Book Reviews

Eyal REGEV. *The Temple in Early Christianity: Experiencing the Sacred.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019. 496 pp. $65.00.

The temple as a concept is integral to understanding the faith of Christianity. When one thinks about the temple, he may envision one of those erected either by Solomon, built post-exile, or the renovations of Herod. Second-Temple Judaism is a designation of time referred to by scholars that span several hundred years and refers to the post-exilic temple. Using the temple as a reference to periods is but a part of demonstrating its importance in Israelite history to define their identity. Regev, however, picks up the conversation and takes it beyond Israel to Christianity. Knowing that the physical temple was deemed insufficient in the letter to the Hebrews and that Jesus told of its impending destruction, it was still a place of rendezvous for the early Christians. Paul himself observed temple rites on various occasions when he had already become a Christ-follower, and the cult itself was hostile when they perceived that Paul brought a Gentile into the courts of the precinct. Central to Regev's tome is the reconciliation of the tensions posed by the Hebrew letter and early Christian theology versus the actions of early Christians and their frequenting of the temple. Even beyond the destruction of the temple in 70 CE, the concept of the temple holds special significance for the early Christians with even second- and third-century Christians invoking its imagery in metaphors.

Regev's research places a Jewish mindset on the material as a whole which removes from it the convoluted infusion of a non-Jewish perspective. In other words, the reader will encounter the Jewish roots of Christianity and how in the early decades the believers, predominantly Jewish, were not as far removed from Israel's history as Christianity tends to be in modernity. His resetting of the readers' minds allows for a contextual perspective rooted in antiquity. The research is stellar, and he makes good use of both primary and secondary sources so that authors from the centuries of early Christianity have their say, as do the ripest scholars of the day.

One point of contention will arise, at least, from a Christian reader's point of view. Regev contends that the temple served other functions than that of atonement, but his case for such is not well stated or firmly established. He believes that visiting the temple was "an experience of the sacred," which is not altogether incorrect. His point would have been stronger had he at some point written about the creation account from an ANE perspective as the creation of a temple. Second, the letter to the Hebrews explains that Christ's sacrifice was once for all, and perfect; whereas, the sacrifices of bulls and goats were incomplete. Regev contended that a Jew who believed in Jesus might still offer sacrifices for other cultic aspects of worship aside from atonement—one thinks of a thanksgiving sacrifice on this note. However, Regev minimizes what Jews did in exile without a temple and how the synagogue—which later birthed the local church—came to ultimately replace temple devotion even by those who refused to attend the temple due to its corruption in the days of Jesus.

His work is an excellent contribution to a topic that is not as prominent in scholarship. The texts he spends time extrapolating are well handled, so ministers would find this a great addition

to their libraries. In the academy, this work would be useful in specialized study but not so much in generalized classes. Scholars, however, would find it useful.

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Christopher A. HALL. *Living Wisely with the Church Fathers.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2017. 274 pp. $25.00.

Protestants, perhaps particularly evangelical Protestants, are not known for their depth in the study of patristics. A number of scholars have attempted to address this weakness with books aimed outside the boundaries of academia, such as Bryan Litfin's *Getting to Know the Church Fathers* and *Tradition, Scripture, and Interpretation: A Sourcebook of the Ancient Church* by D. H. Williams. The current volume is the fourth effort in this vein by Christopher Hall, with previous volumes addressing worship, the study of scripture, and theology in the thought of the Fathers.

This volume is arranged thematically, with an introduction followed by chapters addressing topics of ancient and postmodern importance and controversy among Christians. These range from military service and martyrdom (of far more concern to the early church than to most modern Christians) to marriage and sexuality, the uses of wealth, and entertainment. In these chapters, Hall varies between in-depth explication of the thought of one church father, such as John Chrysostom on marriage or Augustine on war, and briefly excerpting passages from a variety of Fathers from both the Eastern and Western churches. Appropriately for his audience, the author invariably provides his quotations in translation with only occasional reference to particular words in the Greek or Latin text. The final chapter attempts to unite the threads of the book by considering what the good life looks like for "God's image bearer" attempting to live with wisdom in a practical way.

Some might contend that the moniker of "living wisely" is nebulous, but Hall convincingly demonstrates that living "a life nourished by the values of the kingdom of God, a life of deep and lasting human flourishing" (2) had concrete manifestations for the Fathers—and us, by extension—as it did in the pagan intellectual tradition in which many of them were formed. One of the major themes in this regard is the dispositional nature of ethical and wise living. Hall emphasizes the importance not only of the guidance of the Holy Spirit, but also of Christian *askesis* (ἄσκησις), the "work-out program" in which the believer engages in imitating good examples and practicing spiritual disciplines. Hall is at his finest when unpacking issues forgotten or ignored by most but valued deeply by the Fathers; the section on virginity (147-154) is a prime example of this. In addition, the historical context for patristic thought on issues like abortion and infanticide and violent entertainment enriches the text and will be useful to his audience. Very occasionally, there are sections in which an endnote is not provided for a particular quote or idea, but this has only occurred to my knowledge where the work or author has been referenced in the text (112, for example). This is an academic quibble and will not trouble most of Hall's readers.

Both as a standalone work and the terminus of Hall's four-part series, this work is admirable. To borrow a common saying of the late J. Vernon McGee, this book is most effective in that it "puts the cookies on the bottom shelf." There are various reasons that Protestants tend not to avail themselves of the wisdom of the Fathers, not least of which is their more typical association with the Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions. However, Hall manages in this work to address perhaps the chief cause of the lack of patristic engagement by Protestants:

accessibility. As an introduction and demonstration of relevance to a popular audience, this book is roundly successful.

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Denis R. JANZ. *Martin Luther's* The Church Held Captive in Babylon*: Latin-English Edition with a New Translation and Introduction.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. 264 pp. $74.00.

Five hundred years ago, at a key moment in his controversy with the Roman Church, Martin Luther published three influential treatises that together sealed his imminent excommunication by Pope Leo X. The second of these three books was *De captivitate Babylonica ecclesiae, praeludium* (*A Prelude concerning the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*). In this salvo, Luther challenged some of the most cherished aspects of Rome's ecclesiology—the sacraments. The church, he argued, has been held captive by the sacramental system. Based on his definition of sacrament (a promise attached to a sign) and the preeminent authority of Scripture, Luther dealt with all seven ordinances and ultimately concluded that the number of sacraments should be reduced to two—baptism and communion. This shift in the number of sacraments was clearly revolutionary and one of the few matters that would come to enjoy consensus among Protestants of all stripes. Even holy communion, which Luther retained as a genuine sacrament, he declared had been held captive by three shackles imposed by the Church (namely, communion in one kind, transubstantiation, and the mass as a continual sacrifice).

In this new edition of this Reformation classic, Janz makes the case that this book is the most influential of Luther's three great treatises of 1520. This volume includes an extensive introduction, followed by Luther's original Latin text and Janz's new English translation on facing pages. Given how many other early modern texts languish in Latin, virtually unused, one may question the need for a new translation. Four previous English translations of this treatise have been published—by Wace and Buchheim (1896), Steinhäuser (1915), Woolf (1952, appearing also in the famous collection of Luther's writings by John Dillenberger), and a revision of Steinhäuser by Ahrens and Wentz (1959, which appeared in volume 36 of *Luther's Works*). Janz briefly mentions the weaknesses of previous translations: archaisms; unnecessary gender-exclusive language; errors of translation; and various distortions that dull the sharpness, vulgarities, and moral or theological judgments that might have offended Luther's (Lutheran) translators. Without providing any specific examples, Janz expresses his intention to rectify all these deficiencies (46).

In light of a few comparisons between this translation and the previous one from *Luther's Works*, I have observed that the rendering of this translation tends to be tighter and a closer reflection of the original. There are exceptions, however. In the title, for instance, "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church" becomes "The Church Held Captive in Babylon." This is a looser rendering that specifies correctly the meaning of the more ambiguous genitive (*ecclesiae*) as objective. Other loose renderings are less clear. For example, that the nominative *spiritus* is translated as a direct object is puzzling, and it does significantly change the meaning of the sentence (70-71). In other places, a looser translation may not change the meaning, but the English reader may miss an important connection—for instance, when *captivitas* becomes "imprisonment" (80-81). Looser translations are more forgivable since the Latin text is easily accessed by a simple glance across the page.

This translation is accompanied by various other aids. Janz has divided the text into shorter paragraphs and added more headings than were included in the original. More importantly, he

has included extensive footnotes that explain names, events, and anything that may be obscure to modern readers unfamiliar with the historical context.

The background of Luther's book is more fully addressed in the "Introduction" (1-48), which traces the ecclesiological controversy from Luther's *Ninety-five Theses* (31 October 1517) up to the completion of *Babylonian Captivity*. Janz includes an excursus on Thomas Aquinas's ecclesiology, concluding that Luther was incorrect in his harsh dismissal of Thomas's ecclesiology as overly reliant on the papacy (28-39).

Everyone interested in the history of theology and especially the sacraments ought to read this Luther classic. This edition—for its readable translation, Latin text, and helpful footnote apparatus—is highly recommended.

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James L. GORMAN, Jeff CHILDERS, Mark W. HAMILTON, eds. *Slavery's Long Shadow: Race and Reconciliation in American Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019. 271 pp. $32.00.

The book has a tripartite arrangement: (1) Race and Unity/Division in American Christianity (21-129), (2) Case Studies on Race and Christian Unity (133-209), (3) Proposals for the Future (213-260). It has an index (260-271), but no bibliography. The editors mark this as an Abilene Christian University product. Two are professors; all are graduates, and the main references are to Churches of Christ (*a cappella*). It is dedicated to Douglas Foster, ACU professor, as a quasi-festschrift. Of the contributors Hutson is an ACU dean; Pulley and Hughes alumni; Taylor, Robinson, and Brice have taught there. The subject matter falls within Gorman's expertise, but experts in OT and early Syriac Christianity seem less appropriate. The strongest argument for abolishing slavery may be the actions of the ancient church; sadly, Childers could have fleshed that out.

The book is intended to explain why white and black Evangelicals reacted so differently to the Trump candidacy. That answer is easy. One group had been given patronage under the previous administration while the other felt harassed, if not persecuted, by it. The Clinton campaign gave no assurances. We might compare the fourth-century church, obviously not eager to press Constantine, who had ended their persecution, about his family life. This book is not a balanced assessment of the problem; it is a prosecutor's brief to get an indictment. That indictment is at the end (260), quoted from Doug Foster:

> He places the responsibility of repentance and reconciliation squarely on white Christians as the perpetrators of the sin of racism. . . . Race hatred and racial discrimination and segregation is not a mistake; it is sin. It is sin now, and it was sin then.

Indictments typically sharpen the negative. Compare the statement of Allen (214) with the far lower one suggested by Leonard Moore's research.

The book is thus a declaration that this segment of Churches of Christ is joining the Disciples in their approach to this problem—three Disciples contributors. The process mentioned by Williams/Sharp (203) may well be the model behind this effort—increasing efforts to assimilate black churches ("unity") with a strong antiracist emphasis. Not mentioned is the *Realpolitik* behind it. The emphasis then was LGBTQ inclusion. Disciples black churches were both their largest and most conservative congregations. The 1968 antiracist materials were updated and such was achieved.

Gorman (21-38) begins the articles with a study of the interplay between evangelical revivalism and abolishing slavery. Wes Crawford (39-57) writes about racism and division in

Christianity during the antebellum and reconstruction eras. He stresses that "race" is a social, not biological, construct (Sherwin-White).

Hutson (58-88) discusses the role of religion in lynching. Beginning with the statement that segregation began in the North, there is useful background; generalizing from one case has obvious problems (for example, all lynchings occur in election years? Hardly!). Pulley's topic (89-108) is a study of civil rights and the Religious Right. Both could have worked toward racial unity but didn't. She seems eager to condemn Republicans, whose votes percentagewise for civil rights were better. President Harding's Birmingham speech and support of a Republican anti-lynching bill (passed in House, filibustered to death by S. Senate Democrats) deserve mention. The Republican change needs more study; who deserted whom or both? Joel Brown (109-129) writes about resistance to civil rights by evangelicals. He particularly cites "structural" or "institutional" racism. The objections at Nuremberg (such as Shawcross's opening speech) that individuals bear responsibility for crimes still seem germane.

Loretta Hunnicutt's article (133-152) on women and race begins the next section. Her comment about women at the margins needs work (in reference to Countess of Huntingdon, the affluent CWBM board). Lawrence Burnley, a Disciple, discusses (153-171) civil rights and interracial unity, highlighting Disciples' quotas (169, his word) and slow progress (171). Edward Robinson (172-188) details the relationship between James Lovell (white) and Richard Hogan (black), a rare emphasis on individuals.

In section three Richard Hughes discusses Resisting White Supremacy (213-230). Jerry Taylor (231-247) writes on Racial Reconciliation as Professional Practice. He almost revives the panegyric (like the Younger Pliny) as a literary form. He speaks of black anger and rage; what about the white counterparts? Tanya Smith Brice (248-260) comments on racial reconciliation workshops and closes with the indictment. There is no epilogue or summary.

Two major lacunae should be emphasized: poor whites and Muslim Arabs. Nancy Isenberg's *White Trash* makes much of this book obsolete. It tells a great deal about its subject and about slavery (Locke's view beginning at 43). Slavery was the 19th-century agribusiness and slaves their "machines." Such doomed poor whites to a pitiable life noted by skin color—tallow. Slaves—especially females—whatever their hardships, were an economic asset and fed appropriately. Poor whites did not want to dominate blacks but to escape a force that destroyed their livelihood. Most fighting under the "Confederate (battle) flag" hated slavery. The planters feared poor whites would vote to end slavery (Isenberg 312). Poll taxes were first used on them.

