

Book Reviews

The Leadership Bible, New International Version (Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1998). 1679 pages, paper, \$24.99.

The NIV Leadership Bible is one in a sea of different “life situation” Bibles that can be purchased from your favourite Christian book retailer. There seems to be such a plethora of these Bibles, each with its own series of notes for the reader’s edification, it is getting to the point where one might roll one’s eyes and ask, “Another one?”

This Bible, which is also available in hard cover, is replete with leadership tips and mini-studies, as well as a “unique home-page study system” which is laid out in three easy steps on the laminated bookmark, which comes with the Bible. One can use this method to engage in studies under the rubrics of personal development, skills, and relationships, with a great variety of sub-topics under each rubric. These studies are designed to last either one or two weeks and can be used in groups or in personal devotions. Among the “home-page” contents are studies in character, integrity, leader qualifications, wisdom, accountability, conflict management, decision making, time management, interpersonal relationships and servant leadership – all issues that matter to people who are in leadership, either in the church or in the world. There are suggested passages for memorization included in each weekly study.

My own experience in following these different studies is that, while they are faithful to the texts they are set with, they tend to apply more to those who are involved in lay leadership, in the church or outside the church. As a pastor, I found some of the applications somewhat pedantic, but that may be why they didn’t call it the “Pastoral Leadership Bible”. Occasionally, I found that the hermeneutics were stretched a bit to come up with the leadership principles that are applied, particularly in the Old Testament. However, if one is prepared to overlook these – and they may merely show a theological bias – the other features of this Bible that foster the application of Christian leadership principles in daily life outshine the parts which one might consider controversial.

Studies of different Bible characters are also available in this Bible. For example, surrounding Genesis 14, there is a brief (12-line) commentary on the life of Melchizedek. The editors comment on what is known biblically about Melchizedek, and close with an application for leaders: “Melchizedek met Abram’s physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Often the best remembered leaders are those who graciously serve the individuals who comprise their team. Melchizedek points us to Jesus not only as a priest and king, but also as a servant leader” (p. 18).

The paperback version is bound surprisingly well, and sits open without a great deal of struggle, except at the front and back. It is somewhat heavy, as these sorts of study Bibles tend to be, but this is necessary because of all the “extra” notes that have been placed in it.

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I would commend this Bible particularly to those who are in leadership positions outside the church. The kind of person who comes to mind is the man or woman who is responsible for making significant decisions in his or her job, and needs to be able to do so with integrity and good ethical practice – something we would wish for anyone in leadership, but especially Christians in the workplace. *The NIV Leadership Bible* is another useful tool in making disciples for Jesus Christ.

Jeffrey F. Loach

Phyllis Trible, Tikva Frymer-Kensky, Pamela J. Milne, and Jane Schaberg. *Feminist Approaches to the Bible*. Edited by Hershel Shanks. Biblical Archaeology Society: Washington, D.C. 1995. 116 pp, paper, \$11.95.

This book contains the collected talks of four feminist biblical scholars presented at a symposium sponsored by the Resident Associate Program, Smithsonian Institution. Each scholar wrote one chapter and the final chapter includes the Q & A session following their presentations. These women represent a wide range of positions regarding the biblical text. Phyllis Trible and Tikva Frymer-Kensky view the Bible as personally valuable while Pamela Milne advocates abandoning scripture as authoritative. All work within a feminist perspective – considering the text and its message through the eyes and experiences of women.

Trible begins the discussion with a brief description of her own journey of being a woman who loved scripture but recognized the patriarchy that permeates the text and the history of its interpretation. She then describes briefly some of her work with Eve and finishes with a discussion of Miriam, Moses' sister. In this work she shows how one can lift out the marginal and suppressed voices in the text and begin to see these women hidden by the confines of patriarchy.

Frymer-Kensky states that feminism has raised the question about the nature of monotheism and the gender message it conveys. How can women embrace a religion when it has been accompanied by messages of unequal gender relationships and male domination in a hierarchy? She begins by describing the role of the male and female gods of the Sumerians and the Babylonians and then considers Israel's religion. In monotheism, God is not a sexual being, and the ordering of the world is no longer a battle between male and female gods. The result, according to Frymer-Kensky, is that the warrant for male domination is removed, and the text does not explain how to control women, but rather refrains from talking about them at all. She points out that even within a still patriarchal text women continue to show up knowing what to do and how to do it.

Milne's opening statement, "The Bible is the single most important sustaining rationale for the oppression of women," is sure to get the reader's attention. While her solution, to abandon the authority of scripture and relegate it to an interesting but inherently flawed book of historical interest, will not sit well with Christians, her chapter is well worth reading. Milne describes the historical efforts by women to bring a woman's perspective to understanding the Bible, focusing on two time periods, 1850-

1920 and then 1970- present. She notes the resistance the early effort faced primarily from other Christians, even those who shared the same social goals of abolition or women's suffrage. She then catalogs the efforts of recent scholarship to redeem the text for women, noting the efforts of Tribble, Mieke Bal, Esther Fuchs, etc. She concludes that it is not simply the past interpretations that are problematic but the text itself. I found her critique of patriarchy and how it works in the biblical text to be well written and clear. For those who wonder why women are angry in the church, this is the chapter to read.

Schaberg outlines 8 areas of feminist interest when considering a text in the New Testament. She then uses these to consider the character of Mary Magdalene. Historical information available in the text, the egalitarianism in the early church, and details about the wider Jewish culture are contrasted with the tradition received about Mary through the centuries. Schaberg points out that the image of Mary as a whore is deeply ingrained in tradition and yet nowhere in the Bible is she directly connected to it. Instead she was very possibly a leader within the early church. Schaberg concludes that it can be changes in politics that govern what is accepted as truth and the willingness to regain this image of Mary as a leader rather than a whore (or to host a symposium on feminist approaches to the Bible) may reflect shifting changes in the relations of power more than a new discovery in biblical studies.

This book lays out the concerns and problems women have with scripture and with past interpretation. It also provides an overview of some of the ways in which feminist scholarship can open up scripture for women. At the same time some of the solutions are equally problematic, but this demonstrates the difficult position of women. Often they feel compelled to choose between the faith of their fathers and their gender. This book is a good overview of the range of feminist scholarship and thinking for those who are willing to listen to the voices of women.

Donna Laird

J. William Whedbee. *The Bible and the Comic Vision*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. xii+315 pp., hardback \$59.95.

To some readers the use of the word "comic" in connection with the Bible may seem odd. Modern readers generally associate comedy with various kinds of entertainment, from subtle humor to the frivolous, even the vulgar and obscene.

In *The Bible and the Comic Vision*, J. William Whedbee seeks to correct this misunderstanding by introducing the reader to the comedic elements in the Bible. (The title is somewhat misleading; Whedbee's focus is exclusively on the Hebrew Bible.) According to Whedbee, "the Bible revels in a profoundly ambivalent laughter that by turns is both mocking and joyous, subversive, and celebrative, and finally a laughter that results in an exuberant and transformative comic vision" (pp. 4-5).

Whedbee describes the "anatomy of comedy" (p. 7) "from four interrelated perspectives: (1) plot-line, (2) characterization of basic types, (3) linguistic and stylistic strategies, and (4) functions and intentions" (p. 7). He makes frequent reference to

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Northrop Frye's image of comedy as a "U-shaped plot." According to Frye, "action sink[s] into deep and often potentially tragic complications, and then suddenly turn[s] upward into a happy ending." This plot "is embedded in the comic vision in Genesis, Exodus, Esther, and especially Job" (p. 7)

Within this comic vision we find "conventional types: buffoons, clowns, fools, simpletons, rogues, and tricksters." Whedbee's reading of the biblical texts identifies these elements in, e.g., the serpent, Jacob and Rebekah, Isaac and Esau, Moses, Pharaoh, even, in some cases, Yahweh!

Comedy characteristically displays certain stylistic habits and strategies: wordplay, puns, parody, hyperbole, redundancy, and repetitiousness. Comedy focuses on "incongruity and irony, highlighting discrepancy, reversal and surprise" (pp. 8f.) In the Bible, as in most other classic literature, comedy is employed toward a greater end. According to Whedbee, in the Bible "comedy perennially takes up arms against the forces that stifle life and laughter, though even here its barbed arrows generally only sting, not kill.... Comedy celebrates the rhythm of life with its times of festivity and joyous renewal, but it must frequently resort to ridicule in order to bring down the arrogant and boastful who block or threaten the free movement of life" (p. 9). "Biblical comedy has the power both to subvert and transform political, social and religious structures" (p. 11).

The book is divided into two parts. In Part I (The Genesis of Comedy – The Comedy of Genesis) Whedbee examines Genesis 1-11 ("The Comedy of creation" [pp. 19-63]) and Genesis 12-50 ("Domestic comedy in the household of faith: Israel's fathers and mothers as comic figures" [pp. 64-126]). Part II ("Generating Comedy: Biblical Texts and the Drive to Comic Regeneration") treats, in respective chapters, Exodus and Esther ("two comedies of deliverance"), Jonah ("Jonah as joke: a comedy of contradiction, caricature, and compassion"), Job ("creation, chaos, and carnival"), and the Song of Songs. The book concludes with a chapter entitled "Towards a comprehensive view of biblical comedy" (pp. 278-288).

Many of the "comedic aspects" of Genesis which Whedbee notes (wordplays, puns, Jacob [the "Trickster"], etc.) are well known. However, as Whedbee points out, these features 'energize the narrative and often form climactic "punch-lines," emerging as little jokes embedded in linguistic play, jokes that convey forcefully the humor and wit of Israel's ancient story-tellers' (p. 62). The strength of Whedbee's work is his close reading of the texts and his ability to drive the reader back to the texts themselves. In that regard I found many of Whedbee's readings to be suggestive, particularly his reading of Job and of Jonah.

In his conclusion (pp. 278-288) Whedbee highlights the further subversive use of biblical materials in Jewish tradition, how Jonah and Esther, for example, were utilized by the rabbis as readings in the great festivals of Yom Kippur and Purim, respectively.

Some readers may be put off by several of Whedbee's suggestions regarding the depiction of Yahweh as a character in the stories. Thus, in summarizing his reading of Genesis, Whedbee writes, "Yahweh emerges as a rather capricious, whimsical deity who is satirized as a sometimes unthinking tyrant who can be both life-giving and death-

dealing" (p. 61). "[E]ven God himself is also parodied [in Exodus] as a capricious, whimsical deity who delights in his own power and glory, gloating over the defeat of any and all rivals, even when it means destruction and death" (p. 158). In his reading of Job, Whedbee notes that the God of the poetic portions "may still have the power to determine a person's destiny, but already the question is implicit whether this kind of God is still righteous and trustworthy" (p. 229). However, it is precisely the struggle with this question that is at the heart of the book of Job.

Unfortunately, there are several printing errors in this book. A number of Hebrew terms are incorrectly transliterated (pp. 76, 78, 81, 82, 95, 96, 207). On page 234 Job 16:3 should read "what moves you" rather than "what move you." In footnote 13 on page 266, Augsburg is incorrectly spelled Augsburg (also in the bibliographic entry under "Murphy, Roland E"). There are also a number of errors in the bibliography. Commentary series are repeatedly set in italics. A number of entries of articles lack page numbers (e.g., Ackerman, James; Turner, L. A.). These errors do not, however, seriously affect the importance of this book. It ought to be read and wrestled with by every student of the Bible.

David M. Phillips, Galion, Ohio

The NIV Study Bible Library on CD-ROM (32-bit edition, version 2.6). Published by Zondervan Interactive (www.zondervan.com). Includes 1 CD-ROM and a Reference Software User's Guide of several hundred pages. \$129.97.

This piece of silicon magic contains a virtual treasure trove of reference material that would take up far too much shelf space in my study were I to buy each volume separately. On one CD, you get the complete text of the New International Version (including footnotes), an Anglicized Greek New Testament, the King James Version, the New American Standard Bible, the NIV Study Bible notes, the NIV Bible Dictionary, Captions of Maps and Cities, Nave's Topical Bible, the Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties, the Expository Dictionary, the NIV Bible Commentary, the New Revised Standard Version (including footnotes), some "Inspirational Readings" (Bible passages for particular feelings and occasions), and a section of verse notes for the user to create. It will link to your word processor if you ask it nicely. On top of all this, there is an Atlas with exceptional browse features (though toggling back and forth between them proved challenging). As if that were not enough, also included with this CD is the STEP reader, which is a tremendous search tool, and is used quite commonly among different kinds of Bible study software.

The program begins with four windows for the NIV, NIV Bible Commentary, Nave's Topical Bible, and the NIV Bible Dictionary, though it can be set up to open any of the supplied programs. Within these windows are numerous text links, and each window knows what the other is doing – e.g., when you are scrolling through the NIV Bible Commentary, the NIV text window changes verses as you scroll through the commentary. I loaded it onto both my home computer (an ancient Pentium I33) and my office computer (a still-rather-long-in-the-tooth Pentium II 433). Loading time only

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varied by a minute, as even the slower computer took only six minutes to do a "typical installation", which included all books, the Atlas and the STEP reader. This allows one to use most of the programs without needing to put the CD-ROM into the drive every time. The exception, I found, was the STEP reader, which requires the CD to be inserted with each use.

I happen to own the Expositors' Bible Commentary on CD-ROM, also produced by Zondervan Interactive, which uses exactly the same interface. What I found puzzling was that I could not make the two programs talk to each other. It had been installed well before the NIV Bible Study Library, with typical installation; I would have thought that the new program would have recognized the previously-installed one, and set things up so that the two could interact. But alas, I must open yet another program to do that!

This program comes with a sixty-day money-back guarantee, and claims to run with Windows 3.1 or Windows 95. I run it at home with Windows 95 and at the office with Windows 98, with no differences. It requires a Windows-supported video card and printer, and a bare minimum of 4 MB of hard disk space. A complete installation will require 45 MB.

The User's Guide is set up in different sections in a user-friendly manner. As with most computer programs, however, I found I caught on more quickly to the various features of the program just by fiddling around and using it. I would recommend this software investment for students, pastors, scholars, and perhaps especially those who are leading small groups for Bible study.

Jeffrey F. Loach

Some Biblical Studies Computer Resources

It is impossible to keep up with the constant stream of material which is being made available electronically for those who wish to study the Bible. The task is impossible, but the effort to review at least some of the resources is rewarding.

The Zondervan Corporation of Grand Rapids has been active in producing a number of their volumes electronically through their imprint "Zondervan Interactive." A product which will be very useful for teachers and preachers is *Zondervan Theological Dictionaries for Windows* (2002; \$199.88). It contains the complete text of both the *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, edited by Willem van Gemeren, and of the *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, edited by Colin Brown, as well as a small Bible atlas. People have found both of these two dictionaries indispensable in their print versions, and now the electronic versions are even more so, as well as being easier to use. This is due to the added value of the computer for such things as searches and cutting and pasting into word processing documents. The program opens with three windows containing *NIDOTTE*, *NIDNTT*, and the NIV text. There are active hyperlinks in each dictionary which will pull up the scripture passage referred to if it is clicked. Searches are available for all 3 resources, with the search

taking place in the active resource. They can be done through a pop-down menu, or through the use of the right mouse button.

This is an economical way to acquire the two dictionaries. They can be purchased separately. *NIDOTTE* is selling for \$199.99 for the print version and \$129.99 for the individual electronic version (\$149.99 for Macintosh), while *NIDNTT* is \$169.99 in print and \$119.99 for either Mac or Windows.

The same ease of use has been provided for another Zondervan product, the electronic version of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, edited by Frank E. Gaebelein. These volumes have been well-received since they started to appear in print in 1976, and their life-span will be increased through this electronic means. They also provide substantial savings on CD, available at \$199.99 for Windows and Mac, compared to \$454.92 for the print versions of both the OT and NT volumes. Students and pastors will find all of these resources, as well as others produced by Zondervan, valuable on their home or office computer.

Another, different kind of resource has been made available by Todd Bolen, professor at the Israel Bible Extension (IBEX) campus of The Master's College. He has produced an 8-CD set entitled "Pictorial Library of Bible Lands", which is available through his web site (www.bibleplaces.com). He has separate CDs covering: Galilee and the north; Samaria and the center; Jerusalem; Judah and the south; Jordan; Egypt; Turkey (Paul's travels and the churches of Revelation); and Greece and Rome. There is also a supplementary CD of aerial shots of Judah and Jerusalem. The material is available for \$30 per CD, or \$195 for the set of 8. Unlike many programs, these CD's are not self-extracting, but the pictures can be viewed through a web browser, and many of them are available in the form of Powerpoint presentations. The quality of most of the pictures is good, though some of the captions are difficult to read when their letters and the background shot do not provide sufficient contrast. This kind of material can put flesh-and-bones on what can often be just dry pen-and-ink. They will find a useful place in the classroom, the study, and even in the pulpit.

David W. Baker

Bruce M. Metzger, *The Bible in Translation: Ancient and English Versions*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001. 200 pp., paper, \$14.99.

Felicitous is an appropriate description of this flowing work by this world renowned biblical scholar and author. It reads with smooth facility that is fascinating in its affair with the translation history of the Bible. While the title sounds mundane, one will find the reading absorbing. In whole or in part, the Bible has been translated into over 2,000 languages and dialects. Dr. Metzger outlines the history of Bible translation in a way that will intrigue the reader. Included in this work is the captivating and careful analysis of more than fifty versions of the Bible.

Dr. Metzger was the George L. Collard Professor of New Testament Language and Literature, Emeritus, at Princeton Theological Seminary. In addition to chairing the NRSV translation committee, he has participated in two other translation projects plus

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consulted on numerous others. He is a recognized expert in ancient biblical manuscripts and is eminently qualified as author of this work.

The Bible in Translation is a captivating survey beginning with the earliest translation of the Old and New Testaments. Included for each version is an engaging relating of origin, production, objectives, characteristics and strengths. The work flows from the knowledge, research and personal experience of the author.

Part I, "The Ancient Versions," begins with the Septuagint and includes Jewish Targums, Syriac, Latin Coptic, Gothic, Armenian, Georgian, Ethiopic, Arabic, Sogdian, Slavonic and Nubian Versions. English versions receive 68% of the page space of the book. Part II includes the treatment of the Bibles of Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, Matthew, Taverner, Great, Becke, Geneva, Bishop, Rheims-Douay, King James, Harwood's N. T., Thomson, Noah Webster, Julia E. Smith, British Revised, American Standard, New English, New International, three Jewish translations, Good News, Reader's Digest, Contemporary English. There is also a section on paraphrases of the Bible including Henry Hammond's (1653), Philip Doddridge, F.F. Bruce, J.B. Phillips, Kenneth Taylor's L.B. and the N.L.B. and Peterson's *The Message*. Plus there is a treatment of the major version revisions.

While not as comprehensive as some, this is truly an exciting history of the translation of the Bible. It reads like a novel, captivating the interest of the reader from the first page to the end. Filled with historical data, it is an engaging experience for anyone interested in the history of ancient and English versions of the Bible.

Richard Allison

Allen P. Ross. *Introducing Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001. 565 pages, \$39.99.

In this volume, Allen P. Ross has provided us with a thorough teaching grammar for beginning Hebrew students. Each aspect of grammar and syntax is clearly presented with an adequate amount of examples. He provides a balance of linguistic and philological perspectives, combining age-old methods of language learning with more modern methods based on recent discoveries in pedagogy and linguistic theory. In his explanations, he does not shy away from using more technical, linguistic terminology. However, he does define each potentially unfamiliar term as it comes up. This makes his book an excellent grammar for students who have had no prior language experience, yet it is not too simple for those who have.

Ross's textbook is divided into four sections. The first, "Signs and Sounds," devotes six entire lessons to the alphabet and pronunciation. His detailed pronunciation guide and transliteration chart are very helpful. In the second and longest section, "Forms and Meanings," Ross systematically presents basic Hebrew grammar, covering everything from nouns to all the major verb stems and forms. Some basic syntax is introduced in this section as well. He includes exercises at the end of each lesson that

require the student to translate from Hebrew to English and, through lesson 34, from English to Hebrew.

“Texts and Contexts” is the title of the third section, where the grammar is applied and syntax becomes a more prominent focus. This section takes a more inductive approach to the teaching of Hebrew than the previous section. In each chapter, Ross presents any pertinent syntactical information and then guides the student, verse by verse, through a longer passage from Genesis. This is to help the student synthesize the material already learned and process any new information. A review of related grammar and syntax is then presented at the end of each chapter. Pertinent aspects of the Masorah and the critical apparatus of *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) are introduced in this section as well. The last section of Ross’s grammar, “Study Aids,” includes 50 pages of lesson reviews, where an outline of each chapter is given. Also included in this section are a Hebrew-English and an English-Hebrew Glossary, verb paradigms, and charts of the Masoretic accents of the Hebrew Bible.

Ross has included in this textbook a number of features that make it unique and “user friendly.” First of all, the type face is exceptionally clear. This can often be stumbling block when the student is working with symbols he/she has never encountered before. Also, the vocabulary in each lesson is presented with more than the usual one- or two-word definition. Ross connects many of his vocabulary words with cognates or with a familiar usage in Modern Hebrew/Judaism. This gives the student memory aids and helps with understanding the broader meaning of the word. Ross also gives two very helpful review sections. In these, he presents a “mechanical parsing method” for regular verbs (in the first review) and for irregular verbs (in the second). It is a step-by-step tool designed to help the beginning Hebrew student learn how to recognize and parse verbs in their various forms. It is good way of helping the student organize the information he/she has just learned and apply it systematically.

While Ross’s grammar is thorough, clear, and up-to-date, it does have a few drawbacks. First of all, his translation exercises do not include Biblical passages until lesson 25. This can be rather discouraging to the beginning student, not to mention feeling artificial and contrived. Another drawback is the occasional “overstuffed” lesson. In most of his lessons, Ross gives enough new grammar to be challenging but not overwhelming. However, in just a handful of these lessons, he tries to present too much new information, causing frustration for the teacher and/or the student.

Overall, Ross’s grammar is well-written, up-to-date, and a welcome addition to the teaching of Biblical Hebrew. He has combined solid pedagogical techniques with a thorough presentation of grammar and syntax to give us a good, comprehensive teaching text for beginning Hebrew students.

Jennifer Quast, Hebrew Union College

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David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis-Malachi*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999. 330 pp., \$34.99.

Many Christians make every effort to understand what they read in the Bible. We look for any key or help that will give us the upper hand in understanding the content and even the structure of what we read. Dr. Dorsey has compiled a wonderful and fairly concise resource (considering the range of the subject) regarding the Old Testament that is a necessary resource for any pastor, scholar, Bible student, or even the ambitious lay person.

Dorsey, through more than a decade of research and notes, has compiled for the English language scholar a wonderful method to help any reader of the Bible to identify and better understand the relationship between the meanings and the messages of the Old Testament books. Using internal observations of literary structure, Dorsey helps the reader understand that the original authors of the Old Testament had both intent and methodology in the presentation of their messages.

Dorsey breaks down each book of the Old Testament into understandable messages by demonstrating the structure the author used to construct his message. Faced with analyzing the literary structure of an oral culture is an enormous task, one with took many years and meticulous research. *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament* has broken the subject into seven sections, with each section fluidly interacting with the other sections. The seven sections are: an introduction, the Law of Moses, the historical books, the poetic books, the major prophets, the minor prophets, and a solid conclusion with some helpful observations and practical applications of the book.

Dorsey's abundant use of sources and notes are very helpful to the reader for understanding the book better as well as understanding how he arrived at his conclusions. His passion for understanding his subject is evident through the helpful footnotes and comments.

In short, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament* is a solid resource for any pastor, helping to preach sermons that communicate more clearly the author's message; for the missionary it will provide encouragement and clarity to God's desires for all people, everywhere; for the lay person it will provide training and clarity to the message of the Bible; for the scholar it will be helpful for understanding the Old Testament in a fresh and reviving way.

Bradley E. Kittle

Victor P. Hamilton, *Handbook on the Historical Books*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001. 557 pp., hardback, \$32.99.

Victor Hamilton's *Handbook on the Historical Books* is a companion volume to his previous *Handbook on the Pentateuch*, and continues his careful, scholarly, yet highly readable examination of the biblical text. While written with the Bible College reader in mind, serious lay students will also find his book useful for expanding their

understanding of the historical books. Beginning with Joshua and ending with Esther, Hamilton examines the major issues and the relevant questions regarding the text, and takes a balanced view of the historical data. While he does not avoid examining some of the debated issues regarding the historicity of the text, Hamilton does not seek to make this issue a primary one, and thus treats only briefly such issues as the debate over the timing of the conquest of Jericho.

While the author treats the text as actual history, he does not end the discussion there. Hamilton also examines the text for theological themes, and for the part they play in ancient Jewish life – the people of Israel cannot be understood apart from their history.

The author follows closely with the biblical text and gives the reader an understanding of the broad strokes of the history presented there, while at the same time not getting lost in minute details which would overwhelm the reader. This is not to say that the material is not presented in a scholarly way; quite the contrary. The material is meticulously examined to express the relevancy and meaning of the text, yet remaining clear and necessarily concise as befits a book of this type. For those who wish to study the material in more depth bibliographies are presented at the end of each chapter and represent an excellent breadth of scholarship for each historical book.

Perhaps most refreshing in this handbook is the author's own commentary on various issues regarding the text. Hamilton has taught for thirty years at Asbury College, and this volume reflects his skills as a teacher, both as a theologian and as a biblical studies scholar. As a teacher of the historical books myself I found much that Hamilton wrote to be an excellent analysis of the text, and his explanation of the "how's" and "why's" of the biblical narrative is clear and insightful. Some of the connections made by the author show quite a depth of understanding between various Old Testament texts, and he makes ample use of comparison charts and flowcharts to track these connections. The result is a greater sense of connectedness to both the history and the theology of the Old Testament, and to the continuity of God's dealings with His people.

Perhaps best of all, it is an enjoyable read from start to finish as the author has crafted his own narrative style around the biblical text such that the continuity of the history does not get lost in the individual treatments of the historical books. This volume belongs in the library of every person who seeks to understand the themes and significance of Israel's early history.

Robert Gulley, Cincinnati Bible College and Seminary

Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable & Relevant?* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001. 239 pp., \$13.00.

Are you looking for a refreshing book with a relevant and informed message dealing with contemporary issues surrounding the Old Testament canon? If you are like me, filled with too much information and lacking mental organization at times, Walter Kaiser, Jr.'s evaluation of the Old Testament is a must for your library. Kaiser has taken complex and dynamic information and given us his thoughts concerning the authority and reliability of the Old Testament gleaned from his research and experience.

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As with any argument or discussion, a good starting point can be the only foundation for a book to deal with any subject with integrity and responsibility. Kaiser whets the appetite of the reader by posing a simple question in the introduction of his book, "Does it matter"? Though simple, this question proves to be saturated with meaning as the book develops. As pastors, scholars, lay persons, and even new believers, the Christian is faced with intelligent questions by the unsaved throughout the world. Kaiser's starting point acknowledges this issue and allows the reader to know that he will address this issue.

Divided into four sections, the book looks at the Old Testament as if one were looking at the top of a pyramid from each of the four corners; each section still is able to see the top, but the top is not built upon any individual corner alone. The four sections Kaiser uses to address his topic are: the reliability of the Old Testament Canon and text, the reliability of the history of the Old Testament, the reliability of the message of the Old Testament, and the relevance of the message of the Old Testament for today's Christians.

The Old Testament Documents contains a responsible amount of citations, giving the reader an understanding that Kaiser understands his information. Not only does Kaiser use many sources, but he uses a good spectrum of sources, those sources whom he is critiquing as well as those scholars who side with his argument. In addition, Kaiser uses sources that are modern as well as some that are more seasoned with time. There is also a glossary of terms used, making a convenient reference.

In the midst of the many positive aspects of the book there are a few elements of the book that are not as well developed as they could be. For example, the most contemporary resource that Kaiser noted was from 1997; with a publishing date of 2001, many things can change in four years in the area of archeology leading to a better understanding of the Bible. Another example of a lesser aspect of the book is the brief focus on the documentary hypothesis. Not only is this argument against the theory, it is underdeveloped. When reading this section I had a feeling that Kaiser disagreed with this theory and in some sense bordered on the edge of forming a "straw man" against the theory.

However, with the exception of a few minor points, *The Old Testament Documents* is a good resource. Dealing with issues such as archaeology, the documentary hypothesis, the Dead Sea scrolls, the development of the Old Testament Canon, the importance of trusting the Old Testament, as well as many other important issues, Kaiser wraps the confusing theories surrounding the Old Testament into a nice package that will be a wonderful help for anyone seeking to make sense of all the scholarship, the misunderstandings and any supposed contradictions of the Old Testament. *The Old Testament Documents* will be a great addition to any ambitious layperson's, pastor's, missionary's, or scholar's library.

Bradley E. Kittle

Alec Motyer. *The Story of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001. 191 pages. \$16.99

In this work, Motyer gives us a companion volume to John Stott's *Men with a Message*, which was revised by his son, Stephen Motyer, and renamed *The Story of the New Testament*. Like the first volume, this work attempts to show us the content of the scriptures through the eyes of its authors. Unfortunately, this is much more difficult with the Old Testament. While Stott can devote a chapter to each human author of the New Testament, Motyer must work with issues of Mosaic authorship in the Pentateuch, anonymity in the Historical Books, and obscurity in the Prophets of the Old Testament. Because of these difficulties, some of the unique perspective that characterizes the first volume has been lost.

In spite of these challenges, the present work effectively communicates the truth of the Old Testament in a clear and attractive way. Motyer's first chapter is entitled "Starting with Jesus," which sets a strong evangelical tone for the entire book. He then tackles the Old Testament section by section, deftly handling the major theological issues of each.

Like *The Story of the New Testament*, this is intended as an introductory text, and would be useful in an adult Sunday school class or as a high school text. In order to relate to such an audience, Motyer has carefully explained some of the more basic terms in the Old Testament, such as covenant and atonement. His writing style is direct, thoughtful, and insightful. The numerous photographs, maps, charts, and timelines are quite useful and add color and interest. Motyer also points out a number of patterns in the Old Testament writings that might be missed by the average reader. At times these patterns are oversimplifications, but they are effective in introducing ideas that may be new to the audience.

Like Stott, Motyer does not include many of the academic theories of Old Testament scholarship into the body of his text. However, Motyer does place some of these theories, such as Wellhausen's documentary hypothesis, into boxed features. Unfortunately, the books of Deuteronomy, Ruth, and Chronicles are also relegated to such boxed features.

Overall, this would be a great place for a student of the Old Testament to begin.

Jennifer Quast

Frank T. Seekins, *Hebrew Word Pictures*. Phoenix, AZ: Living Word Pictures Inc., 1994. 116 p.

Seekins has produced a simple and attractively illustrated history of the Hebrew alphabet. A child can read it with ease. Each letter is traced to its most likely pictographic origin. A sequence of scripts follows, illustrating metamorphosis through the centuries.

A second and more fundamental aim is more dubious. Seekins assumes that because solitary Hebrew letters have names (the first letter is called *aleph*, the sixth is

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vav), and because these names can with some degree of confidence be traced to a meaning (*aleph* corresponds to "ox", *vav* may mean "nail"), therefore one may infer that words spelled with these letters subsume the meaning of constituent letters. Thus *av* (spelled *aleph-vav*) with its standard translation "desire" is understood by Seekins as conveying that "lust is the strong [ox-like] nail (it binds you to itself)," (p. 34).

For an initially non-phonetic pictographic script such as Chinese with its thousands of characters, this line of reasoning can often prove reliable. Chinese words compounded of multiple characters may have been generated because of the need to convey meaning represented best by the combined meanings of individual characters (cf. Japanese script, descended from Chinese, where a single tree pictograph = "tree" or "wood", two trees compounded = "grove", three trees compounded = "forest"). It is unwise to presume the same logic holds for a phonetic script such as Hebrew with its sparse cluster of symbols (only 22 consonants).

Paul Overland

Katherine Doob Sakenfeld. *Just Wives? Stories of Power and Survival in the Old Testament & Today*. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville. 2003. 136 pp, paper, \$14.95.

Sakenfeld has created a thoughtful, well-written book useful for small groups. Each of six chapters begins with a discussion of a biblical wife (or wives) and then considers them from the perspective of contemporary women from a variety of cultures. Current issues such as survival, cultural differences, or resistance to injustice are raised and she shows how these stories can speak to these concerns. Sakenfeld makes use of recent literary scholarship on the Old Testament to look closely at the stories and raises some of the more disturbing questions about the narratives (Why would God send Hagar back to live with a harsh, jealous, Sarah? Is the relationship between Hoesca and Gomer abusive [chapter 2:3-13], and does God support that?). She also questions the traditional understandings of these women by noting the cultural norms or societal rules under which they lived (Ruth or Esther), or noting the gaps in the narrative that can allow a variety of interpretations (Bathsheba or Michal), or by bringing into the conversation contemporary sensibilities about justice and power (Gomer). Sakenfeld's goal is to present the struggles of these women and consider how they speak to the social situations of people (especially women) today. She then closes each chapter with six or seven questions for group discussion.

Just Wives? demonstrates much of what is good about post-modern thinking. Reading a biblical account through the eyes of people with vastly different life experiences often introduces questions and applications not readily apparent to others. Sakenfeld quotes African American women who have found Hagar to be a heroine as she survives in a situation where she lacks power and privilege. She recounts the forced prostitution of young girls in Thailand and elsewhere for economic survival as a background for the discussion of Ruth. She brings the perspective of women who have

been battered by a husband to the book of Hosea. These women will find her treatment of Gomer and the book of Hosea to be redemptive as she evaluates the use of marriage as a metaphor for God's relationship with his people. This book is not a thorough treatment of these wives, but many of the more significant issues with the biblical text and contemporary interpretation are raised in a clear and insightful way and the discussions that can arise from this are sure to be fruitful.

Donna Laird

Ronald A. Simkins and Stephen L. Cook, et al, "The Social World of the Hebrew Bible: Twenty-Five Years of the Social Sciences in the Academy." *Semeia* 87. Atlanta: The Society of Biblical Literature, 1999. 265pp. \$19.95, soft back.

