that one must do more than word studies and general historical background work to recover the meaning of the Scriptures of either Testament. Historical criticism must be enlivened and supplemented by social-scientific criticism as well. The Scriptures we revere and examine for direction were written within specific social and cultural contexts--whole worlds of meaning, symbols, and rules and expectations for human interaction which are assumed by author and original audience and which therefore guided both the writing and hearing of the texts. We, too, live within specific social and cultural contexts, with our own systems of values, rules for interaction, and cultural heritage. The danger which faces us as readers of ancient texts is that we will read the ancient words within the context of our Western, twentieth-century, post-industrial, post-Reformation (etc., *ad nauseam*) assumptions.

The essays in this volume seek to assist the modern reader understand the social and cultural world of the first-century, so that we may better hear the message of God's Word in its proper context. This is not merely an academic exercise in exegesis, although reliable application must proceed from this task. Rather, it assists us to attend more closely to the true meaning of the texts, and puts us on firmer ground for making the hermeneutical leap from then to now by setting up the basis for a more sensitive comparison of social worlds (ours and theirs).

An introductory essay by Esler addresses the criticisms leveled against use of social-science models in the study of ancient groups, asserting that the models are used only to sift the data and discover new answers through asking new questions, not force the data to conform to the model. It is up to the reader to decide whether or not each

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contributor uses the model appropriately, that is, whether the model is held merely as an illuminating tool or becomes the master-paradigm into which the text is forced. Esler also addresses the importance of close study of the relationship between the social setting of the original audience and the social setting of the modern congregation as a component of the task of hermeneutics and pastoral application. The remainder of the essays are as follows:

### **Part One: The world of first-century Palestine**

Sean Freyne, "Herodian Economics in Galilee"

John J. Pilch, "The Transfiguration of Jesus: An experience of alternate reality"

J. D. M. Derrett, "The Evil Eye in the New Testament"

### **Part Two: Early Christian group formation and maintenance**

John H. Elliott, "The Jewish Messianic Movement: From faction to sect"

Bruce J. Malina, "Early Christian Groups: Using small group formation theory to explain Christian organizations"

J. M. G. Barclay, "Deviance and Apostasy: Some applications of deviance theory to first-century Judaism and Christianity"

N. H. Taylor, "The Social Nature of Conversion in the Early Christian World"

### **Part Three: Family and honor in Matthew and Luke**

Jerome H. Neyrey, "Loss of Wealth, Loss of Family and Loss of Honor: The cultural context of the original makarisms in Q"

Dennis C. Duling, "The Matthean Brotherhood and Marginal Scribal Leadership"

Richard L. Rohrbaugh, "Legitimizing Sonship -- a Test of Honor: A social-scientific study of Luke 4:1-30"

Stuart L. Love, "Women and Men at Hellenistic Symposia Meals in Luke"

### **Part Four: Paul, kinship, and ideology**

Stephan J. Joubert, "Managing the Household: Paul as *paterfamilias* of the Christian household group in Corinth"

David G. Horrell, "The Development of Theological Ideology in Pauline Christianity"

### **Part Five: Oppression, war and peace**

Philip F. Esler, "God's Honor and Rome's Triumph: Responses to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE in three Jewish apocalypses"

Raymond Hobbs, "The Language of Warfare in the New Testament"

Vernon K. Robbins, "Social-Scientific Criticism and Literary Studies"

Attention to the sorts of questions these authors raise and seek to answer should make the reader more sensitive to and aware of the very real human and social pressures, drives, and goals which were operative in the early churches and the surrounding society, and thus better equipped to derive from the contextually-read Scriptures a word which addresses not only the mind or compartmentalized life of faith, but also embraces the relationships and social forces which affect us just as powerfully. It may lead to an awareness of social dynamics which leads to building stronger, more effective congregations (as extended kinship groups or societies within society), as well as to a more insightful, prophetic critique of those institutions and social forces which move away from God's ideals.

David A. deSilva

Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, eds, The Historical Jesus: A Sheffield Reader, The Biblical Seminar 33. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995, 314 pp., £11.95/\$17.95.

This edited work draws together in one, inexpensive paperback book articles on the historical Jesus reprinted from the first 50 issues (1978-1993) of the Journal for the Study of the New Testament.

The articles are grouped together into three subject areas. The first subject area, Jesus, Discipleship, and Covenant, includes articles by G. D. Kilpatrick, "Jesus, his Family and his Disciples"; E. P. Sanders, "Jesus and the Sinners"; D. C. Allison, Jr., "Jesus and the Covenant: A Response to E. P. Sanders"; D. J. Moo, "Jesus and the Authority of the Mosaic Law". The second subject area, Exegetical Aspects of Jesus' Teaching, includes articles by D. M. Cohn-Sherbok, "An Analysis of Jesus' Arguments Concerning the Plucking of Grain on the Sabbath"; A. Ito, "The Question of the Authenticity of the Ban on Swearing (Matthew 5.33-37)"; B. Green, "Jesus' Teaching on Divorce in the Gospel of Mark"; D. M. Cohn-Sherbok, "Jesus' Defence of the Resurrection of the Dead"; F. G. Downing, "The Resurrection of the Dead: Jesus and Philo"; J. G. Janzen, "Resurrection and Hermeneutics: On Exodus 3.6 in Mark 12.26"; B. Chilton, "Jesus ben David: Reflections on the Davidssonfrage". The third and final section, Linguistic and Stylistic Aspects of Jesus' Teaching, includes articles by L. D. Hurst, "The Neglected Role of Semantics in the Search for the Aramaic Words of Jesus"; M. Black, "the Aramaic Dimension in Q with Notes on Luke 17.22 and Matthew 24.26 (Luke 17.23)"; R. Bauckham, "The Son of Man: 'A Man in my Position' or 'Someone'?""; B. Lindars, "Response to Richard Bauckham: The Idiomatic Use of Bar Enasha"; D. C. Allison, Jr., "Matthew 23.29 = Luke 13.35b as a Conditional Prophecy"; J. Gibson, "Jesus' Refusal to Produce a 'Sign' (Mark 8.11-13)".

Certainly this volume does pull together the cream of the articles on the historical Jesus in JSNT. A number of the articles address questions which have been key to recent discussions of the historical Jesus. For example, Sanders' view that Jesus included "sinners" in the kingdom without requiring the usual repentance and restitution is both presented by Sanders and critiqued by Allison. To have two sides of an issue presented back to back like this is invaluable. Jesus' view of the Law is examined in several of the articles, both generally (by Moo) and with respect to particular issues (by Cohn-Sherbok, Ito, and Green). Classic areas of debate are also included. For example, the problem of translating the sayings of Jesus back into Aramaic is addressed by Hurst and Black, and the "Son of Man" debate is addressed by Bauckham and Lindars.

It is interesting to observe that the articles selected focus primarily on the words or teaching of Jesus. Given the recent emphasis in historical-Jesus research on the characteristic activities of Jesus (e.g., table-fellowship, exorcism) and distinctive events in his life (e.g., cleansing of the temple), one would have expected a selection of these types of articles. The editors are not to be faulted of course—they could only work with what had been included in JSNT in the first place. Yet to fill this gap they could have included an article such as Richard A. Horsley, "Popular Prophetic Movements at the Time of Jesus: Their Principal Features and Social Origins" (JSNT 26 [1986] 3-27).

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With a volume like this one needs to ask, "Who should and could read it?" Certainly scholars for whom historical-Jesus research is not a prime focus will find this work useful as a tool to bring them up to date in this burgeoning field. It would also serve well as a supplementary text in a graduate-level course on the historical Jesus. But it is probably too advanced for the average undergraduate student. And it is too detailed for a busy pastor who is seeking an overall introduction to this field of research.

The editors are to be commended for including complete indices of biblical references and modern authors. Two editorial matters would have made the volume even more user-friendly. First, it would have been helpful if the editors had indicated the page numbers and page breaks of the original articles so that references to them in other secondary literature could be found more easily. Second, many of the later articles had abstracts appended to them. Rather than removing these, it would have been preferable to compose abstracts for those articles which lacked them.

Robert L. Webb, Regina, SK, Canada

Joel B. Green, ed., Hearing the New Testament, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995, xvi + 444 pp., \$25.00.

Guides to exegesis and exegetical methods have certainly proliferated in the last decade, but it will be much harder to offer another after Joel Green's fine volume. Green has marshaled a company of recognized scholars (including Richard Bauckham, Bruce Chilton, Robert Hays, and Max Turner), asking each to write in an area of special methodological or ideological expertise. There are chapters dealing with the traditional provinces of method, namely textual criticism, traditio-historical criticism, historical criticism, canonical criticism, and genre analysis, as well as helpful introductions to the study of Jewish and Greco-Roman literature as these enlighten our reading of the literature of the New Testament. The scope reaches forward to the more recent developments in exegetical method, offering introductions to rhetorical criticism, linguistics and discourse analysis, narrative criticism, and reader-response criticism.

Green has done more, however, than present method. A large portion of the book is dedicated to what was been called "the world in front of the text," namely the presuppositions and ideological lenses through which modern readers will view (and conscript) the text. There are two helpful chapters providing an overview of the history of New Testament interpretation and an analysis of philosophical presuppositions in New Testament study over the centuries. Moreover, there are chapters on feminist hermeneutics and an unprecedented section devoted to global (multi-cultural) perspectives on New Testament interpretation. Each chapter on method shows that method at work on one or more of a number of sample passages (Luke 3:1-20; John 4:1-42; 1 Cor 11:2-34; Jas 4:13-5:6; Rev 5:1-12). The reader will thus learn both by methodological discussion and inductive example the aims and scope of each exegetical approach. An introduction and a closing essay by the editor helps fit the discrete approaches into a helpful model for *hearing* what the New Testament might actually say to us as we honor its voices more than the voices of our own ideologies and presuppositions.

In itself, the book will not equip the readers to perform all the various criticisms, but it will certainly equip them to understand the principles and direction of each method. In addition, the reader will be better able to interact with commentaries and other scholarly literature, not only recognizing the modes of exegesis employed but also becoming more sensitive to longstanding hermeneutical and cultural presuppositions (and biases) which emerge. The reader will begin to see the larger program of New Testament exegesis, know what sorts of questions each method asks, and therefore be better able to apply the appropriate lines of research to discover the answers she or he seeks. Each chapter concludes with ample suggestions for further reading, providing the student with a reliable guide to continuing education in a specific method, leading eventually to the reader's own proficiency in application of the method. The resulting volume is an excellent exposure to the spectrum of exegetical methods and ideological criticisms, easily the best on the market today.

David A. deSilva

Arthur G. Patzia, *The Making of the New Testament*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995, 205 pp., \$14.99.

This book does not claim to provide a "New Testament Introduction" but rather gives the student what many New Testament Introductions on the market leave out or treat in all too brief a way. Patzia focuses on the important questions of how the twenty-seven documents were selected and collected to become what we now take for granted as a single canon of inspired Scripture.

Patzia begins with a discussion of the "literary world of the New Testament." He helpfully takes the readers to ancient libraries and into the very different ways in which books were distributed and made accessible at the turn of the era. The chapter continues with brief but pithy discussions of the state of the Hebrew Scriptures, the use of the Septuagint, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha and their connections with the New Testament, the Qumran scrolls, and, rather too briefly, Greco-Roman literature. The second chapter introduces the reader to the composition of the gospels from the memory of Jesus' sayings to individual written documents, and discusses the rationale and process of the formation of a fourfold gospel collection (traced through the writings of early church fathers). Included in this chapter is a very clear discussion of form, source, and redaction criticism, presented in such a way as integrates evangelical conviction and exegetical methodology. A third chapter treats the composition of Paul's letters (including such matters as Greco-Roman letter forms, Paul's use of a secretary, and the deutero-pauline hypothesis) and the collection and use of his letters in both orthodox and heterodox circles. The fourth chapter discusses the composition and acceptance of Acts, the general epistles, and Revelation. Chapter five provides an introduction to the criteria for canonicity: this is an especially useful chapter for those of us who live with "canon" with little or no sense of why the church developed a canon in the first place, and how the church moved through the process of discernment which led to the creation of "canon."

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The last two chapters provide the reader with a fine introduction to the textual transmission of the New Testament documents from autograph to the major codices of the fourth and fifth centuries and beyond. While textual criticism often remains the province of specialists, all readers of the New Testament should seek some working knowledge of the broad strokes of the transmission of these texts. Knowing how the manuscripts were laid out (e.g., with no punctuation or spaces), how scribes produced both intentional and unintentional variations in their copies, how the geographical families of manuscripts differ, and how text critics go about the task of retrieving the most ancient form of a text would help non-specialists understand the origin of the variant readings in the footnotes of most modern translations, the rise of the "Received Text" and the need for continued emendation (although Patzia deals most sensitively with the possibility of the KJV still functioning as "Word of God"), and the amount of interpretive activity that has transpired between inaccessible autograph and critical editions of the text (and modern translations based on one or another of such editions).

In sum, Patzia's work is a valuable one which will enrich the reader's appreciation for the lengthy and nuanced process of the formation of "canon." This book will move the reader to a more refined affirmation of New Testament as "Word of God" as he or she comes to understand more fully how the documents came to be recognized, collected, and finally transmitted to us as such. All seminarians and pastors, indeed all "people of the Book," would benefit from a close reading of this work.

David A. deSilva

Stanley Porter and Lee M. McDonald, New Testament Introduction, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995, 234 pp., \$13.99.

Those who come to seminary seek not only to learn while they attend, but also to discover how they may continue to grow in understanding and knowledge after the formal experience has ended. Porter and McDonald have provided a valuable tool to assist this greater goal by compiling and annotating a bibliography of 848 books and articles aiding the study of the New Testament and its Jewish and Greco-Roman environments (what is commonly referred to as "New Testament Introduction"). The entries are rigorously classified, so that one may readily find the books pertinent to one's interest or need.

In the first two major sections, Porter and McDonald have compiled books which will enable the student to develop his or her grasp of the biblical languages, the science of translation, and the various modes of analysis (criticism) which open up a text's meaning to the modern reader. Especially noteworthy here is the space given to more recently blossoming methods, such as rhetorical analysis, social-scientific analysis, and structuralist perspectives. A third part gathers together works (including primary texts) which promise to impart a richer understanding of the world within which the New Testament was shaped and to which it spoke. Here one will find ample resources, for example, on apocalypticism, Qumran studies, Greco-Roman religion, Hellenistic philosophy, Gnosticism, archaeology, and extracanonical literature. A final section lists available New Testament Introductions, critical studies on Jesus and the gospels, the



authors' top three or four choices among commentaries for each of the canonical books of the NT, and works which grapple with the issues of canonicity and pseudonymity.

Such a guide makes the enormous amount of material available on the New Testament accessible to lifelong students, providing generally sound comments as to each work's usefulness, reliability, bias, and value. As with any such work, some very fine and important books are bound to be left out. Nevertheless, Porter and McDonald provide a solid starting point for seminary students and those wishing to continue their education while in the ministry field. This volume, like its companion volumes in the Institute for Biblical Research Bibliography series, is indispensable to the lover of learning.