Muslims were in the slave trade before and after Europeans; Islamic slavery ended in 1962 (Bernard Lewis, "What Went Wrong?" 89). Hutson's statement (72) needs further qualification; Christians were enslaved by Muslims (Children's Crusade; "recruiting" for the harem or Janisseries by Ottomans). Mostly they practiced slavery without apology and without condemnation.

The omissions are striking: (1) fighters against racism: Sommer, Spain, and Fred Gray III; (2) any mention of Farrakhan, the premier black racist, and Elijah Muhammad's myth on white origins; (3) Fred Luter of the SBC; (4) Harvard's eugenics' origin. "White supremacy" is quite in vogue; a stalking horse for anti-Semitism? It is difficult to talk about white achievements without mentioning Jews prominently. Grace-based approaches! Blacks seemed to find Methodist Arminianism more helpful. This book is indeed a significant event. The text needs revision.

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Timothy LARSEN. *George MacDonald in The Age of Miracles: Incarnation, Doubt, and Reenchantment.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018. 150 pp. $16.00.

In this colorfully informative project Larson familiarizes his audience with a profound man

who influenced Lewis, Tolkien, and Carrol. He borrows from Chesterton, crowning MacDonald the "St. Francis of Aberdeen." Larson introduces his readers to Macdonald's work, influence, and history, while deepening knowledge of those already familiar with Macdonald; examining him against the backdrop of the age of incarnation, within the nineteenth-century crisis of doubt, and through his attempt to reenchant the world on the heels of Western modernity. Each section broadens perspective with scholarly response.

Larson draws from Hilton's characterization of Brittan's nineteenth century divide between atonement and incarnation. He connects this to his own Alma Mater's former habit of not celebrating Christmas as late as 1873; highlighting the late influence of the Victorian shift in America. He compares Macdonald's abundance of Christmas versus Easter jargon, includes several nativity poems, underlining MacDonald's use thereof as his main interpretive lens for the rest of life (26), and quips, that "Christmastime was the Alpha and Omega of MacDonald's entire publishing life" (389).

MacDonald inserted himself into phantasy storylines; seeking thereby to playfully illustrate the beauty of God's presence in life's regularity. He also featured others as characters in his stories, such as his early pastor F.D. Maurice. Larson tells of Macdonald's creativity, intellect, convictions, and interactions with influential people. Hilton's nineteenth-century shift from atonement to incarnation becomes mirrored in Macdonald's preference for Christmas over Easter and how He emphasized becoming childlike in discipleship.

Larsen's second section, 'Crisis of Doubt," introduces MacDonald's apologetics via fictional literature; e.g., *Thomas Wingfold, Curate* where the main character never questioned the intellectual credibility of his faith, having taken the established church for granted. In this realist novel Wingfold's interlocutor, George Bascombe, ferociously mocks belief in resurrection. Throughout this portion Larsen exquisitely unveils the Victorian juxtaposition between faith and doubt, placing MacDonald's literature squarely therein. Macdonald's "insight that questioning things is not wrong" (52) paves the way for informed and generous apologetics despite skepticism's growth. Larsen flavors this section with interactions between MacDonald and doubters like Alfred Tennyson and scoffers such as Mark Twain. Intersecting this theme of doubt with MacDonald's faith in literature Larsen observes that "the quintessential MacDonald leading characters, however, are recurrently ones who really do have fundamental religious doubts but whose quest for truth leads them to a deeper, more profound faith." (58) MacDonald understood doubt as a potential door out of unbelief (81). Richard Gibson responds by referring to MacDonald's work as "ecumenical faith in poetry" (83).

Through the final section, "The Reenchantment of the World," Larsen reports on MacDonald's ministry struggles. Although invited to speak at high-profile locations like Princeton and Manchester, Larsen suspects that MacDonald may have sabotaged his own ministry; having preferred literary pursuits over divinity studies and ministry. Here he detects some self-loathing due to his pastorate within MacDonald's writings, infused with minimal condescension towards his congregants. Here Larsen successfully portrays the human side of MacDonald. Here evidence is provided of MacDonald preaching too loftily for his congregants; However, on the heels of the Enlightenment he sought to reenchant the world. In response Jill Baumgartner fittingly highlights Larsen's exposure of MacDonald; "His [MacDonald's] real dream was to be a poet." And "There were no salaried positions to be had for entry-level poets" (125).

Larsen supports his arguments with substantial evidence with few pages. He successfully weaves both contemporaneous moods with MacDonald's personal experiences and literary interests. Perhaps Larsen might have critically engaged Macdonald's aversion to atonement more sufficiently. By identifying Macdonald's context he nearly reduces him thereto. Larsen might have critiqued MacDonald's reasons for downplaying Easter a bit more thoroughly.

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This work provides a viable alternative apologetic to the negative higher criticism of the post-Enlightenment era. Those interested in historical theology of the Victorian age will find Larsen's portrayal refreshing. Preachers and scholars alike can appreciate Larsen's ability to connect MacDonald's influence to people, places, and mindsets alike feeding into the twentieth century.

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Miroslav VOLF & Matthew CROASMAN. ***For the Life of the World: Theology That Makes a Difference.*** **Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. 196 pp. $21.99.**

When I commenced reading this volume, I thought that I might be able to give this modest book to a thoughtful colleague in the government legal office where I worked to encourage her to reflect on human flourishing as a legitimate end for a thoughtful faith. Hoping to facilitate her stepping beyond reading Tim Keller for her theology I was mistaken. Volf and Croasmun, two talented Yale academics, have instead written a valuable book, but it is basically a screed against theology as practiced in the current academy. While their argument is largely on target, with occasional slips into overstatement, it is a shame that they did not make a more substantive argument for human flourishing as theology's goal. Volf's earlier *Flourishing* could have benefited from a more accessible account that furthered his prior argument.

Volf and Croasmun begin by contending that "theology has an indispensible contribution to make . . . helping people articulate, embrace, and pursue a compelling vision of flourishing for themselves and all creation" (33). They quickly move to indicting the current practice of theology in the academy. Contending theology is obtuse and separated from vital questions of human endeavor while being oriented toward narrow specialists. The third chapter contends for a renewal of theology that focuses on "visions of flourishing life in light of the self-revelation of God in the life, death, resurrection, exaltation, coming glory of Jesus Christ" rather than a drama of redemption (61). In conflict with much of the current zeitgeist, they call for universal and normative vision of that flourishing life.

After arguing for theology's universality, they controversially call for congruity between the life of the theologian and the theologian's academic reflection. They oppose the model of the sciences that often finds such congruity to be irrelevant. Accordingly, they call for prayer to be central to the life of the theologian—a practical argument that resonates to my ears with the theology of Sarah Coakley. They close by doing a case study of theology as oriented toward flourishing in Paul's thought.

The argument is basically well placed even though, as an attorney with divinity school training who teaches as an adjunct on occasion, I profitably read a fair amount of academic theology and see many popular volumes by theologians in print from denominational and popular presses that draw on making aspects of theology accessible. All serious publishing does not consist of technical tomes designed to win tenure. Yet their analysis of theology in elite institutions may ring substantially true to many readers.

The authors have God making a home in this world as their base image of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I am not convinced that the image of the kingdom of God as it comes to us in Jesus is still not a more serviceable route toward this goal. The image of home can be a bit bourgeois. The authors would reclaim a prominent voice for theology in broader contemporary life even if it does not sit as queen of the sciences. This task echoes John Milbank's endeavor without Milbank's arrogance of a theological genealogy that finds its original sin in Duns Scotus.

While I would not hand this volume to my fellow attorney, this volume is sorely needed to make a stir in the academy, and I wish it a broad reception.

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Peter C. ORR. *Exalted above the Heavens: The Risen and Ascended Christ.* New Studies in Biblical Theology 47. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018. 238 pp. $25.00.

Peter Orr's contribution to the New Studies in Biblical Theology series discusses "Jesus as he is now." (1) The book seeks to answer the question: based on the NT, what does Jesus do in his exalted state in relation to creation and the church? After a very brief introductory chapter, this monograph examines three aspects of the NT's teaching concerning the exalted Jesus. First, chapters 2–4 look at Jesus' identity. Chapter two is a discussion of the continuity and discontinuity between Jesus' pre- and post-ascension body. Orr's argument here is that the distinction to be drawn concerning Jesus' body before and after the ascension is not a matter of ontology, but rather a matter of how Jesus relates to creation. Specifically, the ascended Christ receives a new name in relation to creation, the name that is above every name (see Phil 2:9; Eph 1:21; Rev 3:12), and a new status as Lord, Christ, and Son of God (Acts 2:36; 13:33; Rom 1:4). Chapter three explores the near identification of the Spirit and Jesus in Paul's letters and the fourth canonical Gospel. Chapter four presents Orr's treatment of the church as the earthly expression of Christ's body. Orr rightly maintains the distinction between Jesus' own body and the Church as Christ's body, but does not deny that the actions of the earthly Church affect Jesus in his exalted state.

Second, chapters 5–8 discuss the location of Jesus after his ascension. Chapter five presents the NT's teaching on the ascension and absence of Jesus in Matthew, Luke–Acts, John, and Hebrews. Chapter six stands almost as an excursus that treats the topic of Jesus' exalted body, noting both its physical and spiritual attributes. This chapter relates to chapters three and four above in that it argues that Jesus' body stands in distinction from the Spirit and the church—it is Jesus' *own* body. Chapter seven looks at Pauline texts that speak of Jesus' physical absence in his exalted state and is thus a continuation of the discussion of chapter 5. The subtitle of chapter eight is "the epiphanic presence of Christ." Here Orr focuses on passages in 2 Corinthians that employ metaphors to describe the exalted Christ: aroma, letter, glory, face, and life (see 2 Cor 2:14-17; 3:1-3, 18; 4:1-6, 7-12).

Third, chapters 9–10 form the climax of the book and describe the activities of the exalted Jesus. Chapter nine examines Jesus' present intervention in creation, particularly his role in promoting the success of the Church's proclamation of the gospel, Christ's support of the Church during difficult times, and how it is that Jesus speaks through human agents. Chapter ten describes Jesus' relationship to God the Father. Like chapter three's discussion of Jesus' close identification with the Spirit, this chapter surveys the NT's close identification of Jesus with God the Father and how that relationship allows Jesus to serve as heavenly intercessor. A final chapter summarizes Orr's discussions and offers several theological and pastoral reflections.

As is typical of much evangelical biblical theology, Orr's work seeks to smooth out distinct perspectives in the NT. In this book, distinctions between various NT authors on Jesus' current, heavenly identity and actions are not often allowed to stand, and in this way the volume borders on systematic theology. Perhaps this speaks to the larger, unresolved methodological problems in the field of biblical theology. That said, much in this volume is commendable. Orr's exegesis is solid, and he draws appropriate theological conclusions based on it. He has drawn together the NT's teaching on a topic that does not receive much attention in a succinct, accessible man-

ner. This reviewer would not hesitate to recommend this book to a pastor, an undergraduate student, or even a motivated lay person. However, the treatment is not simplistic. This book also serves scholars who work in biblical theology. In sum, this is a fine treatment of a topic that deserves more attention.

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Veli-Matti KÄRKKÄINEN. *Christian Theology in the Pluralistic World: A Global Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019. 565 pp. $60.00.

Few single-volume introductory theology textbooks could claim to match the scope or ambition of this work by Kärkkäinen. Although the work is, in many ways, a very conventional approach to systematic theology in its structure and in many of its conclusions, Kärkkäinen engages at length with a dizzying variety of interlocutors, prominently including liberation, black, feminist, *mujerista*, and womanist theologians, as well as extensive treatments of thinkers from Asia and Africa. Moreover, he places Christian doctrines in critical conversation with the teachings of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism.

The aim of the work is to introduce the reader to the "basic Christian doctrines in their historical and contemporary perorations, including the current global and 'contextual' diversity . . . in dialogue with four other living faiths and their teachings. . . ." (xi). Kärkkäinen also aims to "challenge the hegemony of aging white European and North American men." (xii) The book draws directly from Kärkkäinen's five volume systematic theology, *A Constructive Christian Theology for the Pluralistic World*, condensing the work and rendering it accessible to theological novices. Kärkkäinen's comments on theological method are brief—a mere eight pages in his introductory chapter. In each chapter, he includes a usually short reflection on previous Christian teaching on a given subject, the views of various 20th-century theologians, then a series of engagements with a variety of global and contextual theologians. He then provides a judgment of consensus among these thinkers, which is followed (but sometimes preceded) by how Christian doctrine compares to the four other religions. Kärkkäinen does this for ten *loci theologici*: revelation, the Triune God, creation, humanity, christology, reconciliation, the Holy Spirit, salvation, the church, and eschatology.

Generally, Kärkkäinen is good at discerning consensus among a variety of voices, even if occasionally the consensus is thin. Kärkkäinen is capable of summarizing material from many disciplines and of respectfully handling the ideas and doctrines of other religions. He is successful in engaging theologians from the global south and contextual theology, yet he clearly draws far more from theologians like Barth, Pannenberg, and Moltmann. There is a lack of methodological reflection that may contribute to this. It is not always clear what should give rise to questions and answers in theology for Kärkkäinen, what data should be employed, and how it should be weighed.