Do you desire to explore the social world of the Hebrew Bible? If so, then this is the book for you. *Semeia* is a journal produced by the Society of Biblical Literature that is dedicated to the introduction, exploration, and implementation of new topics and methods of biblical criticism. This particular volume of *Semeia* celebrates the twenty-fifth anniversary of the employment of the social sciences within biblical studies. Essays reflect the past, present, and future of the relationship between the various social scientific approaches and biblical studies.

Essay topics and authors include: "Ancient Perceptions of Space/ Perceptions of Ancient Space" by James W. Flanagan; "In the Shadow of Cain" by Paula M. McNutt; "The Gift in Ancient Israel" by Victor H. Matthews; "Whose Sour Grapes? The Addressees of Isaiah 5:1-7 in the Light of political Economy" by Ronald A. Simkins; "The Lineage Roots of Hosea's Yahwism" by Stephen L. Cook; "To Shame or Not to Shame: Sexuality in the Mediterranean Diaspora" by Susan A. Brayford; "Gender, Class, and the Social Scientific Study of Genesis 2-3" by Gale A. Yee; "Ideology, Pierre Bourdieu's *Doxa*, and the Hebrew Bible" by Jacques Berlinerblau; and "Confronting Redundancy as Middle Manager and Wife: The Feisty Woman of Genesis 39" by Heather A. McKay.

Essays highlight the unique perspectives and insights that the social sciences have had, and indeed still do have, on interpretations of the biblical text. A number of essays reflect ideas and interests of the past, such as patronage and ideology, while others reflect current trends, such as gender and spatiality. More specific examples of the use of the anthropological models and social-scientific criticisms in this volume include the following: In "The Lineage Roots of Hosea's Yahwism" (p.145), Stephen L. Cook employs ethnographic studies from several African groups. The model Cook derives from this ethnographic study is then applied to an exegetical analysis of two passages in the book of Hosea (5:8-6:6 and 1:2-2:1). A second example is Heather A. McKay's essay "Confronting Redundancy as Middle Manager and Wife: The Feisty Woman of Genesis 39 (p.215)." In this essay McKay utilizes not only sociological and anthropological approaches to study the narrative and woman of Genesis 39, but incorporates reader-response criticism and management theory, as well.

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The social sciences have had more of an impact on biblical studies than anyone could have possibly imagined and to neglect its contributions would be a discredit to the discipline. Therefore, it is imperative that libraries begin to expand their biblical criticism sections to include texts that utilize social scientific approaches. On the whole, these essays offer perceptive and insightful information and would be a welcome addition to any biblical criticism library.

Cynthia Shafer-Elliott

Marti J. Steussey, *David: Biblical Portraits of Power*. Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999. Xii + 251 pp., hardcover, \$34.95..

The subtitle of this book is quite deliberate. Steussey does not pursue a "single unified narrative" (p. 4) of David, precisely because no such narrative exists in the Old Testament. Instead, she examines three major literary portraits of David in the Hebrew Bible: David according to the "primary history" (the Books of Samuel), David according to Chronicles, and David according to the Psalms. She concludes with a brief look (2 pages!) at David in the rest of the Old Testament.

This study is intended to help the reader view these various presentations and appreciate their distinctive features. Steussey keeps readers in the text and encourages them to listen. She is not afraid of the hard questions and, rightly, refuses any attempt at harmonization of the conflicting details and presentations. This is evident especially in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 ("Samuel's David as Innocent and Attractive Hero," "Reading David's Heart," and "David's Deeds and Words"). To what extent may it be said that David was "a man after God's own heart"? As Steussey concludes, "Our glimpses of David's heart have shown us a man more worldly-wise, more fallible, and considerably less pious than our first overview [chapter 4] of Samuel led us to expect. What has been lost in admirability, however, has been gained in believability. David's heart looks remarkably like anyone else's" (p. 70).

The whole of chapter 6, then, consists of "a more suspicious reading of other details of Samuel's David story" (p. 71). Steussey touches on more than thirty "problematic statements" and what they may reveal about the man David.

A further comparison (chapter 7) of David and Saul offers "little support for the common perception that Saul is a miserable sinner who deserves his fate, whereas David is an innocent and virtuous hero with just enough peccadilloes to verify his humanity" (p. 85). These are troubling details, not easily explained. Steussey suggests that God's approval of David was "not for David's sake, but Israel's" (p. 88). More troubling, perhaps, to some readers, is the issue of God's "consistency and justice" (see, e.g., pp. 88-91). Steussey does offer the following: "Our questions about David reflect back onto the God who supports him. How wonderful that God would embrace so fallible a human! How terrifying that divine power might flow in such a flawed channel!" (p. 91).

The analysis of the portrait of David in Chronicles (pp. 99-130) highlights a number of well-known aspects. Comparing this portrait to a stained-glass window, Steussey suggests that Chronicles “stylizes [David] in bright clear colors” (p. 99). So, for example, a reading of Nathan’s temple oracle “suggests that God’s answer is finally ‘yes’ rather than ‘no’ to David’s proposal” (p. 111). Thus we find the Chronicler’s emphasis on David’s role in preparing for the construction of the temple.

Steussey’s presentation of the portrait of David found in the Psalms is divided into four parts: “The Psalter: An Overview,” “Psalms Speaking about David,” “The Psalms of David,” and “David and the Book of Psalms.” We see in this presentation how the figure is utilized in the Psalter. The “psalms of David hint at a character somewhat like the one we saw in Samuel—passionate and enmeshed in conflict” (p. 185).

As we move through the books of the Psalter, this “David”—now symbolic of the royal dynasty—moves from naïve confidence in his own righteousness and God’s support through experiences of defeat and finally the dynasty’s fall, emerging somewhat chastened (Book 4) and aware that the promises of the royal covenant are subordinate to the demands of the Mosaic one. His voice becomes progressively less distinct from the people’s as he leads them in worship in the restored community. As symbolic voice of a congregation united in joyful worship, this final “David” of the Psalter resembles the worship-organizing king we met in Chronicles (p. 186).

Readers looking for an historical, archaeological study of David will be disappointed with this work. Readers interested in how David is presented by these various biblical writers will read this work with appreciation. I found that even when I disagreed with Steussey I nevertheless came away with a greater desire to understand the texts and their portraits of David.

David M. Phillips

Martha Lynn Wade. *Consistency of Translation Techniques in the Tabernacle Accounts of Exodus in the Old Greek*. Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series 49. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2003. xiii + 280 pp., hardcover, \$99.00.

Wade is to be commended for even attempting to tackle this complicated and meticulous task. Wade, a Bible translator in Papua New Guinea, began this work as her doctoral dissertation at Union-PSCE. Her first chapter is an “Introduction” (1-13) where she sets out her purpose: “to examine the translation techniques in the tabernacle accounts of the Old Greek” (1). She is particularly concerned with the contradictory claims about the number of translators responsible for these sections. Methodologically, she examines the translation “with respect to choice of lexical equivalents, translation of grammatical structures, and accuracy in communicating equivalent information” (1). Generally, Wade argues that the first translation account is fairly consistent, while the second is not (3-4). She also surveys the various views of scholars from the mid 19th century to present on the number of translators, *Vorlagen*, and other issues surrounding

the discrepancy (4-9). Next, she seeks to use computer aided analysis and objective observations mostly by use of Accordance software (10-11). Ultimately, Wade hopes that, "This book will contribute to the text critical study of the tabernacle accounts by providing a basis for discussion of the development and translation of the text" (9).

Rather than blindly presuming the MT was behind the Greek, Wade considers which "Hebrew *Vorlage*" (chapter 2, pp. 14-55) the translators used. Textual variants in the Qumran scrolls, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the Masoretic text are examined to identify Hebrew textual variants that might be a possible source of translation differences. Wade shows that the Samaritan Pentateuch betrays changes from the MT that are interpretative in nature. Similar interpretations of ambiguous MT texts, she contends, are likewise found in the Greek. Moreover, she argues that the *Vorlage* of the Greek was more like the text of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

In her next chapter, Wade considers "Lexical Consistency" (chapter 3, pp. 56-106) and looks to the word usage between the two accounts which has been major claim that there were a number of translators. Using Accordance Bible software, Wade has analyzed the "percentage of nouns and verbs that are rendered by one lexical equivalent in contrast to those that are rendered by more than one lexical equivalent" (57). Key is that "it is a context-sensitive translation with respect to the choice of lexical equivalents" (58). This is an important statement for Wade, for it reveals that accuracy for her lies in the conveyance of meaning rather than the employment of identical terms. Words used in the second account which are not the same as that of the first, but within an adequate semantic range of that in the first, permit her to consider the second an "accurate" translation.

Turning from lexicographical considerations, Wade next turns to the issue of the "Grammatical Consistency" (chapter 4, pp. 107-148) of the translators. Here she suggests that within a "free translation," such as the Greek of Exodus, the "choice of translation equivalents for grammatical structures is one of the indicators of a difference in the translator's interpretations of the text" (146). Moreover, grammatical variations are frequently the product of lexical choices made by the translator.

Wade's last substantive chapter deals with the issue of "Accuracy" (chapter 5, pp. 149-232). Here she classifies accuracies which "reflect a *Vorlage* similar to" the Samaritan Pentateuch, "reflect a difference in the status of meaning," and reflect a "difference in the quantity of meaning." Variants in readings must be considered in their respective contexts. Wade, for whom the Greek's *Vorlage* is generally unknown, defines accuracy as "the degree to which the G communicates the same meaning as the M" (12-13).

Wade's "Conclusion" (chapter 6, pp. 233-45), largely summarizes chapters 2-5 and evaluates previous hypotheses with respect to the unity of the core and the remainder of the second tabernacle account, the unity of the first and second accounts, and the nature of the translation. She concludes by briefly sketching a hypothetical sociological setting that would account for the results produced her examination of the tabernacle accounts of Greek Exodus. The most significant contribution of this study is that she

concludes that a second translator likely produced the second tabernacle account of the G Exodus using the translation of the first tabernacle account as a point of reference" (13).

The book contains three appendices: Appendix A ("Classification of Minuses in the Second Account," p. 246), Appendix B ("Comparison of some Parallel Passages," pp. 247-249), and Appendix C ("Construction and Assembly of the Breastpiece," p. 250). It contains a comprehensive Bibliography (pp. 251-60) and several Indexes (261-80), including an index of OT passages (261-72), Greek words (272-77) and Hebrew words (277-80), as well as 18 Tables.

The book could have been improved with a subject index of grammatical and syntactical features discussed. Moreover, I question whether Wade has really solved the problems of the tabernacle translations or simply reworded the question. Not all the problems in these accounts are due to grammatical or lexicographical variations. Moreover, there are key terms, such as *katapetasma*, *kalumma*, *katakalumma*, *parapetasma*, and various other curtain and veil language which occur with significant variation in the second account for which she has provided less than adequate account. Indeed, the translator has at times seems to have created words!

Nevertheless, Wade's is a valuable contribution to the discussion for at least three reasons: First, she provides a mass of detailed, computer-aided analysis combined with linguistic know-how that makes hers a valuable reference tool. Second, no significant work has been done on this subject since Anneli Aejmelaeus, "Septuagintal Translation Techniques – A Solution to the Problem of the Tabernacle Account," Pages 381-402 in *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings* (Ed. G. J. Brooke and B. Lindars; Septuagint and Cognate Studies 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), and before that D. W. Gooding, *The Account of the Tabernacle: Translation and Textual Problems of the Greek Exodus* (Cambridge: University Press, 1959). Finally, Wade's first chapter, serving as an "Introduction" to her work, is the first place one should go when entering the potential quagmire of this subject. It is clearly written, remarkably thorough, and even-handed in its evaluation of key players. This book is an essential reference tool for anyone working in this fascinating but complicated subject. Readers should also know that in *SBL* has published the same work in paperback available for \$49.95.

Daniel M. Gurtner, St. Mary's College, University of St. Andrews, Scotland

Douglas Stuart. *Old Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*, Third Edition. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. Xx + 179 pp., paperback, \$18.95.

Most seminary students and graduates have encountered this work in its first two editions. Many professors have been requiring this text for their classes for over two decades (the first edition appearing in 1980)! It has proven to be an invaluable work for the beginner as well as for the pastor who seeks to use his or her exegetical work in sermon preparation.

This third edition is in many respects the same work as the previous edition. In a number of areas, however, Stuart has improved the text to make it even more useful. A

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comparison of the tables of content of the second and third editions demonstrates this. So, for example, in the second edition the heading for 8.a. of chapter 1 read, "Explain what is not obvious." In the third edition it reads, "8.1. Explain all words and concepts that are not obvious." 8.2 (formerly 8.b.) now reads, "Concentrate on the most important concepts, words, and wordings." 8.3 (8.c.) now reads, 'Do "word studies" (really, concept studies) of the most crucial words or wordings.' In section 7 (Grammatical Data) of chapter 2 Stuart has added a second example: "Identifying grammatical specificity: Hosea 1:2."

In chapter 4 Stuart has added entries dealing with the Hebrew University Bible Project and the *Biblia Hebraica Quinta*. Under section 3 he has also added a subsection on works dealing with "Israelite and ancient Near Eastern culture." In his treatment of "Secondary Literature" (Section 11) Stuart has added a new entry dealing with "Computer Bibles." Finally, the book concludes with the addition of two lists: "A List of Common Old Testament Exegesis Terms" (pp. 171-175), and "A List of Frequent Hermeneutical Errors" (pp. 177-179).

These changes make an already extremely helpful guide even more useful. No doubt Stuart will make further changes in the future, but for now this book remains a must for the library of every teacher, student, and pastor. It is the last who should make constant use of this work because, as Stuart again points out, "The end of exegesis is preaching and teaching in the church" (p. x).

David M. Phillips

Ashby, G. W. *Go out and Meet God: A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*. ITC. Grand Rapids/Edinburgh: Eerdmans/Handsel Press, 1997. 164 pp., paper, \$18.00.

Larsson, G. *Bound for Freedom: The Book of Exodus in Jewish and Christian Traditions*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999. 368 pp., hardback, \$24.95.

Janzen, J. G. *Exodus*. Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997. 288 pp., paper, \$24.95.

Recent years have witnessed the publication of a stream of new commentaries on the book of Exodus. Many of these have been aimed at the interested lay-person, so much so that the choice available is likely to prove somewhat confusing. Which commentary is likely to be the most helpful?

While the three commentaries under review were all written primarily for laity and have much in common, there are significant differences between them. To a large extent this reflects the background of the individual authors. Godfrey Ashby is retired as assistant bishop (Anglican) of George, South Africa. Göran Larsson, a Swedish Lutheran, is a director at the Jerusalem Center for Biblical Studies and Research, having taught for some years at the Swedish Theological Institute in Jerusalem. Gerald Janzen has recently retired after teaching for 32 years at the Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, an

ecumenical institution associated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Hailing from three different continents, it is hardly surprising that these commentaries reflect something of the milieu within which their authors have lived in the final decades of the 21st century.

This feature is perhaps most noteworthy in Larsson's work as he intentionally interacts with both Jewish and Christian traditions when explaining the text of Exodus. He writes with the conviction that in the past the contents of Exodus have often been misappropriated, especially by certain Christians keen to promote hostility towards Jews. Keen to redress this balance, Larsson draws deeply upon Jewish interpretations of Exodus, often describing these in considerable detail; for example, he devotes several pages to recounting the practices associated with Passover (pp. 86-90). While this is of value in seeing how certain Jewish traditions develop out of the Exodus story, it is important to remember that not all traditions reflect accurately the original meaning or significance of the text. Caution needs to be exercised when interpreting the book of Exodus through later Jewish or Christian traditions; the traditions themselves need to be evaluated against the biblical text.

The danger of relying too heavily upon 'traditional' interpretations may be illustrated by observing Larsson's discussion of the giving of the law at Mount Sinai. Here he follows a widespread Jewish tradition (involving several alternative chronologies) that the giving of the law took place fifty days after Passover, thus coinciding with the feast of Weeks (or Pentecost). On this basis he then proceeds to draw parallels between the events at Mount Sinai and the coming of the Spirit in Acts 2. Yet, the most natural reading of Exodus 19:1 suggests that the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai 70 days after the Passover; the third new moon after their departure from Egypt would give 14+28+28 days, assuming lunar months of 28 days. Unfortunately, this alternative reading of Exodus 19:1 destroys the foundation upon which Larsson associates the giving of the law at Mount Sinai and the giving of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem.

In addition, while Larsson draws widely upon Jewish materials, an element of selectivity is apparent. Consequently, it is not always made clear that Jews differed among themselves regarding the interpretation of particular texts. Moreover, some Jewish interpretations are ignored completely (e.g., the proposal that the commandment, "You shall not steal", ought to be understood as meaning, "You shall not kidnap"). Since this latter example is probably a mistaken interpretation of Exodus 20:15, Larsson may have decided not to include it. Nevertheless, it highlights the somewhat arbitrary nature of the material that has been used.

Writing against the background of recent political developments within South Africa, Ashby's discussion occasionally picks up on the relationship between the freeing of Israelite slaves from Exodus and the issue of emancipation in the modern world. While it would be easy to exploit the parallels that exist in this area, Ashby exercises good judgement and his evaluation of the book of Exodus in the light of liberation theology is helpful. Sensibly he observes that the process of liberation from human injustice is not an end in itself within the Exodus narrative. While the Israelites are freed from the Egyptian pharaoh's tyranny, they are subsequently invited by God at Mount Sinai to accept his

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sovereign lordship over them. As Ashby notes, to be truly free is to live in complete obedience to the King of Kings.

While Ashby's approach to Exodus and liberation theology commends itself, his reliance upon critical scholarship is likely to create difficulties for many lay readers. Although often disguised, the legacy of the Documentary Hypothesis shapes much of what Ashby has to say. Without further explanation, ordinary Christian readers are likely to find some of Ashby's remarks confusing and/or disquieting (e.g., the account of the building of the tabernacle in Exodus chs. 35-40 reflects worship in the Jerusalem temple and originates from a Priestly writer of the exile in Babylon).

Although Janzen's commentary lacks the distinctive hallmarks found in those of Larsson and Ashby, his treatment is no less informative or interesting. Drawing on a wide range of modern scholarly resources, Janzen provides a clear and usually helpful explanation of the text of Exodus. However, occasional lapses occur. When Janzen quotes with approval (p. 3) Jon Levenson's remarks on contrasting Moses and Hagar, he fails to observe that these rest on a misreading of Genesis 16:9, which does not state, contrary to what Janzen quotes, 'Submit ... to her harsh treatment'. Likewise, the affirmation (p. 150) that the Hebrew verb *ratsah* only designates 'murderous violence' (and therefore should be translated 'murder') is wrong; as Numbers 35:22-28 reveals, someone guilty of *ratsah*, understood here as accidental killing, was not to be put to death provided they remained within a city of refuge until the death of the high priest. Also, *ratsah* is used twice to refer to the execution of a murder (Num. 35:27, 30). (In passing, Janzen is not alone in making this mistake; Ashby also makes the same erroneous claim and in the process transliterates *ratsah* incorrectly.) Fortunately, such errors are few. And while others are very likely to disagree with Janzen's exposition of some passages (e.g., his discussion of leaven [pp. 83-85] and the Amalekite battle [pp. 121-124]), his overall treatment is very instructive and helpful.

All of these commentaries have much to teach, although, as is ever the case, each needs to be read with discernment. As they stand, the three volumes complement each other well, with the authors all contributing different insights worthy of further reflection. If, for whatever reason, it is necessary to choose only one, hopefully the observations given above will assist in making that choice.

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Richard D. Nelson, *Deuteronomy* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002). ix + 424 pp., hardcover, \$44.95.

Richard Nelson's point of view, here as elsewhere, is that the seventh century BC was formative for deuteronomic theology, two key reference-points being formal similarities between the biblical book and the Vassal Treaties of Esarhaddon, and Josiah's reform. Deuteronomy evinces wisdom features, and probably originated among scribal circles in Jerusalem in the time of Manasseh, though the formative group was diverse (pp. 6-8). It is fundamentally an address to free landholders.

The book underwent revisions, as evidenced for example, by the changes in the second person address forms. Regarding composition, Nelson essentially follows Noth's theory of the Deuteronomistic History. Consistent with this, he traces the growth of individual sections of Deuteronomy, finding for example in Deut 4 different origins for 4:1-14 (on the laws and commandments) and vv. 15-20 (the prohibition of images; p. 62). Exilic additions are found in 4:29-31 (and 30:1-10), as almost universally, but these are found to be distinct from 'the dominant theology of Deuteronomy' (since here blessing and curse are sequential rather than proffered alternatives), and this is in line with his location of Deuteronomy essentially in the politics of the seventh century. In general, Nelson maintains a focus on the message of the book as a whole, broadly within this horizon.

In political terms, Deuteronomy moved from the political periphery to the centre, at least for a time, when it was adopted by the Josianic reform program (p. 8). In character, it is 'impassioned motivational rhetoric' designed to produce decisive response from its hearers, with an emphasis on 'religious fidelity, personal morality, social responsibility, and trustworthy government' in 'a single aspiration for the human race' (p. 12).

Nelson's interpretation of the book is always rigorous and thought-provoking. He rightly avoids the view that Deuteronomy is radically secularizing. For example, on the law of Passover and Unleavened Bread (16:1-8), he sees the centralizing of this (now combined) feast as bringing into the sacrificial realm what had previously been non-sacrificial (he cites the use of the verb *zabah* in support; p. 207). However, this sits a little oddly with his view of ch. 12, where, in line with a majority of scholars, he thinks the slaughter of domestic animals for food in the cities, and so away from the sanctuary, is non-sacrificial. The term used is the same (*zabah*), but here Nelson claims that the term itself has been converted from 'kill for sacrifice' to the general 'slaughter' (pp. 154-55). The issue is more complicated than the location of the killing alone, for in fact there are both central and non-central aspects in both these deuteronomistic laws. Nelson recognizes that 16:1-8 also has non-central aspects, but thinks that in that case Deuteronomy has compromised with its own rigorous centralism (p. 207). More satisfying is an attempt to understand the relationship between central and non-central as pervasive dimensions of Deuteronomy's vision for Israel living before Yahweh in the land.

On Deuteronomy as a political document I find again occasion to agree and disagree. He finds in 16:18-18:22 a 'constitutional' proposal, and here he explores the relation between centre and periphery more carefully. He rightly finds a tendency to the decentralization of power, and measures to limit the power of the king aim to meet 'the threat of monolithic tyranny inherent in centralization' (pp. 213-14). The centralization he finds in Deuteronomy is certainly not what he sees as the mythological concept of kingship portrayed for example in the Zion Psalms (p. 222). It is surprising at this point, however, that he declares the political program thus outlined theoretical and 'utopian' (pp. 213, 222). This seems to be at odds with his judgement that the book was both 'dissident' (originally) and also (for a time) aligned with the reform. If either or both of these propositions is true it would seem to entail that the ideas in the book are politically potent. This, in fact, is a tension in Nelson's portrayal generally: is the book part of the

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reform program, or is it distinct from it? It may be that the retreat into the utopian thesis is prompted by the difficulty, in the end, of aligning Deuteronomy with the reform. I am more persuaded by the 'dissident' part of his analysis. And I do not think this leads to dreamy utopianism; rather, Deuteronomy leaves a legacy of powerful ideas which have made an impact on western political thought.

Gordon McConville, University of Gloucestershire

Paul K. Hooker, *First and Second Chronicles*, Westminster Bible Companion, Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001, 295 pp. (pbk).

This work belongs in the Westminster Bible Companion series, which is "intended to help the laity of the church read the Bible more clearly and intelligently" (p. ix). It is directed to those who have not engaged in theological education and is meant to answer questions about historical and geographical details, words that are obscure or pregnant with meaning; the fundamental meaning of a passage; and connections to the contemporary world – apparently a Western, Protestant world. Due to the nature of the series, the reader is given few resources for further study. This work provides no index, no illustrations, almost no attributions, and only a brief bibliography.

The commentary portion is preceded by a succinct, and sufficient, thirteen-page introduction to the Books of Chronicles. Hooker sets out the general range of major scholarly discussions and is admirably cautious about taking positions that go beyond the evidence. He does leave out, though, discussion about whether or not the current ending of 2 Chronicles is original. Most importantly, Hooker skillfully leads the lay reader into historiographical concerns: how "the principal thrust of the work is not merely historical," but "provides a continuity between the storied past of his [the Chronicler's] nation and the present predicament of his people" (p. 10). Hooker discusses how the ancient world, unlike the modern world, did not divide history and theology (p. 13). He introduces the theological messages that the Chronicler wished to communicate to his audience as he retold the history of Israel through his later perspective. Still, I wish Hooker would have offered a critique of modern historiography and its bias against divine intervention that ultimately rejects the Chronicler's message and prevents one from reading Chronicles as Scripture.

The commentary portion then moves section by section, with some introductory and summary remarks for major sections. The NRSV is the basis for the interpretation and precedes the comments on each section in whole or excerpted form. Nonetheless, Hooker has relied on the Hebrew text to inform his comments and to lead him in places to suggest alternative translations of words and passages (e.g., p. 136). Hooker's work is strong historically. In his work, he provides very helpful explanatory comments about the background of Israelite history, often reminding the reader about information found in other biblical books. He describes the sociological setting of the Chronicler and the way in which the concerns of his day would have guided his narrative. He illumines some of the technical aspects of the Temple cultus portrayed in Chronicles

and tries to help the reader visualize the situation by comparing the size of the temple to a modern ranch-style house, and comparing the temple's architectural importance to that of European cathedrals. Although the work is not overtly homiletical, Hooker provides several comments on the current theological applicability of Chronicles.

One methodological issue that repeatedly arises involves source and text-critical problems. Hooker states in his introduction that he will assume the narrative of Samuel and Kings to be the principle source and will assume that diverging material is "either the creation of the Chronicler or preserved by him in an effort to advance his theological agenda" (p. 12). His actual work is less cautious. One finds that Hooker usually assumes that Samuel-Kings as we now have it is the verbatim source and that virtually all differences are creative alterations and additions. His commentary is therefore guided by noting detailed differences and by drawing conclusions about how the Chronicler altered various details in order to promote his theological agenda. The difference in text types for Samuel as attested by the Dead Sea Scrolls probably should lead to greater caution in this area. Still, each commentator has to take a stand on these issues and then proceed with the resulting observations.

In conclusion, I found this work to be very strong, particularly in terms of providing historical and sociological explanatory information. It carries out well the objectives of the WBC series.

Rodney K. Duke, Appalachian State University

Steven S. Tuell, *First and Second Chronicles*, Interpretation, Louisville: John Knox, 2001, 252 pp.

The Interpretation series is written "to meet the needs of students, teachers, ministers, and priests for a contemporary expository commentary...a commentary which presents the integrated result of historical and theological work with the biblical text" (p. v). The form is expository, section-by-section essays that "deal with what the texts say and discern their meaning for faith and life" (p. v). This volume has no notes, illustrations or indices; however, there are numerous internal references to works provided in the bibliography.

Tuell's fourteen-page introduction adequately covers the main concerns. Here he sets the stage for an admirably cautious approach over source-critical issues. When comparing Chronicles to Samuel-Kings, rather than attributing every minor deviation from Samuel-Kings to the bias of the Chronicler, Tuell recognizes that some differences might be due to the Chronicler working with a different textual tradition. Also, rather than attributing all unique material to the Chronicler's invention, in each case Tuell evaluates whether the Chronicler seemed to be relying on historically accurate sources unknown to us or providing his own commentary.

One issue, over which Tuell was "fuzzy," was the genre of Chronicles. After relating how the Chronicler's work conformed to the ancient standards of historiography and how the Chronicler supplemented Samuel-Kings with some historically accurate sources, Tuell concludes that Chronicles is not history, but "Bible study." It is possibly

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the first of the genre of the "rewritten Bible," that supplements and interprets Scriptural narratives, as found in latter works such as Josephus' *The Antiquities of the Jews* (p. 7). Still, Tuell continues to call the Chronicler's work "history" in the following sections. Although his point about how Chronicles uses known tradition within a new interpretive framework is well taken, I would suggest that such is the characteristic of every retelling of history.

Both in the Introduction and throughout the commentary Tuell emphasizes the thesis that the Chronicler presents an emerging Bible piety. The "word of the Lord" always refers to the word of Scripture or to prophetic revelation, which itself generally has been written. "The purpose of life is to seek God, in the words of Scripture and in the worship of the temple" (p. 13).

In the commentary proper, Tuell's essays are based on the New Revised Standard Version, which is not duplicated for the reader. His work, however, ultimately goes back to the Hebrew and Greek texts. He makes comments on textual variants, the nature of the different manuscripts, and translation alternatives to the NRSV.

Much work lies behind this commentary. Tuell interacts with a wide range of biblical scholarship on Chronicles and brings forth relevant interaction on the levels of textual criticism, source criticism, form and structure, historical assessment, and sociological background. At the same time, he provides comments on the level of contemporary theological application. On the level of application, Tuell often brings in points of connection to church hymnody. These points of contact illustrate one of the Chronicler's themes that Tuell stresses: God's presence is encountered not just in the Jerusalem temple per se, but particularly when Israel sincerely carries out the temple worship. Tuell's work is strong in describing and explaining the cultic material of Chronicles. He notes that the work of priests in the temple cultus is given a prophetic standing. In connection with this theme is another strength of Tuell's commentary, his treatment of the Israelite hymnic material (psalms) that is found in Chronicles.

The form of the commentary is its greatest weakness. It was difficult to read, because the many levels of exposition are not presented separately. Moreover, the reflections on theological application are rather sporadic. Different readers will probably come to the commentary with different interests and questions at different times. Were issues of the text, the background, and theological reflection separated in the formal structure of the work, readers could more easily find information on matters of their concern. Still, the strength of the wealth of expository information well outweighs this weakness.

Rodney K. Duke, Appalachian State University

Tremper Longman. *Song of Songs* (NICOT). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001. 238 pp.

Roland E. Murphy and Elizabeth Huwiler, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (New International Bible Commentary Series). Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999. ISBN 0-85364-733-X. 312 pp.

Carey Ellen Walsh, *Exquisite Desire: Religion, the Erotic, and the Song of Songs*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000. 245 pp.

Roger N. Whybray, *The Book of Proverbs: A Survey of Modern Study*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995. 184 p.

The present review offers observations concerning the NIBC volume encompassing Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, then turns to the Longman and Walsh works on Song of Songs. A final paragraph returns again to Proverbs as it considers Whybray's survey of modern scholarship on Proverbs.

Murphy's seasoned insights leave their indelible mark on the Proverbs portion of the NIBC volume. Consistent with brevity characterizing the NIBC design, this work reads more swiftly than Murphy's single-volume Word Biblical Commentary on Proverbs. Consequently it lacks much of the depth he was able to present there. Nevertheless, his enviable grasp of wisdom themes make his remarks in NIBC some of the best I believe, in short format.

In a clear, concise study of Ecclesiastes (NIBC), Huwiler concludes that just as Qohelet struggled to find meaning in life, so one should not be surprised when a quest to discern form and meaning in the composition itself may leave one with a sense of inconclusive struggle (p. 169). While this may be the case, yet I found myself dissatisfied with the extent of insights offered here. Perhaps a publisher's constraints prevented Huwiler from expanding as she would have liked on this profoundly rich and intentionally enigmatic wisdom composition. Murphy's counsel for sapiential reading may have proved particularly fruitful in Ecclesiastes: we must read "with the expectation that the meaning that seems 'obvious' to us may be merely a superficial reaction on our part....;" we must "allow ourselves to be 'caught' by mystery and questioning" (from his Proverbs portion of NIBC, p. 14).

The Song of Songs segment in NIBC is also contributed by Huwiler. In an extensive and highly informative introduction she provides noteworthy contributions under themes including repetitions and their function, song, theology, and human sexuality, as well as addressing more usual topics (e.g., form, unity, genre, canonization). Comments on the text itself are more extensive than those offered for Ecclesiastes. Concerning the complex issue of unity, Huwiler views Song of Songs as possessing a measure of what may be called narrative unity, albeit plagued by significant gaps (p. 236).

Another treatment of Song of Songs comes from Longman in his NICOT volume. He presents thorough yet readable discussion of customary introductory topics

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(e.g., authorship, style, language, date), with a convenient guide to features of Hebrew poetry. But it is "the history of interpretation" which dominates the opening pages (40% of the introduction)—a true treasure for any wishing to learn how the synagogue and church have treated this evocative book. Concerning unity, while characterizing Song of Songs as an anthology of love poems, Longman, like Huwiler, detects a measure of progression as the composition unfolds (p. 56). When commenting on the text itself, Longman seeks to bring to light all layers of potential meaning latent in poetic symbolism. While at times such an approach may fall prey to reading more into the text than the poet intended, at least the interpretive options are clearly before us, enabling us to decide for ourselves what may have been meant.

Exquisite Desire by Walsh is not so much a commentary on Song of Songs, as it is rather a collection of essays inspired by Song of Songs. By "collection" I do not imply that they are disjointed, belatedly collected. Her intent was "to demonstrate just what this ancient Hebrew Song can teach us about desire" (p. 3). A gifted writer with an engaging style, Walsh ponders the concept of desire, biblically conceived. Rather than examining each potential double meaning, she explores issues such as whether the composition is pornographic or erotic, concluding that it was intended as wholesome erotica (p. 45). This Walsh welcomes as a balance to the Bible's customary veiled references to physical love. Resources Walsh draws upon range beyond the linguistic and Ancient Near Eastern compositions customary for commentaries. Though an informed biblical scholar, she is also at home holding the Song in conversation with a wide range of material, from Bruce Springsteen to sadomasochism. A closing chapter turns from literal interpretation to explore the Song as an allegory of spiritual yearning. While *Exquisite Desire* is indeed a creative exploration of themes arising from the Song, it does not satisfy my longing for illumination of the biblical text.

In *The Book of Proverbs: A Survey of Modern Study*, seasoned wisdom-scholar Whybray assembles what is essentially an annotated bibliography of works treating the Book of Proverbs. The period under review is the 20th century. While not exhaustive, it still is very comprehensive. Resources are organized thematically, whether treating issues of origins and background, literary and structural matters of particular chapters, ideas and theology, dating, or text and versions. As a bibliographic resource, this volume will provide indispensable aid for research in Proverbs.