David A. deSilva

Graham Stanton, *Gospel Truth? New Light on Jesus and the Gospels*, Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1995, viii + 215 pp., \$25.00.

The waters in the pool of Gospel studies have certainly been troubled in recent years, and scholars have vied with one another to be the first to plunge in with some new theory or discovery. Two recent theories have caught the public's attention, enjoying the wave of media popularity which has become characteristic of the "Historical Jesus" debates, and these provide Graham Stanton with a launching-off point for his own most recent contribution to Gospel studies. Stanton introduces his work with a discussion of whether or not to distinguish historical truth from "Gospel truth." As early as Origen, the historical discrepancies between the four gospels threatened, in the hands of critics of early Christianity, to undermine the new religion. Origen, however, argued that while discrepancies exist, these are not leaks in the ark of the church: they are rather signs that what the evangelists are communicating is "truth" at another, distinctly higher level than literal narrative. This distinction becomes thematic for Stanton, who, like his second-century predecessor, agrees that the Gospels as we have them serve primarily to provide "Gospel truth" about the character and significance of Jesus rather than strictly historical truth about the facts and sequence of events, indeed that the preoccupation with the latter betrays the very purpose of the Gospels. Interestingly, this is also the position of Luke Johnson's very recent treatment, *The Real Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996), which provides, however, a much more penetrating and necessary critique of the "historical" task itself.

After this theoretical introduction, Stanton soundly opposes the claim made by Carsten Thiede that fragments of a copy of Matthew go back to the middle of the first century CE, as well as the rather sensationalized claim by José O'Callaghan that a copy of Mark's Gospel was unearthed among the Dead Sea Scrolls. His negative conclusions concerning these two media-grabbing hypotheses give way to an attempt to lay out the more basic significance of the materials under discussion. Thiede's fragments, he notes, comes from a second-century codex rather than a scroll, showing that very early in their history Christians had adopted the codex, which could hold all four gospels between its covers, over the scroll, which would only hold one book. This points to the church's determination to retain four gospels, and only these four gospels, as the use of scrolls would have facilitated both opting for less than four, and using gospels other than these

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four. Having debunked the theory of Mark's emergence among the Dead Sea Scrolls, Stanton very briefly outlines some of the significant ways those Scrolls do complement and enrich our understanding of the Jewish matrix of early Christianity.

Stanton then turns his attention to laying out the issues involved in the transmission of the Gospel manuscripts, providing thereby a very accessible introduction to the work of text criticism, and concerning the transmission of Jesus traditions within the church before the appearance of the canonical Gospels, providing an equally accessible introduction to form criticism and to the nature and purpose of the genre known as "Gospel." In a sixth chapter, Stanton reviews the "documentary hypothesis" and the existence of a "sayings collection" called *Q* which served as a source (along with Mark) for Matthew and Luke, giving detailed attention to alternative explanations of the evidence. For Stanton, the *Q* hypothesis remains the most sound and simple. He goes on to examine the claims made (e.g., by John Crossan and the "Jesus Seminar") for the value of the Jesus traditions outside the canonical Gospels, particularly in the "Gospel of Thomas," "The Gospel of Peter," and "The Secret Gospel of Mark." The value of these documents, Stanton concludes, is vastly overrated given both their late dates and their obvious theological tendencies. In chapter eight, he turns to examine the process by which the early church opted for four independent gospels rather than elevating any single one or harmonizing the four to eliminate discrepancies. The early church was willing to live with the historical discrepancies (which their detractors threw in their faces) because of their conviction that the "Gospel truth" preserved by the four different witnesses was vastly richer for their multiplicity.

In the final seven chapters, Stanton conducts his own "quest for the Historical Jesus," tracing the evidence in archaeological discoveries, in pagan and non-Christian Jewish comments about the sect and its founder, and in the canonical and non-canonical Christian writings. Of particular interest here is the way Stanton uses the evidence from Jewish sources: the negative labeling and condemning of Jesus as "magician" and "false prophet" provide strong support for characterizing his ministry as one of teaching and wonder-working. Equally valuable is the judicious manner in which Qumran materials are employed, particularly in the discussion of the nature of Jesus' Messiahship. While the evidence points to Jesus being crucified on the charge of being a Messianic pretender, the question has long remained as to what sort of Messianic model Jesus fit. He was certainly not a political revolutionary, but on the other hand no evidence has been discovered for the expectation of a suffering Messiah. 4Q521, however, speaks of a Messiah whose ministry is characterized by healing, raising the dead, and bringing good news to the poor, providing a model based on Isa 29:18-19; 35:5; 61:1-2, the components of which are precisely what we find in Jesus' ministry and emphasized in the evangelists' narrative. While one might be unimpressed with the scanty conclusions Stanton reaches concerning the Jesus of history, it must be remembered that the historian works within very tight and specific constraints. Stanton argues that the Gospels bear a rich witness to the character and significance of Jesus which simply lies beyond the purview of the academic historian.

Stanton's book provides a fine and welcome guide to the basic issues in critical Gospel scholarship as well as Jesus research. It represents "sane" scholarship at

its best -- while it might not, therefore, receive the attention of the media, it certainly deserves the attention of students of the New Testament. In the atmosphere of academic chaos created by the publicity received by the Jesus Seminar, Bishop John Spong, and the less inhibited interpreters of Qumran's significance for Christian origins, Stanton's volume serves as a responsible "guide for the perplexed."

David A. deSilva

George Howard, Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1995, xiv + 239 pp., \$24.95.

Dr. Howard has revised the 1987 edition of this work, which presents an English translation together with a critical edition of the Hebrew text of a version of Matthew's Gospel found in the fourteenth-century polemical treatise *Evan bohan* by Jewish author Shem-Tov Ibn-Shaprut. Interest in a Hebrew Gospel of Matthew continues to be sparked by comments in the early church fathers which refer to Matthew composing a Gospel (or sayings collection) in Hebrew or Aramaic, which was later translated into Greek. Following the text and translation, Howard conducts a thorough linguistic, literary, and theological analysis of Shem-Tov's Matthew, concluding that it does not represent Shem-Tov's translation of the Vulgate or the Majority Text but rather represents an earlier Hebrew version which was kept alive for whatever reasons in the Jewish community. He also concludes, however, that this is not the same Hebrew (or Aramaic) Gospel of Matthew of which the early church fathers speak.

While it bears incredible similarity to Matthew's gospel, it appears to have belonged to a heterodox strain of Christian Jews which reworked Matthew to promote their version of the gospel. Notably, John the Baptist is said to be described in terms similar to those which John's Gospel refutes. Shem-Tov's version also moves Jesus' attitudes toward the Torah and toward Gentile conversion more in a direction which would be acceptable to a Jewish audience, lessening the differences between Jew and Christian which the Greek text might promote.

The ultimate importance of Howard's work belongs, therefore, to the history of fourteenth-century Jewish/Christian relations (in the polemical remarks made by Shem-Tov in the course of his translation) and in his recovery of potential heterodox Christian voices from a much earlier (though not perhaps apostolic) period. The limited impact of this work, together with its highly technical method of argumentation, make it more a book for the specialist rather than the pastor. Those readers, however, interested in the questions, "how did a fourteenth-century Jew respond to the claims of the gospel?" and "what might have been the direction certain early heterodox Christian Jews went with the gospel?" would no doubt find a thoughtful reading at least of Howard's translation of Shem-Tov's version of Matthew rewarding. David A. deSilva

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David L. Bartlett, Romans, Westminster Bible Companion, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1995, x + 146 pp.

In this entry in the Westminster Bible Companion series, David L. Bartlett, Lantz Professor of Preaching and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at Yale Divinity School, provides a readable treatment of Paul's letter to the Romans that fulfills admirably the goal of the series to furnish laypersons with a resource that probes the biblical texts for greater depth study and that gives background for those engaged in teaching ministries in the local church. The reader of this volume will find the designation "Bible companion" accurate, for the text of the NRSV is provided in full preceding discussions of the passages. For nonspecialists who have had reason to search more scholarly or technical commentaries on Romans, Bartlett's work will prove a welcome respite that not only captures the meaning of the text but also endeavors to make the ancient text practical in the lives of modern Christians.

In a helpful introduction to his survey, Bartlett outlines the reasons behind Paul's address of a letter to a church that he did not found as well as the predominant themes that recur throughout the epistle. As to the former topic, the author asserts that Paul wrote Romans to introduce himself to the community in hope that he will visit them on his way to Spain, to enlist their prayers for his impending visit to Jerusalem, and to address tense relations between Jewish and Gentile believers of which he has some knowledge (1-3). Bartlett then identifies three predominant themes that will help the reader follow Paul's thought (3-11). The first of these is the claim that in Jesus Christ, God does what is right for the whole of creation. God is God of all human beings, of human history, and of the whole universe, and has staked claim over all people through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christ is God's gift to all people, and for their part, human beings must acknowledge this claim through faith in Jesus Christ. The second major theme running throughout Romans is that this God is the God of Scripture. Paul's theological starting point is the Hebrew Scriptures and the proclamation of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The third theme identified by Bartlett is the coming of a new world or new age in Jesus Christ. With the advent of Christ, a shift in ages from the old age of sin to the new age of God's righteousness has begun but is not yet completed. As a result, believers find themselves living in both ages at once. This introductory section provides the reader with an excellent conceptual framework with which to tackle what can be a hard epistle to follow at times.

Bartlett further assists the reader with a helpful division of the text. Sandwiched between the salutation/thanks-giving (1:1-17) and the closing reminders (15:14-16:27), Bartlett identifies four major sections of the epistle. Each is entitled with a thematic description of its contents: "God's Wrath and God's Righteousness" (1:18-4:25); "Living in Hope" (5-8); "God's Faithfulness" (9-11); and "Faithful Obedience" (12:1-15:13).

Judging a work of this type must assess how well it fulfills its goals with respect to its target audience. Individual readers inevitably will find areas of disagreement with understandings of particular details--such is the nature of any length treatment of a biblical document. The true test of a "companion" to a text must evaluate

how well it elucidates what the reader encounters in the text itself. In this respect, Bartlett provides what could serve as an exemplar for the other volumes in the series. He achieves this by providing a wealth of illustrative material throughout his discussion at important junctures in the text. He uses several poetic and hymnic sources in this regard (especially noteworthy is his creative use of the lyrics to "Amazing Grace" for which parts of Romans serve as a sort of running commentary) as well as numerous anecdotal illustrations. This feature of the discussion will make the work of tremendous help for those engaged in teaching (and preaching!) ministries, a characteristic that betrays the author's vocational mission of training future pulpiteers.

For those seeking additional resources for more detailed study, Bartlett provides an adequate bibliography for reference, though the addition of Cranfield's and Dunn's commentaries would have provided for a more well-rounded selection.

In fulfillment of part of the stated goal for the series, Bartlett provides several excellent discussions of how Romans applies to the contemporary situation of the modern reader. This feature of the book demonstrates both the possibility of and the difficulty inherent in applying ancient texts to modern life. In this regard as well, many readers will find reason to disagree with some of Bartlett's suggestions. His discussions of the relationship of the God of Jesus Christ to adherents of non-Christians religions, which gives the impression that Bartlett may lean toward the possibility of universalism (5-6), and of Paul's treatment of the issue of homosexuality in 1:18-32, which suggests that our current understanding of the issue may give us better insight into the problem than Paul had (30-31), are two controversial attempts at application that appear to attribute greater degrees of normativity to the contemporary situation than to the text of Romans. In most instances Bartlett's applications are thought provoking and elicit reflective interaction with the text.

This book is an excellent resource that pastors can confidently recommend either for devotional use or for help in teaching ministries. Its engaging exposition of Romans is a delightful read that does not sacrifice substantive content in the quest to be reader friendly.

Jeffrey S. Lamp, Spiro, OK

Scot McKnight, Galatians, The NIV Application Commentary, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995.

This ongoing series of volumes aims to help readers understand both what the Bible means and what its significance is for their lives. Hence we find the wedding of "application" and "commentary" into the series title. Three sections comprise the discussion of each passage in Galatians: "original meaning" where the author seeks to explain the biblical text in its original context; "bridging contexts" which has the goal of spanning the ancient and modern worlds; and "contemporary significance" which lays out specific implications and applications of the text's meaning for modern Christians.

McKnight, a professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, begins his study with a chapter entitled, "Introduction: Legalism Then and Now." Following the prescribed format, he discusses the various background issues that help readers understand why Paul wrote this letter. Paul needed to refute a grievous error, what McKnight calls *Judaizing legalism*. This heresy viewed Christianity as the fulfillment

of Judaism in the sense that, in McKnight's words, it "demanded total commitment to Israel's law as the climax of one's conversion to Christ" (p. 23). These legalists insisted on Judaizing Christianity in the ways prescribed in the Old Testament (especially circumcision and dietary laws). McKnight sees behind these requirements more than theological issues. He says, "In contesting the Judaizers, Paul is contesting not just theological variation but theology that serves social and racial interests" (p. 25). Paul saw a kind of cultural imperialism enmeshed in a religious system.

On the issue of whether the Judaism of Paul's day could be characterized as a "religion of works," McKnight answers with an empathic, "No!" Taking his cue from E. P. Sanders and others, McKnight argues that the issue Paul counters in Galatians is *not* one of earning salvation (the Judaizers) versus receiving it as God's gracious gift (Paul). Rather in Galatians Paul repudiates the Judaizers' insistence that Christianity should be Judaism plus Christ, with all the implications of adhering to the Law that this would include.

McKnight's position counters many popular and scholarly readings of Galatians which tend to pinpoint the Judaizers' error as their embrace of the Law as a means to salvation—so they could be accepted by God. McKnight argues that Paul's response to their problem does not fit this common scenario. Rather, he alleges, the issues Paul addresses are more social than theological. The Judaizers' essential problem was their failure to see that the era of the law had ended with Christ's coming, wrongly believing that God was still working through the nation of Israel to dispense his promises to Israel (p. 30). Their problem was not that they insisted that one had to keep the law for salvation, but that they insisted on remaining Jews, merely adding belief in Christ to their ongoing commitment to Judaism. And, more important, they insisted that all who wished to be Christians had to follow their lead.

Readers of the commentary will have to trace McKnight's defense of this view through the relevant texts in Galatians to judge the cogency of his case. Though his argument is persuasive and well presented, it works well with some of the data, but not so well with other texts. This reviewer is still not convinced that McKnight (and this entire "new perspective on Paul") correctly understands the issues in Galatians. McKnight rightly rejects the caricature that Judaism was a "works religion" as a whole, but, in my estimation, he has not demonstrated that this was not the problem of the local Galatian errorists against whom Paul inveighs. See, for example, what Paul says in Galatians 2:16 (where he contrasts "works" and "faith"); 2:21; 3:11, 22.