Specific chapters stand out. The chapter on creation is particularly well done in its engagement with current work in scientific cosmology and other religions. His chapter on the church is long but clear and careful as he treads through several ecumenical minefields. Less satisfying is his chapter on the Triune God, which is too cursory even for an introductory textbook and lacks a nuanced, careful treatment of ancient and medieval Christian reflection on God. Kärkkäinen falls into some tired tropes in his critiques of their use of metaphysical attributes to speak of God (73). There are also some notable admissions, particularly of Roman Catholic theology. His chapter on revelation cites *Dei Verbum* and Avery Dulles but little else. The chapter on the church makes no mention of the major Catholic ecclesiologist, Henri de Lubac, nor does

his chapter on salvation make mention of Hans Urs von Balthasar even in his discussion of Christ's descent into hell and the hope of universal salvation (587, 589). There are also occasional factual errors: Ludwig Wittgenstein was not the leader of the Vienna Circle, nor did he endorse their project, contrary to Kärkkäinen's assertion (51).

In sum, this is a valuable textbook and Kärkkäinen's ambitious aims and his skillful execution are commendable. The book is an attempt at something needed for our time: a theology in conversation with a pluralizing world and a global Christianity. Does Kärkkäinen fulfill this need? No. But his work represents as much as we might expect for any individual scholar, and his presentation of so many diverse perspectives in a single volume provides a solid starting point for novice theologians in our moment.

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Zach HUNT. *Unraptured: How End Times Theology Gets It Wrong.* Harrisonburg, VA: Herald, 2019. 255 pp. $16.99.

Zach Hunt is a writer, speaker, blogger, and ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene. The current volume is his first book. It is divided into ten chapters, with endnotes. The title suggests that Hunt will give a detailed critique of dispensationalism, from an insider's perspective. And, there is some of that; yet, it does not comprise most of the book.

Hunt knows how to coin a phrase; his term "The end-times industrial complex" (18), describing the commercialization of the rapture and all things related, is clever. However, approximately the first half of the book is devoted to Hunt's personal story of growing up in the Nazarene church and his journey out of dispensationalism. Within that section, chapter four, "Catching Cannonballs," is particularly insightful in his overview of the history of end-times theology and comparing it with Scripture. Again, his ability to turn a phrase is good; "The end is nigh and nigh again and again and again . . ." (77) succinctly summarizes the numerous (failed) attempts to predict the Second Coming.

Yet, the reader will find himself at times wondering, "Where is he going with this?" as Hunt describes (occasionally in great detail) his life story. The answer comes beginning with chapter 7, "Undragoning." He speaks of the "pathology of fundamentalism" (147) that he claims hindered his faith. Concerning the inspiration of Scripture, Hunt seems to embrace a modified neo-orthodox approach, with a twist: he implies that modern NT scholars are inspired of the Holy Spirit (151-152).

In chapter eight, "Mill Creek," Hunt reveals where he is theologically. He refers to "the mythical global flood of Noah's day" (165). But he doesn't stop there. Hunt says: "Myths have a power to convey truth that literal events don't always have. That's what we see in the book of Genesis, both in the creation account and later on in the story of Noah. Both myths are borrowed from older stories in other cultures and have been shaped and contextualized to meet the needs of the biblical writers" (169).

The curious thing about those who assert that the creation of Genesis and the Noahic flood are myths, is that they tend to ignore the words of Moses and Jesus. Moses writes, "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day" (Exod 20:11). Jesus declared, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female" (Matt 19:4); the Lord also said, "And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man . . . until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all" (Luke 17:26-27). One would be hard pressed to believe that Jesus adopted a "Monty Python" approach to

Scripture; that is, when he publicly said those words, he gave a "wink-wink, nudge-nudge" to his audience. Either he believed (and knew) what he said, or he didn't. Which is it?

Hunt could have produced an effective work to counteract dispensational theology. And at times, he shows flashes of just that. Yet, in his hurry to promote liberation theology (176-243), he reveals himself to be little more than John Shelby Spong "Lite."

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James SIMPSON. *Permanent Revolution: The Reformation and the Illiberal Roots of Liberalism*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2019. 464 pp. $35.00.

James Simpson, Donald P. and Katherine B. Loker Professor of English at Harvard University, argues "that the liberal tradition derives from Protestantism by repudiating it," and creating a "Protestant proto-Enlightenment" in order to survive after years of religious wars in Europe (10, 11). His book endeavors to avoid the "liberal, Whig" interpretation of the Reformation which approaches the period from later history and emphasizes the Reformation's creation of liberalism and the superiority of Protestantism (1). In addition, he avoids both the approach to the Reformation from the Late Medieval Period that sees the superiority of Catholicism and the secularist interpretation that believes the Enlightenment apart from religion was the source of liberalism. To make his argument, Simpson analyzes the English "literary artifacts" of "poetry, literary prose, and drama" because they most helpfully reveal "cultural pressure and/or signal cultural change" (12). His text is divided into seven parts with each part typically containing three chapters. The parts generally "tell a tripartite story" abiding by a sequence: "appropriation of powers and carnivalesque, revolutionary energy (1520–1547); revolutionary grief (1547–1625); escaping revolutionary disciplines? (1603–1688)" (13).

In Part 1, "Religion as Revolution," Simpson describes the Reformation as a revolution due to its "illiberal theological package" of beliefs that sets it apart from previous periods, and because its culture was foundational to other "revolutionary political movements" around the world (17-18). Integral to the shift from illiberalism to proto-liberalism is the result of an "exhausting," never-ending or "permanent revolution" that moves the focus from the outward enemy of Catholicism to the inward enemy of forms of Protestantism that still require reformation (30).

"Working Modernity's Despair," Part 2, describes the despair produced by trying to confirm one's own election. Simpson looks to literature to examine the psychological suffering created by Calvinist theology's absolutist God. Having abandoned the connection of works to salvation, Calvinists must work to provide assurance of election. "The energetic, if neurotic works produced by predestination" are exhibited as two options: "either to remake the state in their own image, if necessary by civil war, or to abandon it altogether in search of a new state" (96). Others rejected Calvinism for Arminianism creating a proto-liberal "reclamation of free will" (97). Simpson sees "a rescued freewill" in "the apparently open vistas of Miltonic epic" even though he concludes that Milton never escaped Calvinist despair but shifts it to hell, voicing it through fallen angels who (in his interpretation) fight the absolutist God like Calvinists revolting against an absolutist monarch.

Part 3, "Sincerity and Hypocrisy," describes the transition from making accusations of hypocrisy in the late medieval period against those in religious orders to the entire Catholic Church in the early Reformation. This then "boomeranged back onto and into the evangelical camp, splitting it from within" (127). The impetus for applying "hypocrisy" within Protestantism was "the priesthood of all believers" and the effort to create a "True Church" (127) A Calvinist can avoid his or her own hypocrisy "by believing in one's despair" which derives from doubting

one's election to be certain of election (133). Some authors, Fulke Greville and Thomas Adams, see no solution to hypocrisy. Others find the solution in the state (Shakespeare) or projection to Satan (Milton). Bunyan sees the dangers of hypocrisy in others like him and himself. Then, Simpson says, "something wonderful happened," the Toleration Act of 1689 (153). This was influenced by John Locke, whose "solution offers the most persuasive management of the schismatic charge of hypocrisy," and lowers "the temperature of the hypocrisy charge," opening "the way to a new culture" (156).

Looking at iconoclasm, Simpson describes different phases of fighting idolatry in Part 4, "Breaking Idols." It begins with images and liturgical inventions of men and moves to idolatry of the mind. This further leads to a "resurgence of prohibited images; further, more violent iconoclasm; and finally, the gallery, the art market, and the art museum" (187). Before the fight was over, Shakespeare offered a proto-liberal solution in art, but "In the eighteenth century especially, English culture, along with other northern European Protestant cultures, invented the category of Art, subtended by the discourse of the aesthetic, and the institution of the art gallery, to save itself from the destructive internal logic of labelling all earthly existence as idolatrous" (197).

"Theater, Magic, Sacrament," Part 5, argues "that evangelicals invented black magic primarily because they needed to attack Catholic sacramental practice, in which performative language (e.g., "*Hoc est enim corpus meum*") makes something happen between heaven and earth" (203). The opposition to performative language extended to the theater: "Perhaps, however, the deepest motive for evangelical hostility to the theater is ontological; theater, like the Mass, stages the performative" (205). This opposition also partly fueled the hunt for witches.

In Part 6, "Managing Scripture," Simpson rejects the "Protestant triumphalism" of Alistair McGrath who looks to "individual interpretive freedom" offered by the Reformation (260). Simpson acknowledges that this freedom is an "indisputable gain," but also that "European modernity's initial, and enduring, fundamentalist reading culture produced 150 years of revolutionary violence" (264). He sees in the Reformation a commitment to literalism that is freed from an outside authority interpreting it. To solve disputes over interpretation one resorted to philology, but they must be resolved through the authority of a monarch or a claim that only the elect members of the True Church can interpret Scripture correctly. Left with a literalist, Calvinist, personal reading of Scripture, the reader experiences despair and anguish tied to uncertainties about election and an inability to perform the good commandments of God. The Bible does not provide "comfort and encouragement" except "through the transcendent portal of grace" (291). Simpson sees a great example of this despair in Bunyan's wresting with Scripture. Despite the negative impact of literalist reading, the practice continues, leaving out the third move of his usual three-part sequence. "Only the legislation, in the form of the Toleration Act of 1689, was finally powerful enough to contain the revolutionary force of literalist evangelical reading practice" (299). Yet some, like Shakespeare and Milton, were able to free themselves from literalism.

Part 7, "Liberty and Liberties," describes the move from the former to the latter. Simpson argues "that singular Liberty is a product of early modernity: it comes into re-existence as a response to theological and political centralizations—singularizations, if you will—of early modernizing in Europe. Above all, it comes into existence as the response to two distinctively early-modern neoclassical resurgences: those of political absolutism on the one hand, and theological absolutism on the other" (319). He then concludes by summarizing his argument and contends liberalism can go wrong when "liberals act like the elect," or assume it is a "worldview" or one of the "first-order belief systems" when it can offer no "anthropology" or "salvation history" (349). If it is treated as a worldview, it becomes "vulnerable," since it is merely "a tool for governing worldviews" (350).

Simpson helpfully recognizes the messiness of illiberal Protestantism and that liberalism arose from a Christian Protestant source struggling with religious violence. He commendably avoids the extremes of the Reformation smoothly creating liberalism or that religion had nothing to do with its creation. He is at his most insightful when discussing what liberalism can and cannot offer. Unfortunately, many aspects of the text are unconvincing. First, it could be attributed to differences in my training and expertise, but the emphasis on literary artifacts (as opposed to other evidence), and the seemingly speculative interpretation of those artifacts—sometimes rejecting other scholarly interpretations (102-103, 182)—left this reader skeptical of his analysis. Literary criticism, while surely valuable, was overemphasized as "the queen of the sciences" (320). Second, Simpson is admittedly harsh towards the Reformation and condescending towards Calvinism, while obsessed with predestination. Despite being "repelled" by aspects of the Reformation, he says he does not "object" to it (345-346). Yet his repulsion largely comes through, and many references to election and Calvinism are harshly labeled as "absurdist" or something like "Kafkaesque" (71, 135, 138). The obsession with election can be seen above in Part 2 with it creating a Weberian work ethic and the application of church to state. In contrast, Diarmaid MacCulloch sees issues with the Weberian connection between theology, and capitalism and individualism (*The Reformation: A History*, 605-607). Also, the fact that everyone historically applied church and theology to the state seems a much more plausible influence. Third, the text often gives the impression of someone unable to relate to Christian experience of the Bible and the challenge of faithfully following Jesus. For example, he again uses "Kafkaesque" to describe Luther's claim that we are unable to do good and fulfill the commandments (291). Kafka is referenced again referring to Bunyan's reading of Scripture as he struggles with issues such as election, Christ's love for him, or prayers to a Calvinist God (298). Fourth, too much emphasis is placed on more radical English Protestants as opposed to more moderate ones, even if it serves the purpose of highlighting an unending revolution (27). Fifth, the uniqueness of the Protestant Reformation compared to the Christian past, and contemporary Catholicism, is overplayed (18). Is "enslavement of the will, with total repudiation of works as currency in the economy of salvation, and the permanent shadow of despair" really that unique (11)? Did not Augustine at least articulate the limits of the fallen will and predestination? Was Luther the monk the only one to ever despair over his condition before the Reformation? Is despair purely a function of Calvinism? In addition, despite Simpson admitting interest in witches before the Reformation, and in Catholic countries during the same period, he makes much of the issue related to the rejection of performativity (228-229). One gets a different impression from MacCulloch: persecution of witches occurs in various regions and is just as harsh in Catholic areas (563-575). Similarly, is performativity enough to explain opposition to the theater when attending the theater was opposed in the Early Church? Sixth, "literalist" is a slippery word in hermeneutics. Simpson admits evangelicals used forms of interpretation other than the literal one, but he says they "*claimed*" they were only using the literal sense (300-301). He confusingly seems to use "literalism" or "literal" to capture issues that are better understood under the labels of law versus gospel, regulative versus normative, or church and state (application of law). He even argues that Milton moves away from literalism after his wife left him by interpreting "Christ's words for their *intention* and their *context*" in Matthew 19 to make allowance for divorce (311, italics added).

I would not recommend this volume for a course in the Reformation due to Simpson's privileging of literary sources and his frequently peculiar interpretation of the Reformation and its theology. It may, however, serve as a resource for a course on English literature of the period.

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Philip John Paul GONZALES. *Reimagining the Analogia Entis: The Future of Erich Przywara's Christian Vision.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019. 381 pp. $35.70.