Paul Overland

J.J. Collins & P.W. Flint, ed., *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, Vols. 1 & 2. SVT 83, 1&2. Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2001. Vol. 1, xxii + 292 pp; Vol. 2, xxiv + 482 pp cloth Hb US \$275.00 ISBN 90 04 12202 8 (set).

This two-volume book is the second in the series 'The Formation and Interpretation of Old Testament Literature', the purpose of which is, 'to examine and explore the prehistory, contents and themes of the books of the Old Testament, as well as their reception in later Jewish and Christian literature' (preface). It contains thirty-two

essays (fourteen in Vol. 1 and eighteen in Vol. 2) by leading scholars from Europe, Israel and North America.

Volume 1 is divided into four parts. In the first there are two general essays. J.J. Collins provides a brief, but useful, orientation to 'Current Issues in the Study of Daniel'. M.A. Knibb discusses the relationship of the MT of Daniel to other 'Danielic' material in the LXX and from Qumran. As he points out, all the texts from Qumran, other than the *Prayer of Nabonidus*, seem to presuppose the existence of the Book of Daniel. He too readily accepts the common view that the *Prayer* 'represents an earlier form of the tradition contained in Daniel 4' (p. 24). There is also a brief discussion of some fairly recently published sapiential texts from Qumran Cave 4 which bring together wisdom and prophecy.

The second part has three essays dealing with 'Daniel in its Near Eastern Milieu'. In each case the 'milieu' is Mesopotamian. K. Van der Torn is sceptical of the historicity of the stories in Daniel 1-6. His argument that the the story of Daniel in the lions' den is based on the plot of the Babylonian wisdom text *I shall praise the Lord of Wisdom*, taking its metaphorical reference to 'a pit of lions' literally, does not convince this reviewer. S.M. Paul discusses some 'noticeable linguistic, philological, and typological Mesopotamian imprints' (p. 55) in Daniel 1-6. J.H. Walton argues that the author of Daniel 7 makes use of topoi, motifs and patterns from several ancient Near Eastern 'combat myths'. The result is not a 'haphazard patchwork quilt' but a composition in which he has creatively transformed this material to express 'his own theological will and purpose' (p. 88).

Part Three contains four essays on 'Issues in Interpretation of Specific Passages'. R.G. Kratz presents his own reconstruction of the process of growth of the book through the addition in stages of the visions to Daniel 1-6. His methodology of detecting 'glosses' as clues to the process is questionable. However, he does draw attention to interesting interconnections between the stories and the visions. A. Lacocque, unlike Walton, argues that most of the imagery in Daniel 7 is of Canaanite origin, rather than Mesopotamian. The essay on the resurrection of the dead in Daniel 12:1-4a by E. Haag is in German. J.W. van Henten discusses allusions to Daniel 3 & 6 in early Christian literature.

For this reviewer Part Four is the most interesting in the first volume. The common theme of its five essays is the social setting of the Book of Daniel. R. Albertz gives an interesting, but speculative, discussion of the socio-political context of possible stages in the growth of the book of Daniel. A study of the 'belief system' of Daniel 7-12 is S. Beyerles' way in to identifying the social setting of these apocalyptic visions. He identifies the apocalyptists with the *maskilim* of Daniel 11:33-35, whom he sees as a highly educated elite and observers of the Torah. P.R. Davies argues that the *maskilim* are the authors of the whole book. He repeats his earlier demolition of attempts to identify them with other known groups in pre-Hasmonean Judaism. In his view they originated in the diaspora but, like most scholars, he simply assumes that the interest shown in the Jerusalem temple in chs. 8-11 is evidence that they moved to Judah. It is not obvious why Jews in the diaspora could not have been as passionate in their concern for Jerusalem and the temple as those in Judah. Nehemiah is an example of one who

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was. Davies suggests that the successors of the *maskilim* may have been among the Qumran community. L.L. Grabbe attributes the final form of the Book of Daniel to an educated, aristocratic Jew *ca.* 168-165 BCE. He tentatively mentions the historian Eupolemus as a possible candidate. Many scholars have read the visions in Daniel in a 'political' way as 'opposition literature'. D.L. Smith-Christopher argues for the same approach to the stories. His argument rightly draws attention to the 'confrontation' between divine and human power but seems overdone. There is a more positive attitude to pagan powers in the stories as compared with the visions. However, the difference should not be over-pressed. In both parts of the book the stress is on the sovereignty of the Most High over human sovereigns, whose arrogance leads to their downfall. The difference in ethos in the visions as compared to the stories is the result of the difference of degree in the arrogance of the 'small horn' as compared with earlier rulers.

Volume 2 contains Parts 5 - 8 of the combined work. Part Five consists of six essays on the 'Literary Context' of the Book of Daniel. The first, by J.-W. Wesselius, argues that the book was deliberately composed to appear to be an 'ancient dossier' of material about Daniel. Less convincing is his claim that it is patterned on the Book of Ezra. Material from Qumran plays a large part in each of the other five essays. While discussing 'The Solar Calendars of Daniel and Enoch' G. Boccaccini makes interesting suggestions about the possible meaning of the perplexing dates in Dan. 8:14, 9:27 & 12:11-12.. P.W. Flint provides a useful survey of the non-biblical 'Danielic' material from Qumran. Similarities between the throne visions of Daniel 7 and the Book of Giants suggests to L.T. Stuckenbruck that they rely on a common tradition which the two works develop in different ways. E. Eshel's brief discussion of 'Possible Sources of the Book of Daniel' doesn't really add much to what Flint and Stuckenbruck say. J.F. Hobbins discusses the concept of life after death as it appears in the Enochic literature, the Book of Jubilees, a work called The Words of Ezekiel and Daniel. He too readily assumes that Dan. 12:3 implies an existence in heaven rather than a transformed existence on earth.

Part Six contains six essays on the Book of Daniel's 'Reception in Judaism and Christianity'. K. Koch argues that the book was received as 'canonical' at different times within different Jewish and Christian groups around the turn of the era. A fascinating essay by C. Rowland examines the use Daniel's imagery as a 'lens' through which to interpret contemporary political contexts. He uses as examples the radical Reformer Thomas Muentzer, the 'Digger' leader Gerrard Winstanley and the artist and poet William Blake. The essay on Daniel's 'fourth kingdom' in targamic literature by U. Glessmer is in German. C.A. Evans explores the influence of Daniel on the concept of the kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus and Paul. The significance of Dan. 7:13 for understanding the 'son of man' sayings in the Gospels is a hotly debated issue, and J.D.G. Dunn provides a helpful survey of the debate and assessment of the main scholarly positions. His own conclusion is that Jesus himself drew upon Daniel 7 in attempting to articulate his own sense of mission and destiny. M. Henze provides interesting examples of different interpretations of Dan. 4 in Syriac literature

The three essays on the theme of 'Textual History' in Part Seven are all rather technical and will be mainly of interest to specialists in this area. E. Ulrich discusses the Daniel scrolls from Qumran. The Greek texts of Daniel are dealt with by A.A. Di Lella, and K.D. Jenner discusses the Syriac texts.

Part Eight is on 'The Theology of Daniel'. J. Goldingay has some thought-provoking things to say about the understanding of the sovereignty of God in the Book of Daniel, as does J. Barton on 'Theological Ethics in Daniel'. The essay on the meaning of 'the Abomination of Desolation' by J. Lust is helpful, and his interpretation of it may well be right, but the essay sits a bit oddly beside the other two in this Part.

Volume 2 ends with cumulative bibliographies and indices.

This is a valuable collection of essays on a wide variety of aspects of the study of the Book of Daniel. The Editors do not specify the readership for which it is intended. Some of the essays would serve as introductions to particular areas of study. Others are quite specialist. Scholars and more advanced students with a particular interest in the Book of Daniel will find it an important resource book.

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Peter D. Quinn-Miscall, *Reading Isaiah: Poetry and Vision*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. vii + 224 pp., paper, \$19.95.

If one is looking for a stimulating and fresh approach to the Book of Isaiah, *Reading Isaiah: Poetry and Vision* by Peter D. Quinn-Miscall is worth a close read. Taking a decidedly rhetorical and literary perspective, Quinn-Miscall offers a selective study of Isaiah's "grand poem" (p. 1). His working supposition is that Isaiah is a poem providing a "retrospective on Israel's history" (p. 3), not a progressive representation of Israel's history. Isaiah presents a vision, an imaginative ideal, of God's ways with humanity and the world for all times and places. The vision is not intended to be tied to the actual time periods presented in Isaiah. Rather, the historical events and characters are simply concrete images employed in dramatic fashion to communicate a timeless message. Therefore the reader is compelled to imagine "a dream world, that never existed but that is filled with the possibility of what might be" (p. 20).

Quinn-Miscall's literary reading of Isaiah allows the spotlight to shine on the unity and literary nature of the text instead of getting mired in common historical-critical issues. Reading Isaiah as a unified work, he sets out to expose features of the text by comparing and contrasting their respective appearances throughout the sixty-six chapters. The first chapter of the book provides a summary and breakdown of the major sections of Isaiah. The next four chapters reflect an astute analysis of some of the text's theological subjects, effective use of images, intertextuality, and conceptual repetition. Quinn-Miscall's presentation pays special attention to three specific literary categories, "themes," "imagery," and "characters," in appraising the content of Isaiah. In the Introduction, he also includes a discussion of other important factors that play a role in understanding and interpreting Isaiah.

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Though Quinn-Miscall exemplifies how fruitful a literary approach can be for understanding a biblical text, his denial that Isaiah intends, at least peripherally, to communicate a message about Israel's history seems to be an interpretive liability in two ways. First, it forces unnecessary interpretive dichotomies which are reflected in broad statements throughout his book. For example, Quinn-Miscall notes, "Isaiah does not usually develop aspects in progressive fashion but repeats and expands them (p. 5); Isaiah is not trying to describe an actual world, present or past, but an ideal world (p. 20); Isaiah wants little to do with actual kings, but he is impressed with their grand claims to divine establishment and to the wonderful society that they will rule (p. 172)." Second, reading Isaiah as simply a "simultaneous panorama" (p. 5) deflates the developmental significance of images within the time sensitive story of Isaiah. For instance, he notes that "Isaiah's vision of God and humanity (whether all nations or only Israel) and the many relationships that can exist between them is the same in his closing and opening chapters" (p. 5).

By eliminating the dynamic of referential history and its rhetorical progression in the drama of Isaiah, the interpreter cuts out part of what makes Isaiah such a moving theological message; namely, that God carries out his will with his people in real historical time. Ironically, Isaiah deliberately communicates this point about God's actions in and through real history *in a literary fashion* by implementing historical information within pivotal sections of the drama. Thus, observing the literary play of real historical dimensions in Isaiah's multifaceted, prophetic message doesn't hinder Quinn-Miscall's literary perspective, but rather contributes to it.

In the end, *Reading Isaiah: Poetry and Vision* has more strengths than weaknesses. Quinn-Miscall's limited view of the role of history in Isaiah's message should not deter one from using his work to gain valuable insight into the literary qualities of the text. This book is a useful study aid for the Isaiah student of any level.

Steven D. Mason, St. Mary's College, University of St. Andrews

M. Daniel Carroll R. *Amos—The Prophet & His Oracles: Research on the Book of Amos*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002. 224 pp., paper, \$32.95.

The emergence of new social scientific and literary methods for biblical scholarship has opened numerous venues for understanding the culture and history of Ancient Israel. In *Amos—The Prophet & His Oracles: Research on the Book of Amos*, M. Daniel Carroll R. explores the impact of modern methodologies on the field of Amos studies. In order to offer a comprehensive picture of modern methodologies, Carroll provides a survey of scholarship related to Amos, which begins with the late nineteenth century and extends to the twenty-first century. In his survey Carroll not only provides information about major theoretical trends and models (i.e. Form / Tradition Criticism, Social Science approaches, reading from the margins, etc.), he also offers reflections on their implications as well as responses to them from other scholars. One of Carroll's main

conclusions about trends in Amos scholarship is that no model is able to meet the needs of a global church; therefore there is a need for diversity in methodology.

In relation to the structure of Carroll's book, one should note that the work is divided into two main sections: first, a history of Amos research from the 1870s to 2000 and second, bibliographies related to Amos research. Carroll's intention in writing *Amos—The Prophet & His Oracles* is not to formulate a central hypothesis and test it, but rather to offer a catalogue of numerous hypotheses that could assist students of the book of Amos. Carroll's collection and presentation of materials related to Amos studies is pertinent and exhaustive.

The first section of Carroll's book allows a newcomer to Amos studies to acquaint him or herself with the theoretical trends that dominate the field. The second section of Carroll's work enables the reader to develop a deeper knowledge of specific topics like: historical background, composition, textual criticism, theology, use of covenant, pastoral use, etc. It is important to mention that Carroll writes from an Evangelical perspective, however his discussion of reading from the margins offers ideas and suggestions that are not conventionally mentioned in the Evangelical scholarship of developed countries.

Carroll suggests that poverty and injustice, two prominent themes in the book of Amos, are particularly relevant for readers in developing countries (pp. 53-54). For many in the developing world, socio-economic marginalization has created conditions that enable them to relate to themes in Amos in ways that the traditional and/or affluent reader cannot. Carroll's inclusion of "reading from the margins" increases the potential for broader thinking in relation to this prophetic book and informs the reader of its relevance.

Amos—The Prophet & His Oracles offers an invaluable foundation in Amos studies and also an inspiring cross-cultural vision for future scholarship. Carroll's work is an excellent reference tool for all levels of Amos scholarship, particularly for those scholars seeking fresh perspectives from around the world and pastors seeking devotional material that unifies Christian commitment and social service.

Jacob D. Dodson

David A. deSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002, 428pp., cloth.

If you have only one book on the Apocrypha, this is the one to have. This work contains not only introductory materials to the Apocrypha but it also serves as an excellent commentary. Fully informed by contemporary scholarship, the author provides an engaging presentation of the content. It is suggested that the reader proceed with Dr. deSilva's book in one hand and a copy of the Apocrypha in the other. That is the best way to get the most out of this informative, valuable and edifying material.

In fluent prose, the author states his three reasons for studying the Apocrypha. First, it gives a full and reliable picture of Judaism from 200 B.C.E. to 100 C. E. Secondly the authors of the New Testament show familiarity with the Apocrypha. Thirdly, the Apocrypha was formative for early Christian theology. From other parts of

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the work, it is evident that there are many additional reasons for studying the Apocrypha. 1. The Apocrypha serves as a witness to the faith of the Jewish people during 200 B.C.E. to 100 C.E. 2. A background is provided in the Apocrypha for understanding the Judaism of Jesus' day. 3. A contribution is made by this literature to the discussion of theodicy. 4. Ecumenically, a study of the Apocrypha can assist Christians in moving past some of the barriers that separate them. (Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Protestant). 5. Some of the Christian greats who admired the Apocrypha were Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, Jerome and Augustine.

Chapter One serves as a very helpful introduction dealing with value, identification, general content, origin and an extended, valuable section on the relation of the Apocrypha and the canon. The reader is also assisted in differentiating between Apocrypha, deuterocanonical, canonical, protocanonical and pseudepigrapha.

Next, the author moves to a discussion of the "Historical Context." Decisively and concisely Jewish history from 200 B.C.E. to 100 C.E. is treated. This material is an edifying, comprehensive record of the historical events of the period dealing with Hellenism, the Maccabean Revolt, Roman Rule and Jews in the Diaspora.

The remainder of the work is a book by book treatment of the Apocrypha. Thoroughness and quality is evident as the author sets forth concise summary of the book followed by an analysis of the structure and contents. Then he moves to "Textual Transmission," "Author, Date and Setting," then "Genre and Purpose," "Formative Influence," "Value for Intertestamental Judaism," and concludes with a section on theology. Each of the twenty books comprising the Apocrypha receive this comprehensive, scholarly treatment. Added benefits of this work include fifteen pages of reference materials to the Apocrypha, an index to authors, a nine page index to subjects and a twenty page "Index to Scripture and Other Ancient Writings." Included in this last section are the Apocrypha, Old Testament, New Testament, Sources, Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Jewish Sources, Christian Sources and Classical Sources. These alone are worth the price of the book for any serious student of the Apocrypha. No wonder others are saying, "This book is destined to become and remain the standard introduction to the Apocrypha for many years to come."

Richard E. Allison

Brad Eastman, *The Significance of Grace in the Letters of Paul*. New York: Peter Lang, 1999. 264 pp., cloth, \$51.95.

Originally a dissertation under the direction of Stephen Westerholm, this volume in Peter Lang's Studies in Biblical Literature series is an ambitious attempt to trace the significance of grace in the undisputed letters of Paul.

Brad Eastman positions his discussion of grace within the last quarter century's reevaluation of Paul and the law. He begins with a summary of the work of E.P. Sanders, H. Räisänen, J.D.G. Dunn, H. Hübner, S. Westerholm, and F. Thielman. His sympathies clearly lie with the direction taken by Westerholm and Thielman, in which a "plight to

solution” schema is still accepted with respect to law and grace. Nevertheless, Eastman does not limit his treatment of grace to that particular debate, wishing to set his examination of grace on the broadest exegetical and theological footing possible.

Eastman approaches his task by examining the undisputed books of Paul in roughly chronological order (1 Thess, 1 & 2 Cor, Gal, Rom, Phil). Proceeding on the assumption that grace “implies dependence on God as an answer to the human condition” (12), Eastman analyzes each book in terms of its portrayal of the human condition, dependence on God in the Christian life (initial and ongoing), and human responsibility.

Eastman is at his best in his treatment of the human condition. Though he is intent on examining grace in other than polemical contexts, he is strongest in his explication of the law, sin, and flesh in Paul’s theology. His indebtedness to his dissertation advisor, S. Westerholm, is apparent in this regard, but this is only an advantage in the opinion of this reviewer. Eastman’s monograph provides a sane and measured treatment of Paul and the law and is worth consulting on that basis alone.

Less satisfying is Eastman’s decision to examine the significance of grace in Paul by focusing on “what may be expressed broadly as the notion of ‘dependence on God’ in Paul’s letters” (10). Apart from his stated reasons that “‘grace,’ understood in a Christian sense, implies some sort of need or dependence” and that he himself thinks “it very clear that Paul believes humanity to be dependent on God’s grace” (10), Eastman provides no rationale for characterizing grace ahead of time in this way and then proceeding on that assumption. Should not an examination of grace in Paul at least begin with an inductive study of Paul’s use of $\epsilon\alpha\rho\iota\varsigma$? Perhaps then a less all-encompassing category (or even definition) might have been found. As it is, Eastman’s organizing principle (“dependence on God”) assumes what it needs to prove and subsumes what it needs to define. The result is a work whose very breadth obscures its focus.

Eastman’s treatment of human responsibility also raises questions. Commendably, Eastman’s book is marked by uncompromising descriptions of the extent and power of grace juxtaposed to equally strong assertions of human freedom and responsibility. Nevertheless, his constant reminders that grace does not bypass the human will and that humans are not purely passive instruments, irresistibly swept along in a larger current, make a straw man of the Reformed position he seems to oppose. In that interpretive tradition and understanding of grace, the human will is not bypassed; it is transformed—and in a way that enables a truly voluntary, spontaneous, and free human response. Nor is all grace irresistible on this view (hence the distinction between common and saving grace). Nor must one conclude from the presence of exhortations to faith and obedience and warnings against falling away in Paul that it is possible to frustrate God’s grace. This is not to say that Eastman must agree with the Reformed view of grace in Paul. It is to wish, however, that he had engaged the issues in a more nuanced and sympathetic manner.

Nevertheless, there is much to appreciate in Eastman’s treatment of Paul’s thought. He provides a generally reliable guide to the gospel in Paul, from the human dilemma that provokes the question to the answer God provides in Christ for humanity. His book is packed with exegetical insight and detailed engagement with modern biblical

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scholarship. In many ways this book is a good guide to the main issues in Pauline studies and theology in a way that far exceeds its titular focus on grace.

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Gordon D. Fee, *To What End Exegesis? Essays Textual, Exegetical, and Theological*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001. X + 378 pp., paperback, \$26.00.

This volume brings together twenty-one articles written by Gordon Fee, one of the leading contemporary New Testament text critics, who currently teaches at Regent College. These were originally published in various journals, festschriften, and books over a period of twenty-five years (1976-2000). As the subtitle indicates, the book consists of essays dealing with textual (chapters 1-5), exegetical (chapters 6-12), and theological (chapters 13-21) issues. These essays are as follows: "One thing is Needful"? (Luke 10:42); "On the Inauthenticity of John 5:3b-4;" "On the Meaning of John 20:30-31;" "Textual-Exegetical Observations on 1 Corinthians 1:2, 2:21 and 2:10;" "On Text and Commentary on 1 and 2 Thessalonians;" "Once More—John 7:37-39;" "1 Corinthians 7:1 in the NIV;" "ΧΑΡΙΣ in 2 Corinthians 1:15: Apostolic Parousia and Paul-Corinth Chronology;" "Ἐἰδωλοθυτα Once Again: An Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 8-10;" "2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 and Food Offered to Idols," "Freedom and the Life of Obedience (Galatians 5:1-6:18);" "Philippians 2:5-11: Hymn or Exalted Pauline Prose?;" "Toward a Theology of 1 Corinthians;" "Christology and Pneumatology in Romans 8:9-11—and Elsewhere: Some Reflections on Paul as a Trinitarian;" "Another Gospel Which You Did Not Embrace": 2 Corinthians 11:4 and the Theology of 1 and 2 Corinthians;" "Some Exegetical and Theological Reflections on Ephesians 4:30 and Pauline Pneumatology;" "To What End Exegesis? Reflections on Exegesis and Spirituality in Philippians 4:10-20;" "Pneuma and Eschatology in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2: A Proposal about "Testing the Prophets" and the Purpose of 2 Thessalonians;" "Toward and Theology of 2 Timothy—from a Pauline Perspective;" "Paul and the Trinity: The Experience of Christ and the Spirit for Paul's Understanding of God;" and "Wisdom Christology in Paul: A Dissenting View."

These essays demonstrate why Fee is one of the most well respected New Testament scholars of our day. The reader sees how all areas of New Testament exegesis are supposed to be carried out, and why such careful exegesis matters.

David M. Phillips

Robert F. Fortna and Tom Thatcher (eds.), *Jesus in Johannine Tradition*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2001. Xviii + 381 pp., hardback, \$25.95

The late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries are an exciting time for Johannine studies. While the work of earlier scholars, especially Dodd, Brown, Bultmann and Martin, remain foundational, newer methodologies are opening questions and

providing results to challenge former consensus. Was John using oral or written sources? Was he in any way dependent upon the Synoptic tradition or the Synoptic gospels? What is John's relationship with non-canonical literature, including later Gnosis? Who constituted the "Johannine community? Was there such a self contained entity as the Johannine community? And, finally, how much of the life and sayings of the historical Jesus are retained in John's gospel? These are just a few of the questions raised in essays contained in *Jesus in the Johannine Tradition*.

The title is somewhat misleading, in that the focus is not these essays is not simply the question of the historical Jesus, but more focused on methodological issues. The essays are addressed to a general as well as scholarly audience, as seen by the conscious effort to restrict footnotes to a minimum. Nevertheless, the thirty essays in the book are written by acknowledged leaders in Johannine studies, and are informative and helpful to both the scholar and the neophyte.

The essays fall into three general categories: The Fourth Gospel and Jesus (pp. 11-111); The Fourth Evangelist's Sources (pp. 113-277); and The Fourth Gospel and Noncanonical Literature (pp. 279-352.) A conclusion (pp. 353-8) summarizes the results for the reader, and, along with the introduction, should be the first items read by those who are not familiar with the breadth of current Johannine scholarship. The one criticism of the book might be the lack of a coherent or over arching thematic unity in the essays. While they are collected under general headings, the reader may be confused by the fact that a multiplicity of methodologies is utilized, and that at times the results may be contradictory. For example, there are three essays on the "Signs Gospel," the hypothetical source behind the seven miracles found in Jn 2-11. The essays by Robert F. Fortna ("Jesus Tradition in the Signs Gospel," pp. 199-208), Tom Felton and Tom Thatcher ("Stylometry and the Signs Gospel," pp. 209-218) and Sara C. Winter ("Little Flags: The Scope and Reconstruction of the Signs Gospel," pp. 219-235) all affirm the existence of a written signs source. Joanna Dewey's work with oral tradition ("The Gospel of John in its Oral-Written Media World," pp.239-252), however, casts doubt on the probability and possibility of the existence of a separate signs source. For those familiar with the state of the questions of Johannine research, such disagreements are to be expected, but may be disconcerting to those less familiar with the state of the current debate.

Nevertheless, despite, or perhaps because, of wide range of interests and methodologies represented, *Jesus in the Johannine Tradition* represents a valuable contribution for a wide variety of readers. For those unfamiliar with the questions of current Johannine research, the essays provide a quick introduction into the difficult, if not confusing, world of Johannine scholarship. For those with more intimate acquaintance with the scholarly debates, it will be a ready reference to provide quick reference to a multiplicity of approaches to this, perhaps, most difficult of the gospels, which, as is often said, provides waters in which "a child may wade, and an elephant swim."

Russell Morton

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Michael D. Goulder, *Paul and the Competing Mission in Corinth*. Library of Pauline Studies. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001. 320 pp, paper, \$24.95

In an expansion and elaboration of an earlier work, *St. Paul Versus St. Peter: A Tale of Two Missions* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), Goulder seeks to revitalize the hypothesis of Ferdinand Christian Baur, that the conflicts Paul faced in Corinth reflected the broader competition between two competing missions. On the one hand, there was the Gentile mission, represented by Paul. In opposition to Paul's mission were Jerusalem based missionaries, whose loyalty was to Peter. These two strains of Christianity came into conflict, the resulting in the second century church, which Baur referred to as "early catholicism." While not adopting Baur's complete hypothesis, especially the Hegelian overtones, Goulder asserts that Baur was essentially correct in his hypothesis of two competing missions in Corinth.

The book opens with a chapter entitled "Gods Ascending" (pp. 1-15), which outlines the major points of Baur's hypothesis, and Goulder's reasons for accepting it. What follows is detailed analysis of various themes to marshal evidence to support the theory. The analysis is followed by five appendices, discussing issues such as the integrity of 2 Corinthians, acts of power, and newer critical approaches.

Goulder's hypothesis may be summed up as stating that the Peterine mission represents a pre-Pauline wisdom oriented Christianity. Its representatives arrived in Corinth after Paul left the city. Their wisdom teaching basically held that Jesus was a prophet of God's message, anointed by the Holy Spirit, but not God's unique son. In this respect, they were similar to the later Ebionites, condemned by Irenaeus. This wisdom teaching combined visionary elements, as well as sexual asceticism. Their visionary experiences enable the Peterine missionaries to have a relaxed attitude toward idol meat, which Paul opposes in 1 Cor. 8.

Nevertheless, the rigor of the Peterines led to some unintended consequences. One is the incestuous relationship of 1 Cor. 5. Goulder hypothesizes that the people involved in the relationship were prominent members of the community. The "peccadilloes" of the couple were overlooked since they not able to adhere the expected asceticism of the group and their financial support was vital to the group (p. 123). The same attitude prevails in marginal religious sects today. Paul, however, is outraged, and calls on the church to "hand this one over to Satan" (1 Cor. 5:5). The treatment worked, and after a period of repentance, Paul recommends the person be admitted back into the community in 2 Cor. 2:5-11.

The Peterines were able to assert their superiority to Paul in two areas. One is that they had credentials going back to Peter and, by implication, to Jesus himself. Paul, on the other hand, could in no way be considered an apostle, and lacked the necessary apostolic credentials, including personally following Jesus. Second, the Peterines could point to the works of power accomplished by Peter and themselves, including visions. Paul does not have these credentials. Even in 2 Cor. 12:1-5, Paul has to boast of the visions of another, Pauline Christian. "Paul himself never had such a vision" (p. 105).

Goulder is not hesitant to place himself in the minority opinion of NT scholarship. In particular, his assertion that the person of 2 Cor. 2:5-11 and 1 Cor. 5 are identical, denying that the visionary of 2 Cor. 12:1-5 is Paul, or in maintaining the unity of 2 Corinthians. His idea that the opposition to Paul represents a unified group is elegant and simple. It has much that is attractive. Yet, the very elegance of Goulder's hypothesis is its undoing. While it provides for a simple explanation regarding the conflicts between Paul and the Corinthian Christians, human relationships may seldom be explained in the simple terms of physics. Indeed, in a cosmopolitan, dynamic city such as First Century Corinth, it would not be surprising if Paul found it necessary to address issues arising from several fronts, including the arrival of missionaries from Jerusalem who derided his abilities, apostleship and mission, as in 2 Cor. 3-4; 10-13. Although a simple explanation would be preferable, the interactions between Paul and the Corinthian Church defy such a unified solution.

Despite these caveats, Goulder's work deserves attention. It is always good to have our assumptions challenged, and Goulder does so in an artful and stimulating fashion. While we may not agree to all his solutions, he brings us back to some of the most vexing questions about the Corinthian correspondence, and Paul's relationship with Christian believers in Corinth. For this he is to be commended.

Russell Morton

Andreas J. Köstenberger. *Studies on John and Gender: A Decade of Scholarship*. Studies in Biblical Literature 38. New York: Peter Lang, 2001. 378 pp., hardback, \$67.95.

Andreas Köstenberger is well known within Johannine scholarship. From his doctoral dissertation onwards he has been researching and widely publishing in the Gospel of John. With the exception of chapter three, this volume is a collection of some of his previous essays on the Fourth Gospel published between 1991 and 2000, hence the subtitle: "A Decade of Scholarship."

The book is divided into two parts. The first part deals various issues in Johannine studies, chapters 1-8. Chapter one discusses the primary introductory issues of the Fourth Gospel: historical setting, literary features, and the theological emphases found in John. Chapter two incorporates research in the precursors of critical scholarship on John's Gospel, focusing on the period from 1790 to 1810. Chapter three, the only essay not published elsewhere, compares the Gospel accounts of Jesus' anointing with the application of verbal aspect theory. Chapters four and five are two detailed studies on important Johannine themes: Jesus as a rabbi and the Johannine "signs." Chapter six deals specifically with the reference to "greater works" of the believer found in John 14:12. Chapter seven is a lexical study of the two primary Johannine verbs for sending. Finally, chapter eight discusses a Johannine biblical theology of mission, flowing from Köstenberger's published dissertation.

The second part of the book deals specifically with various issues in reference to gender, chapters 9-15. Chapter nine offers a critical review of the thesis that priestly celibacy is of apostolic origin. Chapter ten investigates whether or not the reference to

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"mystery" indeed relates to the sacrament of marriage. Chapter eleven offers hermeneutical method in the study of gender roles in the New Testament. The next three chapters, twelve to fourteen, deal specifically with the crucial passage on gender: 1 Timothy 2:9-15. Finally, chapter fifteen offers a comprehensive analysis of women in the Pauline mission.

Although this collection of essays is clearly intended for an evangelical audience, "scholars who disagree with Köstenberger's arguments will at the same time find his scholarship engaging." Köstenberger is upfront about combining the work of scholarship with the work of the church. This volume combines a good example of biblical exegesis with a theological reading of the text taken from the evangelical tradition. Köstenberger's detailed exegetical work in specific pericopae provides an example for all to follow. In part one, Köstenberger covers some of the most important issues in the study of the Fourth Gospel. That alone provides an excellent survey of the issues in Johannine studies over the last decade. In part two, Köstenberger is unafraid to deal with potentially the most difficult issue in the church today: gender. Dealing with both Catholic and Protestant exegesis, Köstenberger tackles some of the most pressing pericopae in the entire discussion of gender. Part two provides both a survey of important issues and passages, as well a humble presentation of one option within the evangelical tradition.

Studies on John and Gender: A Decade of Scholarship would be a valuable addition to all students of John. But this book's most valuable contribution may be to those who are attempting to deal with the issue of gender in both the academy and the church. Although Köstenberger's answer may not be agreed upon by all, his attempt to break the impasse and deal with the difficult pericopae is an excellent example to follow.

Edward W. Klink III

Jon Laansma, *I Will Give You Rest: The Rest Motif in the New Testament with Special Reference to Mt 11 and Heb 3-4*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe 98. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997. 459 pp., hardcover, \$ 84 00.

Originally presented in dissertation form to the University of Aberdeen in January of 1995, "no attempt was made to update the discussion" for its publication in 1997. This book examines the background and significance of the rest motif in the New Testament with special attention directed to Matthew 11 and Hebrews 3-4 (p. 2). In eight extremely well defined chapters (366 pp.), Laansma systematically examines (1) the Old Testament and extra-biblical material (both Jewish and Christian); (2) the theological, practical, and literary interests of both the authors; as well as (3) the modern discussion surrounding Matthew 11:28-30 and Hebrews 3:7-4:11 (pp. 14-16, 359).

In a direct and succinct manner, chapter one, "Matthew 11,28-30 and Hebrews 3-4 in Modern Discussion" (16 pp.), surveys the prevailing presuppositions of the rest motif in Matthew 11 and Hebrews 3-4 and then offers a prospectus for his book. First, Laansma surfaces the neglect among scholars concerning the rest motif in Matthew 11.

He rightly observes, “the chief interest of scholars in examining the rest motif has been to establish that Jesus speaks as Wisdom, with only a secondary interest (if any) in the rest motif as a soteriological symbol” (pp. 2-9). Second, he presents what he considers the controlling debate between Kasemann and Hofius over *καταπαυσις*, and notes, “In most cases the participants in the discussion have been concerned with the larger question of the religious historical background of Hebrews as a whole.” As a result the “schools have tended to polarize the options,” which raises the need for this study (pp. 10-13). Finally he outlines the content of his book. He emphasizes in his prospectus, however, that though both Matthew 11 and Hebrews 3-4 speak to the theme of rest; “It is not our purpose to harmonize these two passages nor to establish a definite link between them” (pp. 14-16), an intention Laansma honors.