Fortunately, the value of McKnight's commentary does not depend on whether or not he is precisely right at this point, for much of his understanding of Paul's arguments works with either scenario. McKnight is especially perceptive in bridging the gap from the Galatians' legalism to ours today. We encounter the same dangers in the church today precisely where we lessen Christ's sufficiency for salvation, and when we neglect the role of the Spirit in producing the life of holiness God requires. Where our "rules and regulations" replace our reliance on Christ and the Spirit, we succumb to the Judaizing legalism of the Galatians. Likewise a modern overemphasis on performance can cloud the sufficiency of Christ. McKnight rightly insists that our acceptance with God depends on what he has done, not on what we do.

If there is any weakness in the commentary, it derives from the requirements of the genre of being an "application commentary." That is, often the actual commentary on the texts of Galatians themselves is frustratingly brief. Though one understands McKnight's interpretation after reading through the three divisions on each passage, pastors or teachers will need to rely on other commentaries along with this one to settle more precise issues of interpretation, and to see if McKnight is right on his.

William W. Klein, Denver Seminary

Gordon Fee, Paul's Letter to the Philippians (NICNT), Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995, xlvi + 497 pp., \$34.99.

Dr. Fee brings a refreshing pastoral sensitivity to his commentary, writing with the teaching pastor in mind as well as the professional scholar. He achieves this in part by reserving technical discussions and the more extensive interaction with other scholars' work for the footnotes, which keeps the text of the commentary straightforward and highly readable. His interest in the pastoral use of this commentary emerges also in his frequent suggestions for the application of Paul's letter as word of God for believing communities today.

The commentary emphasizes grammatical and lexical analysis, moving also into the areas of sociological and rhetorical analysis. He remains a severe critic of attempts to outline Philippians according to the pattern of a classical speech, but nevertheless appreciates the fruits which emerge from observing rhetorical devices employed by Paul as well as the use of rhetorical analysis when working with sections of paraenesis. He also shows a high degree of sensitivity to the rhetorical impact which examples (e.g., Christ, Timothy, Paul himself) would have on the hearers, as well as the power of "friendship" language which runs throughout the letter. One might wish for similar attention to be given to the strategic use of appeals to the civic virtue of unity, although this is not altogether absent.

Fee finds epistolary analysis to be most fruitful for reading Philippians, and this becomes a leading strength of the commentary. He compares Paul's letter with the classical literary types of the "letter of friendship," modified somewhat to include all three partners in the friendship (Paul, the Philippian Christians, and Christ), and the "letter of moral exhortation." Identifying Philippians as, in part, a letter of friendship leads Fee to treat of Philippians in light of classical discussions of friendship and reciprocity. This sheds much light on Paul's references to third parties who are hostile to the believers or to the gospel. Rather than posit complex theories of opposition or heresy, Fee regards these references as a stock component of discussions of friendship: raising the believers' awareness of outsiders who are opposed to the central values of the gospel bolsters the believers' awareness of their shared commitment. Paul refers to menaces to the group from without to strength the unity and solidarity of the Christians from within. Reading Philippians as, in part, a letter of moral exhortation, opens up new avenues for understanding the role played by both positive models (Christ, Timothy, Epaphroditus, and Paul himself) and negative examples (the rival preachers at Paul's site of imprisonment, the Judaizers generally). Paradigms are essential in ethical instruction,

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providing models for shaping behavior. The positive models exemplify "looking out for the interest of others" and relinquishing claims to eminence, or, better, displaying one's maturity through pouring oneself out for others.

Fee argues cogently for the integrity of the letter, showing that the letter as it stands is strategically shaped to produce a certain effect and elicit a certain response from the hearers. No literary dismemberment is necessary, and any would be superfluous. One hopes, perhaps in vain, that a number of other scholars will listen to these arguments and abandon their multiple partition theories. Fee even presses for reading the so-called "Christ-hymn" in 2:6-11 as a composition by Paul written especially for this letter. His comparison of this text with Rom 11:23-26, another passage of highly elevated prose, strengthens his case appreciably.

The setting of the church in Philippi is masterfully portrayed. Paul must address both the pressures the believers feel from their neighbors who remain loyal to traditional religious expressions of loyalty and reliability (i.e., idolatry and ruler cult), as well as the erosion of unity within the group. Fee illumines how Paul's use of citizenship language, Paul's reflections on his own suffering, his goal of conforming to Christ's example, and his emphasis on the eschatological hope assist believers in trying circumstances. There are several problems with Fee's particular construal of this hostility as official or "methodical" (p. 289), as well as with the view that "Judaizing" would actually help relieve tensions between the Gentile believers and the Greco-Roman society. Nevertheless, the reading of Philippians as addressing to need for believers to endure in the face of some sort of negative pressure from without is very useful.

Fee's high view of the historicity of Acts is apparent in his treatment of the background of this letter, which he ably defends by noting the strong points of correspondence between the sections of Acts which treat the missions to Philippi and Thessalonica and the itinerary derived from Paul's letters. Fee helpfully explores also the prominent role of women in this congregation, especially Lydia's leadership, drawing challenging conclusion for churches today.

In sum, Fee has produced a resource of very high quality for pastors and lay leaders as well as scholars — one which will be valuable to all who seek a richer understanding of Philippians and who wish to impart this to others. David A. deSilva

Dick Lucas and Christopher Green, The Message of 2 Peter and Jude, The Bible Speaks Today, Leicester, UK and Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995, with study guide.

Edited by J. A. Motyer (OT) and John R. W. Stott (NT), the contributions to "The Bible Speaks Today" series seek to offer readers accurate, readable expositions of Biblical books that apply their meaning to contemporary life. Thirty-two volumes from both testaments are available, with editions on most of the New Testament now completed. This volume concludes with a nineteen-page study guide to aid personal or small group study and implementation of the letters' messages.

The authors include short introductions to both epistles. Rather than providing what readers might expect in a typical commentary, they cover the preliminary issues to



the letters under rubrics that assess topical as well as historical concerns. For example, in introducing 2 Peter, under "The knowledge of God," the authors show Peter's concern for presenting the truth to confused readers--giving a brief portrayal of their situation. Lucas and Green assess "The false teachers," formerly Christians, but now ignorant opponents who are subverting the true knowledge of God and promoting immoral behavior. To counteract these travesties of the true Gospel, Peter appeals to "The apostolic eye-witnesses," under which heading the authors show Peter's case against the errorists. In the section "The prophetic word" Lucas and Green underscore Peter's concern for the authentic message of the apostles and prophets. In "The authentic gospel" the authors describe Peter's understanding of apostolic orthodoxy against which the readers were to assess and reject the fraudulent message of the false teachers.

What about the issues of authorship? a reader might ask, and How are these apparently similar books related to one another? Not producing a technical commentary, Lucas and Green feel the issues are complex enough that they do not want to bog down average readers in a complex discussion. So they relegate the issue to an appendix of seven-teen pages. They conclude that Peter used and adapted much of Jude's letter. They identify Jude as Jesus' brother. After considering the many problems and alternatives, they side with the traditional view that the apostle Peter wrote 2 Peter. Finally, they conclude that 2 Peter is one, connected treatise, not a compilation of two of more pieces.

Though not written for scholars or professionals, this study shows that the authors are acquainted with the best and recent literature available on these epistles. They regularly; interact--and don't hesitate to challenge, if appropriate--the standard critical commentaries and studies by Bauckham, Davids, Elliott, Green, Kelly, and Martin *inter alia*. For example, they are convincingly skeptical of Bauckham's acceptance of pseudonymity (Bauckham alleges that Petrine authorship of 2 Peter was a fiction transparent to the original readers). They go against the majority view of 2 Peter 1:21 and conclude, with the *NIV*, that Peter's point was to assure the readers of the Holy Spirit's guidance of the *original prophet's interpretation* in the production of Scripture, not a later reader's interpretation of Scripture (pp. 80-81).

The authors provide a refreshingly helpful and straightforward explanation of the knotty problems of the non-canonical quotations in Jude 9 (from the Christian book *The Assumption of Moses*) and Jude 14-15 (from the Jewish *I Enoch*). They decide that Jude did not accept these works as authoritative scripture in any sense, but he only found in their well-known (to his readers) texts biblical lessons and points he wanted to make. Keeping within the boundaries of OT revelation, Jude did nothing different from the "modern preacher quoting Bunyan or a contemporary song" (p. 192).

A strength of this work is the authors' constant awareness of the needs and concerns of contemporary Christians who want to learn what these letters have to say to people in the modern world. One frequently finds judgments like, "We may call Christian leaders today 'apostolic' if they teach the message the apostles taught, but it is misleading to call them 'apostles'" (p. 33). Again, "It is still a frequent obstacle for many non-Christians that publicly recognized Christian leaders advocate standards that non-Christians find unprincipled" (p. 58). And, finally, from Jude, "As we pray for and talk

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to our friends... we must keep before ourselves the fact that, without being offensive or insensitive, we are instructed by Jude to *save* them; the *fire* is near and coming closer, and we must watch that we are not sucked into its path as well. *Snatch them*, says Jude" (p. 228; their italics).

Who will find this volume useful? Virtually any serious Christians individual or group that wants to ponder what these two rather obscure letters might say to contemporary believers will find this book a trustworthy guide. According to Lucas and Green, Peter and Jude have much to say to contemporary Christians. Their judgments are sane, conservative, thoughtfully considered, and winsomely presented.

William W. Klein

William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Introduction to Biblical Interpretation, Waco: Word, 1993, xxiii + 518 pp.

The last few decades have witnessed the introduction of a bewildering array of hermeneutical approaches and methods. These developments raise significant challenges and questions for evangelical interpreters who, like their liberal counterparts, find it increasingly difficult to assert that they can arrive at the one, true message of scripture through the application of an objective method. The publication of this book, which engages new approaches from an evangelical perspective, is therefore a welcome event.

The authors have laid out a comprehensive guide for interpreting scripture, incorporating the salient elements of the current discussion. The text is divided into five parts. "Part I - The Task of Interpretation" explains the crucial relevance of employing a sound hermeneutic, surveys the ways that Christians have interpreted scripture throughout history, and discusses the impact of canonicity on interpretation. "Part II - The Interpreter and the Goal" addresses issues prominent in current discourse: the role of the interpreter (and his or her preunderstandings) and the question of multiple levels of meaning. The next two sections deal with exegetical matters. "Part III - Understanding Literature" lays out a program for exploring literary context, the historical-cultural background, word meanings, and grammatical structural relationships and contains a chapter devoted to particular issues in the interpretation of poetry. "Part IV - Understanding Bible Genres" discusses the various genres of literature in the Old and New Testaments. "Part V - The Fruits of Interpretation" focuses on proper application of the scriptural message. An appendix, which describes and evaluates various literary and sociological approaches, follows the final chapter, and is itself followed by an excellent annotated bibliography.

The authors excel in presenting a thorough program of interpretation in a format and clear writing style that enables the reader to grasp both theoretical issues and the skills that provide the foundation for sound interpretation. With the exception of their discussions of literary, sociological, and reader-response methods (which seem to reflect an uneasiness with the theoretical questions these methods raise), they offer a well-rounded and careful elaboration of the many factors that must be taken into account when interpreting scripture. This is an excellent text for those interested in learning how to interpret scripture with depth and truth and for anyone in ministry who wishes to hone

their interpretive skills. Its clarity and comprehensiveness assure its popularity and longevity.

L. Daniel Hawk

Peter Byrne and Leslie Houlden, eds., Companion Encyclopedia of Theology, London and New York: Routledge, 1995, \$125.00.

In typical usage the word encyclopedia denotes a reference work composed of brief entries arranged alphabetically. Anyone expecting such from this volume will be confused and frustrated. The authors are, rather, using the term encyclopedia in the older sense of comprehensive introduction to theological study. The editors are explicit, (though not without ambivalence), that they are writing for the modern secular academy with all the assumptions such an audience presently demands.

This is an introductory textbook composed of forty-eight chapters organized in six parts: biblical studies; historical theology; history of philosophy; history of Christian spirituality; practical theology and contemporary theology. The volume might have been easier to use if the editors had followed the organization of the theological encyclopedia (exegetical, systematic, historical and practical theology).

A certain bias against Systematic Theology is evident. The treatment of the various theological *loci* are not covered in any usual systematic order, but under various headings throughout the book. Soteriology, ecclesiology and eschatology receive noticeably sparse coverage.

Each chapter is followed by a bibliography of works cited and recommendations for further reading. An extensive index is attached making the work more useful and one appreciates the inclusion of brief notices about the contributors - this helps students to understand that this is only one approach among many, and that the views presented do not drop out of the sky.

Though most of the contributors are British, they come from a wide variety of ecclesial backgrounds so that the work does not seem overly parochial in that respect.

In other ways, however, it is quite parochial. The essay on the formation of the Hebrew Bible, for example, gives no hint that there are well known and respected alternative views (whether traditional or evangelical) to those presented. Also, Heikki Räisänen's account of New Testament Theology simply assumes the triumph of radically subjective hermeneutics and announces the death of propositional theology. More positively, however, John Houlden's essay on Jesus in history is a fair introduction to the basic questions.

G. R. Evans and John Robertson provide, as always, stimulating and skillful introductions to the history of biblical interpretation and the rise of Old Testament criticism. Happily the survey of historical theology proceeds generally from the assumption that the history of theology must be understood developmentally. This is a refreshing break from much of Barthian historiography and the older Hegelian inspired accounts.

John Kent's account of the Enlightenment is clear and helpful. Both he and Keith Clements repeat the standard Barth story. Readers will be aware that the notion that Barth was a neo-orthodox theologian; i.e., a repristination of confessional Reformed

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theology ca. 1550-1750; has been seriously threatened by Bruce McCormack's, Karl Barth's *Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). Oddly, Mark Wynn omits Barth's famous rejection of natural theology from his discussion of the subject.

Philip Sheldrake seems understandably uncomfortable with his fairly trendy assignment to write on "spirituality." The inclusivism implicit in the recent use of the term forces accounts of the Christian practice of piety into a foreign mold. Under the same heading, Rowan Williams acknowledges differences between Lutheran and Reformed piety flowing from their distinct Christologies but mischaracterizes Puritan spirituality as retrograde. In this regard the absence of G. Wakefield's *Puritan Devotion* (London, 1957) from the bibliography is conspicuous.

The final section on the prospects for Christian theology describes the various Post-Enlightenment theological options. Of these John Macquarrie on contemporary Christologies, Colin Gunton on the renewal of Trinitarian theology and Paul Avis' survey of modern systematic theologies deserve special mention.

Of course textbooks perform remarkable feats routinely. Keith Ward's history of the doctrine of God moves from William of Ockham to Romanticism in three pages. That said, this work is probably as well written as any collection of essays can be. For this reason and because it does not seriously challenge widely accepted critical dogma, this introductory textbook will easily pass muster in most British Universities and divinity schools attached to American universities.