For readers of *SCJ*, the German Jesuit theologian Erich Przywara is probably not well-known. Indeed, for most Protestants, the figure carries largely negative associations due to Karl Barth's critical evaluation of Przywara's conception of the *analogia entis* as the "invention of the antichrist." Nevertheless, there has been somewhat of a Przywarian renaissance in contemporary theology (Catholic, Anglican, and Orthodox) among those figures who affirm some form of analogical metaphysics inspired by Przywara, namely John Betz, John Milbank, and David Bentley Hart. It is to this chorus of voices that Philip Gonzales now joins in his book. He argues that the analogical vision of Erich Przywara, which opens up a "suspended middle" between philosophy/theology, reason/faith, and nature/grace, offers a uniquely Christian antidote to philosophical modernity, described as "the seismic rupturing of being from the revelation of the Christian God of creation and redemption," or the rupturing of the ordered relationship of nature to grace. (19) What Gonzales is offering is nothing less than a metaphysical vision whose "nonidentical repetition" today can protect the Church from the various forms of "misremembering" (think Cyril O'Regan) characteristic of philosophical modernity's disfigurations of Christian thought and forms of life.

Gonzales seeks to elaborate this vision in two steps. The first step is a critical dialogue between Przywara and the Catholic philosopher Edith Stein, both of whom represent two ways of creatively engaging philosophical modernity without falling into the problems of Neo-Scholasticism. Gonzales first identifies what the two luminaries have in common (ch. 1), namely the pursuit of a third way between a rejection of Christian tradition and a simplistic repetition of the past without regard to new horizons. In the three chapters that follow, however, Gonzales exposes the vast differences between the thinkers on the relationship between philosophy and theology (ch. 2), their understandings of being's relation to consciousness (ch. 3), and their formulations of the analogy of being (ch. 4). Ultimately, Gonzales finds that Stein's vision remains limited due to the ground she cedes both to modernity's foundational starting point in the "I" or *cogito*'s subjectivity of self-presence (think Descartes or Husserl) and to her depleted conception of the analogy of being as a *tertium quid* between the finite "I" and the infinite "I," thus seeing God as an analogy of humanity. Alternatively, Przywara's vision of the *analogia entis* decenters the modern foundation of the "I" by starting from the suspended tension and nonidentity of the creature's essence and existence, in which the creature's being is eschatologically deferred, such that the very thing that relates creatures to God is at the same time that which maintains the wholly otherness of the God in-and-beyond the creature.

After declaring Przywara's account of the analogy of being as the only effective way to creatively engage philosophical modernity without succumbing to its temptations, Gonzales pivots in the second step to show the fruitfulness of Przywara's analogical metaphysics for contemporary theology. In ch. 5, Gonzales starts by mapping the Przywara/Stein debate onto the post-conciliar conflict between those thinkers associated with the Catholic journal *Communio* (largely theocentric and suspicious of modernity) and those associated with *Concilium* (anthropocentric and optimistic of modernity). By showing the affinities between Przywara's metaphysical vision and those associated with *Communio*, namely the *Nouvelle Théologie/Ressourcement* movement, he is able in ch. 7 to link the analogical metaphysics of Przywara with the work of David Bentley Hart, William Desmond, and John Milbank, contemporary thinkers who utilize Przywara (whether explicitly or implicitly) in a uniquely post-modern key. It is post-modern in the sense that such thinkers both criticize philosophical modernity for the ways it parodies and weakens Christian metaphysical discourse and its forms of life and offer some form of analogical metaphysics as an alternative discourse and grammar that is more

persuasive and more beautiful than both modernity and the various post-Heideggerian postmodernisms (taken up separately in ch. 6) on offer today. Lastly, Gonzales draws from Cyril O'Regan's apocalyptic theology in order to fill out the socio-political implications of Przywara's analogical vision that are undeveloped in *Analogia Entis*. O'Regan's work provides a way of identifying thinkers whose work parodies and distorts Christian language and symbols, leading to a misremembering of authentic Christian vision and life. At the same time, O'Regan offers an apocalyptic grammar and vision that illumines the dangerous implications of such misremembering, namely the loss of authentic Christian life and thought. Ultimately, Gonzales maintains that it is precisely the job of an apocalyptic-analogical metaphysics, ordered to an apocalyptic-analogical theology, to do this work in identifying those perspectives and forms of life that distort Christian thought and life by maintaining the radical distance between creator and creature, giver and gift, as an aesthetic and performative vision of Christian thought and praxis. Where O'Regan's attention has been focused on countering Hegelianisms of various stripes, Gonzales sees a similar distorting danger in capitalism, especially in its logic of domination and its separation of grace from nature.

Gonzales's achievement in this book is truly astounding. If his goal was to secure the future of Przywara's account of the *analogia entis* in Catholic Theology, he has surely succeeded and opened up many avenues for future exploration and systematic elaboration. Unfortunately, at around 381 pages of dense philosophical and theological argument, the book is not for beginners. In fact, the book could have easily been split into two books, one on the dialogue between Stein and Pryzwara; the other, on bringing Przywara into critical dialogue with Desmond, Hart, Milbank, and O'Regan. As a result of this massive undertaking, some parts of the argument are weaker than others. In laying out O'Regan's rejection of Hegelianism and Hegelian hauntings, for example, much more could have been said about exactly what it is in Hegel's writings that makes him so problematic. Gonzales might be ceding territory to O'Regan who has written extensively on both areas, but his illustrations would have been more effective with a richer engagement with Hegel's actual texts, and the same can be said about his treatment of Heidegger. Nonetheless, the book is indispensable for theologians who engage or seek to engage contemporary Catholic thought as it connects Przywara's metaphysics with the entire history of 20th-century debates in Catholic theology and draws from some of the most important theologians writing today. Most importantly, his concluding gesture at future work combining analogical metaphysics, apocalyptic theology, and political theology shows that Gonzales's next steps will likewise be first rate examples of systematic theology.

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Timothy LARSEN and Keith L. JOHNSON, eds. *Balm in Gilead: A Theological Dialogue with Marilynne Robinson*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019. 232 pp. $28.00.

This volume stems from the 2018 Wheaton College Theology Conference, which was devoted to the work of contemporary American novelist, essayist, and occasional preacher, Marilynne Robinson. This marks only the second time Wheaton has dedicated one of its theology conferences to the work of a living figure (the other was N.T. Wright in 2010).

Robinson's acclaimed novel, *Gilead* (Picador, 2004), as well as the other books in the series, *Home* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008) and *Lila* (Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2014), focus upon the families of two Protestant ministers, one Congregationalist and one Presbyterian, in mid-twentieth century Iowa. These novels, as well as her books of essays,

include a significant engagement with Christian theological themes—like conversion and predestination— and figures—especially John Calvin, but also Jonathan Edwards and Karl Barth. Timothy Larsen and Keith Johnson, say, "There is no major novelist working today whose life, thought, and writings more invite a sustained and substantial theological dialogue than Marilynne Robinson" (xi). One could perhaps even describe Robinson as a theologian in her own right (66), though she resists this designation (184-185).

This volume brings together an interdisciplinary group of authors in order to engage Robinson's project from different vantage points. Among them include theologians, historians, English professors, ministers, and artists from a diversity of Christian traditions. Larsen begins by discussing the historical and theological context of the *Gilead* novels (1850s–1950s), comparing and contrasting *Christian Century* and *Christianity Today* readers. The following two chapters, by Han-Luen Kantzer Komline and Timothy George respectively, put Robinson into dialogue with Augustine and John Calvin. Then Johnson discusses Robinson's metaphysics, while Lauren Winner considers preaching and the practice of writing sermons.

Patricia Andujo discusses the treatment of African American experience within Robinson's novels, especially in relation to Martin Luther King Jr.'s critique of "white moderates." Then, Tiffany Eberle Kriner concentrates on space and time in the inter-relation of the *Gilead* novels, analyzing some scenes that appear in two or more of the novels from different vantage points. Artist Joel Sheesley relates Robinson's novels to some of his landscape paintings.

Next, Rowan Williams says that one lesson he has gleaned from Robinson's work is the "insufficiency of goodness" (158). Williams says, "Grace, not goodness, is the key to our healing. To say that is to say that we're healed in relation not only to God but to one another" (163). Robinson provides an account of her understanding of the "Protestant conscience." The book then concludes with transcripts of a dialogue between Williams and Robinson and an interview with Robinson.

While the authors in this volume tend to engage Robinson's work constructively, they do not do so uncritically. For example, Johnson notes that while he finds positive aspects of Robinson's "Christ-centered metaphysics," he argues that it "remains too abstract"—that she "flattens the biblical story of God's love into a persistent state of being" (79). This leaves Robinson with an insufficient account of Christ's sacrifice, which then negatively impacts her account of ethics. Johnson offers a helpful corrective, arguing that God demonstrates God's self-giving love through the cross, which leads Christians to "love [their neighbors] with God's own love" (84).

While contributors give significant attention to her novels, they also engage her collections of essays. They not only give attention to the explicitly theological themes in her work, but also tie in her views of literature, history, science, and politics, among others. They thus provide a well-rounded picture of her project. While this volume would not serve as an introduction to Robinson's life and work, it would serve as a helpful companion for those who have read and benefited from Robinson's corpus.

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Nigel BRUSH. *The Limitations of Theological Truth: Why Christians Have the Same Bible but Different Theologies.* Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2019. 327 pp. $19.99.

This volume is a sequel to the author's 2005 publication *The Limitations of Scientific Truth: Why Science Can't Answer Life's Ultimate Questions* (Kregel). Initially Brush had intended to write a book that would harmonize scientific truths with Holy Scripture (11-12). But every time he built a bridge between modern science and the Bible, it "would eventually collapse

because science kept altering the shoreline on its side of the bridge" (11). And so Brush wrote *The Limitations of Scientific Truth* to show "that scientific truth was not superior to biblical truth" (12). But after the publication of that book, Brush also realized the reverse: theology is not superior to science (12), for theologians share the same human limitations as scientists. "Our theology," he concluded, "is often flawed because we are flawed" (13).

So now he writes this book to dispel the "myth" that theology trumps science when it comes to the truth. "The idea that Christian theology, because of its subject matter (God) or its reliance upon divine revelation (the Bible), is somehow purer or less prone to error than other human disciplines is also a myth" (21). Like the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Dan 2:32, theology may have "a head of gold" because it strives to understand God and his Word, but it also has "feet of iron and clay" because it is practiced by theologians who, like scientists, are humans with flaws and limitations (22).

Brush views Christianity as "unique among all the world's religions" (19) and the Bible as God's divine, inerrant revelation to man (21-22, 304). Some of the interesting conclusions that Brush espouses in his discussions of the correspondences between theological and scientific truths include: the days of Creation in Genesis 1 may not have been twenty-four-hour days but may have been symbolic, an interpretation supported by both Philo and Augustine (250-252); the Earth is 4.6 billion years old, not 6,000 years old, as many Christians have believed on basis of the genealogies found in the Bible (253-259); our galaxy was formed 400 million years after the Big Bang (260); Noah's flood cannot account for the fossil record and the geological column, in spite of what many Young Earth Creationists claim ("The refusal of Young Earth Creationists to acknowledge established facts causes many people to dismiss belief in creationism as either complete idiocy or downright deception," quoting Hugh Ross, 271-272); global warming is a reality that is probably caused by humans burning fossil fuels, contrary to what many Christians today believe (272-280); death existed in the garden of Eden before the fall of Adam and Eve (285-289); and in the past 500 million years, there have been five major mass extinctions that have removed at least seventy-five percent of all life forms on the face of the Earth (294). Most of the conflicts between science and religion in the past five hundred years have been the result of theologians holding on to older scientific views that have now been disproved by modern scientists (95, 304).

This book will be challenging reading for many Christians and theologians, but I fear that Brush is right in many, if not in all, of the controversial views of modern science that he espouses. And he is not just strong in his understanding of science. He is also very strong in his understanding of the Bible. It is unfortunate, therefore, that his book does not include an index of the biblical passages that he cites on nearly every page. Several passages from the Bible are also displayed in twenty-two tables scattered throughout his book. Yet there is no index to these biblical passages, and no listing anywhere of these tables in order to make them easy to locate. There is only a general index to the persons, places, and subjects that he discusses. This book needs to be read. And not just by theologians!

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Walter BRUEGGEMANN. *Tenacious Solidarity: Biblical Provocations on Race, Religion, Climate, and the Economy.* Ed. by Davis Hankins. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2018. 619 pp. $29.00.

The current volume by Brueggemann is a collection of essays based on speeches that he gave between 2014 and 2018 at various universities and seminars, with audiences ranging from academics to pastors to university students. The book is divided into five parts, each consisting of

essays that focus around specific themes: (1) Economics and Social Possibilities, (2) Relinquishing Ethnocentric Ideologies for Sustainable Societies, (3) Creation and Climate, (4) Tradition, Memory, and Identity, and (5) Best Practices for Tenacious Solidarity. The book concludes with three appendixes, in which Brueggemann gives his thoughts on the future of prophetic preaching, biblical theology, and biblical interpretation.