Chapter two, “The Rest Motif in the Hebrew OT” (59 pp.), is divided into two parts. First, Laansma reveals the rest tradition as it is “anchored” in the Deuteronomistic history (Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings), followed by Chronicles, Psalm 132, Psalm 95, Isaiah 11, 14, 28, 32, 63, 66; Jeremiah 6, 31, 50; Lamentations 1, 2; and Micah 2. After isolating and studying key terms (נוח [Hiphil] and cognate noun מנוחה), he identifies several motifs that cluster around the concept of rest (e.g., the land, the temple, the Davidic kingship, and weariness). Then he examines the rest motif in relation to the cultic institution of Sabbath rest with God’s Sabbath rest. Here he distinguishes between the institution of Sabbath rest as a humanitarian concern for the physical relief and God’s Sabbath rest. In addition, Laansma does not mix YHWH’s rest in the temple with YHWH’s post-creation rest event. In conclusion, Laansma muses, “*The rest tradition is a very prominent OT redemptive category* which was incorporated into Israel’s eschatological hopes.” “As for God’s Sabbath rest,” Laansma argues, “it may bear implication for Israel’s Sabbath, but it was probably addressed more directly to the subject of creation . . . than to the Sabbath institution as such.”

Moving beyond the OT, Laansma interacts with extra biblical material in chapters three, “The Rest Motif in the LXX” (25 pp.), and chapter four, “The Rest Motif in Other Jewish and Christian Literature” with an adjoining appendix: “Rest in Gnostic Mythology” (56 pp.). Tracing the usage of key terms in the LXX (words with *ἀναπαυ-* and *καταπαυ-* stems), Laansma observes little change in the rest tradition with respect to those passages considered in chapter two. Passages unique to the LXX, however, “push outward the bounds of the rest tradition” (p. 88) thereby suggesting that “this was a *living tradition*” (p. 101). With regard to the Sabbath, terminological overlap offers some reason to merge the rest tradition with the Sabbath (esp. Duet. 5:14), but it does not actually connect the two concepts. Laansma does identify, however, the development of the concept in the wisdom literature whereby “The result of living wisely – equivalent to living righteously, to acquiring wisdom, to studying Torah – is ‘rest’ in the shape of this-worldly tranquillity and possibly prosperity” (p. 94). The special attention given to *ἀναπαυσις* and *καταπαυσις* reveals the propensity to associate “rest” closely with the temple. In its local usage (Deut. 1:9; 2 Par. 6:4; Ps. 131:8, 14), however, “rest” is *not* to be viewed as a technical term for the temple (contra Hofius, pp. 99-100). Chapter four and its appendix also exhibit excellent discussions on extra-biblical material.

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Leaving the survey of the OT and other Jewish and Christian literature, Laansma launches his NT study in chapter five, "Mt 11:28-30 and Matthew's Wisdom Christology" (49 pp.). In this chapter, Laansma moves beyond the "intriguing possibility" that prevails in NT discussions, namely that Matthew 11:28-30 *must* be interpreted with regard to Sirach 6 and 51 and later gnostic parallels (pp. 8-9, 162). After assessing the wisdom myth in Matthew 11:19, 25-27, 28-30; 23:34-36, 37-39 (p. 163-86), he concludes that though wisdom thought is present, "the evidence does not support the contention that Matthew had an interest in formulating the identification of Jesus and Wisdom" (p. 185). Laansma then challenges Ben Witherington's contention that "Jesus = Wisdom" in Matthew 11:28-30 (pp. 186-207; cp. 235-38). When the dust finally settles, Laansma concedes that Matthew 11:25-27 may convey an "awareness of wisdom coloring," but verse "29c makes it very unlikely that the connection with Wisdom was his primary concern" (pp. 205-07).

After dispelling the wisdom myth of Jesus = Wisdom, Laansma demonstrates how it is that Matthew 11:28-30 is not at all an allusion to Sirach in chapter six, "The Meek King and God's Promise of Rest" (42 pp.). He argues convincingly for Matthew 11:28-30's conceptual and verbal connections with the Davidic dynasty in the OT rest tradition whereby Matthew presents Jesus as the lowly king, the Son of David. Laansma muses, "Matthew clearly saw in the Logion before him a reminiscence of a very familiar OT tradition, *God's promise of rest to his people*" and thereby "would have been well aware of its close tie to David, Solomon, and the Davidic dynasty" (p. 223). Although Laansma recognizes that Matthew 11:28-30 does not correspond exactly to some of the OT rest tradition passages (e.g., 2 Sam. 7:11), Matthew's Jesus "utters the Logion as the Son of David who himself claims to bring to fulfillment the oft repeated, OT promise of YHWH to his people, the promise of rest" (p. 251).

Laansma addresses the concept of rest in Hebrews 3-4 in chapter eight, "A Promise Remains" (pp. 106). Unlike Matthew, the author of Hebrews (*Auctor*) "leaves no doubt that he is making use of the OT rest tradition and that he is connecting it with the hope of a future Sabbath" (p. 252). Laansma, first addresses issues such as apocalypticism, dualism, and Hellenism (pp.253-59). Preliminaries continue with specific exegetical questions about chapters 3-4, namely the background of Kadesh Barnea, the context of the "word of exhortation," and topology (pp. 259-75). Having argued that Hebrews 3-4 speaks of two situations, namely two "parallel" communities and their respective response to God's voice, Laansma moves on to define *κατapaυσις* and *σαββατισμος* (pp. 276-83). On the one hand, *σαββατισμος* is a Sabbath celebration and not a quietistic ideal nor a locale. On the other hand, *κατapaυσις* is a local reality, a place, similar to other eschatological, local realities (i.e., "the coming world" in 2:5; the heavenly city in 11:10, 16; 12:22; 13:14; the unshakeable kingdom in 12:28, etc.). Preliminaries completed, Laansma provides an exposition of Hebrews 4:1-11 (pp. 283-305). He presents and argues that God's resting place is where God holds his own Sabbath celebration, a place which was always intended for human entrance, promised to the "fathers," and is yet to be realized.

After extensive interaction with the text and various proposals on the background of καταπαυσις (Philonic and gnostic of Kasemann/Grasser; Jewish Apocalyptic of Hofius; and independent Hellenistic Jewish Christian), Laansma concludes “*Auctor* absorbs the καταπαυσις of 94,11 [95,11] into his promise Christology.” The language of the Psalm is “a reference to a heavenly and eschatological *Heilsgut*,” which is associated with God’s own rest from his works at creation (Gen 2:2). Laansma rightly recognizes the background of the OT as primary for understanding *Auctor*’s essential concerns. *Auctor* does, however, share the apocalyptic idea that “the καταπαυσις is prepared in heaven and entered eschatologically in conjunction with a resurrection and judgment, that the עולם הבא (world-to-come) will be a day which is ‘wholly Sabbath and rest’” (pp. 357-58).

Chapter eight concisely concludes his work (7 pp.). Although the tendency exists to associate Matthew 11 and Hebrews 3-4 with Gnosticism, Laansma reiterates the importance of not exaggerating such religious historical assignments. Thus he concludes, “our investigation has highlighted the distinctive concerns of the two writers and led us to doubt that they share a branch in the family tree of Gnosis” (pp. 360-62). Laansma, also remains true to his intention to let each passage speak for itself. Though he does recognize conceptual similarities, Laansma clearly identifies the important differences between the two passages (pp. 362-66).

I Will Give You Rest is researched well, grounded in sound reasoning, and presented pointedly. With the exception of the overly cumbersome and excessive length of chapter seven, Laansma divides his material into manageable units for reading purposes. Digesting all that Laansma has to offer, however, will require more than a single reading. A second and perhaps even a third read will be necessary in order to capture the breath of his contributions. Nevertheless, Laansma’s work is a must read for any serious study of the rest motif in the New Testament.

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Bruce Longenecker, ed. *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002. 253 pp., paper, \$24.95.

Narrative analysis is an academic darling that has risen out of the humanities in the last few decades. Despite the postmodern concern with narrative and the rising interest in the Jewish backgrounds of Paul, narrative analysis has been slow to show its face within the field of Pauline research. Though there have been a handful of groundbreaking works from scholars like Richard Hays and N.T. Wright, as well as another handful of syntheses and critiques, *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment* represents the first attempt by a group of scholars to assess the advantages and disadvantages of such an approach. This volume is intended to help determine the shape of a narrative approach to Paul in the years to come.

Much of the genius of this project is in a research methodology that features dialogue. Twelve top scholars were chosen from Britain’s tight knit New Testament community to explore the possibilities and limitations of the narrative elements found

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within the Pauline corpus. The project was defined by five basic stories found within Paul: 1) God and Creation, 2) Israel, 3) Jesus, 4) Paul, and 5) the Inheritors and Predecessors of Paul's Gospel. These five topics are each debated within the letters of Romans and Galatians by two scholars, with an introduction provided by the editor, Bruce Longenecker, as well as two concluding essays from colleagues within the group. The debate was heightened by a round table discussion with all the scholars and including N.T. Wright.

Many potential exegetical problems are worked out through the round table format. For example, Longenecker's essay on the stories of Israel in Galatians and Romans found inconsistencies in the story Paul was working from. Because of the dialogical approach, Morna Hooker's critique—that Longenecker was incorrect in his reading of Galatians—was both anticipated and responded to in the footnotes of Longenecker's original article. This three dimensional tactic is shown in the debate between John Barclay and David Horrell on Paul's own story. Barclay sought to demonstrate how Paul's story is also a telling of the other stories, and warns against an atomistic approach to narrative analysis. Horrell's response to Barclay's excellent essay is sharp, cutting right to the issues in question, and attempts to clear up some of the muddy aspects of methodology.

Because of the newness of the field, there is still an occasional blurring of socio-rhetorical or foreground narrative analysis with the criticism of the narrative substructure that lies beneath the writings and which reveal the nature of Paul's thought world. Though Dunn touches on this concern in his concluding critique, it is never brought to any kind of conclusion. Some of the essays differ little from the way New Testament theology brings individual strands together into a cohesive whole; other essays hint at the refreshing possibilities that a narrative approach could have for understanding Paul. Watson is correct in his concluding essay that there is great ambivalence in the term "story." There is a need for a further volume honing the methodology of narrative analysis, and discovering the relationships between such ideas as poetic sequence, intertextuality, myth, narrative substructure, and the components of a narrative thought world, worldview, or symbolic universe.

Though the academic quality of the project is high, the essays are accessible to students willing to familiarize themselves with the background reading. These scholars are not only getting their feet wet (often for the first time from this perspective), but also wading into the debate—and only occasionally concerned about their traditional sand castles threatened by the incoming academic tide. The result is a refreshing collection of essays that give us a taste of the possibilities of a metanarrative to help bring clarity to some of Paul's writings. Despite the need for future work, this volume is essential for determining if narrative analysis will be a fad that passes with postmodernity's self-deconstruction, or will remain in the exegetical tool belt of future generations.

In the end, *Narrative Dynamics in Paul* is a story about a dozen of Britain's finest scholars meeting with one of the founding fathers of a burgeoning tradition, and engaging in old-fashioned dialogue and debate about the field of narrative analysis. It is well worth a read.

Brenton Dickieson, Regent College

Daniel Marguerat, *The First Christian Historian: Writing the "Acts of the Apostles."* JSNT Supplement Series; 121. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. xii + 299 pp, hardback, \$60.00.

The style and purpose of Luke's second volume has been debated for over one hundred fifty years. Is Luke following the conventions of an ancient novel or historical novel? Is he writing a history, utilizing the method of Thucydides in composing his speeches? What is the role of the Holy Spirit? Why is Paul's conversion mentioned three times? These are among the questions Marguerat addresses in his short monograph. In the process, intriguing issues are raised, stimulating the reader's interest.

The book is divided into eleven chapters. Of special interest is the opening chapter on Luke's historical method. Marguerat acknowledges that Luke writes from a specific point of view, rather than simply attempting to reproduce the "facts" of "what actually happened." Yet, such concerns of the modern age would not be important for Luke's account. "Rather, it must be evaluated according to the *point of view of the historian* which controls the writing of the narrative, *the truth* that the author aims to communicate and *the need for identity* to which the work of the historian responds (pp. 6-7, italics original). Indeed, Luke's method does correspond to the ten criteria of Lucian of Samosata's *How to Write History* (p. 14), as well as the conventions of the LXX, as encapsulated in 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings and 1-2 Maccabees. Thus, "Luke is situated precisely at the meeting point of Jewish and Greek historiographical currents" (p. 25).

Likewise, the chapter 3, discussing the unity of Luke-Acts, provides the reader with grist for thought. Marguerat concludes that Luke is both a historian and a theologian. Yet, the two tasks are actually in tension. As a theologian, Luke is anxious to demonstrate the continuity of God in history. Yet, as a historian, he recognizes that history develops, and that major shifts occur (see p. 63). Thus, the tension between the continuing validity of the Law of Moses, and the expansion of the gospel to the Gentiles, who are not under constraint to obey the full Law are tensions that remain unresolved.

The reader's most cherished assumptions about Acts are also challenged. It is often thought that one of the major themes in Acts is the role of the Holy Spirit, who guides the church at each of its major decisions (see 1:24-16; 2:1-4; 13:2; 16:7). Yet, as Marguerat points out in chapter 6 (pp. 109-128), "The work of the Holy Spirit," the Holy Spirit becomes less prominent as the narrative progresses (pp. 110-113). The Holy Spirit works much in the same way as the Spirit of God does in the Old Testament, for, "Luke does not see the Spirit as the source of faith, but sees him taking hold of believers, in response to their prayer, in order to integrate them into the witness of Christ" (p. 128).

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Finally, the reader is provided new perspectives for understanding well-known themes. In chapter 9 (pp. 178-204) Marguerat discusses Paul's conversion. It is an event of singular significance for Luke, which is narrated three times (in Acts 9; 22; and 26). Yet, each time, the details are slightly different. Is this a feature of Luke's disregard for historical detail, as some critics have maintained? According to Marguerat, it is not, for each account is trying to make a different point. In the first instance, the emphasis is on Paul's dramatic change of life, and the ecclesiastical point is made. In chapter 22, the point is the affirmation of Paul's Jewishness, as we see in his speaking to the crowds in "Hebrew" (i.e., Aramaic) in 21:40, his training under Gamaliel (22:5), and his prayer in the temple (22:17-21). In chapter 26 Luke is asserting the power of the risen Christ.

In conclusion, there is much in Marguerat's book to commend it to the reader. The careful exegesis is enlightening. The familiarity with ancient sources, both their parallels and differences from Luke's account, provide the reader with a cautious analysis, avoiding some of the enthusiasm for supposed "parallels" discovered by earlier critics. The book is well worth the reader's time and attention.

Russell Morton

Scot McKnight and Matthew C. Williams. *The Synoptic Gospels: An Annotated Bibliography*. Institute for Biblical Research Bibliographies 6. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000. 126 pp., paper, \$14.99.

In a series dedicated to facilitating scholars with bibliographic material, Scot McKnight and Matthew C. Williams make a valuable addition, this time in Synoptic Gospels research. For those unfamiliar with the series, these bibliographies are produced under the auspices of the Institute for Biblical Research. Each bibliography is intent on making accessible the most recent English-language works in order to "compliment and expedite thorough, informed research." Every bibliographic entry is annotated, that is, briefly discussed (one to three sentences in length) in order to inform the reader about their contents and general usefulness.

This sixth volume, dealing specifically with Synoptic Gospels research, is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter discusses bibliographies, surveys, and general introductions to the basic issues in Synoptic studies. The second chapter discusses textual issues, specifically textual criticism, style and language, contextual studies, and the use of the Old Testament in the Synoptic Gospels. The third chapter discusses methodological issues, specifically general studies, source criticism, Q studies, form criticism, redaction criticism, aesthetic criticism, social-scientific criticism, and genre criticism. Chapters four through six deal with each of the Synoptic Gospels in turn by their canonical order. The topics include introductory issues, commentaries, and special studies (which varies depending on the Gospel). Finally, the seventh chapter discusses theology. This final chapter comments on those studies that summarize the theology of the Synoptic Gospels in a synthetic manner.

The Synoptic Gospels: An Annotated Bibliography is an excellent resource for students and pastors. As the series to the preface states, this volume will “help guide students to works relevant to their research interests. They cut down the time needed to locate material, thus providing the researcher with more time to read, assimilate, and write” (7). Whether one uses the bibliography at the beginning of research, or to check that no major English-language work has been missed, the volume is valuable. Many other works could have been added to the bibliography, but that is beyond the purpose of the series. The goal of the series is not comprehensiveness, but up-to-date bibliographic access. According to the preface, the Institute for Biblical Research and Baker Book House is to publish updates of each volume about every five years (8). Such an accomplishment will provide students with the most relevant information of research in the field of biblical studies in an easily accessible and summarized fashion. This volume, as well as its counterparts, would be a valuable addition to the libraries of both individuals and academic institutions.

Edward W. Klink III, University of St. Andrews

John McRay, *Paul: His Life and Teaching*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Press, 2003. 479 pp, hardcover, \$32.99.

John McRay's book is intended for an evangelical audience, much in the tradition of F.F. Bruce's *Paul, Apostle of the Heart Set Free*. Like Bruce, McRay focuses more on the life of Paul as represented in the Book of Acts than upon Paul's letters. In this way the work is distinguished from more critical analyses of Paul, such as those of Beker, Sanders and Dunn. Unlike Bruce, McRay has separate section on the teachings of Paul. McRay has written an ambitious work, which, unfortunately, suffers from a lack of critical acumen that jeopardizes its value as a work on the life and thought of Paul.

McRay's first section is entitled “Paul's Life” (pp. [19]-260), where an attempt is made to fill in the sparse detail provided by the Book of Acts. McRay presents an interesting chronology of Paul's life (pp. 73-9), where the conversion of Paul is dated at A.D. 34, conducts the First Missionary Journey in 47-48, the second in 49-51 and the Third in 51-54. The Jerusalem Conference is dated at 49, with Paul's death being placed at 68. McRay accepts the so-called “South Galatian Hypothesis, but with a twist. Instead of trying to date Paul's account of Gal. 2 within the context of the Book of Acts (such as with the so-called “Famine Visit,” Acts 11:29-30), he dates it as a third visit, which Luke omits (pp. 105-106). The logic seems to be an effort to rescue both the accuracy of Acts and Paul's accounts. Nevertheless, McRay's analysis here is not convincing.

Equally problematic are McRay's frequent excursions into psychologizing. While speculation and historical imagination are often helpful, one must be careful not to let imagination substitute for evidence. The reader is further hampered by incomplete information. One example is found on p. 244, where the city of Rome is described, and it mentions that adjacent to the Palatine Hill to the south is the Colosseum. McRay fails to note, however, that the Colosseum's construction was begun by Vespasian and completed by Titus, and that it was not standing at the time of Paul.

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The second portion of the book, entitled "Paul's Teaching" (pp. [261]-447), also presents problems. While discussing Paul's view of the atonement (pp. 317-333), a substantial section (pp. 319-325) examines the role of Christ as High Priest in Hebrews. McRay's defense for this analysis is that "[w]hile Hebrews may not have been written by Paul, the early church considered it sufficiently 'Pauline' in its content to include it in the two oldest and best-known lists of the Pauline canon" (p. 320). Even if most Christians in the early centuries of church history accepted Hebrews as Pauline, virtually no scholar today would. Including Hebrews' discussion of Jesus as High Priest, an image that occurs nowhere in Paul himself, to explain Paul's understanding of the atonement is unconvincing.

Furthermore, in chapter 13 (pp. 334-351), we read the title, "The Heart of Paul: The Theology of Ephesians." McRay opens with the acknowledgment that the authorship of Ephesians is questioned (pp. 334-336), before opting for traditional authorship (pp. 336-339). While McRay accepts Ephesians as Pauline, as is his right, to call a disputed letter the "heart of Paul" is, again, unconvincing.

Finally, for a book that claims to be addressed to students, it is remarkable that there are no bibliographies at the end of the chapters. There are extensive footnotes, but sometimes the scholarship represented by them is dated, as, for example, constant reference to R.H. Charles's edition of the *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (1910-1911). Again, the casual reader would not be aware of the explosion of studies on Second Temple Judaism in the last thirty years by reading McRay's book.

In conclusion, while lay readers may glean something of profit from McRay's book, in the end, it fails in presenting a convincing portrait of the Apostle Paul. The first section indulges in psychologizing, and contains occasional misleading statements. The second section fails in addressing Paul's theology and engages in questionable methodology. The lack of helpful bibliographical material is another setback. It is unfortunate that a more adequate work could not have been written.

Russell Morton

C. Marvin Pate, *Four Views on the Book of Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998. 252 pp., paper, \$ 16.99.

As the title explains, this work focuses specifically on the book of Revelation. The views presented are preterist, idealist and futurist. The futurist approach is treated twice as classical and progressive dispensationalism. The four parts are authored by proponents of each view.

The preterist read of Revelation interprets the book as being fulfilled in the first centuries of the Christian era. It is a review of the history of that period. The idealist approach focuses on the ongoing conflict of good and evil with little or no historical connection. Thus Revelation is to be interpreted symbolically. Classical dispensationalism divides salvation history into eras or epochs according to how God

administered differently in each. The interpretation of Revelation is literal. Thus chapters 4-22 are viewed as prophecies of that which is yet to come. Progressive dispensationalism adds to the classical approach the idea of already/not yet. Thus the differences with the classical approach are as follows: (1) PD holds that Jesus began his Davidic heavenly reign with the resurrection, (2) the church is not a parenthesis in God's plan, (3) the New Covenant is beginning to be fulfilled in the church.

The real question the book helps the reader decide is whether Revelation is a blueprint for the future or is it to be interpreted more symbolically. The four authors clearly and carefully set forth their varying positions.

Richard E. Allison

Stanley E. Porter, *The Criteria for Authenticity in Historical-Jesus Research: Previous Discussion and New Proposals*. JSNTS upp 191; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000. 299 pp., cloth, \$85.00.

This is an important book on an issue of import more widely than just in the area of historical Jesus research. While the particular topic is narrow ("the use of the Greek language as providing the basis for new criteria for establishing authentic sayings of Jesus," 17), there are important ramifications for the whole area of historiography. How does one, in biblical studies or even more widely, establish the validity of historical claims and interpretations? This is most particularly important in the field under discussion here, since the work of the Jesus Seminar, and others, has raised questions, at least among the laity, about what we can know about Jesus at all.

The author, formerly Professor of Theology at the University of Surrey Roehampton and currently and current President of McMaster Divinity College in Canada, is a prolific author and editor as well as an expert in Greek, and is well qualified to address this topic.

The book is presented in 2 parts: previous discussion and new proposals. In the first chapter, Porter addresses the 'Third Quest' for the historical Jesus, looking at their predecessor quests and questioning whether there is any substantive difference between the second quest and current research. He provides a helpful 3-page timeline of the quest, giving names, dates, and influences on many of the scholars involved. In the second chapter, Porter looks specifically at the development of criteria for authenticity, along with the rise of form and redaction criticism. He presents and evaluates the criteria of double dissimilarity ('still widely used', 76), least distinctiveness (diminishing use), coherence or consistency (problematic), multiple-attestation of cross-section (often without foundation), Semitic language phenomena (in trouble). Porter includes a 1-page table showing the various criteria from this and the next chapter, their dates, the criticisms ('Higher', form and redaction) and quest to which they relate. A shorter 3rd chapter looks at recent developments, especially looking at the work of John Meier (criteria of embarrassment, and 'rejection and execution') and Gerd Theissen (criterion of historical plausibility). In all, the section is clearly written, comprehensive, and quite helpful.

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Porter's proposal is to move beyond the Semitic language background to criteria of Greek language and its context, Greek textual variance (comparing pericopes between the Synoptics), and discourse features (using the relatively recent, and often helpful, area of discourse analysis or textlinguistics). He provides a compact but in-depth overview of Greek language and socio-historical study, showing how this burgeoning field, especially among Evangelical scholars, has relevance for determining Jesus' words. (Also included is a special, 17-page excursus in response to the views of Maurice Casey). As a model for his last criterion, he analyses Mark 13.

At each stage, Porter's resources through footnotes and concluding bibliography (over 30 pages in length) is extensive and representative. His most frequent sources and dialogue partners are Craig Evans and Gerd Theissen. If only for the bibliographical resources, if not for his helpful analyses and suggestions, this volume will need to be consulted by all engaged in the study of the historical Jesus, and of biblical historiography more widely. For academic libraries.

David W. Baker

John Christopher Thomas, *The Devil, Disease and Deliverance: Origins of Illness in New Testament Thought*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998. 360 pp., paper, \$21.95.

John Christopher Thomas is Professor of New Testament at the Church of God School of Theology in Cleveland, Tennessee. A scholar and pastor within the Pentecostal and charismatic traditions, Thomas was struck by a significant disparity on the issue of healing. On the one hand, healing receives much popular attention, but on the other hand scholars devote little time to it. Confusion and controversy reign over the relationships between the Devil and disease, sickness and sin, healing and forgiveness, and exorcism and deliverance.

Thomas finds three main approaches to divine healing within these traditions. The first view is that a demon lurks behind every illness or misfortune. So, every healing requires a rebuke of Satan and prayer for healing from God. A lack of healing, in this view, reveals a lack of faith. The second view is that while all sickness ultimately arises due to the Devil, not every particular instance has a demonic origin. Since we all live in a fallen world, much illness now arises from natural sources. This approach points out that there is little biblical support for extensive demonic activity in illness. Therefore, Christians should always pray for healing, but should not always expect divine healing. The third group Thomas calls 'functional deists.' They genuinely believe that God does heal and that the Devil can cause illness, but they are turned off by the excesses of some advocates, and confused over how to discern God's will in specific instances. They pray for healing but don't expect it to occur.

Thomas responds to this confusion and controversy by providing a literary analysis of the New Testament texts dealing with healing. He criticizes much previous historical-critical analysis of these texts because of its focus on "artificial hypothetical

reconstructions" (p. 15) which have sometimes ignored or distorted the plain meaning of the text. Thomas claims many scholars construct a first-century view of the demonic and then read the New Testament texts into this construct. Thomas' literary approach finds little textual evidence that the early church believed that demons were behind most illnesses.

Thomas begins his study with James 5:14-16 because this is the only New Testament passage describing a procedure for divine healing. It explicitly links sin and sickness and appears to assume that healing can be expected and should be a part of the on-going ministry of the church. It has thus been a central passage in the development of Pentecostalism. Thomas reviews the many different interpretations of this passage. He points to the Old Testament backdrop of God punishing sin, sometimes by inflicting illness. But he also shows clearly that even in the Old Testament, not all sickness was viewed as being due to sin. He concludes that James 5 teaches that some illness is the result of sin, and when the connection is known, the sin should be confessed. Therefore, a ministry of healing should exist in the church. However, this passage does not teach that all illness is the result of sin.

Thomas then turns to the Pauline material and points to Paul's validation of his own ministry through signs and wonders (1 Corinthians 12:12; Romans 15:18-19) and his teaching on the gifts of healing (1 Corinthians 12:9). However, Thomas points out that with the possible exception of the thorn in the flesh "Paul does not attribute sickness or disease to the Devil and/or demons" (p. 43). Paul does see a connection between sin and sickness or death (1 Corinthians 11:27-34), but the purpose of such suffering is discipline. At the same time, Galatians 4 shows that even an apostle could have an illness without being possessed or under divine judgment.

Paul's affliction with the thorn in the flesh arose from his divine visions, showing that true spirituality did not protect him from infirmities. It also demonstrates that the prayer of a godly man does not always lead to healing. Epaphroditus is another godly man whose service of God led to sickness and whom God did not miraculously heal (Philippians 2:25-30). Again, Timothy's stomach trouble gives no hint that sickness was a negative reflection of his spirituality and Paul's recommendation of wine shows that medicines were permitted (2 Timothy 4:20).

Thomas next moves to the Johannine literature that reveals a clear and strong connection between sin and sickness (John 5), but with an assumption that the person would know the precise nature of the sin. It is also clear that all sickness is not the direct result of sin (John 9). In the case of the blind man, God is seen as the origin of the illness. From this, we see that suffering can sometimes be the will of God in order to bring about the works of God. Illness is never attributed to Satan by John. There are other cases where the origin of the illness is not clarified, leaving the suggestion that it can be of purely natural origin. In response to divine healing, giving testimony is the appropriate response. Prayer should be the response to illness, presumably with prayer for discernment as to whether the sickness was a form of punishment for sin or something that would lead to God's works being manifested. The greeting in 3 John is often taken to support the view that God desires all believers to prosper and have perfect health. However, Thomas clearly demonstrates that this verse was a standard literary device used

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in both Christian and secular letters of the day. Finding a theology of health and prosperity here is a function of eisegesis, not exegesis.

So far in his study, Thomas finds little evidence that illness was attributed to the Devil or demons, but this picture slowly begins to change with the Synoptic gospels. Here, Jesus is in conflict with demons and various infirmities are attributed to demons or unclean spirits. Unlike James, Paul and John, Mark does not directly attribute illness to sin. He does link it with Satan, but he also attributes the same symptoms to non-demonic illness. Thomas claims that the church should be able discern the origin of an illness, but gives little indication where this particular claim finds biblical warrant.

Matthew has more infirmities caused by demons than Mark, but most accounts don't indicate demonic involvement in illness. Matthew never attributes illness to God, or sin as a cause of illness. Luke, unlike all the others, seems to group healing and exorcism together and thus Pentecostal and charismatic traditions turn to Luke-Acts for biblical support. However, Thomas notes that Luke is not reluctant to attribute death or illness to the hand of God. This may be due to unbelief, or may be sent by God for redemptive purposes. In those cases, it can sometimes be removed by prayer. Luke also makes a close connection between infirmity and demons, and in these cases exorcism can lead to healing. However, Luke also includes numerous healings with no indication of the origin of the illness with a presumption that the illness was of natural origin. Luke also describes devout people who are afflicted by demons without being demon-possessed. Luke 13 makes it clear that natural calamities are not always a gauge of one's sinfulness, and Thomas believes it is legitimate to apply this principle to illness also.

These findings for Luke become the foundation of Thomas' overall conclusion. "In contrast to claims made both at the scholarly and popular levels, the New Testament writers generally make a clear distinction between demon possession and illness" (p. 301). The vast majority of New Testament illness references give no indication as to the origin of the infirmity. Thomas concludes, therefore, that most sickness should be seen as neutral and natural in origin.

Our responses to illness should then include prayer, discernment (as to whether or not sin is involved), confession and intercession (when sin is involved), exorcism of possessed non-believers, and appropriate use of medicine. Applying his findings to those within the Pentecostal and charismatic traditions, Thomas notes that "a total rejection of the use of doctors outdistances the New Testament teaching and thus may do much to harm rather than help" (p. 319).

Since only about ten percent of all infirmities described in the New Testament are attributed to demons, "it would seem wise to avoid the temptation of assuming that in most cases an infirmity is caused by Satan and/or demons. Such a realization, and in some cases adjustment in thinking, could serve to bring a degree of moderation through biblical critique to an area that has been and continues to be sorely abused. . . . the current specialization in exorcisms by some in the church is misdirected at best. . . . there is precious little evidence in the New Testament to support many of the claims that come from those in the 'deliverance ministry'" (pp. 317-8).

Thomas' excellent book should be read and studied by anyone seeking to bring the healing power of God to others.

Dónal P. O'Mathúna, Mount Carmel College of Nursing, Columbus, Ohio

Brad H. Young, *The Parables: Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation*, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998. 332 pp., hardcover, \$24.95.

Young's investigation and analysis is both interesting and challenging. The introduction gives a solid overview of parables in general as teaching tools. Young also surveys the relationship between Jesus' parables and the broader context of Rabbinic Judaism. He makes extensive use of Jewish materials related to Second Temple Judaism including the Mishnah, Talmud, Dead Sea Scrolls, as well as the work of modern Jewish scholars and other major secondary sources. The general outline he follows in his exposition of the various parables is logical and helpful. He opens with a "focus" section describing the basic thrust or theme of each parable. He then generally surveys the history of Christian interpretation, followed by an analysis of the original setting in life with a comparison to Rabbinic parallels if applicable, or Jewish tradition in general before bringing us to his conclusions on a particular parable.

Young's analysis of the well known parable of the prodigal son is excellent, and he elucidates some very interesting background information not found in most commentaries on this parable. He notes that according to Middle Eastern culture and Jewish tradition the older son should act as a mediator in times of family crisis or dispute. This shines more light on the older son's shortcomings. When the younger asked for his portion of the inheritance, the older should have intervened and attempted to talk his brother out of such a shameful request. The older son's inappropriate silence would have been noted by the original audience. The older brother had a responsibility to shield his father from the hurt of such an impudent demand from the younger child. This type of additional information offered by Young shows that in this parable the older son is not merely less important third figure, but a significant actor in this mini drama, and one with some more subtle but significant shortcomings of his own. The original audience then would have perceived the older son as failing in his family role and showing a level of selfishness similar to but more subtle than that of his younger brother. By passively acquiescing to the division of the estate he demonstrates that he too is selfish and self centered only in a different way, thus the later protestations of obedience by the older brother would have had a rather hollow ring to the original audience. The older brother is actually portrayed as being quite emotionally distant from both his father and younger brother, yet the father remains gracious and accepting of him as well. Young's exposition of this parable thus adds greatly to our understanding of this well known parable. Young's use of relevant cultural clues and Jewish sources are a primary strength of this book. Young is not merely rehashing minutiae of linguistic analysis or seeking some novel source critical angle, he is adding valuable new insights to our understanding of the parables through extensive comparison with Jewish thought, theology and culture of the Second Temple period.

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Young's interpretation of the perplexing parable of the unjust steward is very stimulating and it might be more controversial than his other expositions. He contends (following Flusser) that Jesus's reference to "sons of light" (Luke 16:8) is not a reference to his own followers but rather a reference to the Essenes at Qumran, thus the parable is an indictment against the Essene policy of total withdrawal from the surrounding society, refusal to interact with outsiders and their financial policies. A less controversial, but illuminating point that Young makes is with regard to the owner's commendation to the fired steward for his shrewd action in reducing the debtor's debt loads. Young indicates that we are looking at an honor and shame culture. Honor being the highest good that can be attained, more prized than even material wealth. The fired steward attained honor for the owner by means of the debt reduction. The debtors were as yet unaware that the steward had been fired; they would have attributed the good fortune of their debt reduction to the generosity of the owner, and publicly praised his generosity to others in the community. The owner would gain favor and honor within the community. The owner would then in an awkward position where he could not go back to the debtors and ask for the original debts, such action would garner resentment and lower the high esteem he had just achieved in the community. The steward's personally motivated actions thus gained social goodwill for both himself and his former employer. Even if one rejects the association of the "sons of light" with the Essenes, the illumination of the context in an honor and shame culture makes both the actions of the steward and the owner's response to his actions far more intelligible than they would otherwise be to a modern Western reader.