This, however, does not constitute a hearty recommendation. One should think that teachers in many Christian traditions, (e.g., conservative Roman Catholic and Orthodox, but perhaps Evangelical most especially), will find themselves correcting or challenging the critical orthodoxy of the book such that it would serve not as an introduction but as a foil for lectures or as a snapshot of the state of the contemporary theological art. R. S. Clark, Westminster Theological Seminary, Escondido, CA

Ronald Cammenga and Ronald Hanks, [Saved by Grace: A Study of the Five Points of Calvinism](#), Grand Rapids: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 257 pp. (pbk), \$10.95; Study Guide 30 pp. (pbk), \$3.95.

It is often telling to see how we treat those with whom we disagree. This is one of several problematic aspects of the book under consideration. Cammenga and Hanks seem to have very little charity toward those who do not share their position. Such persons are called "enemies of the Reformed faith" (18), and earlier the book is recommended because it "exposes and destroys the foes" of Calvinism (ix).

These foes are many and varied. After beginning (wisely, it seems) not with the five points themselves but with an introductory discussion of the larger issue of sovereignty, the authors list various "denials of God's sovereignty": communist totalitarianism; evolutionism; Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism, Arminianism, the free offer of the gospel, and free will; Deism; and feminism (21-24). Cammenga and Hanks are obviously painting with broad strokes here, and in so doing the accuracy of their portraits often suffers. At one point perfectionism is equated with pentecostalism,

Keswick higher life teaching, health and wealth teachings, and positive thinking (169-170). Roman Catholic doctrines are described in ways which would be foreign to their own theologians (114). Of course, Arminianism is a frequent target. At one point the authors reject the "Arminian type of evangelism that is done with the altar call and which teaches the theology of salvation by 'accepting Jesus' and which most often results neither in godliness nor even in faithful church membership" (169).

Of course, we must take the authors' word regarding all of these descriptions, because at no point do they actually cite works representative of the views they are attacking. There is no attempt to interact with thoughtful opposing arguments except through their own descriptions of those arguments. This opens the authors to the criticism that they have not successfully defended their position so much as have knocked over straw men of their own construction.

There are other difficulties as well. The authors are on less than stable historical ground in their assertion that "Calvin developed and systematized these truths" (ix). There are problems in their assertion that the total depravity brought on by the fall means humans no longer bear the *imago Dei* (43). They are inconsistent in claiming on one hand that God's eternal decrees are unconditioned by humanity, and then on the other that God's reprobation displays His justice and His election displays His mercy (85). Finally, although there is a large amount of Scripture cited (as they interestingly note, "the book is saturated with proof texts", p.x), the explanations of these passages are almost always cursory, and no substantiating (let alone challenging) works are ever referenced.

The authors express as their goal an attempt "to set forth the Five Points of Calvinism in a straight-forward, easy-to-understand way" (x). In a sense they have done this, in that they have set forth a very clear description of a fairly strident Reformed position. They have also provided a useful appendix with relevant passages from the major Reformed confessions, to set the discussion in something of an historical perspective, and have prepared a study guide which could facilitate either individual or group study. What they have been far less successful in accomplishing is dealing fairly with those who disagree. Those outside of the Reformed camp may not recognize themselves in the portraits painted in this book. More seriously, those within Reformed circles and unfamiliar with other positions will not come away from this book with a clearer understanding of the complications of the issues involved. They won't necessarily understand how sincere and godly believers, working from the same Scriptures as they, nonetheless cannot come to Reformed conclusions. In this respect, Cammenga and Hanks have taken a difficult subject and have simplified it by distorting their opposition. In so doing both academic integrity and Christian charity have been to some degree sacrificed. (658)

David M. King, William Tyndale College

John Carman, Majesty and Meekness: A Comparative Study of Contrast and Harmony in the Concept of God, Eerdmans, 1994, 453 pp.

If General Revelation is true--the idea that god has revealed himself to all people through both nature and conscience--we should expect that all religions share

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some fundamental ideas and insights into the nature of God. Carman's work compares theistic beliefs in traditions both east and west, utilizing specific texts from all the major world religions.

The focus of the work is on the notion of *polarity*, the idea that the infinite is often grasped and explained by finite humans in terms of seeming contradiction, e.g., the transcendence and immanence of God; the justice and mercy of God; and the other-worldliness/this worldliness of the divine (9). As one who teaches comparative and world religions, I find Carman's theses both sound and useful for companion readings for courses. If an infinite God has revealed himself to a finite world, we would *expect* that human religions would contain a good deal of similarities (due to God's universal revelation) while holding significant points of difference (due to humanity's fallen and finite nature). Carman has done a good job of documenting just that.

In today's pluralistic and religiously diverse society, it is inevitable that religions will engage in interfaith dialogue more and more. Whether it is true, as C. S. Lewis once said, that there are really only two religions in the world: Hinduism and Christianity, it is true that the challenges posed by east and west religious encounters need a place to begin the religious conversation. Carman's work--irenic in tone and broad in scope--is a good beginning.

Michael McKenzie, Liberty University

Ted M. Dorman, *A Faith For All Seasons: Historic Christian Belief In Its Classical Expression*, Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995, 400 pp. (pbk), \$27.99.

In order to understand Christian theology one needs not only a knowledge of Scripture (the source from which theology must ultimately derive) but also a knowledge of history, for the controversies of the past have formed the doctrinal confessions of the present. This is the strength of the introductory text by Ted Dorman, *A Faith For All Seasons*. Dorman, a professor at Taylor University, has arranged his text according to the traditional loci of systematic theology: epistemology, bibliology, theology proper, anthropology, hamartiology, christology, pneumatology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology. At every point, however, Dorman integrates historical information so that the reader has a sense of how ideas have developed over the centuries (and of why believers continue to disagree on some issues to the present).

Dorman states that he desires to present what Vincent of Lerins described as "that faith which has been believed everywhere, always, by all", or what C. S. Lewis has called "mere Christianity" (3). His citations include the creeds and Fathers, he quotes Wesley as readily as Calvin and Luther, and he interestingly interacts quite a bit with Barth (but few other post-Enlightenment theologians are represented: "modern theologies springing from the Liberal Protestant tradition have not been in the saddle long enough to earn their scholarly spurs", p.5). While Dorman's theology remains comfortably within evangelical Protestantism, he has very few sectarian axes to grind. He often simply describes differing positions without offering a preference, and in areas where differences have been historically heated (such as Calvinism versus Arminianism, or millennial positions) Dorman frequently emphasizes the points held in common by all sides (e.g., 277-278, 347). There are also handy charts summarizing different positions,

as well as maps and insertions which Dorman calls "case studies". These latter are short pieces which expand on a person (e.g., Tertullian), issue (e.g. humanity as male and female), or event (e.g. Pentecostalism and the Azusa Street revivals) which had been touched on in the main text. In all, Dorman provides an informative and fairly unbiased introduction to the main themes of Christian theology.

That is not, of course, to suggest that Dorman's work is not without its problems. His desire to cover theology from biblical, systematic and historical perspectives in such a short amount of space means that certain things will be left out (e.g., it seemed curious that his discussion of modalism would include Praxeas and Paul of Samosata, but have no mention of Sabellius). It also means that complicated ideas are sometimes covered so briefly that one wonders whether his target audience has managed to keep up (e.g., his discussion of the development of the eucharistic tradition in the first two centuries). His case studies, while very helpful in putting flesh onto the bare bones of doctrinal issues, seemed at times to be inserted in such a way as to interrupt the flow of the main text and distract. Each chapter concludes with a set of "points to ponder", however these essentially test the reader on the main points of the chapter without really prodding deeper thought (perhaps about personal applications of what has been presented). Suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter would have also been nice (although a bibliography is provided at the end, along with a glossary of theological terms and an index of persons).

Still, this remains one of the better single volume introductions to Christian theology available, primarily because of its emphasis on history. Dorman is committed to the credal truths of orthodoxy, irenic in handling disputed matters, and a talented enough communicator to keep the whole work clear and interesting. For those who desire an understanding of both what Christians believe and why, or perhaps for ministers or teachers interested in ways to integrate church history into their biblical and theological studies, this is a very nice place to begin. (664) David M. King

Stanley J. Grenz, Theology for the Community of God, Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994, 890 pp.

Stanley Grenz's one-volume systematic theology is a "preliminary sketch" (x) for a theology to fulfill the program he outlined in *Revisioning Evangelical Theology*. In that book, Grenz called for new approaches to our understanding of Scripture, theological method, and the church that would speak to a postmodern context. In effect, the earlier work serves as the prolegomena for his systematic theology.

He deals with the traditional topics of systematic theology in a Trinitarian structure, arguing that salvation, the church, and eschatology are all the work of the Holy Spirit. Although he discusses sin and salvation, he has no major headings for these topics, including them as subtopics under anthropology and pneumatology, respectively.

He affirms a threefold norm for theology: "the biblical message, the theological heritage of the church, and the thought-forms of the historical-cultural context in which the contemporary people of God seek to speak, live, and act" (21). Of these three, he gives priority to the biblical message.

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In line with this threefold norm, he chooses community as the integrative motif of his theology (in particular, the "eschatological community") because of its biblical foundations, its connection with theological discussions of the kingdom of God, and its relevance to the contemporary context, especially to the insights of sociology. His reading in sociology (at least as reflected in the footnotes) seems to be limited; he has been strongly influenced by Robert Bellah's *Habits of the Heart*.

His eschatological approach is influenced by the thought of Wolfhart Pannenberg, under whom he completed doctoral studies. He declares that his own theological preunderstandings are "avowedly evangelical and unabashedly Baptist" (ix). This Baptist perspective is Arminian except in the area of perseverance.

Grenz's theology has a number of strengths. His focus on the eschatological community is a fruitful one which provides fresh insights. His work counters the individualistic tendency of much evangelical theology and addresses the need for community in our broken and fragmented society, as his eschatological perspective provides grounds for hope and for constructive engagement in the world.

The theme of community is consistent throughout the book. An excellent discussion of God as the social trinity lays the foundation for this theme. Grenz argues that community is the life of the trinity, and that God's redemptive purpose for humanity is to bring his people to participate in the mutual self-giving that characterizes Trinitarian life. He describes sin as the destruction of community and salvation as the restoration of community. God's eschatological purpose is to create a redeemed people enjoying fellowship with God and with one another in a renewed creation. Grenz manages to give readers both a vision of the cosmic scope of God's redemptive purposes and a sense of the practical value of this knowledge for the Christian life.

Grenz always presents the biblical foundation for the doctrines he discusses, as well as important historical developments. His conclusions are almost always exegetically grounded. (One exception is his discussion of millennial views, in which he does not exegete Revelation 20.) He tries to take doctrines to their practical expression, as in his consideration of the structure of the local congregation and the elements of an ordination service. His dialogue with contemporary theology as well as the biblical text brings a refreshing creativity to his discussions, although he generally remains within traditional evangelical thought. The book itself is very attractively printed, and the text is accessible to beginning students.

Grenz's "preliminary sketch" does retain some rough edges. Some examples of imprecision in terminology or logic mar an otherwise clear presentation. For example, his references to his three "sources or norms" for theology (21) clouds an important discussion of biblical authority. Sources and norms are not the same thing. Moreover, in his treatment of the beginning of salvation, he confuses the concepts of imputed and imparted righteousness, saying that God "imparts righteousness to us as a new standing before him," using "imputed" as a synonym on the next page (568-69).

Similarly, his definition of regeneration as an interpersonal model of salvation is really more applicable to reconciliation (565-566). In fact, his integrative motif should have led him to give a more prominent place to reconciliation as a model. On page 592 he declares that God's foreknowledge is neither the cause nor the result of predestination.



On page 598, however, he states that predestination, understood as God's determination to glorify believers, is indeed based on God's foreknowledge.

Although Grenz's dialogue with contemporary theology is a strength, it does create some challenges for evangelical readers. This is most notable in the area of Christology. Because of his desire to do Christology from below, he rejects a Chalcedonian or "incarnational Christology" which takes as its starting point an eternal *Logos* which assumed human nature in the event of the incarnation (402, 404-05). He argues that preexistence, like the title *Logos*, is a theological statement attempting to express the significance of the historical Jesus of Nazareth and cannot be discussed apart from that historical life (407).

Similarly, he affirms the deity of Christ by arguing "from below." He says that since the historical Jesus truly reveals God, he must participate in the essence of that which he reveals (397). He also affirms the historicity of the virgin birth, although he does so on the grounds of the historical consensus of the church rather than as a consequence of his theological method. He notes that the virgin birth is important but not "christologically indispensable" (422). His approach is intriguing, but it will not satisfy those who want clear and familiar evangelical affirmations.

Other limitations are created by Grenz's theological perspective. Non-Baptists may be put off by the "unabashedly Baptist" perspective which surfaces periodically. For example, although he notes that "it is fashionable to admit" that the New Testament does not teach a single form of church government, he goes on to argue that the first principle of congregational organization in the New Testament is "congregational autonomy" (717-18). He explains away the instances of apostolic appointment of elders by saying that the apostles may have been ratifying the decisions of the congregation or that it may have been a temporary expedient (722).

As a believers' church theologian, Grenz should be more familiar with Anabaptist theology. He seems to know little about the sixteenth century continental Anabaptists, except the fact that they existed and that they practiced believer baptism. He attributes to the English Baptists some developments in theology and practice (such as an emphasis on community and church discipline) that belonged to the Anabaptists before them.

Even with these reservations, Grenz's book is well worth reading for its biblical foundation and its interactions with contemporary thought. The various influences on his thinking may not yet be fully integrated, but their interactions make for thought-provoking reading. This book would serve as a good text in theology for believers' church seminaries.

Brenda B. Colijn

Walter A. Elwell, ed., Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology, Baker Reference Library, Grand Rapids/Carlisle: Baker Book House/Paternoster, 1996, x+933 pp., \$44.99.

The theological content of Scripture is the main distinguishing feature between it and other, contemporary documents. This content is the focus of this reference work, which supplements regular Bible dictionaries which have their focus on people and places, other vital aspects of the biblical text. Differentiating this volume from other

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theological dictionaries is its aim to avoid the necessity of a working knowledge of the biblical languages, and also its Evangelical position, having a "high" view of the integrity and trustworthiness of Scripture.

The work was drafted by some one hundred twenty biblical scholars, predominately from North America, but having a sprinkling from Britain, Israel and New Zealand. The sole female contributor reflects, one hopes, the numerous demands to write placed on the growing number of Evangelical women scholars rather than any editorial bias.

The volume sets out to explore the theology of each biblical book, as well as various people (Aaron, David, Jesus and Moses, but not Athaliah, Jezebel, or Sampson), places (Babylon [which is not identified in its Revelation symbolism], and Jerusalem), practices (baptism, including that for the dead, circumcision, marriage, and prayer), and concepts (predestination and salvation). While the volume is already massive, it seems that some of the more controversial topics which are left untouched would be where many would turn for help, not being content to follow familiar paths with familiar concepts.