As in his previous work, these essays by Brueggemann seek to bring forth the message of the Bible to speak to the most challenging contemporary situations in a way that refuses to differentiate between religious, political, social, and economic realms of life. The overall theme that runs through the essays can be summarized by the concept of "tenacious solidarity," which is Brueggemann's translation for the Hebrew term *hesed*, and which challenges the "totalisms" that are social constructs that impose a monotone and non-solidarian view of reality onto a society from those in power. As established in chapter 1, Brueggemann's understanding of totalism has been influenced by the work of psychologist Robert Lifton and anthropologist James C. Scott, who have studied the ways in which political regimes aim to control all aspects of the life of their citizens through imposing a totalitarian ideology that suppresses alternative ideas. According to Brueggemann, these totalisms monopolize technology and the popular imagination in order to control people and bring them into conformity, which results in the maximization of production for the state. Thus, monetization is the outcome of totalism, and in the process, monetization leads to the commodification of the subjects of the state. It is the task of prophetic rhetoric, such as that wielded by Brueggemann in these essays, to be a voice from within the social system to expose the weaknesses and limitations of totalisms by courageous acts of imagination. Such prophetic speech can call people forth into a new reality that is able to see beyond the limitations of the current state. Brueggemann discerns that the current dominant totalism of the United States is the "ideology of the market that is in the service of limitless consumerism that receives its religious legitimacy from American exceptionalism," which leads to the exploitation of resources, the reduction of all of life to a commodity, militarization to maintain control of resources, and racism birthed out of exceptionalism (Kindle loc4370). The antidote to totalism is "tenacious solidarity," as manifested in costly commitments between God, humanity, and the world.

Brueggemann's essays take him on a tour through the OT, with a focus on many of the books that he has written commentaries on (1-2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Deuteronomy, the Psalms). He works through large sections of these books in detail, showing how the biblical authors exposed and countered the totalisms of their times. Elijah and Elisha undermine the extraction regime of the monarchy, the Israelites reject the paradigmatic Egyptian totalism in establishing a new egalitarian state, and the limitations and control mechanisms of the Solomonic empire, which established the totalism of the Israelite and Judean monarchy for the next 300 years, are exposed for what they are. Brueggemann positions himself with prophets like Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, who spoke from within the totalisms, but called people through greater acts of imagination and solidarity into new and more faithful ways of being. The tenaciously honest speech of the Psalms and the prophets, as well as the calls to faithfulness to God and neighbor established in the foundational Torah texts of Deut 6:4-6; Lev 19:18, 34, provide Israel with the resources to resist totalisms.

Those who have followed the career of Brueggemann will recognize that the ideas of the essays are a culmination of a long career of writing and engaging the biblical text with the most important social and political issues of our time, and many of the essays are distillations of his earlier work. Several of the essays also have significant overlap with one another, resulting in a lot of repetition across the book. Given the amount of biblical material that the essays cover, as well as the breadth of social issues that are expounded on, there will likely be many readers who

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disagree with some of Brueggemann's specific interpretations of exegetical issues, and with his analysis of the motives behind cultural and social institutions and liturgies that maintain totalisms in the biblical world and today. Brueggemann paints with broad strokes, reading "the entire prophetic corpus from Amos to Jeremiah as one long resistance to the extraction system." Brueggemann sees this entire prophetic corpus as standing in sharp contrast to the religious establishments, represented by the priesthood and monarchy who "maintain the system of extraction that is sustained by the religious ideology of piety and the liturgical myth" (*Kindle loc1244*). Though resistance to totalism as Brueggemann understands it is undoubtedly an important theme in some of the biblical prophets, it may be a stretch to say that this is the focus of the entire prophetic corpus. Brueggemann also extends his anti-totalism reading of the Bible into the NT, where he reads the Gospels and Galatians as resisting totalism. Whether one agrees with Brueggemann's overall approach, or with his specific interpretive details, the book is sure to provide what its title promises: provocations that invite reflection on what the Bible has to say about the most pressing social and cultural issues that we face today.

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Luke BRETHERTON. *Christ and the Common Life: Political Theology and the Case for Democracy*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019. 522 pp. $49.00.

Bretherton's new offering demonstrates that political theology represents more than a trendy subdivision of contemporary Christian theology. While not constituting the heart of gospel proclamation, as interpreted by Bretherton in this volume, political theology expresses essentials to reflectively living Christian faith in a time of empire in the 21st century. A Duke University ethicist, Bretherton has given both church and the academy an argument concerning political theology that descriptively attends to its major currents while contending for a substantive interpretation that stands on its own. He makes the "substantive claim that politics is a crucial arena of human activity through which we come to grasp the truth of many theological concepts, learn how to love our neighbors, and discover what it means to flourish as creatures" (2).

Significantly, Bretherton does not avoid Christology. He contends that "[p]olitical theology discerns the consonance and dissonance between the form of rule incarnated and inaugurated by Jesus Christ and the order and authorities shaping this age between Christ's ascension and return." (21) Centered in Christology, he forthrightly engages issues of power. In this context, his Anglican attention to Pentecostalism was particularly eye opening.

His argument proceeds in three interlocking movements. After an introductory description of this theological approach, Bretherton, moves to a series of case studies of current political theology that showcases its diversity—humanitarianism, black power, Pentecostalism, catholic social teaching, and Anglicanism. From there he highlights three significant cross cutting themes: class viewed with a lens of communion, secularity rather than secularism, and toleration as shaped by hospitality. Finally, he moves to an argument for forming a common life grounded in discussions of humanity, economics, sovereignty, populism and finally democratic politics.

Like much of contemporary political theology, Bretherton pays particular attention to issues of race and class. In contrast to many American and European perspectives, issues of feminism, gender, and the LGBT community receive little attention. He discusses womanism and feminism largely in the context of class, while largely ignoring queer issues.

I appreciated this volume's attention to class and socialism. Its economic discussion of debt issues is valuable while the policy wonk might prefer a little attention to more obscure policy initiatives like antitrust.

This volume's light treatment of Catholic Social Thought surprises as it largely ignores traditional topics like subsidiarity. Sovereignty comes with a modestly British flavor. Bretherton's approach is a qualified Trinitarian and Augustinian one. Rather than American federalism, this volume looks to a consociational commonwealth where sovereignty is distributed and authority arises from multiple associations in a civic pluralism. At times this approach reminded me of legal scholar Heather Gerken's somewhat messy "federalism all the way down" more than any structured Kuyperian sphere sovereignty.

Drawing on notions of covenant, Bretherton's populism dialogues with concepts of the people in relation to hierarchy and to particularity. He distinguishes populism in its political and antipolitical (read Tea Party) forms. His arguments for populism and democratic politics build on his prior work in theology and community organizing. His democratic politics seeks a balance with activism though it shortchanges the nuts and bolts of democratic governance like legislation. Similarly, Bretherton's antitechnocratic bent means ignoring influential public policy tools like cost-benefit analysis. However, these quibbles may just reflect my experience as a legislative attorney and policy analyst.

Bretherton has given the academy and the church a resource that introduces political theology in a manner that will benefit classroom use while providing a substantive proposal in its own right. He focuses on "the need for Christians to coordinate pursuit of the kingdom of God (and a distinctive form of life) with pursuit of penultimate goods held in common with non-Christian others through constructing a common life that is secular yet open to theological claims." (10) Bretherton's work deserves to be celebrated and widely read.

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Ben RHODES and Martin WESTERHOLM, eds. *Freedom under the Word: Karl Barth's Theological Exegesis.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. 320 pp. $45.00.

As a couple of published volumes from the Barth conferences in Princeton demonstrate (Daniel L. Migliore, ed., *Reading the Gospels with Karl Barth*, Eerdmans, 2017; George Hunsinger, ed., *Thy Word Is Truth: Barth on Scripture*, Eerdmans, 2012), scholarship has recently given increased attention to Barth's reading of Christian Scripture. This volume contributes to this dialogue on Barth's exegesis by gathering together fifteen essays by respected biblical scholars and theologians, most of them from a study group in the Evangelical Theological Society from 2013–2015 and a conference on Barth's exegesis held at the University of St. Andrews in 2015.

Part one of the volume includes two essays by the editors that treat some key themes in Barth's doctrine of Scripture. Westerholm describes the development of Barth's theology of Scripture, from his student years to his death, while Rhodes provides an analysis of Barth's theology of Scripture.

Part two looks at some of his early work on Scripture. Francis Watson assesses Barth's *Epistle to the Romans* as "theologically motivated exegesis" (62). Next, the volume includes the introductory essay John Webster wrote for Barth's recently translated Göttingen lectures, *The Epistle to the Ephesians* (Baker, 2017). Third, Carsten Card-Hyatt engages Barth's lectures on the epistle of James, discussing how Barth relates Paul and James.

Parts three through five correspond to parts two through four of *Church Dogmatics*, so each part includes essays engaging Barth's doctrines of God, creation, and reconciliation. Part three begins with Wesley Hill's critical assessment of Barth's work on the Johannine prologue. Next, Stephen Fowl discusses Barth's exegesis of Ephesians 1:4 and how it informs Barth's understand-

ing of election and salvation. Third, Mark Gignilliat discusses Barth's exegesis of the Immanuel and servant passages in Isaiah and how Christ typological relates to Israel. Fourth, Susannah Ticciati offers a critical reading of Barth's exegesis of Romans 9–11 and his theology of Israel.

Part four begins with two essays, by Andrew B. Torrence and Christina N. Larsen, that engage Barth's reading of the creation narratives in relation to covenant and God's graciousness to humanity. Then, Christopher Green looks at Barth's engagement with Revelation 4–5, heaven's role within creation, and the way that "the angels . . . exemplify a performative and holy theology" (217).

Part five begins with an essay by Grant Macaskill on Barth's understanding of the parallel between Adam and Christ in Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15. Second, R. David Nelson analyzes Barth's eschatological reading of Hebrews 11. Then Paul T. Nimmo closes the volume with an essay on Barth's understanding of Jesus' compassion for the crowds (Matt 9:36), which Barth connects not only with its original context, but with the doctrine of the atonement and Christ's continued work as both the "human being for God" and "the human being *for human beings*" (285).

Rhodes and Westerholm compiled a well-rounded volume—one that engages not only *Der Römerbrief* and *Church Dogmatics*, but also lesser known course lectures and smaller volumes. Also, while Barth is known as an interpreter of Paul, the contributors consider Barth's work on texts throughout the Christian canon.

While the various contributors do not treat Barth's exegesis uncritically, they also demonstrate that contemporary readers of Scripture can learn from Barth's theological exegesis. As Westerholm says, "Barth's work is noteworthy in part because he possessed a remarkable capacity to allow himself to be surprised by Scripture" (11). May we do the same.

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Jacob SHATZER. *Transhumanism and the Image of God: Today's Technology and the Future of Christian Discipleship*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019. 182 pp. $22.00.

For those unfamiliar with the term, transhumanism is a cultural movement built on the belief that *Homo sapiens* are continuously evolving and that technology will enable the next step in that evolution towards a posthuman form characterized by improved intelligence, enhanced strength and sensitivity, and increased longevity. It is the philosophy (using the term loosely) explicitly espoused by the majority of Silicon Valley technocrats and implicitly by the masses who unreflectively embrace every technological novelty. Shatzer, a professor of theology at Union University, argues in this volume that Christians need to wake up to the ways their humanity is being conformed to a transhumanist vision by everyday technologies such as smartphones, virtual reality, and the algorithms which increasingly make decisions on our behalf.

The slim book falls into three parts. It begins with two chapters defining the basic terms "technology" and "transhumanism." Technology is a complex term; it can describe not only electronic devices, but also social systems and worldviews. At the most basic level, technologies are tools which enable users to exert their will more efficiently in the world. People use tools, but tools also shape their users. Can a humanity oriented toward power and control hear God's call to humility and service? In an age of perpetual distraction, will humans be able to give loving attention to one another and to their Creator?

In these introductory chapters, as throughout the book, he demonstrates the breadth of his reading. He cites major writers on technology (though he gravitates toward popular writers)

such as Jason Lanier, Sherry Turkle, Yuval Noah Harari, and Nicholas Carr. Some of his most recognizable Christian interlocutors are James K. A. Smith, Rod Dreher (whose short article "Smartphones Are Our Soma" is mentioned frequently, certainly disproportionate to its importance), Neil Postman, and Alan Jacobs. Surprisingly absent are references to foundational works such as those by Marshall McCluhan, Jacques Ellul, Romano Guardini, and Martin Heidegger. Nevertheless, the books he mentions are easily accessible for those wanting to follow up on particular points.

The second section of the book consists of three chapters, each of which considers an incrementally more invasive form of technological enhancement, moving from biological enhancement, to biological and technological hybridity, to a non-biologically based humanity. Specifically, he treats "morphological freedom" for non-therapeutic bodily enhancements available through virtual reality and social media, the augmented reality of the "hybronaut" who uses wearable technologies, and the total disembodiment of mind uploading and artificial intelligence. Each chapter systematically explains these concepts and their significance for the transhumanist movement. He includes basic objections to these technologies and the transhumanists' answers to those objections. He then offers three to four critiques of the technology. Touching back down to earth, he concludes each analysis of these exotic technologies with examples of more familiar everyday technologies which are "tending" in that direction.

The last major section of the book contains the heart of his theological response to transhumanism. Rejecting the posthuman vision of the future, he offers a Christian account of human experience, place, relationality, and self. Traditional Christian thought highlights creational limits on humanity which are transgressed only at our peril. For instance, the doctrine of the Incarnation emphasizes the essentiality of the flesh; likewise, the doctrine of the resurrection of the body demonstrates that some form of materiality will always be a part of our humanity, contra the proponents of a purely digital life. Christian practices such as hospitality and homemaking speak to the importance of local place over against technological tendency toward globalization and homogenization of space. These sections on theology and practice are not extensive (most are only a paragraph), but they still serve to stimulate thought and discussion. Shatzer concludes the book—following the lead of Christian philosophers of technology Albert Borgmann and Craig Gay—with a short chapter on the Lord's Supper, the quintessential Christian practice which ties together the themes elucidated in the four previous chapters: a physical meal of bread and wine shared by people in a covenant relationship gathered around a physical table to attend to one another and celebrate the coming of God in the flesh. This is an instrument which forms humans into the image of God.