The above discussion selected only two parables to give a feel for his approach and contribution to the study of the parables, however his study adds valuable insights to all the parables he reviews. Overall Young's study of the parables is an excellent and stimulating contribution to the study of the parables and is well worth reading.

Christopher Coles

Mark A. Matson, *John: Interpretation Bible Studies*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002. vi+140 pp., \$7.95.

Mark A. Matson's study *John* is the latest addition to John Knox's Interpretation Bible Studies series. The Interpretation Bible Studies series builds upon the Interpretation commentaries (John Knox Press), and continues to provide a high view of biblical authority and excellence in scholarship, with the express goals of helping their readers in perceiving and understanding God's truth so that they may bear spiritual and ethical fruit.

While the book serves largely as a companion piece to the lengthier Interpretation Commentary on *John*, by Gerard Sloyan, the author proves to be insightful in organizing the Gospel thematically. The study itself organizes the material into ten units that attempt to provide a grasp of the major themes and flow from the biblical book.

One of the strengths of the study is the manner in which it is organized. The ten units can be taught over ten weeks or combined for a shorter study. The study can also be integrated with other sources as part of a more in-depth study of the book, or can be used as a personal Bible study. Suggestions for each type of use are included at the back of the book. In addition to the adaptability, Matson also brings a good blending of historical facts and theological insights. The questions for reflection at the end of each unit provide ample opportunity for discussion, and pull the material together nicely. In addition to Sloyan's work, Matson provides good references, giving the reader the means to take his or her study of the fourth Gospel much deeper.

Due to its brevity and scope, *John* does not give much space to such issues as authorship, date, or location of writing, though that is not the author's aim. Instead, the reader is referred to other commentaries. While the series introduction insists that the material can be used as a stand alone study, it must be combined with commentaries and other sources to bring the depth that is needed in most church settings. Additionally, I found that the many sidebars included throughout the text were distracting, pulling the eye away from the text. The back cover suggests that the series includes numerous illustrations and maps. However, the book contains no maps, despite the numerous journeys and variety of locations contained in the Gospel account. Further, the occasional black and white illustrations were too small to be of much practical use and largely represent pictures that can be obtained in any decent set of religious clip art.

On the whole, this book is well worth the cost for anyone who wants to engage in a serious study of the fourth Gospel, either personally or as part of a group study. Though not a replacement for a good commentary, this book helps bring out the Gospel's prominent themes and provides a unity to the Gospel that is sometimes lost in larger works.

Thomas M. Scott

L. Ann Jervis, *Galatians*. New International Biblical Commentary. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999. xiv + 172 pp., paper, \$11.95.

L. Ann Jervis is Associate Professor of New Testament at Wycliffe College, Toronto. She has published several articles and books on issues related to the Pauline corpus. Her work on Galatians in the New International Biblical Commentary is intended to provide the non-theologically trained Bible reader with a reliable exposition of the New International Version.

To her credit, Jervis is forthright about her understanding of Galatians and its impact on the commentary. In her introduction, she proposes that Paul's primary description of the gospel in Galatians is not justification by faith, but rather union with Christ (in keeping with her "New Perspective" proponents E.P. Sanders, Albert Schweitzer and Richard Hays). As one reads through the commentary, it becomes clear that there are two primary interpretive decisions Jervis has made which lead to her conclusion concerning Paul's gospel. First, she takes the phrase *en Christō* found in 1:22; 2:4; 3:14, 26, 28; 5:6 to mean 'in participation with Christ'. She calls this Paul's central

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message in Galatians—that believers are “in Christ” (p.22). Second, she takes the phrase *pistis Christou* found in Gal. 2.16, and 3.22, 33 to mean the “faith of Christ” (subjective genitive). This term, according to Jervis, is not to be confused with the faithfulness of Christ (i.e. his obedience and sacrificial death). Rather, the faith of Christ literally means the faith that Christ has. These two interpretive decisions render the following message in Galatians: Christ’s faith becomes our faith as we participate in him. For Jervis, justification means “being as Christ is, having the same faith that Christ has, which occurs because Christ lives in the believer” (p. 76).

The most helpful contribution that this commentary brings to its intended audience is its concise and even-handed introduction. Jervis addresses the situation and opponents and the date and audience options in a way that would be very helpful for a lay Bible reader who might otherwise be overwhelmed by the competing theories expressed in a more technical commentary. However, both in the introduction and throughout the commentary Jervis fails to sufficiently discuss whether the main Jewish framework Paul was working against was justification by works or covenantal nomism. She devotes only two brief paragraphs (p.84) to prove that covenantal nomism was Paul’s foil, hardly adequate for the commentary’s intended audience.

Another feature that adds value to the commentary is the additional notes contained at the end of each section. These notes reflect Jervis’ expertise in the field, and often include excellent exegetical comments, added background information, helpful bibliographic references, and surveys of the various ways in which a phrase or verse have been interpreted. One such example of the latter can be found on page 82 where Jervis concisely summarizes the various understandings of “works of law” by such influential figures as Luther, Bultmann, Dunn and Sanders. Having these notes at the end helps keep the reader from being distracted from the main discussion.

The most glaring exegetical weakness of Jervis’ work is her insistence that the phrase *en Christō* always means “in participation with Christ” or “union with Christ” (1:22, 2:4, 3:14, 26, 28; 5:6), a move that substantially influences the way she also interprets *pistis Christou* (2:16; 3:22, 33). It would have been more helpful to see other ways the preposition could have been translated and applied.

In the end Jervis’ commentary is a very concise, well-written, and reliable exposition of the “New Perspective” approach to Galatians. The ultimate worth of this commentary will no doubt depend upon whether one embraces Jervis’ overarching understanding of Paul’s gospel and main message in Galatians.

Kelly David Liebengood, SEMINARIO ESEPA, San José, Costa Rica

Ben Witherington, *Grace in Galatia: A Commentary on Paul’s Letter to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. 494 pp., paper, \$37.50.

This work continues the series of ‘socio-rhetorical’ commentaries produced by Ben Witherington in recent years. At over 477 pages, it is a substantial volume with numerous helpful features: (1) a thorough introduction and significant bibliography of

works on Galatians; (2) a verse-by-verse exposition of the text with much attention to syntactical and grammatical issues; (3) ten excurses interspersed throughout the commentary, dealing with issues such as circumcision in the NT world and Paul's view of the Law; (4) eleven sections entitled 'Bridging the Horizons,' which seek to apply the text to areas of modern concern. Witherington brings to this commentary an ability to discuss complicated issues in a clear and helpful way.

As suggested by the designation 'socio-rhetorical commentary,' much of Witherington's focus in the present volume is on applying various insights from the social sciences and rhetorical criticism to the study of Galatians. For instance, Witherington identifies as one of the major theses of his commentary the view that Paul, when he wrote Galatians, was already thinking of Christianity as a sect rather than a reform movement within Judaism. This view comports with Witherington's inclination to see more apocalyptic discontinuity than salvation-historical continuity in Galatians. Much attention is also given to the rhetorical structure of Galatians as Witherington builds his case that rhetorical conventions are more determinative for the structure of the letter than are epistolary forms. In addition, Witherington argues throughout the commentary that Galatians should be seen as deliberative rhetoric rather than forensic rhetoric.

In addition to his socio-rhetorical emphasis, Witherington deals with some of the key questions which inevitably arise in the interpretation of Galatians. Though disagreeing with James Dunn and other proponents of the 'new perspective' that Paul is only polemicizing against those boundary markers which separate Jew from Gentile, Witherington also takes issue with the traditional Lutheran reading of Galatians. In particular, Witherington seeks to show that the pressing issue in Galatians is not about 'getting in' or even 'staying in,' but rather about 'going on.' Though Paul believes that salvation is indeed by faith apart from obedience to the Mosaic Law, he is primarily concerned in Galatians with seeing that the Galatian Christians go on in the faith with which they began their Christian life. In Paul's mind, the crucial factor for the Galatian church is the eschatological work of Christ, which has now made the Law a glorious anachronism.

Several concerns about the commentary may briefly be mentioned. First, it is difficult to discern the intended audience of the commentary. Certain features, such as the application sections and relatively light treatment of text critical issues, seem to incline toward a wider audience, but the length of the commentary and its occasionally technical discussions make it less helpful for those who are not scholars. Second, numerous typographical and grammatical errors prove to be increasingly distracting as one reads through the commentary. Third, though Witherington has made substantial contributions in socio-rhetorical issues and has helpfully brought many Greco-Roman sources to bear upon Galatians, his treatment of Jewish sources and motifs is less substantial (a quick glance at the indices in the back of the book will bear out this observation). For example, although a significant number of recent scholars have argued that Paul in Galatians is drawing upon a sin-exile-restoration motif found often in the OT and Jewish sources, Witherington includes little to no discussion of this possibility.

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Despite these several concerns, Witherington's commentary proves to be a valuable addition to the constantly expanding literature on Paul's letter to the Galatians.
Stephen Witmer, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

Gareth L. Cockerill, *Hebrews: A Bible Commentary in the Wesleyan Tradition*. Indianapolis, Indiana: Wesley Publishing House, 1999. 316 pp. hardback, \$24.99.

Gareth L. Cockerel, Ph.D., is a professor of New Testament and Biblical Theology at Wesley Biblical Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi. As the title indicates, he seeks here to interpret Hebrews from a Wesleyan perspective. The approach is to explain the text of Hebrews paragraph by paragraph. The biblical text from the NIV is not reproduced. Where it is quoted, the text is in bold type. The target audience for the series is the intelligent lay reader.

The sixteen-page introduction includes: characteristics, authorship, recipients, purpose, and Old Testament references. An outline of the text deals with the text in six sections to be discussed later. Extensive footnotes including technical material appear as endnotes to each chapter. A very limited bibliography completes the extra materials.

Following the lead of Hebrews 13.22, the author believes the work is a sermon "reminiscent of synagogue preaching in the Greek speaking world." The question of authorship goes unanswered except to note that the style differs greatly from Paul. The recipients were Hebrew Christians experiencing public shame that apparently had become lax in their Christian living and were stunted in their Christian maturity. The author believes them to be Greek speaking Jewish converts in accord with the title of the book.

The author is committed to an Old Testament pattern of three parts for his basic commentary. Part the first portrays God's people gathered around Mount Sinai. Part the second portrays "God's people in the wilderness traveling to the Promised Land." Part the third "shows the ministry of the high priest." Thus for the author this is expressed in Hebrews as a chiasm as follows:

Sinai Picture (1.1-2.4)

Pilgrimage Picture (2.5-4.13)

High Priest Picture (4.14-10.31)

Pilgrimage Picture (10.32-12.13)

Sinai Picture (12.14-29)

Chapter 13 then becomes a final application and farewell. Each of the pictures in the chiasm is given a Christological interpretation and serves as the basis for understanding the book.

It seems to me that a better approach to Hebrews would be to look at the mass of material concerning the recipients, their problems and their needs (2.1-3; 3.18-19; 4.1-5, 11, 14; 5.11-14; 6.1-8, 11-12; 10.32-37; 12.1-2, 12-17, 25. 13.1-25). Then proceed to (1) Christology and (2) preaching for answers to the perplexing problems of drift, rest, perseverance, suffering, courage and immaturity.

The author exhibits great awareness of quotes from the LXX Old Testament and its usage by the author of Hebrews. Recurring themes receive emphasis throughout the work. This is perhaps the highlight of the study. Considerable attention is paid to the tenses of verbs, which is important but sometimes conclusions are overdrawn.

Richard Allison

Donald A. Hagner, *Encountering the Book of Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2002. 213 pp., paper, \$21.99.

This is an amazingly engaging commentary on one of the most important books in the New Testament. It is an attractive chapter-by-chapter commentary written in a user-friendly, lucid style. There are over sixty side bars filled with informative information such as: an outline of Hebrews, Midrashic interpretation, Psalm 110 in Hebrews, Sabbath Rest, and Melchizedek.

The Encounter Series by Baker targets college-level Bible course as textbooks. However, this work deserves the serious study of any earnest Christian. The work surveys the entire book of Hebrews, moving between its theological message and practical application. The goals of the work are as follows: "(1) present the factual content, (2) introduce historical, geographical and cultural background, (3) outline hermeneutical principles, (4) to work on critical issues, (5) to substantiate the Christian faith."

The author makes the case for a high Christology in Hebrews emphasizing Christ as high priest, the eternal nature of Christ's priesthood, Christ's atoning work, Christ's enthronement, the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice and Christ the author and pioneer of salvation. This is accomplished by demonstrating that the new is already present in the old.

The author considers the work first an exhortation or sermon, then a treatise and finally an epistle exhibiting terminal characteristics of such. The major purpose of Hebrews is "to exhort as the frequently inserted exhortations indicate." Thus careful consideration is given to the circumstances of the original readers. Apparently they are in danger of lapsing back into Judaism or Gentile paganism or perhaps a retreat into proto-Gnosticism. To counter, this according to Dr. Hagner, Hebrews sets forth the "incomparable superiority of Christ and the finality of God's work in Jesus." In other words the answer is preaching and theology. The author of Hebrews accomplishes this by alternating between discourse and application.

The author includes eighteen pages of introduction addressing origin, author, readers, date, purpose, structure, literary genre, archetypes, use of Old Testament, relation of old and new and the problem of anti-semitism in Hebrews. The end materials include: ten pages of Conclusion, setting forth theological emphases, contribution to New Testament theology, what Hebrews offers the church and the individual Christian; an Excursus dealing with entrance into the canon; a Selected Bibliography; a Glossary; a Scripture Index and a Subject Index.

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The book of Hebrews and this commentary serve as a corrective to triumphalism, the get rich quick gospel and easy eschatology exhorting the Christian to persevere in the faith once and for all delivered to the saints. Faith and faithfulness receive greater treatment than in any other book in the New Testament.

The author, Donald Hagner, is the George Eldon Ladd Professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary. He wrote the two-volume Matthew commentary in the Word Biblical Commentary series. The present book is a complement to his Hebrews in the New International Biblical Commentary series.

Richard Allison

William J. Webb. *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals, Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. 2001. 256 pp, paper, \$25.00.

Scripture assumes slavery is an on-going institution and even encourages slaves to obey their masters. How then has the church moved to a consistent stance of abolition? How are we to understand those slavery passages? Should we simply relegate them to obscurity or apply them simplistically to current employee situations (always obey one's employer)? If the church can reject that social institution then using similar reasoning can/does it also reject patriarchy? If the answer is, "yes," then does that also lead to an acceptance of homosexuality?

In his excellent book Webb uses these three topics as case studies to consider a "Redemptive-movement" hermeneutic. He writes, "Relative to when and where the words of scripture were first read, they spoke redemptively to their given communities. Yet, to stay with the isolated words of the text instead of their spirit leads to an equally tragic misreading. To neglect reapplying the redemptive spirit of the text adds a debilitating impotence to a life-transforming gospel that should be unleashed within our modern world" (50).

Webb analyzes many of the most important texts regarding these topics, but he is most interested in providing the reader with a way to help them consider the cultural component of any text. He assesses whether a text is "culturally bound" or is "trans-cultural" (timeless). "...what aspects of the text should we continue to practice and what aspects should we discontinue or change due to differences between cultures" (51). Webb works through 18 different criteria to consider the influence of culture on a particular text. In addition to his three primary topics he also makes use of many less controversial subjects as examples to demonstrate how a particular criteria works.

Webb uses a case-study format and the topic of women to arrange his 18 criteria, moving from the most persuasive for that discussion to those that are inconclusive. His table of contents consists of his hermeneutical terminology that is often not clear until one reads the section it refers to. However, once having read the book, the titles become useful for future reference. The order would be different for other topics since not every criterion is equally relevant for every topic. By comparing and

contrasting the criteria with various topics he demonstrates the strengths and weaknesses of each criterion.

Webb guides decisions about the application of a text with a 'ladder of abstraction.' Cultural forms are at the bottom with trans-cultural principles at the top. Following the redemptive spirit of the text one can identify a higher principle and apply it in our culture. For example, the Old Testament command to leave the corners of one's fields unharvested is a culturally specific application of a higher trans-cultural principle to help/feed the poor and even of the higher command to love your neighbor. Leaving the corners of fields unharvested today would not do the urban poor much good given their living distance from wheat fields but the trans-cultural principle of caring for the poor still stands (210). Thus the redemptive concern of the text is not lost when the culturally specific application is no longer possible.

Webb is an egalitarian and does not believe scripture supports homosexuality but he considers other perspectives fairly (even including a chapter titled, *What if I'm Wrong*). In addition he also discusses why scripture accepts cultural practices that we perceive today as inherently unjust and how we determine what is "better" or "redemptive." Webb's extensive bibliography is helpfully grouped by topic and he has included four appendixes where he has collected information or commentary both ancient and modern on scripture related to women.

I have only small criticism of this book. His focus is cultural hermeneutics so he touches on other hermeneutical approaches only sporadically. Thus Webb can consider a soft-patriarchy as a possibility (243). A feminist hermeneutic would question that it is possible to privilege or honor one gender over the other without diminishing the value and role of the other gender based on the *experience* of women (not one of his criterion). So the reader must consider how other hermeneutical methods may also shed light on the discussion. Secondly Webb seems to make a significant logical error early in his book. He notes that when moving from ultra-soft slavery to abolitionism the last thing to go is *ownership*. He then states that moving from patriarchy to egalitarianism for women the last thing to go is *hierarchy* (48). I would suggest that the last thing to go is hierarchy based on *gender* irregardless of gifting, interest, or calling which is different than arguing against all forms of hierarchy.

I found this book extremely helpful in developing a consistent and reasoned way to interpret scripture. Webb's effort to provide an objective approach to these topics is of great value to anyone wanting to keep all of scripture authoritative and who may be struggling with these issues. Overall this is a finely written study of cultural hermeneutics on some very important issues and well worth reading.

Donna Laird

Gabriele Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways between Qumran and Enochic Judaism*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. xx + 230 pp., paper, \$25.

In *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*, Gabriele Boccaccini is concerned with the origin of the Essene movement and its relationship with the people of Qumran.

Boccaccini offers an alternative hypothesis to Essene origins and its connections to Qumran, namely, the Enochic/Essene Hypothesis. Boccaccini claims that "Enochic Judaism is the modern name for the mainstream body of the Essene party, from which the Qumran community parted as a radical, dissident, and marginal offspring" (16). For Boccaccini, systemic analysis is a methodology that allows texts to be grouped according to chronology and ideological structure rather than traditional associations. Through "systemic analysis of middle Judaic documents" (middle Judaism refers to the period during which "Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism emerged from their common 'biblical' roots" [xiii]), Boccaccini believes it is possible to distinguish between Enochic Essenism and Essenism associated with Qumran. According to Boccaccini, these have been misleadingly combined under the title *Essene* by ancient historiography, resulting in an ideologically monolithic perspective of Essenism in modern scholarship. Although historiography is important to Boccaccini, it has served to confusingly link *trajectories* of Judaism into a single expression of Judaism that many scholars mistakenly refer to as Essene.

Through historiographical analysis, Boccaccini describes the Essenes, as recorded in Jewish sources (Philo and Josephus) and non-Jewish sources (Pliny the Elder and Dio of Prusa), in the following manner: 1) both sets of sources can be confidently referring to the common phenomenon of Essenism through their common usage of the term Essene; 2) all characteristics of the Dead Sea Essenes (described by Pliny and Dio) applied to the Essenes located throughout Palestine (described by Philo and Josephus), yet with less intensity and radicalization; 3) the Dead Sea Essenes were characterized by their distinctiveness – they were intriguing sensationalism for hunters of exotic stories such as Pliny and Dio (48-49). "In short, historiographical analysis leads to the overall conclusion that the community of the Dead Sea, described by Pliny and Dio, was a radical and minority group within the larger Essene movement, described by Philo and Josephus" (49).

Qumran was also inheritor of more than a tendency to radicalize Essenism, however. According to Boccaccini's systemic analysis, Qumran can be shown to have been involved in the ongoing opposition of Enochic and Zadokite Judaism. The Enochic priestly establishment openly opposed the Zadokite priestly establishment somewhere between the 4th and 3rd centuries B.C.E. As inheritors of this schism, the Qumran library is representative of the diverse theological perspectives of its manuscripts, although modified as necessary according to the world view of Qumran Essenism, according to Boccaccini. The library was not an *ad hoc* collection. For Boccaccini, the library was commonly owned rather than commonly authored (54-55). Containing both biblical and non-biblical (sectarian) literature, the Dead Sea Scrolls are the result of "a deliberate and coherent process of selection and preservation" (58). At the heart of the sectarian literature are the ideological themes of 1) cosmic dualism, 2) predeterminism, 3) impurity and evil, and 4) isolationism, according to Boccaccini. The particular interpretations of these four themes at Qumran combine with the overall non-conformist, Enochic priestly tradition and Zadokite influence, to portray a sectarian picture of the textual evidence. In the end, Boccaccini claims that Qumran sectarian documents are not only unique to

Qumran but “had no significant impact on mainstream Rabbinic Judaism” (158). Fundamentally, “systemic analysis leads to the overall conclusion that the community of the Dead Sea Scrolls was a radical and minority group within Enochic Judaism” (162).

For Boccaccini, although the Essene Hypothesis should be taken as conclusive, it has failed to clarify the relationship of Qumran Essenism to mainstream Essenism. According to Boccaccini, the Enochic/Essene Hypothesis more firmly grounds and further explains discrepancies in the Essene Hypothesis by allowing for the recognition that “the Qumran library comprised not only the documents of a marginal sectarian community but also a substantial body of Essene literature from the second temple period, independent of Qumran” (196).

There is much in this book that is impossible to treat in detail within this review. For the potential reader, it is important to note Boccaccini’s determined approach and art of synthesis of a complex set of literature. For Boccaccini, Enochic Judaism becomes a product of the transitional age of middle Judaism. As a product, Enochic Judaism, transitioned into Essenism and its offshoots, is fundamental, for Boccaccini, to our understanding of the Qumran literary corpus.

C. Jason Borders, Brunel University/London Bible College

James Montgomery Boice and Philip Graham Ryken. *The Doctrines of Grace: Rediscovering the Evangelical Gospel*. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway Books, 2002. 240 pp, \$17.99.

The mere reference of Reformed Theology to some may cause a shudder and the unsheathing of spiritual weapons while drawing distinct lines in the sand of theology ready to do battle. No doubt, for the reader skeptical of Reformed Theology, *The Doctrines of Grace* may in fact renew the feelings of disdain towards the heritage of Luther, Calvin, Kuyper, and now Boice. But for those bathed in the reformed heritage of the doctrines of grace, Dr. Boice’s words will ring true to the heart of their passions.

Dr. James Montgomery Boice lobbed the first shot into the playground of theology with the prologue to this book titled, *Whatever Happened to the Gospel of Grace? Recovering the Doctrines That Shook the World*. He asked where the true gospel of grace from beginning to end went to and why the church needs to reclaim this great truth of Scripture. In *The Doctrines of Grace*, Dr. Boice and Philip Graham Ryken, who completed the composition following the death of Dr. Boice, again riles the feathers of many within the evangelical community by delivering a blistering, yet sobering, critique of the status of today’s evangelical church.

The Doctrines of Grace is unapologetically polemic, laying Calvinism over and against Arminianism, laying the foundation that Calvinism is, in fact, good for the church and that Arminianism generally leads to the pathway into liberalism. *The Doctrines of Grace* is broken down into three main pillars: The Doctrines of Grace, The Five Points, and Rediscovering God’s Grace. The first pillar is largely historical, both in its detailed description of the lineage reformed theology carries as well as the timeline of discussions that developed what are known as the “five points of Calvinism.” The historical synopsis

of the events through history are found to be clearly laid out and fair in both its criticism and affirmation of both traditions, reformed and arminian. The polemic nature of the book is noticed immediately as it begins its assessment of the current trends of evangelicalism by observing that the church has "supplanted the plain teaching of Scripture with entertainment, group therapy, political activism, Signs and Wonders – anything that promises to appeal to religious consumers"(20). Dr. Boice asks the church to consider, instead of catering to "man-focused" operatives of salvation: "If we are actually dead in our sins (radical depravity), then only God could choose us in Christ (unconditional election), only Christ could atone for our sins (particular redemption), and only the Spirit could draw us to Christ (efficacious grace) and preserve us in Him (preserving grace)" (33).

The core of *The Doctrines of Grace* is found in the second pillar where the traditional "five points of Calvinism" are clearly laid out in five separate chapters. The book follows the traditional TULIP acronym of total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and perseverance of the saints. Dr. Boice generally follows a method of introducing the doctrine, supporting the particular doctrine through Scripture, observing the historical development of the doctrine, and then handling objections raised throughout history. Considerable literature has been published, from short booklets to voluminous dogmatics, in affirmation on these five foundations of the reformed faith. *The Doctrines of Grace* should join the short list of resources on any theologian's bookshelf when referring to a clear and biblical explanation of the doctrines of grace.

The final section of *The Doctrines of Grace* strikes to the heart of what Dr. Boice and his successor at Tenth Presbyterian Church Philip Ryken, have desired to convey – rediscovering the whole life called by those who live the doctrines of grace. The text breaks down into two sections – "the True Calvinist" and "Calvinism at Work." In the "True Calvinist," Isaiah 6 is used as a backdrop to walking through the life of a Calvinist committed to more than just theological dogmatics, desiring to carry out in all of one's life their chief end which is to glorify God. The book states this is accomplished through receiving a God-centered mind, penitent spirit, grateful heart, submissive will, holy living, and living with a glorious purpose. "Calvinism at work" can often read like a biography of Tenth Presbyterian Church's humanitarian work in Philadelphia, where it is located. In the midst of the listing of Dr. Boice's ministry gifts to the city, one great principle is proclaimed – true Calvinism at work should be "biblically based, theologically rigorous Calvinism that is also practically minded and kindly hearted (12)."

In the final section of his book, Dr. Boice produces a definitive masterpiece in fleshing out the implications for ministry when adhering to the doctrines of grace. Those who seek to discredit the doctrines of grace as well as those who hold dearly to the doctrines and need a shot in the arm for ministry would do well to carefully read the true workings of a Calvinist witnessed in Dr. Boice and his successor, who are committed to mercy and evangelism through truthful teaching grounded in the grace of God from beginning to end.

Bradley L Selan

Peter Jensen. *The Revelation of God*. (Contours of Christian Theology; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002). 208 pp., paperback, \$17.00.

The Revelation of God by Peter Jensen, is a refreshing and balanced discussion of key themes related to revelation. Formerly principal of Moore Theological College (Sydney), Jensen has composed a carefully thought-out volume, superbly organized and well written.

Jensen sees the gospel of Jesus Christ as "the indispensable way to the knowledge of God." It is therefore the revelation by which everything else that claims to deliver knowledge of God must be assessed and interpreted." Furthermore, he contends this gospel bears information about God, his person and plans, that could not be obtained from any other source.

He explores a wide range of implications of this viewpoint. For him, this comprehensive emphasis on the gospel of Christ includes recognition of what Christ said, what he did, and who he is. Jensen's focus on the gospel does not limit itself to New Testament considerations. His stress on the gospel, for example, recognizes the tie-in with the Old Testament (especially its covenantal features) and thereby preserves the unity of the whole scriptural revelation.

Concentration on the revelatory aspects of the gospel is the key feature of Jensen's extensive treatment. Although he acknowledges (minor) elements of truth in other approaches to God, Jensen avoids their weaknesses. The focus and main attention, accordingly, are directed away from such avenues as natural theology (including philosophical "proofs") and religious experience. Priority, he suggests, must be given to the gospel as the "interpretative grid" for all revelatory knowledge and authentic experience.

Under Jensen's keen observation, it is the gospel that provides the indispensable "instrument by which we come to know God" and also the framework for interpreting what God is doing in human experience. And, he maintains, it does far more than that. It furnishes the moral compass that guides our personal trust, our practical living, and moral decision-making.

From this reviewer's viewpoint, Jensen's acceptance of biblical inerrancy appears somewhat less than enthusiastic. To adopt inerrancy --- and he definitely does --- on the basis of better consistency with his firm assent to infallibility seems rather weak. Inerrancy, of course, can be embraced on the warrant of the factual situation --- supporting scriptural citations including statements by Christ himself; absence of confirmed error; etc. This latter approach would have given Jensen a more convincing case for its merits than subscribing to it as a deductive spin-off from infallibility.

Nevertheless, any shortcomings in Jensen's work are outweighed by the many strengths of this excellent volume. To have highlighted, as he does, the focus of God's revelatory thrust in the gospel itself is a correct assessment, a faithful rendering of the epistemic and scriptural realities.

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In scope and quality of analysis, this book earns a place alongside such works as Benjamin Warfield's *Revelation and Inspiration*, Carl Henry's *God, Revelation and Authority*, Bernard Ramm's *Special Revelation and the Word of God*, and James Packer's *God Has Spoken*. Jensen has given us a rich collection of insights into God's revelatory promises which have been inscripturated in a unified, trustworthy Bible.

This book fully deserves an attentive reading. Written clearly, it can be beneficial to both the discerning layperson and the scholar.

John Y. May, Retired, University of Pittsburgh

Serene Jones, *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology: Cartographies of Grace*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000. 214 pp., \$17.00.

Feminist Theory and Christian Theology by Serene Jones is part of the series, Guides to Theological Inquiry. This is a helpful series which introduces the reader to a variety of issues in contemporary theology. Jones' purpose is to map out, through the image of cartography, the terrain of Christian theology with an overlay of feminist theory. Her goal is not to reconstruct a new theology for the Christian church, but "to provide markers for traveling through the terrain in new ways" (p. 19) that will sensitize us to the new contours of our theological maps. The "signposts" along the map she presents come to us through her use of Reformed theology, via Calvin and Luther, feminist theory, and her own location as Associate Professor of Theology at Yale Divinity School. These, along with her reflections on the actual experiences of women, serve to provide a useful introduction to feminist theory and theology for a first time reader.

After defining her terms and articulating her purposes in chapter one, Jones moves on to the substance of her work in *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology*. She tackles three doctrinal issues in Christian theology: soteriology, sin, and ecclesiology. In a dyadic structure, Jones devotes two chapters to each topic. First, she presents various aspects of feminist theory in a succinct manner. In particular, she uses feminist theory in chapters two, four and six to expand the reader's understanding of the debates concerning women's nature (essentialist versus constructed), the nature of women's oppression, and the potential loss of women's agency in the "public/private" divide of both liberalism and communitarianism. These chapters provide a good initiation to feminist theory, while at the same time, highlighting the debates and disagreements within feminism.

Second in the dyadic structure are chapters three, five and seven where Jones overlays feminist theory on soteriology, sin and ecclesiology. In doing so, Jones attempts to highlight how these doctrines may be "remapped" to take into consideration the insights from feminist theory on women's nature, sin as oppression, and women's agency and identity in community. What will likely be most surprising to the reader is Jones' favorable treatment of Calvin and Luther who are often caricatured as "anti-woman," with certain justification. Jones recovers aspects of Calvin that may be more amenable and complementary to feminist theory. In particular, Jones remaps Calvin's

understanding of sin as “unfaithfulness” and “total depravity” to account for the realities of the loss of women’s gifts and potentiality as divine images and a depraved social order that uses power to oppress women (chapter three), enabling us to name oppression as sin. Jones recovers Calvin’s image of “the Church as Mother” (chapter seven) in her remapping of the church as a community of “bounded openness” where lives are shared and restored in a community bonded together which invites others in. Jones criticizes Calvin for bifurcating justification and sanctification in chapter two of her discussions of salvation. Jones’ recovery is a reversal, an emphasis on sanctification which tells the story of God’s mercy and grace in order to give women a sense of agency and substance on which to be judged which is lacking in a juridical understanding of justification (p. 63). It seems that Jones bifurcates justification and sanctification in the opposite direction by continuing to separate the two. Perhaps a good dose of a Wesleyan synthesis between justification and sanctification may be a more apt response for linking righteousness and justification with moral agency in sanctification. Chapter two was a provocative reminder that, historically and theologically, a Wesleyan theological framework has tended to be more welcoming and favorable for the moral agency, gifting, and empowerment of women.

Feminist Theory and Christian Theology: Cartographies of Grace is a good introduction to the ways in which feminist theory can both amplify and challenge theology. Jones’ book is based on the assumption that doctrines “do more than simply provide Christians with propositional statements or static rules. Doctrines serve as imaginative lenses through which to view the world” (p. 16). While not everyone will agree with the imaginative lenses, conclusions and practices that Jones proposes in her cartography of theology, certainly most will agree that we are all involved to a degree in the new contours of Christian theology if we, like Jones, are situated “within the work of a long line of theologians who have shared in the critical task of helping the church reflect on its present-day witness and practice to see if it continues to be faithful to the revelation of God manifest in Scripture, tradition, and the ongoing life of the Christian community” (p. 11).

Wyndy Corbin

John MacArthur, *The Battle for the Beginning: Creation Evolution and the Bible*. Nashville, TN: W Publishing Group, 2001. 237 pp. \$15.39

How were we created and why? Have you ever wondered how the Bible answers these questions or wanted to know what to tell someone who wants to know? Or are you the type of person that is interested in apologetics of the Christian faith? If so, then *The Battle for the Beginning: Creation, Evolution and the Bible* by John MacArthur is the book for you.