Evangelicals will find the volume readable and useful, with the brief bibliographies appended to many articles, and the lengthy Scripture index adding to the usefulness. Preachers and teachers, as well as librarians at all levels of institutions, should be aware of the work.

David Baker

Colin E. Gunton, A Brief Theology of Revelation, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1995, 134 pp., \$29.95.

In his book A Brief Theology of Revelation, Colin Gunton stresses that "Christianity is a revealed religion" (p.16). Modernity seeks, however, to force a choice between reason and revelation. Gunton rejects this dichotomy, asserting (after Coleridge) that "all Truth is a species of revelation" (22). Here Gunton's trinitarian emphasis, and particularly his pneumatology, is crucial: "If there is revelation of the truth of the world, it is because the Spirit of Truth enables it to take place. To put it another way, the creator Spirit brings it about that human rationality is able, within the limits set to it, to encompass the truth of the creation" (34-35). Thus, any system which seeks to ground knowledge (any knowledge) in direct human reason and/or experience without divine revelation is a form of pelagianism -- a denial of the necessity of grace (for this reason Gunton rejects foundationalism, p. 50).

The central task of revelation, however, is the communication of a saving knowledge of God. It is here that special revelation, the revelation of Scripture, becomes necessary. "The particular quality of the Bible's mediation of revelation is derived from its mediation of salvation. It's [sic] uniqueness derives from the uniqueness of the Christ who is mediated and of that which is mediated by Christ" (74). The Father is made known by the Son, however only a very few directly experience this revelation. Gunton writes, "May we not then say that the work of the Spirit in inspiration is to enable the authors to write what they have written and to enable their words to be the indispensable mediators of revelation?" (78).

This then leads to a discussion of the relationship of revelation and tradition. Here, too, is revelation mediated: "It concerns the way in which the generally agreed revelation is interpreted and handed on by those who follow the prophets and apostles: the way in which revelation is mediated by tradition" (95). Gunton writes, "Tradition in the church, then, is a process of gift and reception in which the deposit of faith -- the teaching and ethics of the Christian community -- is received, interpreted and handed on through time" (103). Here as well is the work of the Spirit, for "Wherever there is revelation of any kind, there is the work of the creator and redeemer Spirit" (121). It is the work of the Spirit which is crucial to revelation, which enables the creature to reveal the Creator. This therefore provides for Gunton the possibility of both general revelation in nature and special revelation in Scripture. "Why should we not gladly accept the humanity of scripture as the vehicle of revelation? And why should not the created order and linguistic forms in general serve as media of revelation?" (124).

Gunton's book has much to recommend it. It deals with an area which is not often considered in depth. Because Christianity is a revealed faith, many within it simply take the fact of revelation as given without considering what revelation entails. Gunton's work is helpful in consciously working in terms of the Trinity (here he reflects something of a trend in recent British theology), and especially so in stressing the role of the Holy Spirit, who historically has been associated with the giving of prophecy and Scripture but less often with revelation in the broader sense.

There are also questions, however. Pluralists may question Gunton's silence concerning the possibility of revelation outside of the Judeo-Christian tradition (Gunton interestingly asserts that special revelation necessarily precedes general revelation). Also, when Gunton discusses the relationship between scripture and tradition, it is difficult to see a clear delineation between the two (although Gunton appears to accept a closed canon produced in "a specific revelation period", p.113). Conservatives may also wonder where Gunton's system will lead with regard to issues of biblical reliability. Gunton is not clear here -- he can defend the notion of propositional revelation and in another place write of the "less acceptable sides" of the Old Testament record (79). Even the notion that all knowledge requires divine revelation raises epistemological questions which Gunton cannot pursue. Indeed, perhaps most of the difficulties in this book arise from its brevity, and its nature as a theological overview rather than a comprehensive treatment. However, as Gunton is certainly correct regarding the centrality of revelation for the Christian faith, this book may still be recommended as a valuable introduction to this important doctrine. (736)

David M. King

Sydney H. T. Page, *Powers of Evil: A Biblical Study of Satan & Demons*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995.

Over the past several years there has been a perceptible increase in the number of studies, at both the popular and scholarly levels, devoted to the Devil and/or demons. The sheer quantity of books, articles, films, and addresses indicates that interest in this topic is extraordinarily high. While part of this fascination might be attributed to the attempt to explain some of the more heinous and brutal acts occurring with alarming

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frequency today, much of the current preoccupation among Christians is the result of renewed reflection in the church about the reality of supernatural evil forces. After years of either completely ignoring or relegating the issue of Satan and demons to the backwaters of theological discussions, numbers of Christians have not only rediscovered that powers of evil are very much a part of the biblical world view, but are also convinced that believers must be active participants in spiritual warfare against such powers. At issue is the nature and power of the Devil and the relationship between demons and Christians. Without fear of overstating the case, opinions range from those who deny the existence of the Devil and the demonic to those who see demons lurking behind every illness or other misfortune. Needless to say, this topic is both controversial and divisive.

Sydney H. T. Page, Professor of New Testament and Academic Dean at Edmonton Baptist Seminary, has sought to bring some measure of clarity to the current, and at times extreme, discussion by offering a systemic examination of the biblical teaching regarding Satan and demons. The underlying assumption of his method is that "the Bible's authority is primary; thus, experience must be judged in the light of what is taught in Scripture" (p. 9). Page's academic preparation for such an exegetical undertaking includes the Ph.D. from the University of Manchester.

This investigation of the biblical text is divided into six major sections, with a number of excursions throughout the work and concludes his examination with a post-script on the Demonic Today.

In chapter one ("Satan in the Old Testament") Page finds that Satan is not a figure of major importance, though the concept was apparently familiar to the readers. The term itself occurs only three times in the OT, with all occurrences coming in relatively late compositions. These three passages indicate that a developing understanding of Satan is discernible in the OT in that the word progresses from being a common noun to functioning as a proper noun. In all these texts Satan is presented as being in fundamental opposition to God and humanity.

Chapter two ("Fallen Angels, Demons, and Evil Spirits in the Old Testament") reveals that a great variety of terms are used to refer to evil spiritual agencies, all of which have reference to "independent spiritual beings opposed to God" (p. 81). These evil forces promote injustice, the oppression of God's people, idolatry, deception, and violence. Though exhibiting some similarities to Satan, these forces are never directly related to Satan in the OT, nor is he presented as the head of these forces. In contrast to contemporary Ancient Near-Eastern texts, the OT makes no reference to demon possession or exorcism, nor do the people exhibit undue fear or fascination with these spirits.

"Satan and Jesus in Conflict" is the subject of chapter three. Here Page notes the marked increase in references to Satan in the Gospels as compared to the OT. In fact, this conflict is identified as one of the leading Gospel motifs, beginning in the temptations, continuing in the ministry of healing and deliverance, and culminating in the passion. In contrast to the OT, Satan is presented as the leader of a demonic kingdom. In addition, the Gospels indicate that the followers of Jesus are subject to Satan's attacks, specifically as it relates to the temptation to sin.

In the chapter devoted to "Jesus' Mastery of the Demons", Page takes up the issue of demon possession and exorcism. While the Gospels give evidence of a conflict between Jesus and the demons there is no idea of a struggle between equals, for Jesus' superiority is at no point in question. Jesus is portrayed as always being successful in his exorcistic ministry. The demoniacs many times seek Jesus out often screaming when confronted, sometimes confessing Jesus' messianic dignity. The laying on of hands plays no role in exorcisms and there is little conversation between Jesus and demons. While the demons are presented as opponents of Jesus, those tormented by demons are never criticized. Chapter four is followed up by an excursus entitled "Exorcism in the Modern World". Here Page argues for the possibility of demon possession and the need for exorcism. At the same time, he urges extreme caution in the diagnosis of demon possession calling for considerable critical reflection and warning of specific implicit dangers.

In chapter five Page takes up the "The Apostolic Teaching Concerning Satan" offering a survey of the nonnarrative materials in the NT. Here Satan is found to be a dangerous enemy exercising a pernicious influence over an unbelieving world and occasionally unleashing attacks on believers. The latter consists of temptations, afflictions, and accusations. Despite the apparent power of Satan, there is an optimistic tone in many of the passages examined in that Satan is viewed as an (ultimately) defeated foe who may be overcome in the everyday practice of believers.

The final major chapter of the book is devoted to "The Apostolic Teaching Concerning the Powers of Evil". Although Page finds a number of similarities between the ideas found in the nonnarrative materials with that discovered in the narrative texts, he also points out some of the distinctives of the Epistles and the Apocalypse. While the existence of evil spirits is taken for granted, one finds new terms used to describe them, most notably "rulers" and "authorities". As are the demons, these entities are allied with Satan. Among their functions are: the promotion of error, involvement in moral and religious struggles, the accusation of guilt against humanity, and the affliction of those who do not belong to God. For the most part, these documents attribute the same functions to these spirits and they do to Satan.

Page concludes his study with a postscript entitled "The Demonic Today" in which he offers reasons why believers should take seriously the existence of Satan and evil spirits. At the same time, he encourages believers to avoid the dangers of breeding fear and paranoia, appealing to Satan and demons to excuse one's failings, accepting superstitious beliefs and practices, engaging in unrestrained speculation, and falling victim to imbalance.

Page has produced an important and helpful book for all those interested in this topic. It is well conceived, researched, and written. The author seems to have examined all the major relevant texts in an exegetical style that is even handed with very little special pleading. If the evidence does not warrant a specific conclusion, Page does not reach it. If there is not enough evidence to make a decision he leaves the issue open. The author is also to be commended for attempting to bring the fruit of biblical scholarship to bear on the life of the contemporary church on a most significant issue.

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The primary weakness of this fine study is the methodological approach found in the use of the Synoptic Gospels. Instead of allowing the individual evangelists to be heard on their own terms, they are placed together and read through a "historical-critical" grid. The result of this methodological decision is that on various occasions Page misses the individual Evangelist's overall view on the topic. For example, if Page had paid more attention to the Lukan narrative on its own, two of his conclusions may well have been altered. First, it does appear that in Luke the laying on of hands some-times accompanied exorcism. Second, Luke does not treat alike all those afflicted by demons. He appears to work with two distinct categories: a) there are infirmities which result from demon possession proper, a condition in which the sufferer is dominated by the evil spirit and b) there are demonic afflictions of persons who are otherwise unaffected by the evil spirit. While this is not the place to spell out the implications of these points, they do indicate that a narrative approach to the individual Synaptic could have strengthened the study.

Even with this criticism, Page's work is excellent and should prove to be an invaluable resource for classroom and parish alike. Both Page and the publisher are to be commended for the production of such a fine volume. It is to be highly recommended to the readers of *ATJ*.

John Christopher Thomas,  
Church of God School of Theology, Cleveland, TN

Richard Swinburne, The Christian God, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994, 261 pp., \$24.00 (pbk).

This is the third of Richard Swinburne's projected tetralogy on what he terms "central Christian doctrines" (p. 3). Having dealt in earlier volumes with issues surrounding human sin and divine revelation, Swinburne turns in *The Christian God* to an account of the nature of God, with an emphasis on the Christian doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation. Swinburne, who is Nolloth Professor of the Philosophy of the Christian Religion at Oxford, follows in this book his preferred pattern of dealing first with philosophical issues, and then applying his philosophical conclusions in a thorough, systematic and concise way to theological issues. Thus, he begins in Part I of *The Christian God* with an exposition of five basic metaphysical themes--Substance, Thisness (individuation and identity), Causation, Time, and Necessity--in preparation for their application to issues surrounding the nature of God. Part II then consists of five chapters discussing Divine Properties, the Divine Nature, the Trinity, the Possibility of Incarnation, and the Evidence of Incarnation. Although there are many carefully argued and intriguing aspects to this book--including discussions of God's omnipotence, omniscience and His existence in time--I will discuss here only Swinburne's conclusions regarding the Trinity and the Incarnation.

Concerning the Trinity, Swinburne argues that God, as an omniscient and perfectly free and rational agent not subject to the causal power of desires, will inevitably do what is best, when there exists a best action. Thus, if we can discover an overriding reason to perform some action, we can reasonably suppose that God will inevitably perform that action. Swinburne calls such an action that flows inevitably from God's

perfect freedom and goodness an act of essence, contrasting this with an act of will. He then claims that, because love is a supreme good, there is overriding reason for a divine being to cause the existence of another divine being, and, because worthwhile love "involves co-operating with another to benefit third parties" (p. 177), there is overriding reason for two such divine beings to co-operate in causing a third such being. Such causation, being inevitable and an act of essence, would not be a creative act of will. Therefore, each of these divine individuals is what Swinburne calls 'metaphysically necessary', in that they are *inevitably* (actively or permissively) caused by a divine being--God the Father being the active cause of God the Son, both of these together being the active cause of God the Spirit, and the Son and the Spirit in turn being permissive causes of the continued existence of the Father (whom they inevitably allow to exist).

Swinburne goes to some lengths to test his *a priori* philosophical conclusions against the revelation of Christian scripture and tradition. In assessing his views on the Trinity, Swinburne claims that the relevant creeds (Nicene, Athanasian) and councils were, in denying tritheism, "denying that there were three *independent* divine beings, any of which could exist without the other; or which could act independently of each other." (p. 180, Swinburne's emphasis). In accordance with this, the causal relationships described above (1) entail a strong mutual dependence or "indivisible unity" (p. 181) among the three divine beings (2) are the only significant source of individuation among them.

Swinburne also claims that his theory of the Incarnation allows us to read the doctrine formulated by the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) as internally consistent and as consistent with the New Testament. Swinburne argues that being human is not an essential property of individuals who are human--one can lose or gain humanity while retaining one's identity--and this is contrasted with divinity and with various specific divine properties (omnipotence, etc.), which are essential properties of divine beings. Thus, Swinburne argues, any incarnation must involve God taking on human properties as contingent (not essential) properties--which, because *all* humans have such properties contingently, is enough to make God fully human--without giving up His essential divine properties.

This is not an Apollinarian view where God uses a human body but has no human soul. Rather, it is God's 'soul' (in a broad sense) taking on "a human way of thinking and acting, as well as his divine way" (p. 197). This leads us to Swinburne's central thesis concerning the Incarnation, which he calls the 'divided mind' account. Taking a cue from Freud, and rejecting the notion of total interpenetration, Swinburne proposes that a divine being who became fully human, thinking and being tempted in a human way, would have to divide his mind into a fully divine part and a part that was, by God's own perfectly free choice, limited to a human way of operating. Much like a human can believe she is acting on one set of beliefs when subconsciously she is acting on a different set, so Christ could act, for example, without always being aware of his omniscience: "So using the notion of divided mind we can coherently suppose a divine individual to become incarnate while remaining divine, and yet act and feel much like ourselves" (p. 203). Although God could never allow himself to do wrong, Christ could *feel* tempted to do wrong due to the divided mind, thus sharing in the experience of our

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temptations, and he *could* succumb to the temptation to refrain from supererogatory action (such as crucifixion). Thus, he would be praiseworthy for acting in a supererogatory manner under typically human limitations.