The past few years have seen a proliferation of Christian critiques of technology. Shatzer does not set out to produce novel arguments, but he does a masterful job of consolidating and organizing the wealth of resources available in a fresh and systematic way. Though he does engage some technical material, the writing is clear enough to be used for an undergraduate course or for an advanced Bible study group.

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Walter BRUEGGEMANN. *Preaching from the Old Testament.* Working Preacher Series. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2019. 196 pp. $18.99.

This volume launches a new series of scholarly homiletic resources published through a partnership between Fortress and the Working Preacher project, a program launched by Luther Seminary to help preachers develop professionally. The publishers turned to Walter Bruegge-

mann, who is known for both his OT works, such as the classics *The Prophetic Imagination* and *The Message of the Psalms*, as well as the homiletic works like *Cadences of Home* and *The Practice of Prophetic Imagination*, to author this first volume and set the tone for the series. At the time of this writing, no additional volumes have been announced.

Brueggemann opens his book with words that seek to scaffold everything that follows: "The Old Testament is perennially, at the same time, a rich resource and a complex challenge for the Christian preacher" (xiii). The chapters that follow do not present a strategy for preaching, such as the classic Lutheran "law/gospel" or the traditional deductive model that draws its structure more from rhetoric than from exegesis. Instead, Brueggemann seeks to offer a theological perspective on the narrative of the OT that informs the preacher as he or she approaches these texts, assuming that the preachers will draw their sermon text selections from the lectionary. He also breaks from the common evangelical argument that all preaching must have a Christological focus, arguing instead that Christian preaching should focus instead on the whole of God's interactions with humanity. Taking up the mantle of form criticism and argument that preaching is essential to the form and function of the Church, Brueggemann embarks on a discussion of how to understand and preach the OT for a culture that is not only unfamiliar with the texts but may, in fact, be opposed to the teachings contained within.

Since Brueggemann is not offering a strategy guide, he follows the lead of such writers as John Holbert, with his *Preaching Old Testament*, or Thomas Long, with his classic *Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible*, and does not provide commentary and insight on every area of the OT. For that, one is better off looking to Elizabeth Achtemeier's *Preaching from the Old Testament* or even Scott Gibson's edited volume *Preaching the Old Testament*. Here Brueggemann advances a narrative lens for understanding the OT. In this lens, Brueggemann argues that the OT was composed historically late and had a deep political agenda, one that sought claim on the land of Canaan for the Jews who were returning from captivity in Babylon. Surrounded by political regimes who still saw value in theological mythos, Brueggemann argues that we must see the OT as more of a political document, which helps us preach these words as words of national (Exodus and Psalms) and sociological currency (the Wisdom Literature).

Much of what comes between Leviticus and Job is excluded because it does not serve Brueggemann's argument, which means that this volume will only serve those who track with the historical evolution of the OT that Brueggemann advances in this volume. To be fair, there is much theological insight to gain from this work. However, if one is looking for a guide on how to preach from the OT, one should look elsewhere.

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Daniel T. RODGERS. *As a City on a Hill: The Story of America's Most Famous Lay Sermon*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018. 355 pp. $29.95.

In this volume Rodgers traces the history of what many today assume is a founding document of the United States: John Winthrop's 1630 sermon, "A Model of Christian Charity." But he argues that the text's "foundational status" is an "invention" of the last sixty years, as our nation's leaders rediscovered and reinterpreted it to justify American exceptionalism. His book "push[es] back against the origin myths that have obscured [Winthrop's sermon]" and narrates how "a forgotten document arc[s], much later, toward iconic status" (7, 9).

Rodgers makes his case in three, multi-chapter parts. Part I offers a close reading of Winthrop's sermon, situating its words and metaphors in their historical context. Concepts like

"city on a hill" and "chosen people" were unexceptional in the seventeenth-century Atlantic world. Winthrop applied them in his local context: the small community of nonseparating Puritans who founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Part II describes how these metaphors were especially mobile in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as the United States matured as a nation. Nationalism and eventually imperialism traded heavily on a belief in a divinely ordained destiny for the people of the United States. In Part III, Rodgers explains how Winthrop's sermon attained the status of a founding document of the United States. Rediscovered among the students of Perry Miller (1905–1963), it soon moved into the canon of nearly every collegiate American studies program. Moreover, Cold War-era politicians appealed directly to it to define the very character of the United States and its place in world affairs. Especially since the 1980s, the sermon and its metaphors have been at the center of political rhetoric in the United States.

In a thought-provoking Epilogue, Rodgers suggests that Winthrop's sermon offers a "vivid lesson in the ways in which the lives of a text proceed through time" (280). It is timelessly relevant because its metaphors bear reinterpretation as new readers pour their own disappointments and aspirations into them. Founding texts like this have power to shape and renew an identity. However, he also wonders whether current political rhetoric—led especially by President Donald Trump—is shedding itself of the messy and creative tensions in Winthrop's sermon and its metaphors. If a new kind of nationalism is emerging in the United States, to what will it appeal for its core metaphors?

After reading the book jacket, I assumed that Rodgers' book was just another myth-busting history of something; however, even before completing the introduction, I was convinced that he was really onto something significant. He brilliantly makes his case in an argument that is clear and accurate, meticulously researched, and fair to those who may interpret things differently. His prose is characteristically lucid and graceful. By the end, I was convinced that he is right: "A Model of Christian Charity" is a text that history mostly forgot, but it becomes a founding document much later as its core metaphors are re-interpreted, often in ways that Winthrop would not have recognized. Rodgers is not necessarily decrying that iconic status; rather, he is simply awakening us to how that transformation occurred.

I would pose two questions to Rodgers, though neither undermines the significance of his book. First, he moves so freely between talking about Winthrop's "A Model of Christian Charity" *as a text* and its core metaphors that the reader is sometimes left wondering how to distinguish between them. Is the sermon actually the same thing as the sound-bite phrases into which it is often segmented? Similarly, I think that Rodgers does not deal sufficiently with the fact that Winthrop already reinterprets the metaphors of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, which itself reinterprets metaphors borrowed from biblical Judaism.

Second, Rodger's last chapter, "Ambivalent Evangelicals," strikes me as flawed. He claims that evangelicals reject political appeals to Winthrop's sermon and its metaphors because they highlight the virtues of the nation; evangelicals, on the other hand, want to stress the nation's need for repentance, especially from Supreme Court decisions believed to be disastrous to Christian morality. But we live in a time when who counts as an "evangelical" in the United States is more unclear than it ever has been. From my point of view, Rodgers is talking about "fundamentalists," not "evangelicals."

Rodgers has done precisely what good scholarship always does: illumines and stirs up conversation about things that really matter. This is a must-read for anyone interested in the relationship between Christian faith, politics, and national identity in the United States.

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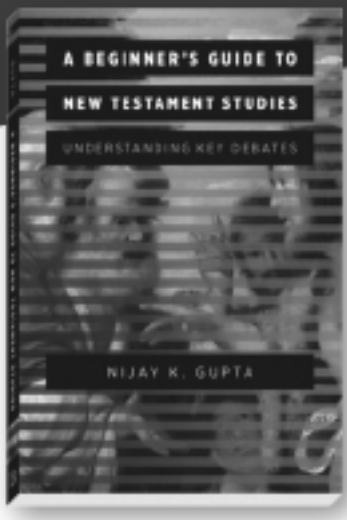

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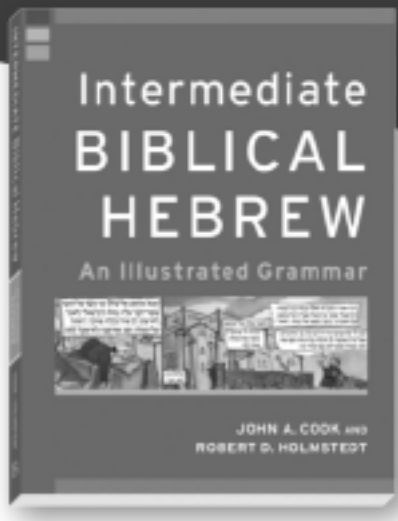

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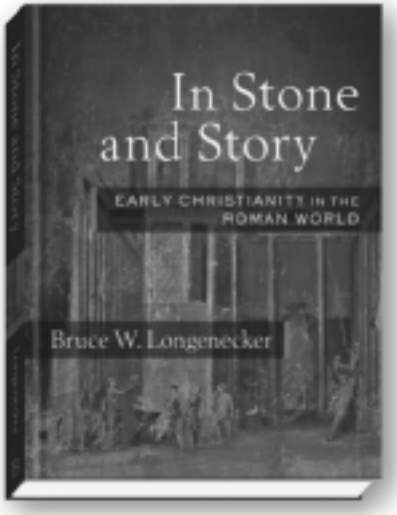

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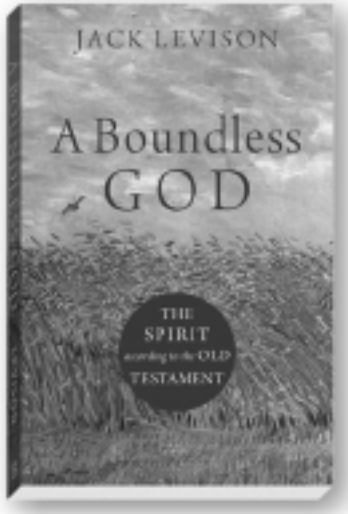

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Gary SELBY. *Pursuing an Earthy Spirituality: C. S. Lewis and Incarnational Faith.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019. 232 pp. $22.00.

The influence that Lewis in the past sixty years has had upon contemporary Christianity certainly rivals that of contemporaries such as Barth and Bonhoeffer, and that of contemporary authors such as McGrath and Wright. Although Lewis is more popularly known as the author of the beloved *Chronicles of Narnia* series, where Christ is embodied in the Great Lion Aslan, and it is the faith of children that sparks justice throughout this wonderland, Lewis's influence goes far beyond fields and thickets and the meaning of the "hidden story" in these tales. Lewis was a formidable apologist and linguist, one who lectured and wrote about his late-found faith with the skill of a theologian yet with the relatability of the local tavern owner. In many ways, Lewis was comparable to the apostle Paul, in that both were well-versed in religion, history, rhetoric, economics and poetry yet were also survivors of "come to Jesus moments." Their faith was not just layers of stale philosophizing built one footnote upon another; their faith was built upon a lived experience, what Lewis called "red beef and strong beer" (1), not built in the safety of the study but in the risky space of the human-divine interaction.

Such is the topic of the current volume. Selby, now Professor of Ministerial Formation at Emmanuel Christian Seminary following a longtime tenure at Pepperdine University, focuses on how Lewis's writings demonstrate his growing understanding and practice of the Christian faith, a faith that Lewis firmly believed was to be a *lived* and not merely an intellectual faith. As Selby notes in the Introduction, "Lewis believed that becoming spiritual meant growing in self-awareness, expanding one's consciousness of the world and others, and, most importantly, expanding one's consciousness of the presence of God" and that "spirituality involved obeying God more and more out of a free, uncoerced choice" (9). For Lewis, Selby argues, this was best demonstrated through an "earthy spirituality," an approach to discipleship that "might sanctify physical pleasures through practices of attention, gratitude and adoration, and self-control" (9). In living in this way, Lewis argues that we will discover and experience "joy," the ultimate virtue (aside from love, of which God is the generative being).

Through a thorough exploration of the bulk of Lewis's more well-known writings, such as *Mere Christianity*, *The Four Loves*, *Letters to Malcolm*, *The Screwtape Letters* and especially *Surprised by Joy* and *Perelandra*, Selby presents Lewis in a way that is rarely seen in Lewis studies, that of practical theologian or spiritual director. Lewis was concerned that a "negative spirituality," a falsely perceived "hostility between body and spirit" (57), had taken root in Christianity, which had grown into the very apostasy of apathy that Jesus, Paul, Jude, and other NT and early Christian writers had warned about. The correction to this, Selby argues, is Lewis's focus on "consciousness and choice" (79), what may be better understood as the philosophical virtues of self-awareness and agency. In practicing these elements, we are able to discover "joy," the ability to live gratefully in God's goodness.

Selby presents an intriguing entry into both Lewis studies and discipleship studies. Where most Lewis studies provide a thematic study of Lewis's work, Selby seeks to explore the development of Lewis's concept of discipleship through his writings. This, then, makes this an insightful entry in discipleship studies because we rarely read Lewis in this way. Concerns with this volume, such as the lack of including particular Lewis scholars and his overuse of *The Space Trilogy*, do not mar this overall solid discussion of what it means to have lived faith.

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Robert K. JOHNSTON, Craig DETWEILER, and Kutter CALLAWAY. *Deep Focus: Film and Theology in Dialogue*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. 262 pp. $26.99.

This volume is a mature and insightful reflection on the engagement between film and Christian theology. As a preacher who has always been interested in this intersection, I found this volume to be informative, stimulating, and edifying.

First, I learned a lot about: the historical relationship between the church and Hollywood (chapter 2), about how movies are made (chapters 3–4), about the varieties of film criticism (chapter 5), and about the MPAA film rating system (first part of chapter 8). All this information gives depth and context to the theological work the authors are doing. This book isn't simply a set of theological reflections on a series of popular films. Nor is it a "how-to" guide for creating sermon illustrations from movies. Instead, this volume is an extended theological engagement with movie-making both as an industry and as an art form.