In this ten-chapter book, John MacArthur addresses the debate concerning creation vs. evolution in a Bible-centered and bold fashion that has come to characterize both his preaching and writing. Those who are familiar with and enjoy writing will find it an informative, stirring, and an enjoyable read. Those who possess questions

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concerning Christianity and the rationale behind its views about creation, are new to the faith, or new to MacArthur will find it a refreshingly thorough and thoughtful explanation of the rationale of the Bible's understanding of creation. He covers the creation study as found in Genesis chapters 1-3 in an expository method that has come to characterize his teaching. As he covers these chapters, he attacks incorrect thinking of schools of thought opposed to the creation narrative of the Bible such as the naturalists and "Big Bang" theorists who believe that the creation account of the beginning of the world is irrational because it is faith-based. He argues that all these schools who claim to be correct because they are not faith-based are not correct. The fact is that they are very much faith based and rationally errant, while the Bible's account of the creation is faith-based and completely accurate. He makes this statement,

It is nonetheless interesting and ironic that secular physicists trying to explain the origin of the earth on purely scientific principles face a similar dilemma. Scientists who hold to the big bang theory must explain how a universe full of matter appeared out of nowhere in an instant....no theory about the origin of the universe is tenable without an all-wise and all-powerful Creator...Why should we reinterpret the clear statements of Scripture and try to turn this into an ages-long evolutionary process? Why cannot we simply take God at His word?" (p. 93&94).

Therefore, he concludes that the Bible's account of the creation narrative as found in Genesis chapters 1-3 is the only one that can be held as completely true by a truly rational individual.

The book's content is academic in nature, but MacArthur's writing style makes it understandable and enjoyable to those who do not walk the campuses of seminaries as well. It is a thorough and very good explanation of the debate that surrounds the beginning of creation and the truth of the Bible's account. It should be on the shelves of seminary libraries throughout the nation.

Tim Monteith

Donald K. McKim, *Introducing the Reformed Faith: Biblical Revelation, Christian Tradition, Contemporary Significance* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001). 261 pages, paper, \$27.95.

The name 'Donald McKim' has become synonymous with 'accessible reference works in the Reformed tradition' in Presbyterian circles in North America. If you look on the shelf of many a Canadian or American Presbyterian pastor, you will probably find at least a couple of books written or edited by McKim. With *Introducing the Reformed Faith*, he has not let us down. This is one of the most readable and commendable books on the Reformed tradition that I have ever read. Were I not Presbyterian myself, reading this book would make me think very seriously about

becoming one! The book helps to make clear that, as McKim states in the introduction, “The Reformed faith is a faith of *living people*” (emphasis his).

There are nineteen chapters in this volume, the first sixteen of which deal with major topics of interest in the Reformed tradition. It is, in many ways, laid out like a systematic theology, beginning with Scripture and ending with the end times. McKim opens the book with suggested ways to use it, either as a study for an individual or for groups. He also suggests that one could read only the text, or the text and the endnotes. The endnotes are somewhat voluminous in themselves (50 pages of somewhat fine print), but give insights that, for many readers, are helpful. These include word origins, quotations from scholars, historical notes, and citations that help to clarify the points he makes in the book. That being said, one could read only the text itself and still be greatly edified.

Each chapter is laid out just as the subtitle of the book states: biblical revelation, Christian tradition, contemporary significance. As part of the “Christian tradition” section, each chapter has a “Reformed emphases” subheading, in which McKim makes clear where Christians in the Reformed tradition tend to stand on the matter being discussed. Here, he often will cite a creed or statement of faith from the Reformed tradition. He is careful to note that there is not unanimity among Reformed believers on all matters, and he explains, where appropriate, what some of the different opinions are among the various strands of the Reformed tradition. Each chapter concludes with “Questions for reflection”, which are useful both for group and individual study.

McKim uses a number of “big” words, which he defines well, making the book accessible to anyone with a secondary school education. He is very committed to the use of inclusive language, which sometimes makes the grammar awkward. Many of his illustrations are from his own experience in the United States, which do not always resonate with a Canadian reader (for instance, the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy in the 1920s was highlighted by more than the Scopes trial!) Still, I would not hesitate to hand this book to an informed seeker who desires to learn more about the Reformed tradition, provided the seeker would sit down to discuss each chapter with me as she or he read. If one has spent one’s whole life in a different theological or ecclesiastical tradition, reading this book all at once, without an opportunity for verbal reflection, could be somewhat overbearing.

Some might suggest that in this relatively small book, McKim has attempted to conquer Rome. True, he aims high, and covers all of his bases quite well. The only pitfall I noticed in this midst of this was the common problem of glossing over some issues that probably deserved a more lengthy treatment. He remedies this in the endnotes by giving numerous citations of sources in which the issue at hand can be explored much more deeply.

The ‘nice touches’ in this book come near the end. McKim spends chapter 17 citing other Reformed scholars, some of whom came up with different emphases for the Reformed tradition than this book shows. He cites the work of A.A. Hodge, the late scholar of Princeton; John H. Leith, of Union Seminary in Virginia; as well as I. John Hesselink and Jack Rogers. In chapter 18, McKim answers some common questions

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about the Reformed tradition, questions I am asked often. It is in this (sadly) short chapter that he addresses, in only four paragraphs, one of my passions about the tradition, which is church government. The nineteenth chapter is a 52-question (one for each week of a year) catechism, which McKim prepared to be "Reformed and ecumenical" (p. 186). It, too, is a useful tool. Following this is a list of Presbyterian and Reformed churches known to exist in Canada and the United States. Recognizing that his approach is not the only approach by which to understand the Reformed tradition, he lists comparative sources near the end of the book to give the very curious some additional reading.

As I constantly am updating my curriculum for teaching newcomers to my congregation about the Reformed tradition, I will use this book as a source, and will surely wear it out in a short time due to the number of times I will turn back to it for reference. For the believer in the Reformed tradition or outside the tradition, it is a book well worth reading.

Jeffrey F. Loach

Leon J. Podles, *The Church Impotent: The Feminization of Christianity*. Dallas: Spence, 1999. xviii + 288 pp, paper, \$10.77.

Leon Podles' book might easily be dismissed by Evangelicals as one of the more bizarre entries in the male/female leadership debate. Such a dismissal would be entirely understandable. Podles' view of Scripture fluctuates. Most of his discussion treats the text as reliable, but, when he does comment on origins, he contends: "The main books of the Old Testament took their canonical form in the midst of the Exile" (65). "The writer of Genesis" blamed the exile on "a flaw in the relationship of man and woman. This flaw was projected back to the very beginning of history" (64). Few Evangelicals would posit a pool of authors shaping the Genesis account of Adam and Eve to explain the exile. And few should be comfortable with his New Testament theory that the gospels were written as apologies to the Romans and "therefore the Jews, for whom the Romans felt no special affection, were the enemies given most prominence" (81). Problematic, too, is his contention the Holy Spirit is "the reciprocal love between the Father and Son" which "becomes itself a person" when that love "attains fullness" (85).

His main argument that sex does not equal masculinity/femininity, sex and gender being different, and, therefore, the Persons of the Trinity are masculine, but not male, while their unity is feminine, but not female, is at best circular. It rests on an inductive sexual observation - men separate, women unite or commune - which is posited back into the supposedly non-sexual Godhead. Such reasoning triggers implications Podles would very much not want; for example, at the moment of this review a transgendered candidate is petitioning a denomination in our vicinity using the same basic argument sex does not equal gender, contending his sex is male, his gender identity female, so he has had himself scientifically adjusted. While his argument is no stronger than Podles', it does make a reader question the logic of the underlying theory of the book:

Why use the term gender when sex is explicitly not involved? Why ask whether God is masculine or feminine, positing definitions back to God drawn from human behavior? Such a procedure is similar to asking what race God is (Is God white or black?) by basing one's discussion on current socio-anthropological or ethnographic descriptions of races. The great Marcus Garvey objected to just such reasoning: "Our God has no color, yet it is human to see everything through one's own spectacles, and since the white people have seen God through white spectacles, we have only now started out (late though it be) to see our God through our own spectacles" (*Philosophy and Opinions*, 1:44). One could paraphrase: "While our God has no sex, yet it is human to see everything through one's own spectacles of gender, so we men posit God as masculine (and disagree with feminists who label God as feminine...)." But, with gendered language not consistent in ancient Hebrew and Greek for all 3 persons of the Trinity, and verses explicitly resisting identifying God with such categories (e.g. Deut 4:15-16, Mark 12:25), why do it? Why is God not supragenderal? As God is not Jewish, though God worked powerfully through the Jews, God need not be labeled masculine to work powerfully through males. This point underscores a series of inconsistencies in Podles' methodology. For example, he uses the gender based language argument to claim masculinity for the Father and Son, but ignores gendered language in his discussion of the Spirit (the Spirit is feminine in Hebrew, neuter in Greek). He also avoids discussing the obvious objection against gender-based language having true universal gender references (e.g. how is a "year" feminine and a "day" masculine in Hebrew? How are a "year" neuter and a "day" feminine in Greek)? Other inconsistencies include explaining Jesus choosing only male disciples "to spare women that burden" of martyrdom (79), while commenting eight pages later "the sacraments have always been open to women, as has martyrdom" (87). Finally, a heavy dose of Roman Catholicism (e.g. "Mary is the mother of the Church", 85) might close out Evangelical interest in this book altogether. But such dismissal would be a mistake. This last part, the heavy Roman Catholic nature of the book, is actually its strength and its real contribution.

Leon Podles himself was a Roman Catholic pre-seminarian who dropped out of seminary because of the endemic, rampant homosexuality (x). Given the recent high profile Roman Catholic scandals (especially currently in Boston with Paul Shanley and the embattled Cardinal Law), the book becomes more than simply a heterodox offering in the seemingly endless debate on female leadership, this time on the complementarian side. Podles' complaints in the final analysis are essentially about the "homosexualizing" of Christianity through the "feminizing" of it. In other words, this is not a simple recruit in the firing lines of the current Evangelical in-house debate. It is much more: a critique of the legacy of historic Catholicism with an impassioned plea that Evangelicals not follow its errors.

One does not need to accept all his bio/psycho-speak postmodern theomythology to realize that Roman Catholic theology and practice are in deep trouble in its high incidence of pederasty among its ordained leadership. Neither should we be put off by his English professor's penchant for hyperbole ("The Methodist Church is a women's club at prayer" [xv] or "*Christianity Today* has made as many compromises as it can with feminism and ignores the problem of the lack of men in the church" [xv]) to

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recognize this is a hurting man who is delivering a serious warning. If we take into account the context out of which Podles is writing, Evangelicals on either side of the women's leadership debate can learn something useful.

When he addresses the issue of homosexuality he can provide provocative insights (e.g. 70-71). Refreshing is his break with the usual man is active, woman is passive mythology and particularly enlightening is his analysis of the origin of that chestnut, the Aristotelian revival in medieval scholastic thinking with its bridal and maternal theology (102ff). His helpful detailing of the shifting of the bride of Christ imagery from the collective to the individual explains the disenfranchisement of men from the Church (and also enlightened me personally why, since early puberty, if not before, I have always loathed the hymn "In the Garden" and Warner Sallman's "bearded lady" picture of Christ). His final plea that brotherly love be salvaged from sexual aberration so that churches can create a safe place to grow our sons healthfully into holy men is a concern all of us need to take to heart.

Like Ezekiel lying down on his sides for 390 and 40 days respectively to gain attention for his points (Ezek 4:4-6), Professor Podles' approach may appear at times to be a strange one, but his warning is timely and serious.

William David Spencer, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

R. C. Sproul. *Saved from What?* Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2002. 128 pp, \$15.00.

As a young professor of theology in 1969, R. C. Sproul was approached by a stranger on campus and asked, "Are you saved?" *Saved from What?* is not just his pithy answer, but the title to one of R.C. Sproul's latest books. After collecting himself from this unusual answer, the stranger then tried to present the gospel to Sproul, but he lacked the "understanding of what salvation is (p.14)." Bothered by this encounter, Sproul decided to conduct a small, informal survey about salvation at a Christian bookseller's convention. He discovered only one person sufficiently answered the definition of salvation out of a hundred participants.

The dialogue with that stranger and the informal survey led Sproul to write this book and produce a compact, yet comprehensive text on salvation. "Shocked by the apparent ignorance of the most elementary article of Christianity (p.15)," Sproul sets out to enlighten the unaware that "we need to be saved from God (p.25)." In eight short chapters, Sproul concentrates on the theology of salvation and humanity's desperate need to know where salvation comes from and through what means we receive it.

The first two chapters discuss different biblical words for salvation and the total depravity of man. Chapter three hits the core of why we need another book on salvation; today's culture, both Christian and secular, ignores why Jesus died on the cross. Sproul risks offending colleagues by pointing out how Christian bookstores aren't any different than secular ones and how they "offer precious little literature on the cross of Christ (p.45)." He continues by pointing out how many people are oblivious of the fact that they are accountable to God for their sins. Postmodernism negates individual

responsibility in America and the word sin left the mainstream language long ago. Sproul takes a fundamental stand of getting back to the basics of preaching the cross.

The next few chapters involve basic training for understanding salvation theology. Sproul explains theological words like substitution, satisfaction, expiation and appropriation. His strong reformed views especially emerge in chapter six concerning God's covenant and atonement. His elaboration of covenantal blessings and curses is very thought provoking about God's relationship with his people, past and present. The book ends with the chapter dedicated to the eternal reward for accepting God's salvation. "Adoption and the beatific vision (p.103)" reminds the readers that the Christian's focus should aptly be directed toward Jesus and our eternal home.

Sproul presents salvation thoroughly and compactly. He is comprehensive in his definitions on views of sin and salvation. The book could equal a semester or two of seminary theology. He also remains relevant with appropriate examples easy to identify with, like using money illustrations to describe sin as debt and ransom and simple diagrams to typify justification. Sproul's passion and concern for the true gospel message is evident and meaningful. His observations do not come off judgmental or condescending toward contemporary Christianity, but more of a convincing nudge. This effort echoes that of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's thoughts and concerns of "cheap grace" from his book, *The Cost of Discipleship*. At the present time, it seems vital to remember that Christ dying on the cross was for more than the freedom to wear WWJD bracelets and have a good self-image. Sproul drives that point home effectively. *Saved from What* ultimately reminds people why the truth of salvation is so important. As Sproul summarizes at the end of the book, "It is a salvation that is by God, from God and for God."

As competent as this book is, a subtle dilemma arises in the intended audience. Sproul and the ministry he founded, Ligonier ministries, typically write to educate and challenge the laity with scholastic books and resources. The church laity would greatly benefit from this book and Sproul's personal anecdotes are very endearing, but it is rather dense for the casual reader at times. He might be requiring too much from lay readers, but then again that might be his point. As for the seminarian or professor, the majority of the book would be review. However, Sproul offers several examples and insight that aren't necessarily covered in theology class, like useful biblical references and informative facts on Luther and Calvin that would aid any pastor. *Saved from What?* is a well written, inspiring book for both lay person and seminarian alike and deftly provides the answer to the question, "Are you saved?"

Tally Whitehead

Sarah Sumner. *Men and Women in the Church*. InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove IL. 2003. 332 pp, paper, \$17.00.

Sarah Sumner received her graduate training at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Chicago and is a professor of theology at Azusa Pacific University in California. She is a woman in ministry who holds a high view of scripture. The subtitle

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for this book reflects an important and often ignored goal, "Building Consensus on Christian Leadership." It is an effort to find some middle ground in the current debate between the Complementarian and Egalitarian positions regarding women in ministry. She refuses to take a stand in either 'camp.' Her book combines stories of her own experience as a woman called into ministry with theological discussions of various biblical texts and church tradition. Dr. Sumner critiques both positions being debated among conservative Christian scholars and then often offers a third alternative.

This book will unsettle those on both sides of the debate, and she calls on both to acknowledge their biases and the issues they would rather not mention. Readers are asked to acknowledge the underlying (and on-going) tradition of perceiving women as inferior or, conversely, ignoring the differences between the genders. She calls on Complementarians to allow women to hold men accountable for their leadership. Much of Sumner's book is well reasoned and will certainly be an encouragement to women in ministry especially if they are involved in very conservative or traditional churches.

I did find her book problematic in a number of ways. Sumner is unwilling to be labeled a 'feminist.' Even being a 'biblical feminist' is outside her comfort zone. Her reasoning is that to be feminist requires one to supercede the gospel with the agenda of women's rights, equality, and justice. I find this to be a false dichotomy. Martin Luther King did not supercede the gospel when he made racial equality and justice his life work. It was in fact the gospel and his life experience that prompted him to pursue those and overturn a system that was militating against African Americans in our society. Although Sumner states that a new paradigm needs to replace the old one, she does not address the need to change the social system that militates against women in the church. She suggests women should respond to a call to ministry as Queen Esther did who approached the king (stepped out in ministry) when it was against convention. Meanwhile the rules and conventions that made her action risky remain in place. Sumner makes much of the inappropriateness of women claiming the "right" to lead or teach in the church but fails to understand that it is a right to simply have the *opportunity* rather than be categorically denied access to those roles based on gender. It is a 'right' that men have always had.

Sumner enters the debate over the meaning of several of the more difficult New Testament passages including the word "head" in 1 Corinthians 11:3 and the translation of "submit" in Ephesians 5:21-22 and understanding 1 Timothy 2:9-14. Her desire to build consensus leads her at times to leave room for both egalitarian and complementarian interpretations so she often rejects other current solutions, though her own arguments are not compelling. For example, when treating Ephesians 5:21-22 Sumner's effort to stay in the middle is weakened when she acknowledges that the verb "submit" occurs only once and thus requires "wives to your husband" to connect to the previous statement "submit yourselves one to another." The grammatical structure bolsters the argument that in the mind of the author of Ephesians these ideas were connected and not separate concepts.

In addition Sumner fails in the rest of this section (Eph 5:23-33) and again in 1 Timothy 2 to consider the cultural issues affecting these texts. In 1st Timothy she

hypothesizes about specific issues regarding church order within that congregation but does not mention broader cultural influences. Even though she has read William Webb's book on cultural hermeneutics [reviewed elsewhere in this issue] she uses a static hermeneutic – not considering the patriarchy, educational differences, etc. inherent in the understanding of gender relationships in the first century.

At certain points this book is quite useful. Sumner reviews the early church fathers' negative opinions of women and the effect tradition has had on interpretation of scripture and the practices of the church, but she is inconsistent in considering the cultural influences on the Bible. She knows there is a preponderance of masculine language but dismisses any negative effect it may have since the text is inspired. This is too simplistic a response to a significant issue for any woman seeking to understand her place in the church. I believe Sumner's contribution will continue to further the discussion towards a more helpful paradigm for women and men in the church but her own solutions are not sufficient for the task.

Donna Laird

Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *First Theology: God, Scripture and Hermeneutics*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002. 384 pp., paper, \$25.00.

In an attempt to confront the challenges which postmodern literary criticism has presented to the reading and interpretation of the Bible, as well as all texts, Kevin Vanhoozer, Research Professor of Systematic Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, presents a proposal through a series of essays that comprise *First Theology: God, Scripture and Hermeneutics*, for meeting these challenges. The primary challenge, according to Vanhoozer, is the shifting of meaning from the words, narratives and authorial intent of biblical texts to the interpreters of texts and their social contexts, who ascribe meaning to words and narratives. Therefore, we are left with the question, "what makes one interpretation better than any other?" (p. 23).

Vanhoozer utilizes, modifies and subverts certain arguments of postmodern literary criticism and communication theory in addressing these challenges. He concedes to the postmodern claim that all persons have presuppositions which function as interpretive grids in hermeneutics. His proposal, then, is that we view "God, Scripture and hermeneutics as one problem" (p. 9). Vanhoozer refers to this as the task of "first theology," or a theologically informed hermeneutic which "recognizes our doctrine of God affects the way we interpret the Scriptures, while simultaneously acknowledging that our interpretation of Scripture affects our doctrine of God" (p. 10). In lieu of addressing each topic, God, Scripture and hermeneutics, as separate topics, as is typical in most standard presentations of systematic theology and biblical studies in an evangelical context, we ought to link them so that our view of Scripture as revelation flows from an understanding of the God who speaks through divine-human interaction, and who can, therefore, be understood. This should be our "first theology" and primary hermeneutical assumption about God.

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Vanhoozer takes on the challenges of speech-act communication theory. While never explicitly defining speech-action theory, communicative discourse ethics, and the various components of linguistic theory as articulated through continental philosophers such as Jürgen Habermas and Ludwig Wittgenstein, Vanhoozer utilizes the concepts of speech-actions in his understanding of the relationship between God, Scripture and hermeneutics by focusing on the way in which language is used as the action of the communicator to elicit response. His premise is that "Scripture is neither simply the recital of the acts of God nor merely a book of inert propositions. Scripture is composed of divine-human speech acts that, through what they say, accomplish several cognitive, spiritual and social functions" (p. 131). God, speaking through Scripture, has accomplished what God intended. Vanhoozer proposes a Trinitarian model for understanding how God's speech in Scripture produces the results which God desires. This "trinitarian theology of holy Scripture" (p. 154) involves the locution of the Father, the illocution of the Son, and the perlocutionary effects of the Spirit (pp. 154-157). The Father speaks ("locution") through the human authors of Scripture; the Son, the *Logos*, is the reality called into existence ("illocution") by the Father's locution; and the Spirit effects the results ("perlocution") which the Father intended in speaking by convicting and illuminating the reader as to the reality of the Son, resulting in "belief, obedience, praise or some other" (p. 155).

Vanhoozer's work, while dense and presumptive of the reader's familiarity and grasp of current trends in literary theory, does answer the question, "what makes one interpretation better than any other?" from his own theological and hermeneutical location. Vanhoozer remains moored to his Reformed roots since his "trinitarian theology of holy scripture" purports to be a recovery of the Reformed understanding of the interaction between Word and Spirit effecting God's desired results, starting with salvation (chapter 7). Vanhoozer also retains a commitment to the primacy of authorial intent in hermeneutics, which signals that much of his book aims to defend this hermeneutical strategy utilized by many evangelicals at the expense of a much needed nuanced understanding of how the social location of the interpreter, primarily evangelicals, influences our interpretation of the Bible. Therefore, "what makes one interpretation better than any other?" are the intentions of the authors of texts. In the act of communicating, they had intentions of being understood; understanding what they meant is the task of hermeneutics. To discount their authorial intentions is paramount to an act of injustice, according to Vanhoozer, by ascribing meaning (or no meaning) they never intended to their words, or deconstructing the text to such a degree that "the sense of the text is undone, doomed to wander like a shade through the rubble of signifiers that signify nothing" (p. 232). *First Theology* is worth the read simply for a new way to understand the ethical dimensions of the hermeneutical task. It is one we should approach with humility and with the theological virtues of "*faith*, that there is a real presence, a voice, a meaning in the text; *hope* that the interpretive community can, in the

power of the Spirit, attain an adequate, not absolute understanding; *love*, a mutual relation of self-giving between text and reader" (p. 231).

Wyndy Corbin

Philip Yancey, *Reaching for the Invisible God*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000. 301 pp., \$16.99.

Philip Yancey refers to himself as an artist seeking to communicate. He does this daily as the editor of "Christianity Today" magazine and as an intriguing, thought-provoking author of several books about difficult subjects ranging from faith to pain. He has asked questions that few are willing to ask, such as "Where is God when it hurts"? His boldness has made him an award winning author. Two of his books, *The Jesus I Never Knew*, and *What's So Amazing About Grace?* have won the Book of the Year award. *Reaching for the Invisible God* follows in the style of his other great books and is certain to help the reader examine his/her faith and relationship to God. This book is written from the perspective of Yancey's spiritual journey from doubt and disillusionment to faith.

Have you ever doubted God's existence or thought about what He means to you? *Reaching for the Invisible God* helps examine these issues by asking the difficult question, "How do you have a relationship with an invisible God"? Yancey answers this by saying that one must exercise faith just to know that He exists and that by God's very nature people will have doubts, which often partner with faith. By examining them, there is opportunity for faith to grow. Because of God's love for us, he permits these doubts. He yearns for a personal relationship with each of us. Truly grasping this relationship affects everything that the believer does in his/her life.

Examining faith and one's spiritual journey raises many other issues. Yancey writes that faith in God requires both patience and hope: patience in remembering past blessings and hope that faith is worth the risk. It requires surrendering to God and having a desire to please Him. Yancey says that "living for God alone involves a radical reorientation, a stripping away of anything that might lure me from the primary goal of pleasing God. Living in faith involves me pleasing God, far more than God pleasing me." (p. 82)

The reader's spiritual journey can be strengthened through Yancey's accounts of biblical characters like Peter who asked Jesus to help him with his unbelief, Paul who wrote, "Suffering produces perseverance, perseverance, character, and character, hope" and Jesus who told the woman seeking healing that her faith made her well. It is encouraging to know that great fathers of the faith like Martin Luther, Richard Baxter, and Dwight L. Moody struggled. Luther struggled with depression; Baxter's faith was based on probabilities not certainties; and Moody's application to join a church in Boston was almost denied due to his uncertain faith. God will work with the faith that we have if we allow Him to do so.

I recommend this book to anybody interested in having a more intimate relationship with God. Yancey engages the reader through his writings about real life

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experiences. He also encourages seekers by looking at the lives of biblical heroes like David, Job, and Jonah who struggled and at times failed to obey God. Yancey begins and ends each chapter with thought-provoking quotes from famous people. Reading *Reaching for the Invisible God* will strengthen each reader's walk with God by encouraging him/her to think about faith and how God affects his/her life.

Ellen Clodfelter

George J. Zemek, *A Biblical Theology of the Doctrines of Sovereign Grace: Exegetical Considerations of Key Anthropological, Hamartiological and Soteriological Terms and Motifs*. Mänge, FL: Zemek Books, 2002. 277 pages. Pb Free upon request.

A Biblical Theology of the Doctrines of Sovereign Grace is a good volume on the doctrines of man, sin, salvation and sanctification. It is concise and well organized, but since it is written as a review of Anthropological, Hamartiological and Soteriological terms and motifs from a scholarly standpoint, it may be difficult for a lay person to comprehend.

The author, George J. Zemek, possesses both the experience and education required to write such a work. He received a doctorate of theology at Grace Theological Seminary. From 1965 to 1978 he was professor of biblical languages, theology and apologetics and from 1985 to 1988 he was the seminary's director of doctoral studies. Beginning in 1988 he taught for six years at The Master's Seminary in Sun Valley, California. He is also the founding pastor-teacher of Grace Bible Church and Training Center in Brandon, Florida.

The book is divided into three parts – each focusing on one of the three motifs of the book. Each chapter begins with a section that focuses on key Hebrew and Greek terms necessary for comprehending the doctrine in question. Consequentially, a theological statement of the doctrine follows each of these sections. The book is concluded by a series of appendices, most of which richly supplement the main discourse.

A person who strive to rightly handle the word of truth, will appreciate how Zemek avoids twisting the truth of Scripture with preconceived notions or by trying to force them into a specific theological camp. This is avoided by referencing Scripture on nearly every page and testing Scripture with Scripture. He also ties the Old Testament and New Testament together by showing the Greek counterpart of Hebrew words. For example, in dealing with biblical soteriology, Zemek shows that “the function of *bahar* referring to the election of individuals and/or a particular group of people is perpetuated by this verb's primary semantical counterpart throughout the LXX and on into the New Testament (i.e. *eklegomai*)” (p.145). Finally, Zemek rightly divides Scripture by tying the truths of various chapters together. For example, on page 154 he says that “the doctrine of predestination, for one who accepts the biblical doctrine of depravity, is the only basis of hope of success in preaching the gospel.”

This book also has stringth in the way Zemek tactfully reveals theological errors commonly found in the church today. For example, on page 193 he begins a short discourse on the exegetical and theological errors characteristic of gospel reductionism.

Writing with the Biblical scholar in mind, Zemek has produced a great review of the doctrines of man, sin and salvation. It will be used by serious biblical scholars for years to come because it covers, as Zemek prefaces the book, "subject matter...of preeminent importance."

Christopher Rufener

H. D. (Sandy) Ayer, *The Christian and Missionary Alliance: An Annotated Bibliography of Textual Sources*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2001. xx + 403 pp., \$66.00 cloth.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance: An Annotated Bibliography of Textual Sources is exceptionally comprehensive in its vast inclusion of Christian and Missionary Alliance writings. It is one of 45 other titles in the ATLA Bibliographical Series and is a source that is both faithful to its central subject and detailed enough for any scholar or student. In the creation process of the book, H.D. Ayers had an endless amount of writings to choose to include or not to include. Yet for all those that are unsure if this resource is valuable, they will find, upon examination, that his overall selection is impressive.

This annotated bibliography contains over 2,500 items relating to more than two million people. Most entries included were written by authors that had significant influence with the C&MA, and/or were authors closely tied with the Alliance. The time span of the text ranges from A.B. Simpson's first published work in 1880, through 1999. Ayers focused the book on the Alliance's historical ideology of the fourfold gospel and used it as part of the structure that helped him arbitrarily decide which works to incorporate. The fourfold gospel message is Jesus Christ: Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King. The book is comprised of several types of writings which include: primary and secondary source materials in the form of books, periodicals, articles, essays, booklets, pamphlets, tracts, and theses.

The design of the book is simple to understand. The book is divided into two sections. The first section contains annotated bibliographies of books, essays, articles, and theses. The second section contains annotated bibliographies of periodical sources. To ensure that users would find exactly what they are looking for, the book contains both a subject index and a personal name index. This bibliography is a must for any researcher or writer that requires first-rate sources regarding the Alliance.

The comments under each bibliography were sufficient. Ayer's comments were longer for the sources that needed more explanation while other sources only needed a few comments to explain the work. His writing style is clear and helps his readers to know whether or not a source will be useful. *The Christian and Missionary Alliance: An Annotated Bibliography of Textual Sources* is written for anyone who needs to find a source about the Alliance or from an author closely related to the Alliance. Ayer's text

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will most likely have the desired information for both students and experienced scholars in this comprehensive and detailed bibliography.

Christopher M. Meekins

Christoph F. Blumhardt and Johann C. Blumhardt, *Now Is Eternity*. Farmington: The Plough Publishing House, 1999. xi + 68 pp., \$8.00 (paper).

Now Is Eternity is a thoughtful collection of words from Johann Christoph Blumhardt and his son, Christoph Friedrich Blumhardt. Johann lived from 1805 to 1880, and Christoph lived from 1842 to 1919. Their words are a heartfelt and simple expression of their love for God and contain power and emotional truths for all believers in Jesus Christ. The writing style is similar to other theological works composed during the relative time periods of these two men. In many ways, the arrangement and construction of the Blumhardts' words contain similarities to Oswald Chamber's book, *My Utmost for His Highest*.

The words and text itself discusses and proclaims the most basic Christian doctrines. Yet the essence of the book is captured in its focus upon eternity. The desire of the editors of the Blumhardts' words was to concentrate the reader's attention upon the subject of eternity and the way in which that subject provides both comfort and wisdom for all people. If the book is read in its entirety, it is obvious to its readers that it is clearly written and theologically accurate in the evangelical Christian sense. Every morsel of wisdom attempts to reflect the nature of God the Father, proclaims the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, and experientially embraces the power and work of the Holy Spirit.

Now Is Eternity is written for all people. It would best be understood if read by a believer and follower of Jesus Christ. However, those that do not understand the essence of the Gospel can and should still consider reading the book because the words within it supersede understanding and are profoundly powerful. The book is also helpful for those in ministry who are looking for theological inspiration, or for those who need short paragraphs that encapsulate an idea for a teaching lesson or a sermon. Everyone should consider purchasing this book because it is an inspiration and a delight for those that have read it.

Christopher M. Meekins

G. R. Evans, *A Brief History Of Heresy*. Oxford, England: Blackwell Publishing, 2003. pp.195, \$54.95.

Heresy is a serious concern of the Christian church; most Christians nod heads in agreement. However, it has proved difficult to define and detect heresy in nearly all periods of the church's existence; more Christians exclaim, "Hear, Hear"! The church's attempts at dealing with heretics have frequently been as non-Christian as the errors it

was trying to eliminate; the vote of Christian opinion is now almost unanimous. These statements could well serve as a summary of Professor Evan's book.

She is a Lecturer in History at the University of Cambridge, with recognized expertise in the Middle Ages of European church history. This book is the second in a series of Brief Histories of Religion published by Blackwell, with more titles projected for the immediate future.

Her brief history covers all periods of the church's existence from the earliest centuries to the present. Controverted doctrines from the various periods illustrate the topic. She notes issues concerning dualism and the doctrine of the trinity, which recur through time because, in the first case, they are hard to eradicate, or, in the second instance, difficult to define for all times and places.

A major strength of the book is its frequent use of primary sources. Professor Evans knows the treatises which marked the developments in historical theology. Consequently, she poses the question in chapter two whether the Christian faith, in its core beliefs, is consistent over time or does it evolve to an ever richer understanding of its doctrines. While the final answer is left to the reader's deliberation, she at least is certain that any particular definition of doctrine will not satisfy Christians in every period and place.

Her knowledge of people who agitated the church – prophets, critics, fringe groups, and the doctrinally deviant – is considerable. Even those with a fair grasp on church history will find people in her chapters that they did not know previously. She usually cites the responses of the church to these provocateurs, referring to the documents which supply the historical evidence.

In keeping with the English heritage of religious and political toleration, she is decidedly against the activities of politically powerful churches concerning "heretics." Such churches are often more concerned about institutional existence than they are vital faith, and that often meant they condemned people who were "more Christian" than they were. Even in the emotionally - charged issues of heresy, the author believes the church must be as ethically concerned about "means" as it is about "ends."

In spite of its many virtues, the book is not without its faults. There is a noticeable lack of closure on the issue of heresy. Throughout the book the author says that doctrinal truth and ecclesiastical unity are proper concerns of the church, yet she gives little guidance about how the church can determine orthodox faith today, and, if it can determine it, how much can it insist upon it as a criterion for fellowship, given the current emphasis upon ecumenicity, not only among confessing Christians, but also with the calls for inter-religious harmony among the world's religions.

Again, she does not wrestle sufficiently with the question of church and state. Most of her examples of the church's mistreatment of heretics occurred under the fateful influences of Constantinianism. It is possible for a church to discern error and deal with its advocates in a thoroughly Christian manner, without recourse to civil government and its means of punishment. Must the church today tolerate every version of "Christian" doctrine and conduct simply because in centuries past it did not treat heretics properly? The book powerfully makes the points that heresy is not easy to define and even harder to correct. But it does not follow, that nothing counts as heresy or that the church has no

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means to address error. The book is clear about what the church should not do concerning heresy, but it is reticent about what it should do about it.