*The Christian God* is part of a series, a piece of a larger philosophical argument for the faith. However, the work is ultimately self-sufficient, and a reader with a good philosophical background or aptitude can approach *The Christian God* on its own terms. The book is a central work by one of the leading philosophers of religion of our day. It will be a necessary part of any college, university, or seminary library, and it will be profitably read by anyone who thinks seriously about the attributes of God and about the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation.

G. Scott Gravlee, The College of William and Mary

Bruce Waltke, Finding the Will of God: A Pagan Notion?, Gresham, OR: Vision House, 1995, 181 pp.

"God loves you and has a wonder plan for your life"- familiar words from a common evangelistic tool. The first statement is incontrovertible, but it is on the second which this volume could be said to focus. Bruce Waltke, longtime professor of Old Testament and Hebrew in Canada and the US, skillfully takes up this topic.

A major theological problem with the last part of the first sentence above is the implication that the plan referred to is unique, specific to each person, and hidden, requiring a diligent search. We have all heard, or said, "I want to find God's will for my life." Waltke queries the supposition that God is trying to keep that will away from us, depriving us of security and joy of living.

Waltke introduces the mechanical, instrumental means of soliciting the will of the gods which were used among Israel's neighbors (e.g. divination, lots, signs), some of which were evident in the life of Israel itself, and some even today. He makes the interesting observation (p. 70): "There are no instances of seeking or finding God's will after Acts 1.24....It is not divination, seeking to probe the divine mind, but revelation given by God to His people."

The last six chapters of the book articulate six means of guidance or revelation: Bible reading, a heart for God, wise counsel, providence, common sense, and supernatural, divine intervention.

The volume is very insightful and practical, deserving a place in church, college and seminary libraries, and on the shelves of all who would serve God. It would be an excellent tool for a Bible study group.

David W. Baker

R. Alastair Campbell, The Elders: Seniority within Earliest Christianity, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994, 309 pp.

Campbell's work deals with a subject long neglected in scholarly circles. Tracing the "consensus view" back to Sohm, elders have largely been ruled by unfounded assumptions. Sohm's successors retained his view of leaders in Paul's letters as being charismatic but neglected Sohm's view that elders were not an office. Moreover, noting that *elder* is not found in the "genuine" letters of Paul, some interpret the NT as recording



the opposition between the Pauline (Gentile) charismatic model and Jewish-Christian model derived from the synagogue-elder.

Chapters two and three deal with Jewish and non-Jewish texts in the Greco-Roman period. The next three chapters treat the NT evidence; first, the "genuine" Pauline writings, which are the earliest, then Acts and the Pastoral Epistles, which are roughly contemporaneous. The final corpus is early post-NT literature.

Campbell concludes that the consensus opinion is mistaken because it reads back into ancient texts post-Reformation assumptions, not adequately taking into account the household as a sociological institution. Elders, he argues, were not officers, but simply elderly people who led by nature of ancient sociological household structure and the cultural value of honoring the elderly. Since believers first met in houses, the household structure explains the term "elder." The host, a person of means so as to provide a large house, would preside over the meeting in his house (κατ' οἶκον, in Luke). That person would be called an "elder," as would all the heads of households present. When the believers outgrew one house, other houses would contain a "house church" with an identical arrangement. To meet the organizational need of multiple house-churches in a location, each house chose one of the elders as *episkopos*, or bishop, to represent them. All bishops would still be elders simply because they were still the influential members. These bishop-elders led corporately when believers met κατ' ἐκκλησίαν (again, Lucan terminology). It is in the Pastoral epistles where churches are taught to appoint elders κατὰ πόλιν (Tit 1.5-9). Though this could mean "in each city," Campbell suggests it is better to understand this in a sense parallel to Luke, i.e., "over the city." This gave rise to a monepiscopacy as seen in the post-NT literature. It was only later that elders become an office known as priests (pp. 228-35).

Campbell's argument that "elder" is an originally vague term, which connoted rank rather than office is convincing. He notes that he has interpreted details which are open to other explanations. What gives him confidence is that the difficulties of the early second century literature can be more neatly explained by his reconstruction than they can by the consensus view. For Campbell, the household model provides a knowable and substantial basis for understanding the workings of the NT church. The absence of the term "elder" in Paul does not mean that there is conflict between Jewish and Gentile churches, but that there is within the NT itself a development of church polity, which is provided for in the Pauline writings.

Four questions may be raised. First, Campbell reads the Pastoral Epistles as an innovation to establish the monepiscopacy over a city, rather than correction or general instruction. If the Pastorals are actually Pauline, how would that affect his reconstruction?

Another question regards sociological method and inspiration. Campbell (pp. 101-2) says, regarding Paul's teaching in Corinthians, "that people [i.e., Paul] act as they do not simply as the result of theological ideas, but also in response to social and economic realities." Is sociological method overriding the Spirit's inspiration of Paul?

One of the fundamental blocks of Campbell's thesis is that elders were ranking members of the community, and therefore wealthy and influential. Is it difficult to square this with NT teaching about the poor, as in 1 Cor 1.26-28 and James 2.1-13, and the

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reputation that existed of Christians being poor as late as the early third century in the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix, c. 12?

Finally, dealing with the implications of his study for the modern church, Campbell treats elders and the role of women. He reasons that since "elders" refers to the influential members of society, we should view NT women such as Lydia as filling that role. Therefore the modern church should consider allowing women to reenter this leadership role (pp. 255-7). However, if the NT is going to serve as a model, and if elders actually held a position of rank and not office, then would it not follow that though some women had rank, they did not hold office and therefore the NT offers no parallel for ordaining women to such an office today? Lee M. Fields, Roanoke Bible College

Alvyn Pettersen, *Athanasius*, Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1995, 202 pp., \$16.95 (pbk).

Patristic scholar Johannes Quasten has commented that the history of dogma in the fourth century is identical with the history of the life of Athanasius. In light of Athanasius' vigorous defense and explication of Nicea in spite of stiff theological and political opposition (indeed, Hamak has argued that without Athanasius the church would have fallen to the Arians), it is difficult to overstate his importance to the development of the theology of the church. Therefore the new introduction to Athanasius by Alvyn Pettersen may be seen as a most welcome addition to the literature.

Pettersen begins with an Introduction to Athanasius' "Life and Times". This is less a biographical sketch than an overview of the theological and political situation during the life of Athanasius, and it provides a very useful backdrop to what follows.

Athanasius is, of course, known primarily for his christological teachings. Pettersen's study is helpful in that it approaches Athanasius' theology as a whole, thereby setting Athanasius' christology into the larger context of his thought. Pettersen therefore begins not with incarnation but with creation and God's providential work in that created world. From here Pettersen moves to consider Athanasius' understanding of revelation, and of humanity's resistance to revelation. Pettersen's third chapter considers God's self-revelation in the incarnation of the Logos as the only remedy for the human dilemma. Pettersen emphasizes that for Athanasius christology is closely bound to soteriology. The Logos who revealed the Father could not merely have a creaturely knowledge of God, but must in fact be God: "For Athanasius, that people could look upon the face of God in Christ was the basis of much human hope" (71). Pettersen then discusses Athanasius' understanding of salvation as not merely a restoration to a prelapsarian state, but rather as a participation of humanity in the divine nature through the divine humanity of Christ: "Salvation thus delivers people from sin to 'participation' in God, to deification. For the Logos 'became man that we might be deified'" (105, citing *De Incarnatione* 54).

The last half of the book considers the Incarnation and Trinity. In chapter five Pettersen again emphasizes the soteriological implications of Athanasius' christology. Thus, Athanasius stands equally against docetism, Arianism, and adoptionism in that each system imperils human salvation:

The passions are, for Athanasius, an integral part of the Incarnation, which was undertaken for our salvation. Hence, Christ's passions must be real passions: otherwise people's real passions will not be met. The divinity of the Logos must be genuine: otherwise he will not be a sufficient healer of the real passions he meets. There must be a real union of the Healer with the passible humanity needing healing, and not simply the Healer's coming upon a passible person: otherwise the salvation will not be secured. (123)

Chapter six examines the trinitarian implications of Athanasius' terminology, considering his use of "form", "like", "proper", "**homoousios**", and "**hypostasis**" in discussing the relationship of the Father and the Son. Chapter seven sketches the relationship of Father, Son, and Spirit, and shows Athanasius' attempt to describe the Godhead in ways which show distinction but not division of the Persons.

Petterson has written a very good introduction to the thought of one of the church's most significant theologians. His writing style is clear, although there is an economy to his writing which condenses his thought and which therefore may make the book a bit of a struggle to the "general readers" at whom the publisher states (back cover) the book is in part aimed. For those who are interested in early church history or christology, however, this book is well worth the effort. David M. King

Daniel G. Reid, Robert D. Linder, Bruce L. Shelley, Harry S. Stout, Craig A. Noll, eds., Concise Dictionary of Christianity in America, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995, 378 pp. \$16.99.

Having received just acclaim for the Dictionary of Christianity in America (1990), the publishers decided that a condensed version in paper might be beneficial. The task fell to Craig A. Noll, who has done yeoman's service in reducing the original to almost a quarter of its size.

Naturally, all articles are reduced in length. Longer, survey articles of the Dictionary are often omitted entirely, as are biographical articles on several notable individuals who are still living (though Billy Graham and John Paul II still rate inclusion). Also deleted are the contributors' list, the very helpful introductory survey of American Christianity by R. D. Linder, and the bibliographies at the end of each entry.

What results in the Concise Dictionary is a more popular version that should have great appeal to students, pastors, and lay readers. Here is quick information on hundreds of people, events, institutions, and ideas germane to American Christianity.

In several ways the recent product improves on the former one. Many notables who died in the interval are included: Ralph David Abernathy, Hans Wilhelm Frei, Donald A. McGavran, Jacob A. O. Preus, and D. Elton Trueblood, among others. I must

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admit, however, that I am puzzled as to why David Koresh deserves more ink than John Meyendorff, Bernard Ramm, Paul Ramsey, or Paul S. Rees.

At several places the sequence of articles corrects the former volume's slips in alphabetizing. A new article is included on Princeton Theological Seminary. Why, one might ask, are there no articles on such topics as Evangelicals for Social Action, the Jesus Seminar, the Vineyard Movement, or Womanist Theology among African-Americans? Especially when the word hallelujah (hardly an American copyright) gets included in both books.

These criticisms in no way detract from the genuine merit of the Concise Dictionary. Scholars and students doing research will still prefer the larger Dictionary (\$44.99), but thousands of purchasers of the Concise Dictionary will thank Craig Noll for his labor of love and InterVarsity Press for an affordable reference volume on Christianity in America.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Graydon F. Snyder, Health and Medicine in the Anabaptist Tradition, Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1995, 152 pp.

Graydon Snyder begins his book with an overview of the Anabaptist movement--its characteristics and vision. According to the Anabaptist position, healing and health maintenance occur within the context of the faith community. Only within the family of God can life be lived to its fullest. In fact, being a member of the group is of greatest importance. To lose one's honor results in shame. Satisfaction comes through acceptance by the group, whereas same has serious implications for one's mental health. Ill health results when a disruption of community occurs. But the Anabaptist's did not view illness as a result of sin.

Community creates an atmosphere in which people can maintain good mental health whereas individualism promotes personal breakdown. Snyder uses the word mutual aid frequently defining it as caring for another in community. All of life, from birth to death, is of importance. Snyder traces the impetus for treating the mentally ill within the community to Civilian Public Service during World War II, which provided an alternative for the Mennonite conscientious objectors to war.

This book is an excellent resource for congregations as well as the broader church. Snyder embodies a holistic approach which stresses all aspects of life. He ends his book with a challenge to the Anabaptist community to continue to promote wellness not only within the local and national community, but also around the world. He asks some hard questions and challenges Anabaptists to continue to work at breaking down the barriers between races, genders, social classes, in order to build communities that promote mutual love and respect.

Mary Nitzsche

K. C. Abraham and B. Mbuy-Beya, eds., Spirituality of the Third World: A Cry for Life, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1994, 210 pp., \$19.95 (pbk).

With contributions from some twenty writers representing almost as many nations, this book distills the papers and responses given at the Third General Assembly.

of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians, held in Nairobi, in January, 1992.

Two essays (not actually given at the Assembly), constitute Part One and set the context of the debate, clarifying the concept of the "Third World", not simply its geographical extent but, more important, its human, and socio-economic configuration and its disadvantaged relationship with the "North" or "First World". Part Two, entitled *The Search for Spirituality*, includes five essays, while Part Three, *The Theological Response*, is the longest, consisting of eight essays, three of which are followed by responses by other participants. This reviewer found aspects of the organization of the book perplexing: for instance, Gebara's article *Cry for Life from Latin America*, would fit more comfortably in Part Two than in Part Three; the Opening Address of welcome by Sergio Torres comes half-way through the book at p. 87; and at the end of the book an article on *Taking the Poor Seriously* seems somewhat anticlimactic following the Statement of the Assembly (would it not have been better placed at the beginning of the book or at least at the beginning of Part Three, especially since the author-editor himself says in his Introduction that the Statement will conclude the book?)

The essays vary widely in length and in style. Some are context-specific, like that on the Mexican-American Indians or on Catholic charismatic renewal in Lubumbashi, Zaire, while others are more conceptual, as with Elizabeth Amoah's *A Living Spirituality Today*. It is clear from the many different definitions that "spirituality" escapes reduction to a single idea. Some examples of definition include: that which "permits us to make sense of Life" (Mbuy-Mbeya), "a dynamic and radical experience of... the PRESENCE" (Elizabeth Amoah), "our connectedness to God, to our human roots, to the rest of nature, to one another, and to ourselves" (Statement of the Assembly). However, all the writers would agree that the experience shared by those in the Third World has profoundly affected the perceptions and aspirations that together shape their spirituality.

Included in this commonality of Third World experience are the familiar themes of poverty, oppression, marginality, and hopelessness. Women frequently suffer more than men in such situations and it is fitting that eight of the twenty contributors are women. The Third World scene is clearly painted in strong, dark colors, not least in Pablo Richard's major article *A Theology of Life: Rebuilding Hope from the Perspective of the South*. A less familiar theme to some will be the perceived repercussions of the collapse of communism since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. This has robbed the Third World of one important alternative to American-style capitalism and has established an unopposed new international order which is assumed by some (cf. Fukuyama's *The End of History?*) to be the climax, goal, and pinnacle of human strivings. This capitalism, according to Richard, is characterized by the twin evils of exclusion of the majority and the destruction of nature (p. 93). More than one writer in the book draws attention to the fact that the people of the Third World are increasingly unneeded and irrelevant to the First World, especially in view of the accelerating revolution in information technology.