Second, I found myself being prodded in new directions. The book is filled with examples of how the authors themselves have been spiritually affected by movies, as well as with examples of how they enter into theological conversation with movies. As I read through their "wrestling" with how God can be present in and speak through film, I was repeatedly inspired to do similar kinds of work: to return to some of my favorite films and to experience new ones with attentiveness and openness to what kinds of theological insights and questions might emerge. One principle the authors argue for in this regard is "appreciation before appraisal" (167-168). That is, Johnston, Detweiler, and Callaway urge that we experience movies on their own terms and "hear" what they have to say before making our theological and/or ethical judgments. This is not a call to leave one's Christian convictions at the door of the theater, but rather to practice the "ethical patience" (166) to allow the film to be what it is before entering into some kind of judgment or evaluation of it.

Third, this volume has the potential to build up the body of Christ. The chapters on "discerning mystery" through a theological lens (chapter 7), on "expanding our field of vision" through an ethical lens (chapter 8), and "encountering the other" through a cultural lens (chapter 9) provide a biblically grounded and wise model for Christian interaction with one of the most influential industries and art forms of our time. Here is neither a "retreat" or "defend" mentality, but something far better: the humble conviction that Christian theology can and should stand on its own two feet and not run from, but rather critically engage what film offers us, even and especially when film challenges our beliefs or pushes our ethical boundaries. In chapter 8 the authors quote what Daniel Defoe once said about literature and apply it to film: "To give the history of a wicked life repented of, necessarily requires that the wicked part should be made as wicked as the real history of it will bear, to illustrate and give beauty to the penitent part, which is certainly the best and brightest, if related with equal spirit and life" (162-163). Some films put evil and wicked things on display only to revel in them. Others, however, deal with wickedness in ways that are difficult to watch, not in order to glorify wickedness, but in order to be honest about it. One good example of this latter path is *Flight* (2012) starring Denzel Washington. Most of the movie is taken up with Whip Whitaker's (Washington) debauchery. The presentation of his continuing disregard for others and his descent into self-destruction is not pleasant, appealing, or titillating. It is, frankly, disgusting. But this honesty about Whitaker's sinful condition makes his sudden turn toward repentance at the end of the movie all the more surprising and powerful. The authors would have us encounter such films with both genuine openness and biblical wisdom.

This volume would be valuable as a text in a college or seminary class on theology and film, as well as a guide for a small group or Bible school class wanting to tackle the same topic. I

know that I will be returning to it as a guide for making wise theological use of film in preaching and in other parts of pastoral ministry.

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R. W. L. MOBERLY. *The Bible in a Disenchanted Age: The Enduring Possibility of Christian Faith.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. 217 pp. $25.00.

In this volume Moberly, professor at Durham University, seeks to provide a fresh thesis for how one might take the Bible seriously in what Charles Taylor has identified as an age of secular disenchantment. He endeavors to replace an evidentialist approach (i.e., intellectual assent based on evidence) to the Bible which focuses on the historical reliability of biblical events and details in order to propose a new way to approach the claims of the Bible. In its place, he suggests "a journey of biblical exploration in the company of people both past and present whom one has good reason to trust" (7).

In chapter 1, Moberly poses the problem. As a symbolic launching point, he uses Benjamin Jowett's suggestion that the Bible should be studied like any other book. In practice, this has meant Christian adoption of the historical-critical method, and while Moberly does not question the value of the historical-critical method, he argues that Christians must provide other reasons why the Bible is not "like any other book" (20). He begins a case study that will proceed through the rest of the book comparing Virgil's *Aeneid 1* and Daniel 7 of the OT. These texts warrant comparison since they both give messages of deities (Jupiter and the Ancient One) bestowing sovereignties on earth upon a favored people (Romans and Jews). Why should Daniel's account be given privileged status over Virgil's? Why should the Ancient One be treated differently than Jupiter?

In chapter 2, "Approaching the Bible," Moberly proposes a trilogy of legitimate ways to read the Bible: as history, as classic, and as Scripture (42). First, reading the Bible as ancient history can be done without any religious concern for whether any particular claim is true. The limits of the biblical canon have little significance. Second, there has been an explosion in recent years of reading the Bible as cultural classic. Even Richard Dawkins advocates studying the Bible due to its impact on Western culture. The cultural approach is seen in the growth of studies in the reception history of ancient texts. The Bible may also be viewed as an artifact of cultural heritage and as a literary classic of the human condition. While this approach is compatible with faith, many who use it do so absent of faith questions. Using the historical and cultural approaches, Moberly ends this chapter by returning to the case study of Daniel 7 and *Aeneid* 1 demonstrating a basic historical approach to these texts.

In chapter 3, "Towards Privileged Perspectives," Moberly proposes how one might approach the Bible with a dimension of faith that has characterized historic Christianity (80). Drawing on Jonathan Z. Smith's notion of canon, the author suggests that every person selects a narrow set of things to privilege in understanding the world and their position in it (82). Even atheists like Charles Darwin privilege certain natural phenomena to interpret the world. Drawing on the work of Peter Berger and Alasdair MacIntyre, Moberly describes several plausibility structures. In the first plausibility structure, "significant others" play important roles in guiding one toward new realities (94). In the second, the historic Catholic Church persuades Augustine to enter into faith and the life of the church. In the third, the whole of the Christian tradition is indispensable for the enduring significance of the biblical witness. The fourth plausibility structure requires accepting the biblical canon of the Christian community. These plau-

sibility structures justify privileging Jesus and Scripture as a legitimate focusing option. Moberly ends this chapter by returning to the case study of Daniel 7 and *Aeneid* 1 and argues that while Virgil's vision is one of an endless rule of the Roman empire, Daniel's is a call to join a small group of the oppressed people of God.

In the fourth and final chapter, "Towards Trust and Truth," Moberly draws upon Jesus' words in John 7:16-17 to bring the argument to conclusion. "Thus the key point is that a certain kind of knowledge—that particular human words genuinely originate with God—is inseparable from a certain kind of personal responsiveness" (138). Without an openness of heart and mind, Moberly argues, the divine origin of the words of the Bible is unverifiable. Then Bible can be viewed as containing the words of God when personal responsiveness is added to the Christian plausibility structure. "One's trust in people can and should lead to trust in the book they trust, which in turn can and should lead to trust in the reality of God, supremely in the person of Jesus, that this book conveys" (139). He ends this chapter by returning to the case study of Daniel 7 and *Aeneid* 1. Applying insights from the previous chapters, he argues that Daniel has a privileged position for Christians because the picture of Daniel's Ancient One is taken up in Jesus Christ (notably in Matthew 28:18-20). Since Jesus reveals God for Christians, this warrants a "look here not there" approach for Daniel 7 over *Aeneid* 1 (162).

An excursus ends three of the chapters, and a substantial epilogue on biblical literacy calls for serious engagement with the Bible in public discourse. One unique device used by the author throughout is to provide extra material in smaller font that the author considers important, but not essential, to the main argument. My main critique of the book would be its brevity. Moberly's engaging style whet my appetite for more at every turn. Because he used the case study in every chapter, I expected his conclusion on Daniel 7 and *Aeneid* 1 to contain explanatory power that clearly illustrated his thesis. I found the conclusion to the case study to lack the clarity I hoped to find.

Moberly has provided an engaging attempt to take the Bible seriously in an age of disenchantment. At every turn, the author's arguments are fresh and thought-provoking. For scholars, clergy, and theologians interested in the enduring significance of the Bible as Scripture, this book will surely come as a welcome resource. I am not qualified to judge whether Moberly's thesis will prove compelling to many secular Westerners; however, I thoroughly enjoyed the book and found the arguments stimulating.

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William M. WRIGHT, IV, and Francis MARTIN. *Encountering the Living God in Scripture: Theological and Philosophical Principles for Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. 272 pp. $26.99.

The authors set out to show that Scriptures, the Christian canon of the Bible, mediate God's presence and power to those who read them. The mediation of God's presence and power through God's word entails causal effects enacted in the world by God's will. The argument for this bold and simple claim is divided into two parts: the first discussing the biblical evidence (chapters 1–4); the second articulating the philosophical and theological rationale that makes this argument possible (chapters 5–10).

Wright and Martin begin with a description of the biblical witness concerning the Word of God spoken directly by God. Drawing on passages where God speaks directly, like the creation narrative or the Gospels, they assert that God's spoken Word has the power to enact God's will in the world. So that when Jesus proclaims God's message to the world, he makes the kingdom

of God a reality. The power of God's Word to enact God's will is also evident in the lives of ordinary humans throughout the Bible. The prophets and apostles serve as prime examples of people speaking God's Word to communicate God's presence and enact God's will.

The philosophical and theological claims that undergird the argument of God's presence and power begin with the distinction between Creator and creation. Wright and Martin highlight the theme of the two books of revelation (the Bible and the natural world) common in early Christian literature. God, as Creator, does not exist in the same way that created beings and things do. God's existence is not contingent upon another. This transcendent Creator is nonetheless immanently present to the creation.

The distinction between creator and created leads to the question of being, or what it means to exist. Wright and Martin use the metaphysics of Thomas Aquinas to highlight participation and relationality. Following Thomas, Wright and Martin suggest that human existence is a subsistence relying on the God who created all things. Human existence is rooted in God's gift to humanity. The creator distinct from creation entails that the natural world is not a closed system, but open to the movement and actions of God. The reason for this reflection is to combat a reading of Scripture that interprets the Bible in terms that can only be verified through empirical methods.

According to Wright and Martin, Immanuel Kant's philosophy allows no intrinsic intelligibility between a thing and its being. They argue against Kant by insisting that the Creator-creation distinction and participatory ontology, can be applied to human cognitive understanding of the world and consequently words. Human ability to understand the world and to communicate through language, lays the foundation for observing how human cognition interacts with external realities. Wright and Martin then draw on *Dei Verbum* from Vatican II in order to show how the external, divine realities and mysteries are made known to people through the Bible. They close the book by arguing that the Holy Spirit makes the mysteries of God's presence and power known to the one who reads the biblical text.

Overall, the book is well written and handles complex discussions of metaphysics with clarity. The emphasis on the classical theology of the Creator-creation distinction and Thomistic metaphysics is a highlight of the argument. Perhaps the least appealing or convincing aspect of the book is the way that Immanuel Kant is represented. Because of its emphasis on classic Christian theology and philosophy, this book would serve well as a textbook for a class on Christian hermeneutics.

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Douglas MANGUM and Douglas ESTES, eds. *Literary Approaches to the Bible*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2017. 323 pages. $27.99.

This volume is the fourth anthology in the Lexham Methods Series. As the title implies, this volume is dedicated to methods that operate within the limits and dynamics of the texts themselves. It contains eight essays: 1) Introduction, 2) Canonical Criticism, 3) OT Rhetorical and Narrative Criticism, 4) Inner-Biblical Interpretation and Intertextuality, 5) Narrative Criticism of the NT, 6) Rhetorical Criticism of the NT, 7) Structural Criticism, and 8) Post-structural Criticism.

The essays generally follow the same formula. A section on the "Definition and Goal" of each method typically covers the major schools of thought within a method, as well as the theoretical factors and exegetical needs that shape the field. The introductory section is followed by discussion of the historical origins and development of the method, a section detailing the

steps involved in its application, a section on the limitations of the method, and a section describing current horizons in each method and its relation to other methods. Each chapter ends with a selected bibliography of essential post-introductory works.

The strength of this volume is breadth of content and input. Beyond introducing methods, it allows students to see the related goals, assumptions, questions, techniques, and weak points that these methods share while also highlighting the differences that delineate each approach and make them productive in their own right by collecting these methods topically under the single heading "Literary Approaches." It can often be difficult for students to get a feel for how the various domains within biblical studies interact, and a book that can explicitly demonstrate and explore those relationships is a valuable contribution.

On the other hand, the most immediately noticeable issue in this volume is the combination of OT Narrative and Rhetorical Criticism into a single essay despite the separate essays on NT Narrative Criticism and Rhetorical Criticism. The combination of rhetorical and narrative criticism into one chapter for the OT despite their actual separation (preserved in the NT essays) is certainly a pedagogical weakness. Collapsing two distinct methods together is pedagogically risky, and bifurcating the two Testaments is likewise questionable. It is also a strange inconsistency in a volume which does not otherwise divide methods by testament or combine methods into single essays.

In terms of individual essays, the strongest is Jeffrey Leonard's introduction to Inner-Biblical Interpretation and Intertextuality, while the weakest is John Delhousaye's chapter on Poststructuralism. Leonard's essay introduces a complex subject clearly and thoroughly, and deftly defines a field which can often be somewhat slippery to handle. He provides a theological justification and exploration of intertextual reading, and his application section goes into precise detail on the various steps of intertextual analysis without intimating that the process is a rigid or mechanical one. Delhousaye's essay suffers primarily from a lack of material. His essay focuses on deconstruction proper, but omits more recent theoretical developments in poststructural methods such as de- and post-colonial readings or queer hermeneutics. While his chapter gives students a good introduction to the underlying concerns and assumptions of these methods—such as a desire to level the power imbalances of the interpretive playing field—it would have benefited greatly from expansion.

This volume is an excellent introductory textbook to literary biblical criticisms. It could be used on its own in undergraduate settings or alongside more in-depth material at the graduate level. It is accessible enough to serve as an excellent introduction for interested laypeople.

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Daniel CASTELO and Robert W. WALL. *The Marks of Scripture: Rethinking the Nature of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. 192 pp. $21.99.

This volume from Daniel Castelo and Robert Wall is one of the latest in an avalanche of texts promoting a so-called "Theological Interpretation" of Scripture (= TIS). A proper review of it might pose for itself the question of whether anything sets this book apart from the rest of the avalanche.

The novelty of Castelo and Wall's approach consists in the notion advertised in the book's title. They have hit upon a new way of thinking about Scripture: to take the four so-called Nicene "marks" of the Church (unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity), and apply them to Scripture. The fact that it is at least a coherent idea to reapply these marks in this way allows plenty of room for discussion, and the easiness of the discussion throughout the book gives an air of obviousness for the points being claimed. Whether this (seeming) obviousness is warrant enough for the book's thesis is another question.