These criticisms, however, do not invalidate the many merits of the book. It is an excellent survey of heresy throughout the church's history. Those who read for information and insight will be abundantly rewarded. Its reading level should make it accessible to most adult readers. But is the topic one of interest to today's reading public? The book, by default, will likely serve the interests of students, particularly those who are engaged in religious studies.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Erwin Fahlbusch, et. al., eds., *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, vol. 2 (E-I) and vol. 3 (I-O), Trans. and Ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001, pp. 787, and 2003, pp. 884, \$100.00 each.

The *Encyclopedia of Christianity* is the English translation of the third edition of the *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon: Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie*, published in Göttingen, Germany in five volumes between 1986 and 1997. Volume I of the English version was published in 1999 and was reviewed in the Ashland Theological Journal in 2000 (vol. xxxii, pp.157-158). With these subsequent volumes arriving in a timely manner, the English-speaking scholarly community can anticipate the completion of the set by 2006.

As noted in the review of volume one, the articles are of excellent academic quality. Through the majority of the articles are written by German scholars, there is a concerted effort to be broadly ecumenical in outlook and contemporary regarding what is happening in the Christian church around the world. Many of the additions to the original articles and the insertion of new articles by the English translation team address these concerns of ecumenicity and contemporaneity. This is quite noticeable in additions of various North American perspectives and in updated bibliographies at the end of the articles.

Since the academic quality of the articles in volume two and three is similar to volume one, it would be of little purpose to repeat accolades mentioned in the earlier review. This review, therefore, focuses on particular issues of interest that permit new things to be said about the entire project. A careful analysis of the contributors in the various volumes yields some interesting results. Of more than 300 articles in volume two, 231 are written by authors who did not contribute to volume one. That means that about 73% of the authors in volume two are new contributors. In volume three, again, nearly 200 writers are utilized that were not use in volumes one and two, so that approximately 65% of the articles are written by new writers.

Thus, the encyclopedia represents a broad scholarship. It also allows for many academic viewpoints. Erwin Fahlbusch, along with his co-editors, Jan Milic Lochman, John Mbite, Jeroslav Pelikan and Lukas Vischer, and eighteen consulting editors, are to be commended for drawing upon such a large and diverse group of scholars. Credit is

due the English version team also, particularly to Edgar W. Smith, Jr. and Craig Noll, and their advisors, for authors solicited to write additions to the original German articles and to add new articles of interest to readers in North America. The publishers note in volume two (p.x) names two more staff assigned to the English project who are also suggesting writers and updating bibliographies, namely, Norman A. Hjelm and Roger S. Boraas. Part of the encyclopedia's appeal is its diverse, international scholarship.

The diverse authorship is not just due to the additional writers solicited for the English edition. Additional German contributors far outnumber authors who are added just for the English translation. The combined impact of both sets of contributors is scholarship in depth and breadth. Since most authors wrote a limited number of articles, they were able to cover their subjects thoroughly. Multiple authors, especially on larger subjects, allowed for confessional and geographical differences to be heard. In sum, the broad ecumenical quality of the encyclopedia will guarantee extensive international appeal.

In working with volume three, I decided to concentrate on the geographical articles, many of which were prepared for the English edition. Two types of articles are involved. First, there are individual country articles, not only for large (Mexico) and influential countries (Japan), but also for small (Luxembourg) and relatively insignificant countries (Maldives and Mauritius) in terms of current world influence. Secondly, there are excellent area surveys regarding Christianity in various parts of the world. Two are prominent in this regard: a series of articles on the Latin American Churches and their theologies, and extensive articles on North America and its theology.

Thirty-nine country articles are contained in volume three. They follow a general pattern: location and general condition of the country - ethnically, economically, and politically; a survey of its history, politically and religiously; and a specific analysis of the current religious situation, with considerable attention to ecumenical relations between Christian churches and between world religions represented in the countries. The length of the articles varies from two columns to several pages, though the size of the articles has more to do with individual contributors than to the size of the country under discussion. While all the articles are informative, and many are particularly insightful, some are less than what one would expect of an encyclopedia of its reputation. In several instances the editors had to supply the country article, leaving one to ponder whether no writer could be located or if someone was derelict in his/her duty.

Since most of the countries in the volume are from the "second" and "third world," they provide an excellent introduction to geography and religion. Many have gained their independence in the last fifty years, and thus are on the cutting edge of contemporary history. Except for a few religious experts, the rapid changes in religious developments occurring in these countries are largely unfathomed by even the reading public. This enlightenment is probably the strongest argument for including these articles in the encyclopedia. One develops an awareness of the interplay of politics and religion, the impact of Pentecostal denominations in 20th century missions, the emergence of indigenous and independent churches in countries emerging from colonial domination - especially in Africa, and the widespread conflict between Christianity and Islam from Africa to central and southeast Asia. The impression conveyed is that the global context

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of 21st century Christianity will differ from the 20th century as much as that century did from the previous one.

The broad area articles (Latin America and North America) are outstanding. They discuss general features that pertain in each area as well as differences manifested in particular geographical regions. History - both political and religious - particularly in Latin America, is summarized under several chronological periods. For those who know something of the complexity of this story, the encyclopedia articles are remarkable for their clarity. They manage to simplify the account without distorting the picture of Christianity in the area. Readers doing their first investigation into Latin American religious history would do well to begin with these articles.

The history of theology on both continents is done very well. While the content is simplified, there is no loss of significance in the theologies that are covered in the articles. Each theology is discussed in its chronological setting, noting its salient points, its chief representatives and its influence upon subsequent thought. Average readers will be able to grasp the major movements that have appeared in American Christianity from the colonial period to the present time.

The general impression that the geographical articles of volume three convey is that the encyclopedia is well served by these inclusions. They add interest without losing scholarly quality. That is all that one could ask of any notable reference work.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Barry L. Callen, *Authentic Spirituality*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001. 268 pp., paper, \$18.99

Dr. Barry Callen, Professor of Christian Studies at Anderson University presents a full framework for the practice of authentic spiritual growth. With strong reliance upon the Holy Spirit in the process, the author moves beyond outward incidentals to inward realities. The work is a clarion call to move beyond both religion and its liberal expression to authentic Christian maturity. For Callen, Christian spirituality is Christ-centered. Spirit driven and leading to the Father.

The author sees as essential to "Authentic Spirituality" the work of the Spirit in leading the Christian into an adventure of developing holiness. This is to be accomplished by reference to the Bible, Christian tradition, the Christian Year, the Apostle's Creed and the six spiritual movements identified by Richard Foster. Chapter one relates how God is the one who reaches out in openness to all people. Each of the following chapters highlight a biblical word that illumines the Christian life, a Christian tradition from church history, elements from the developing Christian Year, a theological teaching from the Apostle's Creed and a nugget from the six spiritual movements. The concluding chapter focuses on practical paths to sanctification.

The supporting data comes from a veritable who's who in evangelical spirituality. The author rambles through the works of over 100 authors for quotations.

examples and illustrations. The bibliography is a great place to get started in reading the literature of spirituality.

The addendum includes a very helpful glossary of terms extending from "Asceticism" to "Sacrament." These items receive extended treatment and not just definition. In addition, there are 17 pages of copious footnotes. They are loaded with interesting details and helpful information. Next comes an interesting chronological list of "Select Spiritual Leaders" from Polycarp to Alister McGrath. The "Select Bibliography" contains a section on reference works, journals, authors writing before 1980 and a list of authors writing since 1980, an "Index of Subjects and Persons" and an "Index of Scripture."

Richard E. Allison

Phil Christensen and Shari MacDonald, *Our God Reigns: The Stories Behind Your Favorite Praise and Worship Songs* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2000). 143 pages, paper, \$9.99.

Did you know that the author of one of North America's favourite praise songs was once the first runner-up in the Miss New Mexico contest? It's true! Karen Lafferty, who penned the words and wrote the music for the well-known song "Seek Ye First", was once a beauty queen. Her story, along with twenty-four others, appears in *Our God Reigns*, co-written by a self-described "worship pastor, journalist, and husband/father" and an author and editor. What Ken Osbeck is to hymn stories, these two are to the stories behind praise songs. *Rev.* magazine (January/February 2001 issue) showed an advertisement from Kregel stating that this book was also available with a companion compact disc (advertised cost: US\$21.99).

As both a pastor and a musician, I enjoyed reading these stories. However, as a Canadian and a Presbyterian, some of them were unfamiliar to me. I would have appreciated having the CD to listen to while I read, but alas, the CD did not come with the review copy! I did know 15 of the 25 songs examined, and found myself humming them as I read about their genesis. Among the best-known songs cited in the book are "As The Deer" (Martin Nystrom); "Give Thanks With A Grateful Heart" (Henry Smith); and "Lord, I Lift Your Name On High" (Rick Founds).

Several common threads appeared in a number of these stories. The most outstanding of them was the connection that so many had with Christ For The Nations Institute in Dallas, Texas – an organization I learned about via the Internet (www.cfni.org). The degree of influence that this organization has had over contemporary praise and worship is pervasive. Other common threads included Youth With A Mission, Christian Copyright Licensing, Incorporated, and a few of the larger contemporary churches in southern California.

The authors interviewed each songwriter, and allowed each one to review the interview material for accuracy before the book went to print. Commonly found in most stories were anecdotes of the circumstances around the writing of the song. (This stands in contrast to most hymn stories, which tell something of the whole life of the writer; this

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can be accounted for by the fact that most contemporary songwriters are still alive.) Many of the circumstances outlined in the stories were tales of pain or poverty, but that strong faith brought them through every trial.

For worship leaders whose congregations use contemporary music regularly, this book will be a handy reference tool for the purposes of introducing the songs. For worship leaders who are largely unfamiliar with the genre, it serves as a modest introduction. The book is written in a very folksy style (the frequent use of the term "gonna" was a bit disturbing). No story is more than four pages long; the book is easily read in a matter of a couple of hours.

Jeffrey F. Loach

Dana E. King, M.D., *Faith, Spirituality and Medicine: Toward the Making of the Healing Practitioner*. New York: The Haworth Pastoral Press, an Imprint of the Haworth Press, Inc., 2000. Pp. xi-126, \$15.95.

The last ten years have exploded with an increased appreciation and respect for the link between spirituality and physical health. With observations based on experience and over 220 references cited in the slim volume, *Faith, Spirituality, and Medicine: Toward the Making of the Healing Practitioner*, Dana E. King, M.D., strikes a heavy blow to the wall that has traditionally separated these two ancient traditions.

Dana E. King is currently Associate Professor of Family Medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina. He vigorously advocates the integration of spirituality in the care of patients, and has been actively involved in both research and development of curriculum for medical students, while addressing the relationship between faith, spirituality and medicine.

Dr. King's book is a mere 126 pages in length, but packs a big wallop of research statistics and case studies, which back up the justification and use of his biopsychosocialspiritual model of health care. He asserts that the current biopsychosocial model stops short of respecting the influence of the patient's spirituality on his/her health, and that the patient must be viewed as a complete symbiotic system to actualize effective treatment and healing. Because religion is an important part of daily life for seventy-five percent of the people in the United States (p. 13), Dr. King urges the clinician towards an obligation to assess and address spiritual issues in the interest of quality patient/client care, and provides practical advice and actual assessment tools to help the clinician determine when and how to take a spiritual history. He not only tackles the ethical hot potatoes of taking a patient's spiritual history, when to refer to chaplains, and how to pray with patients with his customary practical logic, but also backs up his convictions with extensive research statistics. Dr. King also explores the education and training of chaplains, and their role and impact on patient care, and considers spirituality issues in special patient populations. He includes an intriguing chapter on the influence of the health professional's own spirituality, and offers a challenge that all providers, regardless of their own beliefs, be equipped to assess and refer patients to providers who would be

sensitive to the spiritual needs of the patient. His last chapter provides practical suggestions as to how to overcome the barriers to integration of spirituality in a clinical practice.

By far, the greatest strength of this tiny book is the voluminous weight of the research and the practical, organized approach of Dr. King. Each chapter is prefaced with clearly defined objectives, and concludes with both intelligent and thought-provoking discussion questions, and a summary. Sprinkled throughout the short chapters are text boxes which summarize the important points, and case studies which illustrate the principles discussed. Clearly, the author knows his material and respects the readers' time, by presenting his ideas in a lucid, concise format. While not being particularly innovative, the text is an invaluable resource for anyone involved in the health care field who is interested in providing the best health care possible by being actively involved in the spirituality of the patient or client.

Elizabeth Vargo

Alksei Pentovsky, ed. *The Pilgrim's Tale*. New York: Paulist Press, 1999. xii + 230 pp., paper, \$19.95.

The *Pilgrim's Tale* is one of an nearly one hundred volumes in "The Classics of Western Spirituality" series published by the Paulist Press. The series contains the original writings of outstanding teachers from Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Protestant, Jewish and Islamic traditions.

The *Tale* is the relating of encounters experienced by a pilgrim on a journey toward Jerusalem. The pilgrim is the dedicated Christian who is searching for union with God. The journey is the unfolding spiritual life of the Christian in the quest. Jerusalem, the city above, is the destination which by the way is not reached in this life. The pilgrim abandons his worldly life and becomes a wandering mystic.

The approach is that of hesychasm which literally means quietness. This is a contemplative tradition that dates to the fourth century of the common era. The pilgrim dedicates himself to unceasing, mental, of the heart prayer in order to achieve union with God. The common instrument for accomplishing this is the "Jesus Prayer," (Luke 18.13). Support for accomplishing all of this comes also from the *Philokalia*, collected sayings of Eastern Fathers from the 4th through the 15th centuries. It was first published in Greek in Venice by Nicodemus in 1782.

The *Pilgrim's Tale*, is typical of Russian spirituality of the 18th and 19th centuries. This volume is a very readable translation of the text of the Optimo redaction. A 46 page introduction gives the background and history of the collection and the numerous redactions. The heart of the process is "unceasing prayer," from the admonition of the Apostle Paul, (1 Thess. 5.17). This means to pray at all times and in all places The Jesus Prayer. The frequency of prayer through practice becomes an acquired habit that becomes natural according to Saint Hesychios. Frequency will eventually attract the intellect and the heart to a proper disposition.

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All of this reminds one of the "Game of Minutes" proposed by the modern mystic, Frank Laubach. The focus is reminiscent of the apophatic approach to spirituality defined by Holmes in his history of spirituality. This translation is both easy to read and enlightening as the reader follows the pilgrim on his journey to union with God.

Richard E. Allison

N. Graham Standish, *Discovering the Narrow Path: A Guide to Spiritual Balance*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 2002. 216 pp., paper, \$17.95.

In *Discovering the Narrow Path: A Guide to Spiritual Balance* N. Graham Standish offers a refreshing view of Spiritual Formation, both with regard to the need for such spiritual formation, and with regard to finding the proper balance between spirituality, theology, and religion. Mr. Standish comes from a Presbyterian background, and writes from the perspective of a minister, teacher, and Spiritual Director within his denomination. Having noted this, however, one is immediately aware of how little denominationalism comes into play within this work. Mr. Standish goes beyond denominationalism to express an ecumenical truth that finding the balanced or "narrow" path is both the need and the goal of all true spirituality, regardless of one's particular religious affiliation. Rather than rejecting denominationalism, Standish encourages one to grow deep in one's particular denomination, but not to stop there; he encourages us to discover the best of various groups within Christianity as each has much to offer the person seeking truth.

Standish maintains that divisions in theology and religious practice arise as each new group responds to excesses within the current group; each denomination gets its start by reacting to and trying to correct excesses in one area which has led to neglect in other areas. Each denomination begins, then, by trying to find balance, only to later lose the very balance it seeks.

The author also contends that perfect balance is never achievable due to the imperfections of human nature. While Jesus is the only person to have achieved the truly balanced life, this does not mean one should not strive to come as close as one can to finding balance. This is accomplished by finding a balance between the extremes of religious activity, theology, and the contemplative, spiritually formed life. Jesus modeled such a life, walking the narrow path between service, theology, and worship.

One of the greatest contributions of this book is the author's discussion of the need for all believers to re-connect with the heart of a Trinitarian experience of God, something the author believes we have buried under orthodox teaching regarding the Trinity. Standish maintains that the early church did not so much teach (or even understand) the *theology* of the Trinity, as it sought rather to *experience* the Trinitarian relationship of God as it relates to the believer. The roles of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the life of the believer differ, and yet each one contributes a vital element to the experience of God. The author rightly notes that most church members are afraid of experiencing the presence and power of the Holy Spirit because that is something one

cannot control. But to quench the Spirit by ignoring Him is to miss the vital and necessary life-giving ability of the Spirit to direct and empower the Church.

This is an excellent book for leader and lay person alike, but it is perhaps most beneficial to those who have allowed their teaching and their training to sterilize their relationship with the living God, the God who seeks not servants, but children

Robert Gulley, Cincinnati Bible , College and Seminary

Jonathan Goldstein, *Peoples of an Almighty God: Competing Religions in the Ancient World*. Anchor Bible Reference Library; New York: Doubleday, 2002. 575 pp., cloth, \$36.95.

This is a unique book, and one which I believe promises to have a distinctive voice in the discipline. The author is interested primarily in comparative religions, but with a narrow focus. He is not comparing religions from vastly different cultures and times, but more particularly the religious expressions in texts from the Israelites, Babylonians, and Persians from the mid- to late-first millennium BCE. What binds these people groups together as similar is not monotheism (which the book's title may imply for some), but rather their conviction that each believed its protector god was a deity "stronger than all other powers combined" and was the creator of the world (pp. 3-4). Polytheism among other peoples of the ancient world reflected the multifarious phenomena of nature and history in such a way as to make it impossible to worship one deity as "almighty." Even those cultures that accepted a single deity as "king" of the gods (such as Sumer, Greece, and Rome), did not perceive the royal king as having greater power than all other forces combined (p. 4). So the Israelites and Babylonians, in particular, believed Yhwh and Marduk respectively were stronger than all other heavenly powers combined, which occasionally led to ill-advised decisions, especially in regard to warfare.

Goldstein believes the intellectual structures necessary to sustain such convictions in antiquity have been preserved among the literary products of the Israelites in the Bible, which may serve as a model for evaluating which other ancient groups were, in fact, "peoples of an almighty god." These types of literature are (1) authoritative utterances on the cosmic might of the deity, (2) stories of divine intervention in time of adversity or of other challenge to the god's power, (3) connected histories, (4) prophetic texts, (5) prayers complaining of the hostility or inactivity of the god, and (6) meditations on the apparent injustice of the deity. After a brief survey of the Israelite version of the materials, Goldstein turns to the Babylonian exemplars of these literary types and concludes they too were a people of an almighty God (chapter 2). A similar survey of the literature of the Egyptians and the Zoroastrian Iranians leads to the conclusion they were peoples of a nearly almighty god (chapter 3). The rest of the volume is comprised of rigorous and detailed analyses of these literary types from all the people groups in view here (chapters 4-15). Goldstein admits the first three chapters present his "speculative theories," while the rest of the volume explores the texts upon which they are based (p. xi).

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Some may object that the author's definition of an almighty God as a deity "stronger than all other powers combined" is too narrow, or is not one recognized by peoples of antiquity, or perhaps some will even argue, nonsensical as a reasonable, working definition. In fact, I would agree that the definition established by Goldstein is an intellectual artifice – a mirage, so-to-speak – and not a working definition used by people of antiquity. But having said that does not discount the tremendous value of Goldstein's accomplishment in this volume. The use of such an artifice as a means of analyzing the literature and religion of the Israelites and their neighbors is a heuristic tool in the gifted hands of the author. The book will certainly be read widely and usefully for years to come.

Bill T. Arnold, Asbury Theological Seminary

J. P. Moreland & John Mark Reynolds (eds.), *Three Views on Creation and Evolution*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999. 296 pp, paper, \$17.99.

The 'three views' of the title of this book are 'young earth creationism', 'old earth creationism' and 'theistic evolution'. However, those who present these views in the book are not completely happy with these common 'labels'. Paul Nelson and John Mark Reynolds prefer to call their view 'recent creationism' rather than 'young earth creationism' because, they say, the earth is the age it is and there is no reference point against which to measure it as 'old' or 'young'. Robert Newman prefers 'progressive creationism' to 'old earth creationism' since he wants to put the emphasis on God's creative activity occurring in a progression of steps over a long period of time. Howard Van Till calls his view 'fully gifted creation' because he 'recognizes the entire universe as a creation that has, by God's unbounded generosity and unfathomable creativity, been given all of the capabilities for self-organization and transformation necessary to make possible something as humanly incomprehensible as unbroken evolutionary development' (p. 173).

The book opens with an Introduction in which the editors seek to set out the central issues in the creation-evolution debate and to give a historical overview of it. This is demanding reading in places because of its conciseness. It is followed by the three chapters that are the core of the book. Each begins with a presentation of one of the views. The proponents are asked to answer five questions: What is their overall position? Why does the controversy matter? How does their understanding of science inform their approach? How does their understanding of the Scriptures influence their approach? What role does extra-biblical evidence and arguments play in confirming or contesting their theological beliefs? This presentation of the view is followed by four fairly brief 'Responses' by Walter L. Bradley, John Jefferson Davis, J. P. Moreland and Vern S. Poythress. The proponent(s) of the view are then allowed a final 'Conclusion' to pick up some of the issues raised in the responses. Because there is considerable overlap between the two 'creationism' views Van Till is allowed double the space of the others to expound

his view. The book ends with two short 'Reflections', by Richard H. Bube and Philip E. Johnson.

The format works well. The different views are presented clearly. The responses do highlight some of the weaknesses and omissions in the presentations. On the whole there is a welcome absence of the polemical tone that too often mars debate on this issue. One weakness is that none of the respondents favours theistic evolution. As a result Van Till gets a stronger critique from them which might, unfairly, give the impression that his case is weaker than the others, whose presentations do not face quite the probing they might otherwise get. In fact one or two of the points made in response to Van Till seem to result from the respondent misconstruing what he says because of lack of sympathy with his position. In the reflections Bube argues for careful definition of terms in the debate and presents a position close to Van Till's. Johnson argues for the 'intelligent design' position. Both he and the advocates of the 'creationism' positions put a lot of weight on the work of Michael Behe. Because of when they wrote their pieces they may have been unaware of the critical responses there have been to his book *Darwin's Black Box*, to which they refer. Some of Behe's examples of 'irreducibly complex systems' have emerged from this looking less convincing than Johnson claims they are.

This book is a good 'primer' on the creation-evolution debate and could be a useful basis for discussion of the issue in church groups or in college classes on science and religion.

Ernest C. Lucas, a former research biochemist, is Vice-Principle and Tutor in Biblical Studies at Bristol Baptist College, England

James Montgomery Boice, *Renewing Your Mind in a Mindless World: Learning to Think and Act Biblically*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993. 136 pp. Pb \$9.99.

Are you a person who wishes to think and act differently from the culture that seeks to enslave you to its ideals and to strip you of your true humanity? If so, "Renewing Your Mind in a Mindless World" is a great springboard into non-conformity. Its author, the late James Montgomery Boice, was the pastor of the renowned Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and author of thirty books on the Bible and related subjects. Therefore, he brings both scholarly and pastoral insight to the text.

Boice quickly engages the reader by prefacing that "we live in mindless times, days in which millions of people are drifting through life, manipulated by the mass media. Few give thought for their eternal souls, and most, even Christians, are unaware of any way of thinking or living other than that of the secular culture that surrounds them" (p.9). In light of this understanding, Boice's aim is to accurately exegete Romans 12:1-2 and to urgently call every Christian to its mandates of transformation through the renewal of the mind. Each of its ten chapters is devoted to a small portion of the passage, thus proving its value to the faithful Bible student and careful exegete.

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As a young pulpiteer, I appreciate how Boice's work reads like a sermon. Mirroring a good message, its key strengths include the attentive definition of terms, engaging illustrations, a thoughtful critique of culture and practical application. For example, in chapter four, which is devoted to the textual phrase, "in view of God's mercy," he defines mercy in terms of its relation to the biblical terms of grace and goodness. In succession, he concludes the chapter by illustrating the divine gift of mercy in the lives of Adam, Paul and the Englishman, John Newton. Furthermore, in chapter three he warns us that "if you fill your head with trashy 'pop' novels, you will begin to live like the trashy characters you read about" (p.40). As a practical response, he goes on to suggest reading one good Christian book for every secular book read.

Writing with the lay-person in mind, but also posing practical challenges for the most staunch theologian, Boice has successfully suggested insightful changes in thinking and practice that are necessary for being a living sacrifice to God. Truly, the Christian faith is both doctrinal and practical. Therefore, come, read and listen as Boice defies the idea that actions can be divorced from the contemplation of the mind.

Christopher Rufener

Stanley Hauerwas, *A Better Hope: Resources for a Church Confronting Capitalism, Democracy, and Postmodernism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2000. 288 pp., \$19.99.

Always looking for a good battle, Stanley Hauerwas has staked his ground in the battle heating up around the role of the Christian Church in the lifeblood of American idealism. Hauerwas, never shy with his critiques, offers up a sharply drawn account of the churches abuse of secular idealism in shaping its own inner workings. Though critical in nature, *A Better Hope* offers valuable insights from a theologian who has led the ethical revolution on how the church may impact, while itself not be impacted by secular society.

As identified in the subtitle of the book, *A Better Hope* seeks to impact three areas of contemporary life: Capitalism, Democracy, and Postmodernity. For those schooled in the theology of Hauerwas, *A Better Hope* provides little new information or ways of framing the arguments of today, though it will take the reader back with its far less polemical tone than Hauerwas has been noted for. While still firmly rooted in conviction and passion, Hauerwas has come out in a more ecumenical tone, maybe as a result of the inevitable calming that age often brings about, as he suggests in the book's introduction.

For those unfamiliar with the Hauerwasian school of theology, *A Better Hope* provides a good text to challenge the accepted ecclesial boundaries established regarding societal interaction. Hauerwas continues to advance several major causes in this book. First, he tackles the role of the church in our democratic, postmodern time, calling for the church to stop acting like a business and act more like the church seen in Scripture. Secondly, Hauerwas proposes the idea that ethics and theology are not different

disciplines but instead should be seen as hand in hand, tightly interwoven in the Christian's daily life. Finally, Hauerwas moves to where his true passion is – the church, calling for the church to distance from society's standards, replacing them with Scripture's standards, while at the same time not isolating themselves from influencing society.

The reader will find a remarkable endnote section following the text of the book. Of the 288 pages, nearly 75 are endnotes. It is clear Hauerwas has been influenced by a great many minds throughout history, and the reader will benefit from sharing in this book.

While *A Better Hope* is not Hauerwas at his classic polemic best, those familiar or newly acquainted with his previous works will appreciate the many questions and proposals Hauerwas offers to the church in search of itself. For those who desire a refreshing new approach to the church's interaction with society, Hauerwas will certainly not disappoint.

Bradley L. Selan

Bill Hybels, *Making Life Work: Putting God's Wisdom Into Action*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998. 214 pp., \$9.60.

We all know that we could use a bit more wisdom when it comes to making decisions about ordinary life. Yet in the midst of this fast paced world and our ever-increasingly busy lives, we just do not have time to stop long enough to acquire it. Well, do not fret. Bill Hybels, well-known and widely acclaimed author, counselor, and Pastor of Willow Creek Church, has come to the rescue.

This short, easy to read 200 page book takes the reader on an in-depth study of the book of true wisdom, Proverbs. The book defines wisdom as what is true and right. It applies the truths of the Proverbs to individuals' lives by addressing such topics as pursuing wisdom, taking initiative, doing good, developing discipline, speaking the truth, choosing friends wisely, marrying well, forging strong families, cultivating compassion, managing anger, and trusting God for everything. While the style of each chapter is clear and easy to read, they nonetheless deal with profound issues. This succinct and powerful style of writing which is characteristic of Hybels will be familiar and enjoyable to those who have read him before, and it will be refreshing to those who have not. Study questions are included at the end of the book so that readers in group settings can reflect upon the content of the book and make conclusions that will bring about lasting changes in life.

Chapter 13, concerning the topic of anger, demonstrates the value of this book to a reader. In this chapter, Hybels identifies the two ways in which individuals deal with anger. One is the brash person who releases his anger upon those around him without giving thought to his actions. The second type of person is the "bottler," who holds the anger deep within himself. This person's anger, while more subtle in nature, affects those around him greatly. Hybels states that the common root of both responses to anger is the unwillingness to deal with one's anger. He asserts that anger is a warning light that something deeper is wrong, and if one does not face his anger, identify its root, and learn

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from the anger, it will continue to poison relationships. Each person who reads this book will honestly be able to identify with one of the three types of individuals that Hybels lists, a "spewer," "bottler," or one who learns from anger. No matter which one a person is, he can either review material already known or learn new material that will help him deal with anger and strengthen relationships. The same can be said concerning each chapter's subject within the book as a whole. One will be able to identify Hybels' personal everyday stories and learn lasting, helpful lessons from them.

While the book is not academic in the normative sense, it is thoughtful and powerful. Its contents were originally included in a sermon series given at Willow Creek church that greatly affected and changed the lives of those in the congregation. The publisher has put them into the form of this book so that the truths expressed in these sermons on Proverbs can affect the lives of a much larger audience in the same way. It is a worthy and useful tool that will bring wisdom to many lives. It will bring clarity of purpose and action for Christian living. For this reason, it should be included in each person's personal library as well as the libraries of Christian institutions across the country.

Timothy M. Monteith

Nancey Murphy, Brad J. Kallenberg, and Mark Thiessen Nation, ed., *Virtues and Practices in the Christian Tradition: Christian Ethics after MacIntyre*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997. 385 pp., paper, \$25.00.

Virtues and Practices in the Christian Tradition: Christian Ethics after MacIntyre is a collection of essays by Christian ethicists, theologians and philosophers writing in the aftermath of Alasdair MacIntyre's pivotal work, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (2nd edition, University of Notre Dame Press, 1984). The editors of *Virtues and Practices in the Christian Tradition* have as their goal "to bring together the work of Alasdair MacIntyre in philosophical ethics with the writings of a variety of Christian ethicists in such a way that the latter *exemplify* the patterns of moral description and moral reasoning defended by MacIntyre, while allowing MacIntyre's philosophical concepts to shed light on the shape and justification of the theological positions" (p. 85). The first three chapters of the book provide a brief introduction to MacIntyre's philosophical ethics and the attraction to Christian ethics. While it would behoove the reader to be familiar with MacIntyre's *After Virtue*, the subsequent essays by various scholars, such as Stanley Hauerwas, Richard Hays, and Rodney Clapp to name a few, are helpful for introducing the ways in which virtue theory, ala MacIntyre, and concepts of narratives, traditions, virtues, and practices, are applied to moral formation, Scripture reading and hermeneutics, and practices in the church, as well as issues such as family, sexuality, abortion, pacifism, racism, feminism, business, medicine, and the economy.

While using MacIntyre's proposals for the cultivation of virtue in a storied context, the authors raise provocative insights on the ways in which the church should become the storied context for the development of virtue and practices given the demise

of universalism in ethical theory characteristic of the shift from a modern to a postmodern ethos. As Kallenberg notes at the end of the volume, the aim of the editors was not to introduce a new ethical theory but to illustrate the ways in which “moral reasoning itself is very much a communal practice” so that we, the readers, may experience a change in the way we see things (p. 364). By accomplishing this aim, this volume of essays is refreshing and helpful for understanding the relationship between moral reasoning as a community practice, and dare I say, obligation of the church. Each essay shatters the divide between the notion of a public and private morality, yet also confronts the simplistic idea that public morality is simply the extension of one’s personal sense of morality. Since moral reasoning and discernment require a storied context, morality, by its very nature, must be public and social. Therefore, the challenge for Christian ethics is, “which story and context inform our understanding of virtue and morality and what does this morality ‘look like?’” against the backdrop of a culture enamored with the autonomous individual, consumerism, materialism, and militarism. The editors and essayists of *Virtues and Practices in the Christian Tradition* provide compelling answers to this question by illustrating the ways in which the church provides, or ought to provide, the storied context where virtues are formed and practices followed that emerge from and continue to extend the “tradition, practices, and narratives” of the Christian story (p. 365). This book is not only a helpful introduction to Alasdair MacIntyre, but extends his work by constructive and critical appropriations by Christian ethicists, theologians and philosophers.

Wyndy Corbin

Glen H. Stassen and David P. Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002. 538 pp., cloth, \$30.00.

Recent scholarly conversations in Christian ethics have posed the question, “what is it that makes Christian ethics *Christian*?” Glen Stassen and David Gushee, in their joint work in *Kingdom Ethics*, provide a much needed focus to this question. They propose that Christian ethics, in order to be *Christian*, must have as its primary source Jesus Christ, who inaugurated a Kingdom that requires of its members a particular way of life. Christian ethics is a natural outcome of Christian discipleship as part of our faithful response to Jesus Christ (p.21). Stassen and Gushee use the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) to flesh out what Christian ethics must look like, since it is through the Sermon on the Mount that Jesus provided the concrete and visible practices that entail Christian discipleship, and hence, Christian ethics.

Throughout the first two sections of the book, Stassen and Gushee interact with the various dimensions of ethical thought, such as norms, virtues, intentions, actions, ends, and obligations. While helpful frameworks for any discussion on ethics, Stassen and Gushee’s aim is to present a distinctive Christian ethic that addresses these issues in a distinctively Christian way. It is in the Sermon on the Mount they find the essence and the pattern of Christian ethics.

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Stassen and Gushee see in the Sermon on the Mount not only a vision, or *telos*, of the Christian life, but virtues and norms characteristic of a Kingdom way of life. They are: compassion for the poor; mourning and sorrow for wrong-doing; peacemaking; restorative justice; mercy; integrity and wholeness between intentions and actions; loving treatment of our enemies; and willingness to suffer for doing right (chapter 2). The Sermon on the Mount also provides a model for "transforming initiatives" or actions that correct wrongs by presenting an alternative practice that breaks the vicious cycle of wrong-doing (pp. 132-137). It is from the Sermon on the Mount, and the biblical narratives, that Christians understand the good, the ends, the norms, the virtues, and the transforming actions befitting those who profess to follow Jesus.