The contributors' response to the dilemma that faces the Third World are varied. On the one hand the deeply somber Ivone Gebara declares:

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I find myself becoming more and more skeptical of and dissatisfied and disgusted with the unrealistic discourses of certain theologians and social scientists who continue to maintain that despite everything the situation is changing for the better. To me, this appears to be intellectual fantasy. (p. 110)

At the close of her article hope does shine, but it is against an increasingly dark background. On the other hand, the article on *The Spirituality of the Brazilian Base Communities* is written in an altogether lighter, more joyful key, portraying and quoting groups of believers, often with little or nothing to their name but who, surprisingly free of bitterness and recrimination, share with and support one another and work together for a better tomorrow.

The longest article in the book is also the most theological, that by George Soares Prabhu entitled *The Jesus of Faith, A Christological Contribution to an Ecumenical Third World Spirituality*. In it, Prabhu (an Indian Jesuit), argues that the christological formulations of Nicea and Chalcedon, if taken to be definitive for all time and all cultures, end up impoverishing the christological quest. They should rather be seen as culturally and historically confined. Even the "privileged text" of the New Testament encompasses not one christology but many (contextualized) perceptions of Jesus meaningful to their various and different readership communities. The New Testament thus provides not a finished christological product but rather a number of models of expressing the Jesus of faith. Taking the New Testament as our example, argues Prabhu, our task

is to create new christologies, by confronting the cry for life which resounds in our Third World with our experience of Jesus. The starting point of our christology is then the dialectic understanding of our Jesus experience with our Third World situation.

The emerging elements of a Third World christology are then suggested: experience of God, love, justice, solidarity with the poor, conflict with the powerful, and resurrection. Prabhu's article concludes by arguing that this dialectic of the Jesus of experience and the cry for life is likely to produce a christology which is not exclusive but rather inclusive, - "the Inexhaustible Mystery has a thousand saving names". Prabhu's conclusion may be consistent with his understanding of the New Testament as a collection of models but it might be asked whether such a perception of the New Testament does justice to Prabhu's own recognition of it as "privileged text". Nevertheless, the article rightly underlines that christology, to be satisfactory, must also make contextual sense. Too often in the past it has been content to repeat "fossilized" terminology, - preserved exactly but lacking life.

In summary, the book is an important one, intending to speak for the majority in the world, expressing pain and anger as well as hope, while also challenging the attitudes and indifference of the world's powerful minority.

K. Gordon Molyneux, All Nations Christian College, England

Phil Parshall, *Inside the Community: Understanding Muslims Through Their Traditions*, Baker, 1994, 240 pp.

Parshall has undertaken an ambitious task: to explain doctrinally the second-largest religion in the world, giving Christians a more thorough understanding of the Islamic faith. The work is arranged topically, with chapter titles representing the points of Islamic doctrine which have close counterparts in Christian theology, e.g., Salvation, Miracles, Prayer, Fasting, and so on. When such user-friendly topics are combined with a very readable style, Parshall has succeeded in his goal of increasing understanding among Christians.

At times, however, the author's admitted apologetical thrust seems to get in the way of objectivity. When explaining the Islamic doctrine of revelation, and their view of the inspiration of the Quran, Parshall notes that there are difficulties in seeing how the Quran could possibly be without error since,

"One can only speculate as to the degree of loss of accuracy in this process [how the inerrant Quran was handed down through the generations]. First, anything human is subject to some degree of error, no matter the commitment to perfection. Second, human memory over a period of twenty years cannot be regarded as inerrant." (22-23)

While most biblical scholars and textual critics would agree with Parshall's evaluations of the Islamic claims to Quaranic accuracy, evangelical biblical scholars would surely have something to say about Parshall's two general, broad-reaching claims. If *anything* human is subject to some degree of error, then is the orthodox view of apostolic inerrancy possible? If so, then there would appear to be some things human not subject to error; if not, then is Parshall saying anything about the Christian view of revelation? If he is, it would seem--given the overall tenor and tone of the book--to undermine much of what he says elsewhere. Even the Christian view of biblical inerrancy depends a good deal on humans acting--albeit guided by God--without error; and good memories play no little parts in that!

It would seem that it would be more helpful to examine the Islamic claims to Quaranic inerrancy on their merits and let it go at that, rather than making such broad, sweeping philosophical claims. Parshall does do a good job of examining the Quaranic transmission *historically*, and such documentation is provocative enough.

Thus, the book works better as a text for Christians seeking more understanding about their Muslim friends and co-workers; it is not designed (nor would it fit well) as a text for a course in comparative religions. If one understands that going in, then the book has filled a valuable niche.

Michael McKenzie, Liberty University

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Klaus Berger, The Truth Under Lock and Key? Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1995, xi + 113 pp., \$12.99.

The somewhat sensationalist title of this book may lead one to suspect that between its covers one will find more unwarranted speculation about the impact the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls will have for Christianity, more wild affirmations about the Scrolls containing the true story of the early church. The question mark in the title, however, is highly significant, for Berger sets out in the first half of the book to show that such sensationalist readings have no basis in reality. Targeting the theses of Robert Eisenman (followed by Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh), who reads the scrolls as though Paul were the wicked priest and James the "teacher of righteousness," Berger shows the lack of support for such a reading in the texts themselves.

After defusing this reading (which had, of course, greater popular appeal than any careful scholarship could), Berger presents a more balanced and reliable comparison of the Qumran community and the early Christian church under the headings of community organization, religious practices, messianic expectations, the dualistic view of humanity (children of darkness vs. children of light), and eschatological expectations. Two areas of significantly common ground emerge: first, the shared conviction that one's movement was a "conversion movement within Israel for its renewal" (hence the significance of the "twelve" as a governing body in both communities, the ritual of baptism as a mark of repentance, wilderness as a place of renewal, and a "new" or renewed covenant); second, the very striking emphasis on God's justification of the sinner by God's favor and mercy shared between the Qumran hymns and Paul's letters. Berger works from the principle (shared by such notable scholars as John J. Collins and James H. Charlesworth) that few indeed of the Qumran texts reflect a strictly sectarian perspective, and that, rather, many of the texts shine a new light into the shared piety of first-century Palestinian Judaism. One can thus begin to discuss how Qumran texts shed light on the New Testament without positing simplistic hypotheses of direct influence.

As a cursory overview of the significance of the Scrolls for understanding early Christian movements, Berger's book has much to offer. The work benefits from Berger's use of the more recently available texts as well as those in the standard collections (e.g., Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*). His views are his own, however, rather than strictly an overview of scholarly consensus. For example, there is a text bearing witness to the title "Son of God" at Qumran -- a title heretofore assigned a Greco-Roman background. Many scholars, notably John J. Collins, read this as a title given the Messiah. Berger, however, argues that the title actually refers to the eschatological opponent of the people of God. He also differs markedly from others in his estimation of the degree of eschatological expectation at Qumran. Such disagreements are not in themselves problematic, of course. There is, however, not enough detailed discussion to make convincingly *all* the points Berger seeks to make.

In sum, Berger offers a very astute critique of sensationalist views which have enjoyed the attention of the media and the unwary far too long, and provides a helpful orientation to how the Scrolls may be better employed to shed light on early Christianity. It remains, however, only an introduction, and should lead the readers to seek out those



more detailed and nuanced discussions which one finds, for example, in F. G. Martínez and J. T. Barrera, *The People of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: Brill, 1995) or John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star* (New York: Doubleday, 1995). David A. deSilva

Louis H. Feldman and Meyer Reinhold (eds.), *Jewish Life and Thought Among Greeks and Romans*, Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1996, xliii + 436 pp., \$48.00.

Feldman and Reinhold bring together in one volume a treasury of first-hand witnesses to the life and thought of Jews in Palestine and the Diaspora from the period of Alexander the Great (332 BC) into the sixth century AD. Translations of texts by Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, and Judeans, by pagans, Jews, and Christians are organized into a thorough portrait of what it meant to be Jewish, and how outsiders viewed Jews, during this period.

The collection opens with a chapter containing the earliest references to Jews in Greek Literature. A second chapter looks at records of Jewish culture in Ptolemaic Egypt, attesting to the nature and degree of Hellenization among Jews there (Alexandria containing the largest number of Jews outside Palestine), while a third, brief chapter gathers records concerning the life of Jews elsewhere in the Diaspora. The next two chapters treat "pro-Jewish" attitudes and measures taken by Greco-Roman authorities and intellectuals, a helpful counterbalance to more common discussions of "anti-Judaism" in the ancient world. Chapters six and seven assemble the evidence for conversion to Judaism (including positive and negative reactions to proselytism from both Jewish and pagan authors) as well as for the existence of a body of Gentile "sympathizers" who would have been connected to synagogues in varying degrees of informality. These are especially useful chapters since the questions of conversion and attraction to Judaism (even the existence of "God-fearers") remain lively subjects of debate among scholars, and since many Christians share the view that the Gentile mission began among such Gentiles as were first attracted to the synagogue (following the picture of Acts).

Chapter eight (fully one-quarter of the book) provides windows into the political, economic, and religious life of Jews in Palestine from the Hasmonean into the Roman period, including several helpful pages documenting the degrees of Hellenization in Palestine. The ninth chapter assembles texts speaking about the three Jewish revolts, the two in Judea (66-74 AD and 132-135 AD) and another one, potentially more damaging to Jew-Gentile relations, among Diaspora Jews (115-117 AD). A final chapter treats ancient anti-Jewish attitudes and actions, both in terms of persecution by official or mob action and in terms of intellectuals' criticisms of the Jews on political, religious, social and cultural grounds. The fact that it is more than twice as long as the two chapters on "philo-Judaism" tells us something about the difficult time Jews must have had in general. This chapter is indispensable for probing, for example, the hostility and prejudice which befell the church, for many of the same criticisms leveled at the synagogue were leveled at the church (no doubt, in part, because it was perceived by outsiders as just another form of Judaism).

Feldman and Reinhold provide brief introductions to each section and very brief orientations to (and summaries of) the actual primary texts. They give just enough

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to help the reader, but no so much as to intrude upon the voices of the ancient witnesses themselves. Where texts are fragmentary, potentially ambiguous, or just plain obscure, the editors add clarifying remarks in brackets. Usually these are reliable, but they should always be read critically. For example, chapter ten rightly includes 2 Maccabees 4:7-17 as a witness to the Hellenization crisis of 175-164 BC. This text describes the efforts of Jason, high priest in Judea thanks to a generous bribe, to turn Jerusalem into a fully Greek city and to abolish Torah as the law of the land. The editors insert the name of the Syrian monarch Antiochus midway into the selection in brackets, leading the reader to blame the "reforms" wholly on the Gentile king's initiative. While this may be in keeping with their view of what "really happened," it flies in the face of the actual text which gives repeated indications that Jason spearheaded this apostasy and no justification for reading Antiochus as the direct cause of those actions.

Such small matters aside, this book would be a good investment for anyone with a serious interest in exploring the life of Jews in the centuries around the turn of the era. The struggles they faced, the criticisms they endured (and answered!), the admiration they engendered are all brought wonderfully to life as the editors allow the ancient voices to speak again. If the price is high, by all means avail yourself of a library copy -- the first-hand opportunity the volume gives the reader to hear the sources themselves will reward any time spent entering into those ancient conversations.

David A. deSilva

Florentino García Martínez, The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996, lxvii + 519 pp., \$30.00.

The publication of this collection (first in Spanish, in 1992) marks the end of the "scholarly scandal" of the withholding of many of the Dead Sea Scrolls from the larger scholarly community and from the general public. The many wild theories of finds at Qumran deliberately kept hidden because they could radically shake the foundations of Judaism and Christianity may finally be silenced. Prior to this volume, the best and most complete collection was the third edition of Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), which included translations of 62 manuscripts from Qumran. Martínez has brought that number up to 270, adding all of the non-biblical texts discovered at Qumran which are sufficiently well-preserved to allow translation. The rationale for not including biblical manuscripts found at Qumran is, of course, that this would vastly expand the volume of the book with material of greatly limited appeal (the province of textual critics of the OT and Apocrypha). Two to three hundred fragments are indeed so fragmentary that there is not possibility of determining what they say with any degree of probability, and so they, too, remain unpublished.

After a brief introduction, Martínez provides translations of the Dead Sea Scrolls grouped either by genre or content: "rules" (The Rule of the Community, the Damascus Document); halakhic texts (notably the famous 4QMMT, with its "works of the Law"); primarily eschatological texts (e.g., The War Scroll); exegetical literature (targums, *pesharim*, the Temple Scroll); para-biblical literature (paraphrases of OT texts, important extra-canonical books like *1 Enoch* and *Jubilees*, testaments and other

pseudonymous works); poetic texts (apocryphal psalms, the Hymn Scroll, exorcism hymns, wisdom poems); liturgical texts (Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, daily prayers, curses and blessings); astronomical and calendrical texts; and, finally, the ancient treasure map known as the Copper Scroll (a good candidate for the next Indiana Jones movie). Unlike other available collections, Martínez provides translations of every manuscript of a given document found at Qumran (not just the most complete version or a composite version). This opens up, for example, the possibility of comparing the different available versions of the Community Rule or the War Scroll, and investigating possible lines of development within the history of each document's use in the life of the community. Each section is given a brief introduction, and the whole work concludes with a complete catalogue of all the identifiable manuscripts from Qumran.

This is certainly the collection of choice for any devotee of Qumran studies, and will quickly become the standard text for use in seminaries and graduate programs. The author's desire to reproduce the text as literally and exactly as possible, however, may strike the reader as less poetic, and in places less comprehensible, than other available translations. Much of this stems from Martínez' reserve when it comes to filling in *lacunae*, or breaks in the manuscript (which in some of the more fragmentary texts included becomes quite frustrating). The result, however, is a surer representation of the actual scrolls as we have them. More recent books on Qumran use these newly released texts in their reconstructions of the life and theology of the community, and so it will be of benefit to all who have an interest in the future of Dead Sea Scrolls study to acquaint themselves with this volume. The recently published study on Qumran by Martínez and Julio Trebolle Barrera, *The People of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Writings, Beliefs and Practices* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), would make an excellent companion volume and, used in tandem, would provide a most reliable and succinct introduction to this community which has so captured the attention of scholars and public alike. David A. deSilva

Florentino Garcia Martínez and Julio Trebolle Barrera, *The People of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Writings, Beliefs and Practices*, Leiden: Brill, 1995, ix + 269 pp., \$42.00.

Nothing in the field of Intertestamental Studies has captured the attention (and wild imagination) of the media and popular interest like the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the mysterious community at Qumran. Airwaves and bookstores have carried astounding speculations to the minds of the American audience: has publication of many of the scrolls been delayed because the texts contain material damaging to traditional Christianity and Judaism? Do the finds undermine orthodox concepts of "canon"? Do these texts speak cryptically about John the Baptist, Paul, James, and Jesus himself? Was Jesus the "Teacher of Righteousness"? Or was Jesus perhaps simply an Essene for a period in his preparation?