In sections three, four and five, Stassen and Gushee take on the formidable task of applying their proposal for Kingdom Ethics to a variety of contemporary issues, such as war, just peacemaking, capital punishment, abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering, marriage and divorce, sexuality, gender roles, justice and love, truth-telling, racism, economics and the environment. In each rich chapter, they apply the Kingdom ethics model of transforming initiatives by identifying the elements and layers of wrong-doing, the vicious cycle, and then proposing transformative actions. One of the greatest strengths of most of these chapters is the depth with which they analyze contemporary ethical issues. Their analysis of wrong-doing extends beyond the limits of personal morality, by looking at each issue through a variety of lenses, deeply attuned to the influential forces of social context on issues of social ethics and morality. Their proposals for transforming initiatives, therefore, encompass proposals for both personal and social change. It is unfortunate that the chapter on gender roles (chapter 15) did not provide the breadth, length, depth, and bold proposals for transforming initiatives that the other chapters provided. Both Stassen and Gushee are deeply committed to gender equity and the righteous treatment of women called to Christian ministry. This chapter, however, tended to minimize the issue by not challenging the gender ideologies, hermeneutic, practices and contexts that have constrained women, thereby producing a weak suggestion of "convergence" in mutual servanthood (pp. 322-324), something which both equalitarians and hierarchalists would affirm with very different understandings of authority, women's roles, and resulting practices.

Kingdom Ethics is a rich introduction to Christian ethics. Anyone who reads this book will appreciate the complexity and dynamism of Christian ethics. At the same time, a reader will be enriched as a disciple of Christ as she or he engages with this material, informed by a desire to follow Jesus in our contemporary context.

Wyndy Corbin

Michael M. Uhlmann, ed., *Last Rights? Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia Debated*. Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center/ Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1998. 677 pp., paper, \$35.00

This book is a compendium of significant articles and legal cases dealing with suicide, assisted suicide, and euthanasia. It was compiled after the U.S. Supreme Court rulings in 1997 and contains some of the most significant writings on this topic. The book is edited by Michael Uhlmann of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. It is unfortunate that by the time this review appears, the book is out of print.

Uhlmann, with a law degree and a doctorate in political philosophy, introduces the book with a prediction that "assisted suicide and euthanasia could well become the dominant social and moral issue in the United States" (p. 1) during the first decade of the new millennium. Other bioethical issues, such as stem cell research and cloning, have supplanted assisted suicide in the public consciousness. Yet the underlying issues and arguments presented in debates over assisted suicide get at the core values that influence people on a broad range of social issues. For that reason, even though assisted suicide does not get the public exposure it did at the time this book was published, this volume remains invaluable.

Collected in one volume we have some of the most the central figures in academic and public policy debates on bioethical issues. The book is divided into four parts. The first contains an overview of western thought on suicide, and is the only original article in the book. Uhlmann concisely summarizes the views of major Western philosophers on suicide, beginning with Plato and Aristotle, covering Augustine and Aquinas, and concluding with Hume and Kant. Although necessarily brief on each, this chapter provides a very useful summary of the arguments that have historically been made in defense of and opposition to suicide.

Part II, like each of the following parts, begins with an introduction from Uhlmann which very briefly summarizes the articles in that section. This allows unfamiliar readers to pick and choose the articles most relevant to their study. Part 2 contains contemporary authors presenting moral and theological perspectives on this issue. Presentation of theological perspectives alongside secular and philosophical ones makes a welcome change from other volumes that sometimes ignore theological views. Excellent articles by those who advocate the right to assisted suicide are here, including Margaret Pabst Battin and Peter Singer, as well as those opposed, such as Leon Kass and Gilbert Meilander.

A significant inclusion is part of A. Alvarez's article on the history of suicide. Unfortunately, nothing is mentioned of his blatant historical errors which have deeply impacted academic and legal discussions on this topic. Alvarez's claim is that many in the early church lusted after death and sought to be killed. So, what many view as the persecution of the early church was, in reality, "a perversion of their own seeking" (p. 69). Overwhelmed by "the suicide mania of the martyrs" (p. 71), Alvarez claims that the church had to do something to stop this drain on its members. Thus, the task fell on Augustine who came up with a strong position against suicide.

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Alvarez and those who follow his position argue that Christianity's traditional opposition to suicide was a political decision, not a biblical one. Therefore, modern society is entitled to reverse that position. In spite of the logic of this argument, and its popularity, it is neither historically nor biblically accurate (Dónal P. O'Mathúna and Darrel W. Amundsen, "Historical and Biblical References in Physician-Assisted Suicide Court Opinions," *Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics & Public Policy* 12.2 [1998], 473-96). Some qualification of such a problematic piece would have been welcome in this volume. However, the remaining articles give the interested reader some of the best moral arguments on both sides of this issue.

The contemporary assisted suicide debate occurs in a medical context, and this is the focus of Part III. This section includes pieces from some of the most visible proponents of assisted suicide, such as Jack Kevorkian and Derek Humphry, although neither was particularly well argued. More significant was the article by Timothy Quill, a physician who has become very public with his case for a very limited set of conditions in which a physician who has known a patient for a long time should be permitted to help with his or her death.

Herbert Hendin addresses the empirical data available from the Netherlands on their experience with assisted suicide and active euthanasia. This data reveals what most opponents of assisted suicide fear: once the gates are opened to assisted suicide, it becomes easier and easier to justify its use in situations for which the original legislation never intended. Thus, for example, Hendin points out that a Dutch report revealed that within one year, over one thousand competent patients were put to death by their physicians without the patients' requests (p. 375). Today, much more evidence is available to demonstrate how difficult it is to control the desire to help patients die once any physician killing is permitted.

The final part of the book addresses the legal perspectives, concluding with sections from the 1997 U.S. Supreme Court decisions and the cases which led to those decisions. These cases are now accessible to the interested reader in one place and are accompanied by helpful commentary. Also included are model laws which proponents seek to have approved, and a general critique by Daniel Callahan and Margot White of plans which seek to allow assisted suicide in a carefully regulated form.

This book is a necessary addition to anyone who is interested in physician assisted suicide, either from an academic perspective or from a pastoral perspective. Although the debate has shifted out of the public limelight, the issue comes close to people's minds and hearts every time someone suffers deeply when seriously ill or dying. The issue raises fundamental issues of personal autonomy, control, death and God's sovereignty. Although some of these topics were not addressed directly in this book, it goes a long way to providing a complete compendium for addressing this difficult issue.

Dónal P. O'Mathúna

Allen Verhey, *Remembering Jesus: Christian Community, Scripture, and the Moral Life*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002. 526 pp., cloth, \$35.00.

Allen Verhey's book, *Remembering Jesus*, is a rich work that will expand the reader's appreciation of the church as the place where Jesus is remembered, not just in doctrinal confessions, but in active remembrance through the "performance of Scripture" in our lives and practices. In order for the church to be a place which remembers Jesus through the performance of Scripture, we must become a community of moral discourse by asking "what shall we do?", a community of moral deliberation by asking "why shall we do this and not that?", and a community of moral discernment by wrestling with "how shall we do this?" in a complex world (chapter 1). Central to these tasks is the role and use of Scripture. Chapter three is an important chapter for understanding how Scripture functions as a primary source in Christian ethics, given the difficulties of its "silence" on the many contemporary issues we face, its "strangeness" to those of us in a context informed by the values of modernity, its "diversity" in providing moral instruction, and its hermeneutical and exegetical "difficulty" when applied to a variety of issues (pp. 50-52). Verhey concludes this helpful chapter with antidotes to the problems of using Scripture in ethical deliberation. These are reading Scripture with humility, in community, as Canon, with exegetical care, prayerfully, and with the paired virtues of holiness (setting apart Scripture) and sanctification, fidelity and creativity, and discipline and discernment (pp. 55-71).

The remaining chapters in Verhey's book (chapters 4-20) provide remembrances of Jesus' confrontation with sickness, sexuality, economics and politics, the ways in which the early church performed Scripture, and how we continue to perform Scripture when confronting these issues. Verhey's chapters in part two, "Remembering Jesus in the Strange World of Sickness," are some of the most immediately helpful chapters of the book, not surprising given Verhey's own work in medical ethics. These chapters are a must read for clergy, chaplains, and pastors involved with helping people face death in light of the failed promises of science to cure all diseases. For Verhey, remembering Jesus means practicing "watchful medicine," which combines courage and patience, joy and lament, with care for the suffering, reverence, humility and gratitude (pp. 145-154). A community which remembers Jesus in the face of a person's sickness will not abandon her to the tyranny of technology and alienation from self, others, and God. In sickness and death, remembering Jesus points to "a better destiny" and demonstrates that "death is not the last word, and that God's good future makes its power felt not where the dying cling desperately to life, nor where the dying are deliberately killed, but where dying is faced with courage and accompanied by care. 'I believe in....the resurrection of the dead, and the life everlasting'" (p. 154).

The section on sexuality in Verhey's book, part 3, addresses the ethical dimensions of patriarchy, marriage, women, family, divorce, and sexual expression. Verhey provides helpful insights on the ways in which patriarchy is assumed in biblical texts and the contributions by feminist scholars in exposing the appropriation of patriarchy in hermeneutics and oppressive practices in the church (p. 185-186). He, also, exposes patriarchal assumptions by presenting the alternative ethic when a

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community of faith truly remembers Jesus through liberating practices of performing Scripture. Most evangelicals will not embrace where Verhey goes in the application of his insights to the issue of homosexuality (pp. 232-240). In attending to the passages which address homosexual behavior, and to the absence of any references in Jesus' teaching, Verhey affirms "the story of our creation as male and female still suggest... that the Christian vision of good sex is the 'one flesh' union of a man and woman that gestures and nurtures the covenant made in vows, carried out in fidelity, and hospitable to children" (p. 238). However, we must realize that we are on the fall side of creation and not yet in God's good future. With this realization, Verhey proposes that we don't have to be indifferent to the "Scripture's story-formed preference for heterosexual intercourse in order to say that intercourse (whether heterosexual or homosexual) within the context of a relationship of commitment and continuity is better than promiscuity and infidelity" (p. 239). It strikes me as odd that much of Verhey's ethic in medicine, sexuality, economics and politics is formulated based on God's preferred future of what ought to be. Why he accepts the conditions of the fall as the normative framework for sexuality is a mystery.

The final two sections, on economics ("Remembering Jesus in the World of Adam Smith") and politics ("Remembering Jesus in the Strange World of Politics"), lend provocative insights on these crucial social issues. Even though Verhey's redefinition and defense of theocracy, which he carefully distinguishes from theonomy, hierocracy and bibliocracy, becomes tedious after five chapters, there is much to gain by a thorough reading of these chapters, as well as the others. *Remembering Jesus* is a splendid resource for considering the relationship between crucial aspects and sources for Christian ethics: Jesus, the Scriptures and the Church.

Wyndy Corbin

Jonathan Edwards, *Resolutions and Advice to Young Converts*. Edited by Stephen J. Nichols. Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2001. 40 pp. paper, \$2.99.

Church workers and teachers are always looking for intelligent readable materials that can be discussed by their students. As a young man of nineteen and twenty, Jonathan Edwards, one of America's greatest Christian thinkers, wrote up seventy resolutions intended to direct him through his ministerial training and to lead him to be the Christian person he desired to become. These resolutions present a thought out design for life. Most are very general guidelines such as number five, "Resolved, never to lose one moment of time; but improve it the most profitable way I possibly can" or number fifty-six, "Resolved, never to give over, nor in the least slacken my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be." He occasionally gets quite specific such as when he says in number fourteen, "Resolved, never to do anything out of revenge." It is amazing that one so young could have such a clear understanding about what is truly important in life. Edwards was devout in his faith, clear in his thinking, and practical in

his approach to life. These resolutions, published in a new format and accompanied by a ten page letter from a more mature Edwards to a new convert providing her with directions for her future Christian growth, provide great challenging material for discussion in either a classroom or youth group format, or for one's private devotions.

Mark Hamilton, Ashland University

Wayne Grudem and Dennis Rainey, *Pastoral Leadership for Manhood and Womanhood*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2002. 289pp, \$15.99.

Never judge a book by the cover, or by its editors. Wayne Grudem and Dennis Rainey tend to attract conservative readers, but their most recent collaboration could benefit a broader readership. *Pastoral Leadership for Manhood and Womanhood* is one of four books published directly from the conference, "Building Strong Families in your Church," held in Dallas, Texas, in March of 2000. Fourteen speakers fill fifteen chapters on a variety of topics from the conference. Seven of the chapters deal directly with marriage while the other seven cover such topics as single adult ministry, ministering to homosexuals and their families and domestic violence. Chapter Fifteen closes the book with a general encouragement for pastors and others in leadership.

The contributors include several notable men like Dennis Rainey, Bob Davies, H. B. London, R. Kent Hughes and Dick Purnell. While the marriage chapters were important to the goal of the book, the other chapters offered extremely useful advice to other specific ministries in the local church and thus improve family life. H. B. London's contribution, "Cultivating a Man Friendly Church," is highly relevant and helpful. His pastoral experience spans over twenty years of getting men not only involved, but also disciplined in the church. His information and wisdom is invaluable for every church starting or maintaining men's ministry. London gives a personal example of how playing softball with some of the guys from his church and going out for coke afterwards was a huge deal to those men. He emphasizes the personal relationship with these men was much more important than dragging them to a Promise Keeper event. As he put it, "I discovered at McDonald's with dusty, scarred knees, that the best economy for building a church is to build around 2 Timothy 2:2, to invest yourself in teachable, likable, trainable, pliable, available men (p.86)."

Dick Purnell contributes two chapters on reaching and ministering to single adults. The practical application for pastors is enormous. He suggests several helpful points to help build single adult ministries in any church, no matter what the established dynamics are. Purnell outlines a top ten list of "Why single adults are turned off by the Church (p.101)" and fifteen hints to not turn them away. His second contribution to the book is "Helping Single Adults Handle Moral Failures (p.247)." Again, Purnell delineates the ways singles are affected by sinful choices and the steps the pastor can take to minister effectively to them, so they can become healthy and fruitful disciples to the local church.

Bob Davies addresses the sensitive subject of homosexuality. Drawing from his experience from working with Exodus International, Davies imparts essential insight

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into understanding the sin of homosexuality and dealing with family members. He provides indispensable insight about his personal struggles and shares a number of stories from other people's lives.

Half the book is on marriage and, as mentioned above, that stems from the conference theme of building strong families. One of the most helpful tools the book provides on marriage comes from Ken Sande's chapter on "Church Discipline: God's Tool to Preserve and Heal Marriages (p.161)." He includes a diagram from Peacemaker Ministries named appropriately "the slippery slope of conflict (p.168)." The diagram categorizes the common responses of people into three parts: escape responses, peacemaking responses, and attack responses. He encourages pastors to teach this diagram to couples, so they can learn peacemaking responses like discussion and negotiation. The other chapters on marriage were "good reads" and offered traditional advice to couples, like better communication, be romantic, etc.

A recognizable oversight with the book concerns the marriage chapters. Several marital concepts overlap and seem redundant. For instance, Dennis Rainey writes about the "foxes" that snack on the fruit of a marriage. In the subsequent chapter, Danny Akin is warning about the "little foxes that spoil the vineyards (p.52)." Rainey refers to the "third fox: a mistress, (p.44)" where Akin alerts about his fifth fox called, "the fox of outside interference (p.56)." Another weakness within the marriage chapters would be the absence of the "other" side presented. Obvious to many associated with Wayne Grudem, the material falls on the conservative side of women's roles, but it would have been beneficial for one of them to objectively present the pro-woman leadership argument, then provide their reasons why they disagree. As the book stands now, readers are only given the choice to agree with them or join the liberal camp, which is too bad, because the book offers a wealth of insight for ministries to any church despite what one believes about woman's roles.

The book is a great resource for conservative male pastors to build healthy ministries. The chapters dealing with singles, men and homosexual ministries were especially outstanding and applicable to any church. The editors target a specific audience and to that end, they achieve their goal. If those in the less conservative circles pick up *Pastoral Leadership for Manhood and Womanhood*, they would be pleasantly surprised with the helpful tools and insights the book provides for their own churches.

Tally Whitehead

Peter White, *The Effective Pastor*. Geanies House, Fearn: Christian Focus Publications, 1998. 260 pages \$18.05.

In Mt. 5:13 - 14, Christians are commanded to share God's love and be witnesses of his goodness. They are to be the salt and light of the world. However, something is drastically wrong. During the 80's and 90's, more than 200 people were leaving the church in Scotland each week, the size of an average congregation. People have failed to nurture a whole generation's walk with Christ, as seen in the fact that half

of the youth, ages 10 – 19, left the church. In light of these facts and other frightening statistics, Peter White wrote *The Effective Pastor*. In its pages, he includes wisdom that has been gained through thirty four years of experience and study in ministry as a pastor and principal of Glasgow Bible College. White believes the crisis is in part due to the failure of Christian leadership that fails to rely on the Holy Spirit. Some of the subjects that he includes in his book are: (1) calls to ministry, (2) guidelines for preaching, and (3) how to minister to individuals through listening and caring.

Often those in Christian ministry feel unworthy to do ministry. They should be mindful of the fact that people were made to glorify God and that God has put them in the positions where he wants them to be. White claims the ultimate breakdown of Christian workers is the inability to give and receive love. The solution is for pastors to surrender their ministries to God. This is done by allowing God to mold through prayer, personal devotions, and scripture. D. S. Whitney gives excellent advice on scripture study by suggesting the following three steps: (1) setting aside time, daily, (2) using a reading plan, and (3) meditating on a verse, phrase, or word. White also believes that further benefit can be gained from journaling and self evaluation.

The Effective Pastor also provides practical information on preaching. White likens it to a doctor bringing medicine to the sick. The pastor has the privilege of bringing scripture, medicine for the soul, to the congregation. In doing so, he/she must apply it to people's lives and provide a balanced diet of the scriptures, by utilizing the whole Bible. White quotes Robert Murray McChyne's prayer as a model prayer: "Lord, forgive my sins, pour your Spirit upon us and take for yourself the glory." (p. 58).

The pastor must practice good listening skills in his/her ministry. White says that this puts people in a better position to live their lives for God. Good listening shows compassion. An important part of listening is body language. Fifty five percent of one's impact on a person is through gestures, facial expression, and posture. Choosing a warm, safe environment also increases the ability to communicate. White says this should include pictures on the wall and comfortable chairs.

The Effective Pastor provides practical information. White strengthens his message through the use of Bible verses and quotes by famous people at the beginning of each chapter. He also encourages application and evaluation by including exercises at the end of many of the chapters. An extensive bibliography promotes further study. This book should be added to seminary libraries as well as to every pastor's personal book collection.

Ellen Clodfelter

Mark Yantzi, *Sexual Offending and Restoration*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1998. 256 pp., paper, \$13.99.

The scourge of sexual abuse has only received attention in scholarly journals since 1974 when *Psychological Abstracts* began seeing such a significant number of research reports on the topic to warrant a separate category heading for "incest" in their subject index. The increase in public awareness of sexual abuse in general has resulted

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in society's dismissal of the notion that this is a rare occurrence. While there is a steadily increasing number of books addressing the resolution of victim issues stemming from early sexual traumatization, far less concern is given to the issues driving perpetrators and the benefits from an offender facing the agony he or she has caused. The continuation of silence and secrecy in this area only serves to take power away from the victim, especially given the ineptness of the current judicial system to rehabilitate offenders and do anything significant to remediate the pain of survivors.¹

To fill the silence in this crucial area, Mark Yantzi provides a compelling case entitled *Sexual Offending and Restoration*. The focus of the book is on the offended and advocates a balanced response between empathy for the offender with stark awareness of how their actions have harmed others. Yantzi enlists the insights of eight others, four men and four women, some of whom were victims and others perpetrators, to form a "Book Reference Group." This non-therapeutic group fills the book with their own comments forged from their group experience.

Before Yantzi explicates his case for "Restorative Justice," he provides introductory information on the effects of sexual abuse and why sexual abuse occurs (chapters 2-3). These chapters are cursory and sometimes simplistic.² The core of Yantzi's message begins in chapter 4 where he introduces "Restorative Justice." Yantzi criticizes the judicial system for formalizing the attempts to right wrongs and taking the process virtually completely from the hands of those most involved: the victim and the offender. Restorative Justice sees value in having the victims and offenders meet. It processes sexual offenses in a manner that is both "in the system, but not of the system."³ Restorative Justice is an alternative to the current societal swing from punishment to rehabilitation in dealing with offenders. Both approaches focus blame on offenders and are pessimistic about their ability to change. Also, they do not aid in prevention, nor help victims heal. Restorative Justice emphasizes responsibility in the community.

A crucial observation that Yantzi makes is that criminal actions are symptoms that offenders are disconnected from broader society in any meaningful way.⁴ Restorative justice sees those who violate sexually not as diseased, but as acting out of a deep and habitual emotional isolation from meaningful personal relationships. Restorative Justice seeks to reconnect the offending person with the community while taking responsibility for her/his actions. Another aspect of Restorative Justice is restitution, that is, that the offender make some form of payment for the harm done.⁵

Chapters 5 and 6 attempt to exemplify the application of Restorative Justice in not only an all too common step-father/step-daughter scenario, but also to a situation where a church leader is the abuser. Chapters 7-13 put a wrench to the nuts and bolts behind the complex issues of healing. Addressed are such things as recognizing wounds, forgiveness, how to respond to the offended, applying Restorative Justice in difficult cases and providing some examples where this approach has been effective.

While I admire Yantzi's work, one of the concerns I have is an undercurrent that downplays the outrage toward those who have offended.⁶ Jesus himself was irate at the abuse of a child and threatened strict punishment for the guilty (Matthew 18:1-9). While some who abuse sexually are open to restoration, not all will be. With the strength

of compulsivity associated with this atrocity, perhaps it is safe to say that many will not. There must be some recourse to restrain and even penalize sexual predators not responsive to restorative justice. Here the pacifist bias of Yantzi's denominational tradition may bleed through. Not all will respond to a grace centered approach that seeks to address the deeper issues driving sexual exploitation. Isaiah once said to God, "When your judgments come up the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness. Though grace is shown to the wicked, they do not learn righteousness; even in a land of uprightness they go on doing evil" (26:9, 10).

Aside from this caveat, I found Yantzi's work to be a crucial voice in an area of frightening silence in our eroticized times. His work offers a viable alternative to the emotionally charged issue of how to provide a Christ-like and healing response to offenders. He does a good job showing that forgiveness in such cases is not a glib denial that terrible evil has occurred. Yantzi provides wise counsel on how a caring church should respond to offenders. Perhaps the crowning piece of Yantzi's work is his careful structuring of a facilitated dialogue between a sexual offender and his/her victims, particularly when the abuse has occurred in a family. The book is sensitive, thorough and is written in an easy to read format. The Book Reference Group's comments supplement the author's considerable academic and experiential knowledge of the subject. While they are not intended to provide a strict guideline for healing, they aid in providing identification with deeper issues, which helps to disentangle the emotional knot felt not just by many victims, but also offenders.

¹Mark Yantzi, *Sexual Offending and Restoration* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1998), 9.

²For example, sexual abuse is considered a logical outcome of patriarchal values. Yantzi comes close to *assuming* that patriarchy *necessarily* results in increasing drive for power that is left beyond accountability. There are far too many cases of white male heads of households who are appropriately handling their power and do not abuse. Sexual abuse doesn't result from patriarchy, but from the sinful nature of *some* who abuse patriarchal power *and* the later retaliations of those disempowered by their authority. The problem is less in the system than in those who use it to their devious advantage. In fairness, this is acknowledged later by group member "Gary." See 42-44.

³Yantzi, 54.

⁴I might add that this disconnection likely is in the areas of either nurturance or discipline. Nurturance builds self-confidence and discipline curtails self-confidence from being used in self-serving or harmful ways. Both are necessary for good social adjustment. They are usually most consistently provided in the home.

⁵Yantzi, 57-59.

⁶Yantzi, 47.

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Everett L. Worthington, Jr. *Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling: A Guide to Brief Therapy* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999. 296 pp., hardcover, \$25.

Only about 50% of clients seeking marital therapy emerge with well-functioning marriages that last over three years beyond treatment. Disturbed by this statistic, Everett L. Worthington offers *Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling*, which chronicles a Christian oriented, brief approach to marital therapy drawn eclectically from various theoretical frameworks. The author suggests that much of the failure in traditional marital therapy is not only that the couples usually come with a low motivation to work, but also that the process gets bogged down in the morass of negative couple interactions. In short, therapy does little to infuse hope and failure rate is inordinately high compared to other types of issues. So this approach emphasizes hope.

Hope-Focused Marriage Counseling seeks to help couples with marital difficulties in less than ten sessions primarily by a three part hope building strategy: 1) fostering motivation (*will* power to change); 2) showing couples tangible ways to change (*way*power to change) and 3) helping them learn to wait on God's work in their marriage (*wait*power). After summarizing the theory in the first part of his book, Worthington exemplifies "over one hundred in-session interventions and homework assignments to flesh out the theory" (18). He sees hope-focused marital therapy as a blueprint for treatment that describes the therapy's goal (to produce stronger marriages), focus (promote hope), your strategy (to correct weaknesses in valuing love, faith and work), potential target areas (9 possible areas, based on assessment) and interventions.

The nine potential target areas that the counselor assesses are the couples': 1) central beliefs and values; 2) core vision for the marriage; 3) skills in confession/forgiveness; 4) communication; 5) conflict resolution; 6) cognition; 7) closeness; 8) complicating factors and commitment. After expanding on each of these items, the remainder of the book provides specific therapeutic interventions for each area. Flanking this section of the book are two chapters dealing with insights and practical suggestions on precounseling and assessment on the front end and a chapter on the back end that hypothesizes twelve essentials for hope-focused therapy to be effective.

The approach differs from traditional marriage counseling (cf. Everett L. Worthington, *Marriage Counseling: A Christian Approach*) in various ways. For example, the latter expects most of the change to occur during the treatment, whereas the hope-focused anticipates changes to accrue post treatment. Also, for hope-focused treatment, the therapeutic relationship between the counselor and client is crucial, but the client is the fundamental change agent.

Worthington's work is carefully distilled from a blending of sound time-tested principles, the author's own practical experience and biblical truth. The model is highly pragmatic and does not get sidetracked by irrelevant and vain pursuits so common to the modern counseling endeavor, e.g., subconscious causes or cognitive structures for long standing behavioral patterns.

Worthington gave the refreshing illustration of someone correcting his tennis swing when he was younger. The swing was not corrected by delving into his past or unconscious motivations or cognitive structures. Instead, "he demonstrated. I observed"(23-4).

Worthington's style is readable, his material is well organized and the book lends itself to ready adaptation by both the beginning counselor and the experienced but searching marital therapist. Yet Worthington conveys that he is aware that "one size does not fit all" and provides some criteria specifically for those who would most benefit from hope-focused counseling (21, 22). Worthington produces strong chapters on promoting confession and forgiveness, strengthening communication and aiding conflict resolution, but he also pulls therapy out of the remedial to the preventative.

I found the second section of Worthington's work to be at times tedious and overwhelming as I moved from intervention to intervention. This is not necessarily a criticism of his work or approach, but an unavoidable outcome of the complexity of marital issues and the wide scope of issues the book seeks to summarize. Worthington has his hand on the pulse of the field of marital therapy and eclectically draws from a wide sample of what the most effective practitioners are saying. (The author generously quotes efficacious techniques from Willard Harley, John Mordechai Gottman, Norman Wright, Gary Chapman, Neil Clark Warren, Larry Crabb and John Stuart.) Perhaps Worthington's interest in brevity is why some of the interventions seem simplistic. Therapeutic approaches are like budgets—they look fine on paper until mixed with reality!

At times I wondered if Worthington separates hope-focused therapy too far from spiritual and ethical concerns (20). While it is true that a Christian marital therapist is not entitled to preach at or proselytize his/her clients, neither can solid counsel and interventions be given apart from some attention to the spiritual well-being of the client. Spirituality is a *crucial* component for everything one seeks to do in strengthening the marriage. It is not a competing goal, but a facilitating one.

While the brief approach to therapy is a good ideal to shoot for, the realities of the severity and complexities of marital problems (not always clear even after a thorough initial assessment), the lack of interest and motivation in the clients and the resolution of deeply engrained behavioral interactions are not always as easily moved. Still, Worthington's work is a rock solid strategy for helping couples progress through crisis, while equipping them with skills to effectively manage future conflict and to implement positive behavioral cycles within the dyad.

Jeffery S. Stevenson

Sarah Horton, *Web Teaching Guide: A Practical Approach to Creating Course Web Sites*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000, 242 pp. \$15.95 paperback.

Ever wondered how technology could enhance your teaching? As the title suggests, *Web Teaching Guide* is a practical approach for educators who seek to enhance their teaching by adding a course web site. This book is not to be confused with a guide

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for online teaching although many thoughts and applications are transferable to online teaching.

This book is a great resource for educators because it is pedagogically focused rather than technologically focused. Horton does give enough helpful technological information but with all the different programs available for creating web sites, it would be impossible to cover them all in one book. There appears to be more books available for the mechanics of web page production and it is refreshing to see a book such as this one that focuses on the underlying issues of why a course web site is a good teaching and learning tool.

This book is formatted into five chapters that walk both the novice and the expert through the stages that are necessary for the creation of a successful website. These are: planning, developing, creating, using, assessing. The total space of this book dedicated to the planning and developing the site exceeds the space dedicated to the creation of the site. It is refreshing for me to see the amount of time and energy dedicated to the planning and developing BEFORE the actual creation of the web site is attempted. The author stresses the need for the developer to have a clear understanding of how the site will be used and how it will enhance the course. Horton does a wonderful job helping the developer understand that the web is a different genre and that we need to know the potential users of the sites and what the real purpose of the site is. For instance, it is a fact that most web readers will not read large blocks of text online. What is one to do if the materials necessary for the class are too large? The author addresses different ways in which you can format text to make it readable online. This is just one of the many ways in which Horton gives the reader valuable assistance in planning a useable website.

Since information on the web is highly visual and interactive, Horton discusses how to make the pages attractive while adding elements such as interaction and usability. The addition of pictures from actual web sites gives us a greater understanding of what visually works on a site and what to avoid. I personally found myself jotting notes in the margins and inside the covers of this book.

One of the most helpful features of the book is the section summaries where Horton lists all the pertinent questions the website creator needs to ask in order to create the most effective web site. This handy tool enables the reader to incorporate the information presented in a practical way for the readers' current project.

I highly recommend this book to any educator who has plans to use the web to enhance classroom teaching. Every educator will learn something new and will be surprised at how this genre can enhance teaching and learning.

Vickie Taylor

John Polkinghorne, *Science and Theology: An Introduction*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998. 144 pp., \$19.00.

A professor at Cambridge, England, John Polkinghorne has focused most of his writing on the interface of science and theology. With degrees in both disciplines, he is a Fellow of the Royal Society and also an ordained priest in the Anglican Church. He wrote four books regarding science/religion prior to this one, and has published more on the subject since the release of *Science and Theology*. He is a frequent speaker at international conferences which explore the boundaries between science and religion.

The book under review is the product of his time at General Theological Seminary in New York, lecturing on science and theology. The author sees it as a basic textbook for college classes that want to discuss the interface of the two domains. In terms of that goal, it succeeds very well. Both science and theology majors could profit from this book. For that matter, many students in other fields could also profit from the book, for he explains theories and propositions in language that students can understand. However, I doubt whether most students could process the book unless they were in their upperclass years. The book requires students who excel in analysis, synthesis, and critical evaluation. It would help considerably if they had some background in philosophy.

The introduction of the book (pp. 1-3) indicates the author's wish to begin with foundation issues of both disciplines, particularly their historical and methodological perspectives. He then moves to more detailed issues: current scientific theories and how they could affect our understanding of humanity and God. Next, he considers what a natural theology might suggest about God and moves on to specific issues in Christian theology based upon Scripture. It is Polkinghorne's conviction that there is nothing in authentic science that can invalidate the Christian claims regarding Christ, including his resurrection from the dead. He concludes the book with two explorations: whether scientific approaches to the universe might provide a topic where the various world religions could have a fruitful dialogue (Ch. 7), and what are the limits of scientific exploration (Ch. 8). This final chapter discusses ethics in science. The author does not believe everything possible is permissible. There are moral bounds to scientific experimentation.

The book has many features that commend it. Primarily it introduces students to the more significant scientific findings and theories of the last two centuries. A wide range of topics are considered, along with the leading proponents of various interpretations. Most of these are subjected to the criticism that Polkinghorne and others have provided. Thus, one learns that some scientific theories are not universally supported.

Perhaps the chief contribution of the book is to underscore the necessity of both disciplines for a satisfactory understanding of life. Polkinghorne is convinced the two are compatible. His book should help young adults to deal with the insights of both domains with less conflict than their parents experienced. While endorsing much of the scientific method and taking seriously many of science's convictions, he is quick to point out its limitations and to critique the field, when its proponents go beyond pure science and

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make metaphysical claims to a worldview dominance that is not warranted. Here the author is certain that theology has the better claims to truth.

Nevertheless, Polkinghorne's resolution to science/faith questions will not satisfy all Christians. Some will be troubled by his endorsement of evolution as the best account of "how" the universe functions (even though he insists that Christian theism has the best explanation to "why" there is a universe). Others will take exception to his view that Genesis 3 is a myth about the origin of sin, particularly in light of Pauline theology which makes the Adam-Christ contrast so significant. Many conservative Christians will find his "critical realist" reading of Scripture hard to accept, since it appears to diminish the objective truth side of the Bible.

However readers respond to Polkinghorne's stances, the book is a success. It makes both sides realize that we are in a genuine dialogue as equal partners. At best, one can only issue progress reports, for both disciplines are in flux. Better answers to some contested issues still lie in the future. Neither discipline can claim to have vanquished the other. If there could be less "contest" and more "cooperation," satisfactory answers might be found more readily. If this scenario were to play itself out, no one would be happier than Dr. John Polkinghorne.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.