The finds in the caves near Qumran answer enough important questions without resorting to such sensationalism, and this new volume by Martínez and Barrera (a collection, really, of essays and lectures) promises to guide the reader safely and responsibly through the troubled waters of understanding the importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The first half of the book deals with the community of Qumran itself: what

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prompted the withdrawal of these people to the desert? What was their manner of life? What did they believe? This section includes a survey of the contents of the major documents, as well as a chapter on the origins of the particular group at Qumran in relation to the larger Essene movement.

A second section moves on to consider specific areas of interest on the map of current scholarly debate. Of particular interest to students of the New Testament are chapters on biblical interpretation and messianic expectations in the Dead Sea Scrolls. A fuller (and most rewarding) treatment of the latter has recently appeared in J. J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, but this chapter presents at least an admirable introduction to an area of important similarities and dissimilarities between Qumran and the early church. The treatment of purity issues at Qumran should also be of interest, since divisions within the early church (between Jewish and Gentile Christians, and between Paul and, say, his rivals in Galatia) were frequently motivated primarily by concern for purity and defilement.

The book concludes with three chapters on the relationship between the Qumran documents (and community) and the early church and its texts. Martinez rightly notes that the Scrolls' importance is in the light they shed on Second Temple Judaism, *not* any direct light they shed on Christian origins: nevertheless, like any body of background/environment texts, the Scrolls do shine a new light on several aspects of the New Testament. The first chapter largely corrects misunderstandings about the importance of the Scrolls propagated by renegade scholars and scandal-hungry media, though Martinez draws also some positive information from a comparison of several Qumran texts, hermeneutical methods, and theological concepts with Matthew's gospel. In a second chapter, Barrera works through each section of the New Testament corpus against the backdrop of Qumran literature. The book concludes with a very specific study, comparing Matthew 18:15-17, the instructions for rebuking an errant brother or sister, and the practice of "discipline" at Qumran. This is more than a mere textual study -- it probes the very nature of community in the Matthean circle and Qumran conventicle.

The discovery of the Scrolls has, to be sure, led to much needless controversy and speculation, but their value must not be tarnished by their misuse. We now have access to a treasure-trove of literary artifacts, the life and thought of a distinctive "Judaism" which flourished between 100 BCE and 68 CE and can provide a wealth of comparative material by which to sharpen our picture of the matrix of early Judaism and nascent Christianity. Martinez and Barrera -- two scholars at the very heart of Qumran research -- have provided an excellent introduction to this community, its literature, and its importance.

David A. deSilva

Jacob Neusner, ed., Dictionary of Judaism in the Biblical Period, New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan, 1995, 2 vol., xxvi+693 pp., \$175.00.

This is an interesting, popular-level dictionary of early Judaism, though the title is misleading. It not only expands beyond the Jewish understanding of "biblical" to include the New Testament era as well, but even goes beyond anyone's definition of "biblical". It has entries on 'Mishnah' and 'Talmud', which are centuries later than any

biblical canon, and includes, e.g., an entry on the Visigoth king Sigibert III from the mid-7th century AD.

Articles are short, usually less than a page, and the popular nature of the work is evidenced by an annoying lack of bibliography for any of the entries. For public and college/ seminary libraries, the relative value for cost would not commend the work for individual purchase.

David W. Baker

Helmut Koester, ed., Ephesos: Metropolis of Asia, Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1995, xix + 357 pp.

Archaeology of the Near Eastern and Greco-Roman world remains an essential cornerstone of biblical studies and hearing the Word in context. Study of ancient Corinth, for example, has greatly enriched discussions of Paul's correspondence with the first-century inhabitants of that city. Indeed, the appearance of material on the *realia* of Corinth in works of biblical studies has gone largely unparalleled. This collection of essays provides a helpful means of bringing the material culture of another major city -- one of great importance for ancient Asia Minor and the history of the Christian church (beyond the New Testament period) -- into scholarly reflection on the Christian texts themselves.

The contents of the volume are as follows:

- Peter Scherrer, "The City of Ephesos from the Roman Period to Late Antiquity"  
L. Michael White, "Urban Development and Social Change in Imperial Ephesos"  
Christine Thomas, "At Home in the City of Artemis: Religion in Ephesos in the Literary Imagination of the Roman Period"  
Helmut Koester, "Ephesos in Early Christian Literature"  
Dieter Knibbe, "*Via Sacra Ephesiaca*: New Aspects of the Cult of Artemis Ephesia"  
Hilke Thür, "The Processional Way in Ephesos as a Place of Cult and Burial"  
Heinrich Zabeihlicky, "Preliminary Views of the Ephesian Harbor"  
Susanne Zabeihlicky-Scheffenecker, "Subsidiary Factories of Italian Sigillata Pottery: The Ephesian Evidence"  
Steven Friesen, "The Cult of the Roman Emperors in Ephesos: Temple Wardens, City Titles, and the Interpretation of the Revelation of John"  
Maria Aurenhammer, "Sculptures of Gods and Heroes from Ephesos"  
James Walters, "Egyptian Religions in Ephesos"  
Stefan Karwiese, "The Church of Mary and the Temple of Hadrian Olympios"  
Vasiliki Limberis, "The Council of Ephesos: The Demise of the See of Ephesos and the Rise of the Cult of the Theotokos"

The collection originated in the 1994 Harvard Symposium on Ephesos, bringing together members of the Austrian team which has been excavating and researching ancient Ephesos with scholars of Greco-Roman religion, New Testament, and ancient art. It is truly a (pardon the pun) groundbreaking volume.

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For the interests and needs of a minister, however, for whom time for study and continuing self-education is limited, this may not be the best investment of energy. There are two articles of direct interest to such people. The piece by Steven Friesen on the imperial cult in Ephesus and the Revelation of John is well-written, documented, and integrated into biblical studies. The second article, by the eminent Helmut Koester on references to Ephesus in early Christian literature (the New Testament and the letters of Ignatius), contains some useful insights into the origins and development of the church(es) in Ephesus, but these are nestled in a distinctly liberal view of the New Testament documents which is presented as indisputable fact (without defense or even the admission of the need for defense) in a most irritating way. Full-time scholars will need to read the collection and integrate its valuable contributions into their work on New Testament texts. Those who already have sufficient motivation to take a study tour of the "Lands of the Bible" should make this collection required reading before starting their trip. Most pastors and devoted laity, however, may do much better to wait for more Scripture-centered works (like future commentaries on Paul or Revelation, or a book on the archaeology of the New Testament), where the integration of the pure archaeology and social history into reading a specific text rooted in Ephesus will have been already achieved.

David A. deSilva

Thomas J. Davis, By the Waters of Babylon: One Family's Faith-Journey through Illness, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

In a book describing the illness and death of his wife, Thomas Davis provides an honest, candid, and personal look into a journey filled with despair, tragedy, faith and joy.

"I'm fine. Doing OK." But I wasn't fine. The moaning winds of despair frosted my mind; I could smile because the moisture in my lips had frozen hard as stone; and my heart was so heavy that it felt it must be iron. I was trapped in a bleak midwinter.

Beginning with the first diagnosis of his wife's acute lymphoblastic leukemia, the author shares a kind of practical theological journal with the reader. Davis has a gift of understanding the issues underneath the surface. "Why" does God let this happen is not the question as much as "where" is God as he, his ailing wife and two daughters deal with struggle and loss.

The author observes "when all is said and done, for the really important things in life there are no answers, only explorations." So this is no simple answer book for the tough questions of life, but it is a kind of sign that points the way toward the fulfillment of hope and the joy of eternal life.

Davis is able to put words to the grief process that encourage faith-filled conclusions as a young family copes with cancer. Even in the dark night of the soul one begins to see the light shine through.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, Texas

Marge Jones with E. Grant Jones, Psychology of Missionary Adjustment, Springfield, MO: Logion Press, 1995, 173 pp.

From the title, one might expect a heavy technical book. Instead, this book is highly readable and intensely practical. The premise is that missionary work is truly difficult--not a new thought, but one which is easily forgotten as we set goals and go forth to conquer the world for Christ. The number of missionaries having to leave the place of service prematurely indicates that this "may be the most difficult challenge a person can live."

Jones shows that the cost of adjustment is high, and missionaries need help in order to make the grade. The journey is filled with surprising hazards. Though the pedestal on which one is placed while in preparation may help create perseverance to get to the field, a continuing attitude that one is special may be detrimental in learning to live with nationals. A passive accommodating candidate may create less conflict in training, but may be less successful in coping overseas. Being made aware of facts such as these can help missionaries with adjustment. They can learn to develop alternatives to attitudes of competition, pressure and the "tin cup" image, for example.

Concepts from psychology help with understanding the rupture that occurs when missionaries transfer to new cultures. Drawing on the seasoned insights of other missionary writers, Jones lists the causes of stress, the stages of culture shock or adjustment, and issues that affect one's ability to form new patterns, arriving at her own helpful conclusions. The "language grind" is thoroughly discussed from the struggle with the missionary's "feeling like an idiot" to the listing of reasons why mission boards need to have a flexible approach to language study.

Jones is not afraid to tackle controversial and complicated issues such as bonding. Not ignoring the wholesome contributions to understanding such paradigms have brought, she cautions against a blind commitment to the infant bonding and incarnational models, calling for balance, honesty, and the deep underlying attitudes of servanthood.

Other important issues dealt with are that of unrealized expectations and the long term view, the "goldfish" lifestyle and how mission boards can help, struggles with guilt of various kinds, and the constant threat of conflict with the home office, other missionaries, family members, and national church leadership. Not forgotten are the process of reentry and the satisfaction of perseverance, maturity, and achievement.

It is hard to fault a book so compact and practical, balanced and specific. Had it been written some years ago, a missionary I know could have avoided many pitfalls.

Grace Holland

Levi Keidel, Conflict or Connection: Interpersonal Relationships in Cross-cultural Settings, Wheaton, IL: Evangelical Missions Information Service, 1996, 136 pp.

Probably no subject has ever been more pertinent for the missionary community than that of interpersonal relationships. Missionaries and agencies repeat that their greatest challenge is people getting along with people. Keidel covers relationships

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ranging from that of new missionaries to old, through missionaries relating to national church leaders, to multicultural and multiracial teammates, to the poor, to oppressive governments, to visitors from home, and to mission boards. Relation to one's own work load, marriage stresses, depression, and family separations also come under discussion.

Keidel writes not out of theory but out of his own missionary experience of thirty years and that of his friends. His observations are honest, probing, and wise. "Focusing on tough problems like that of how to give so as not to create dependency bring into focus many current missions issues. If you are looking for a comprehensive systematic study of missionary issues, this is not the book you need, but if you want to be touched and challenged and want to alert others to the potential joys and sorrows of missionary relationships, this book will do you good. Grace Holland

Jim and Janice Walton, Sent to the River God Forgot, Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1995, 180 pp.

Sometimes in the celebration of missionary victory the tedium and struggle are minimized, but Jim and Janice Walton do not glamorize their work in this account of eighteen years spent as Wycliffe Bible translators with the Muinane people in Colombia. The writing style is refreshing in this simple, honest, and humble account of what occurred as two missionaries did what they believed God wanted them to do. A special plus are the constant ties of lessons the Waltons were learning with similar lessons the reader may be needing to learn today. An example of one such lesson is the discovery of the need for an "in-between faith." Many people have starting faith and many help to celebrate a victorious faith, but what is needed is faith to go on and on in the face of every obstacle.

Not expecting miracles, the Waltons describe their wonder as they saw God providentially bring together events to provide the message of the scriptures for this isolated people. Their theology was challenged and their cultural presuppositions were upended. Their understanding of God was enlarged as they listened and learned, worked and waited. The Walton's clarification of their goals as they worked is enlightening. They believed that as both linguists and missionaries they were benefitting the Muinane people, the nation of Colombia, and the international academic community. They clearly illustrate that what destroys cultures is not missions but relentless invasion by the "civilized" world.

Many questions about missionary life are answered for the reader. One can see that personal battles were intense at times, whether the missionary was on the air strip shouting at God, "I want to go home," or was startled awake at night with a persistent voice demanding, "Who are you?" The question of the effect on one's family is answered in the positive responses of the grown children as they look back on their experiences. The question as to whether or not it was worth the struggle is answered in the glimpses of grateful responses from the Muinane as they began to trust Christ and experience release from their binding fears.

The concluding chapter is the most powerful in that it does not describe a glorious celebration when the printed New Testaments are delivered. Rather, the disappointment is intense as the expected excitement is replaced by guarded acceptance



of the books by individuals one by one. The drug lords have invaded the area, and the people are being bribed with food and cassette players, or intimidated by other means. Only faith--a gift to missionaries and to all of us--could end such a story with the words, "but this is not the end." God did not and will not forget the river where the Muinanes live. Missionary candidates, church workers, and supporters alike will profit from reading this book.

Grace Holland

Timothy Yates, Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century, Cambridge: University Press, 1994, 275 pp.

Yates begins this study with a reference to the lack of widespread attention to missiology in Britain and then proceeds to make an excellent contribution to this "science of missions" through his analysis of missions in this century. To do so effectively in a volume of this size is no small aim, but one which, in the judgment of this reader, the author achieved.

Yates' method is to focus on large issues as they developed, finding that the most momentous ones fit roughly into ten-year periods. Mission "as expansion" and mission as "the church of a people" significantly summarize the thinking in the early decades of the century. Then came a twenty-year period of mission appraisal, and the first half of the book comes to a close with a summary of the extensive intellectual preparation and discussions of the Tambaran Conference of 1938, made all the more significant by the spiritual issues of the approaching world war.

In the second half, covering the period of 1950-1990, Yates sees mission conceived of at various stages as "presence and dialogue," as "proclamation, dialogue and liberation," and as "proclamation and church growth." A final attention-holding chapter highlights the most recent decade and its preoccupation with the issues of pluralism and enlightenment.

In the process of highlighting issues, Yates shines reflective light on the great missionary councils and the individuals who helped to shape them. An attractive feature of the book is that a concise summary of the thinking of a given missions leader (such as Christian Keysser, Kendrick Kraemer, Max Warren, Stephen Neill, or Leslie Newbigin) or that of a number of leaders concerning one issue, can be quickly gained by means of the thoroughly prepared index.

One disappointing aspect for American missiologists might be the writer's somewhat excessive criticism of Donald McGavran as a writer and thinker, an assessment not accorded other leaders, even when Yates obviously disagreed with the position taken. Yates does credit McGavran with presenting insights which have stimulated missions thinkers in this age, and defends certain of his ideas against the excesses later attributed to him.

It is refreshing to glimpse a view of missions in the twentieth century through British eyes, to get a somewhat broader picture than others have presented, and to see the lordship of Christ upheld by the writer's choice of points and counterpoints offered by mission leaders midst the many currents of this century.

Grace Holland