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As an installment in the TIS paradigm, this volume is driven by a now familiar set of commitments, of which the main two are the privileging of the unity of Scripture and the church's hermeneutic privilege, and the deprivileging of all so-called Enlightenment thinking. Castelo and Wall justify the TIS approach (rhetorically) by carefully delimiting the term "theological" so that it includes their favored notions of Scripture as "canon" and as "means of grace," but excludes the approaches TIS defines itself over against. Scripture, we are told, is "not simply a text" but also a "theological category" (2). By this the authors mean to exclude the simple use of Scripture as a "source" or "instrument" for theology, but to this reader it appears that they are able to do so only through a highly tendentious way of defining the terms at hand. The authors disparagingly characterize the historical-critical mode of doing theology as viewing Scripture as "simply a deposit of theological building blocks" (3) in which Scripture "serve[s] epistemic purposes"—supposedly a bad thing—but a more honest assessment of the matter, it seems to me, would be simply to ask which approach falls most in line with Scripture's self-understanding.

Castelo and Wall are quite right to deflate the incarnational model of Scripture—an approach lately identified with Peter Enns—but they concede too much to that way of thinking when they assume that the hermeneut should seek refuge in another analogy. And so, in place of the analogy with the incarnation, they give us the "Church-Scripture analogy" (33-35). Their argument for doing so is not altogether clear, but it has to do with the church being "Scripture's legal address" (35). Proceeding along this line of thought, they are eventually led to view Scripture itself as a "charismatic gift" (51). This compares to Aquinas's claim that the inspiration of the biblical writers was a distinct charism.

The reader of this review will have sensed my frustration with this book, but I should not pass over one more TIS staple: the regularity with which the book appeals to feelings of piety rather than to logical necessity. We are told, for example, that the historical-critical paradigm dismisses the TIS view of Scripture—with respect to its claims about both the origin of Scripture and the Spirit's role in reading Scripture—on the grounds that such a view is "religiously biased" (76). It that were true, of course, it would score a legitimate hit against historical criticism. But might it not be that some historical critics dismiss the TIS view for other reasons, such as a lack of correlation between those views and Scripture's self-understanding?

Those who accept the TIS approach, as well as those seeking a better understanding of the TIS movement, will do well to read this book—both for those moments where it invokes those habits of thought found in a hundred other TIS texts, and for those moments where it sets out in a new direction. The book is undeniably well written, and it wouldn't surprise me a bit if its ideas on the "marks" of Scripture end up being influential. Indeed, the easiness of Castelo and Wall's discussion will undoubtedly cause many readers to forget that applying the marks of the church to Scripture is a novel gesture, rather than a tried and true way of thinking.

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Robbie F. CASTLEMAN. *Interpreting the God-Breathed Word.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. 132 pp. $17.99.

Castleman, professor emeritus at John Brown University, states that the purpose of this short book is "to help students of Scripture observe the text itself and learn to research the historical and cultural background of what the text says and when the text was written" (3). The introduction lays out the methodological parameters of Castleman's guide. Specifically, she adopts a speech-act model for encountering Scripture, which she defines as recognizing "that what God speaks, happens" (5). The necessity of careful observation of the biblical texts is the subject of chapter one. For Castleman, this need arises because the Scriptures are intended to

produce faithful discipleship in the reader. Rightly so, the move from text to faithful implementation is made by first observing, not asking what the text means, so that readers can avoid eisegesis. Chapter two is a discussion of Castleman's understanding of speech-act theory. This hermeneutical approach allows Castleman to maintain the particularity of Scripture (its varied historical situations), the veracity of the events recorded therein, and the communication of meaning to a contemporary reader via authorial intention.

The next three chapters are the core of the book. For Castleman, the reader of Scripture should understand first the actual event recorded (chapter three, the world behind the text), the textual record of the event (chapter four, the world inscribed in the inspired text), and finally the response envisioned by a historical understanding of the text (chapter five). She labels these the first, second, and third voices of Scripture respectively. Finally, in chapter six, Castleman encourages readers to consider each passage's contribution to the canon as a whole. A brief conclusion summarizes the entire process as living wisely by participating in Scripture.

Castleman certainly accomplishes the goal of helping people better observe the text. At every turn, careful attention to the texts of Scripture is encouraged. Each chapter concludes with a set of suggested exercises for the reader to practice the methods discussed in the chapter. This is the book's key strength. Researching the historical and cultural backgrounds of the texts, however, is given short shrift. To this reviewer's mind, Castleman had opportunities to help her own readers wrestle with the historical situation of texts of Scripture when discussing voices one and two. However, because she believes there is a nearly direct link between a historical event and the record of that event in Scripture (voices one and two), she actually cuts out the need for historical and cultural investigation. Genre concerns and the perspectives of the human authors of Scripture are essentially not taken into account. Therefore, the total purpose of the book has not been accomplished.

This is a book about how to read the Bible, not how to read *and study* the Bible as the subtitle of the work suggests. As such, if used in a theological college classroom, it would need to be supplemented by other works that discuss principles of exegesis and hermeneutics. The primary use this reviewer sees for this volume is as a tool to help a motivated lay person better engage the Bible through slow, careful reading of the texts.

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Philip R. DAVIES. *The Bible for the Curious: A Brief Encounter*. Bristol, CT: Equinox, 2018. 168 pp. $85.00.

Imagining that someone was completely unfamiliar with origin, story, cultural background, and contents of the Bible, Philip Davies provides a brief overview of those topics in this volume. He approaches this challenging task in four parts comprised of twelve chapters. Part One covers Bible basics and details his approach to understanding the Bible along with his view of the development and formation of the OT. Part Two covers the stories of Israel, the OT and history, the biblical stories of Israel, and a history of ancient Israels (yes, plural). The third part, stories of Jesus Christ, provides both overviews of the contents of each NT book and the author's view of the writing and development of each book. Part Four (Philosophy, Ethics, and Piety) covers the OT books of prophecy and the wisdom literature.

The issue that most readers in the Stone-Campbell Movement will immediately notice and have the most disagreement with is the author's foundational assumptions about the Bible. Specifically, Davies views the Bible as nothing more than literature, devoid of any historical facts or objective truth. Simply put, he takes the Bible as nothing more than a literary record of the

inventive and fanciful faith of ancient people groups. His purpose is simply to satisfy a "secular curiosity as to why these monuments of Christianity were made, what its creators were like, and what technological and ideological values they express," (4). As such, what really happened in the past is completely irrelevant and unknowable to the biblical writers. Rather, "What is thought or wished to have happened is more significant. It is from such stories, regardless of their 'historicity', that people derive their identity, values, ethics, and worldviews." This includes the author's assumptions about Jesus. He states, "We might accept that a Jesus did exist, but there is no one 'historical Jesus' that we can confidently reconstruct," (84). For those in the Stone-Campbell community who hold that the Bible does record historical events, characters, and discourse, accepting Davies' presuppositions about the very nature of the Bible will prove to be a significant obstacle to finding value in the book.

The irony of the book, however, is that Davies at times does offer valuable insight into how the construction of the text tells a story, specifically as the NT books reflect their reliance on the OT. For example, in providing an overview of the Gospel of Matthew, the author draws out both interesting and useful parallels of Matthew's (or whoever wrote Matthew) presentation of Jesus and the life of Moses. Of course, Davies sees no historical figures as Jesus or Moses. Regardless, his literary analysis of the text provides limited value.

The title of the book identifies the intended audience: those who are curious about the Bible. Unfortunately, readers who are curious will be presented with a one-sided view that only sees value in the Bible as literature, and perhaps for some, a source theistic existential "faith" akin to other religious texts. Students, professors, and preachers who value the historical reliability of the Bible and see supernatural inspiration as the true nature of the Bible will find little value in the book, however.

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

This volume, which is a synthesis of many themes that Seitz has worked on throughout his career, is a *prolegomena* discussing several key issues that pertain to reading the OT as Christian Scripture. The work is divided into three parts, the first one being an orientation to reading the OT, with a discussion of the nature of the "Elder Testament" (ch 1), an overview of Seitz's canonical approach to the Elder Scriptures (ch 2) and theological interpretation (ch 3), and finally a discussion of specific OT texts (ch 4).

Seitz begins by discussing the labelling of the OT as "old," and what this label presupposes. Seitz clarifies that the Christian Scriptures are not "old" in the modern sense of being superseded or outdated by the "new," but rather, "old" in the sense of "venerable, original, and time-tested" (15). Hence, Seitz favors the designation "Elder Testament," which expresses the foundational sense of the Elder Testament as establishing covenantal continuity that extends into the NT. The Elder Testament is understood in analogy to an ancient Israelite "elder" or sage, who "maintains memory, upholds norms, whose veracity has withstood the test of time," and who takes "responsibility for justice and proper stewardship of the past for the present generation," as the foundational movement of the Elder Testament finds new points of reference in the work of God through time (17-18). In this discussion, Seitz is not advocating changing the official terminology that is used to describe the OT, but rather calling for foundational reflection on

the presuppositions of Christian readers of the OT, as a wrong connotation of the label "old" can lead to disparagement of the OT. In doing so, Seitz recognizes the importance for Christians to read the OT as part of the Christian Bible that includes the NT, while maintaining respect for the integrity of the OT by giving it the space to witness to revealing "God's economic and ontological life with Israel, the church, and all creation." Revelation of the life of God is foundational for Seitz's definition of the canon, which Seitz understands as expressing the ontological being of the Elder Testament as a witness to the work of God in the world that spans the two testaments that maintains their canonical coherence and unity (28). On an ontological level, the Elder Testament bears witness to God revealed in the Trinity working in the life of Israel, and then among the people of God in the NT (48). This is not a matter of reading the Trinity back into the Elder Testament, but rather, the "ontology of the Old Testament, that is, how the depiction at the center of the Elder Scripture—the divine life of the One Lord God YHWH—opens onto and indeed pressures a specifically Christian reading of the triune God as arising from this first scriptural witness" (35).

In Part Two, Seitz discusses the limits of an "overarching narrative" approach to reading the Elder Testament, warning against reading the Elder Testament as a whole as a narrative that leads up to the NT (ch 5). This kind of reading that places the Elder Testament into an overarching story is in danger if blurring the distinctives and integrity of the individual books of the Elder Testament and marginalizing books of prophets and Writings that do not fit into the narrative sequence. Chapters 6 and 7 discuss the limitations of the Documentary Hypothesis through an investigation of the divine names for God used in the Pentateuch. Seitz is not averse to historical criticism per se (50, 106), but he shows through an analysis of Exodus 3 and 32–34 that many of the gaps and inconsistencies that source criticism has used to identify sources can also be understood as intentional expressions of theological complexity to variously describe the transcendence and immanence of God (78-79, 83, 98). In this section, there would be more room for Seitz to compare how his understanding of historical criticism of the Pentateuch and critique of the classic expression of the Documentary Hypothesis fits with more recent models of the supplemental approach to Pentateuchal formation, and in his discussions of the theology of the Pentateuch, there would be room for further discussions of divine appearances such as Genesis 18, and also to consider texts outside the Pentateuch, which have been read in light of the Trinity in the history of Christian interpretation.

The third part of the book includes a range of readings of key texts in the Elder Testament, including Psalms 2, 110, and Proverbs 8, showing how the theology of these texts give glimpses of the life of God that exerts what Seitz has called "ontological pressure" leading into the NT revelation of God as Triune. Seitz concludes by arguing that the revelation of God in the Elder Testament is foundational for contributing to the Trinitarian confession that the NT makes more explicit (264). A chapter on reading creation theology in Ecclesiastes in light of Genesis points to the importance of giving the Writings their due place within the canon through an intertextual approach, rather than quarantining Ecclesiastes (and Proverbs and Job) as "Wisdom Literature" through problematical assumptions about a distinct "wisdom" genre.

Seitz has produced a valuable work that raises the most important questions every Christian reader of the Elder Testament should ask about the nature of canon, theology, and Trinity, and how these concerns weave together in the process of reading the Bible as Christian Scripture. Every reader has implicit assumptions about these matters, and Seitz has performed a great service by helping readers become aware of how these assumptions govern our reading.

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Lester L. GRABBE. *Faith & Fossils: The Bible, Creation, and Evolution.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. 182 pp. $24.00.

In this volume, Hebrew Bible scholar Lester Grabbe presents readers with a reasoned example of how the Bible can and should be used in discussions on creation and evolution—namely, as a theological tool and not a science textbook. Section 1 is titled "A Scholar's Story," and focuses primarily on the biblical text. Grabbe begins by briefly narrating his journey from a fundamentalist Christian interested in pursuing a career in paleontology, to early studies in Bible college, and then on to his academic career in Hebrew Bible. In chapters 2 and 3 Grabbe examines creation and flood narratives in the Bible as well as in other ANE texts. Chapter 4 begins to bridge the gap between discussions of biblical texts and evolutionary theories with a discussion of the term "after its kind" from Genesis 1. After discussing the phrase in the biblical text, he describes the "scientific" theory of barimonology, and then turns to whales to illustrate the transition in forms that is widely recognized across many species by paleontologists.

The title of section 2 ("Evangelicals and Evolution") may be slightly misleading, since Grabbe surveys the views of nonbelieving (ch. 5) and believing (ch. 6) scientists, and only mentions evangelical views to note that the majority of evangelical Protestants reject evolution. In chapter 7, Grabbe surveys the composition and redaction history of the Bible, after noting that his own view of evolution changed due primarily to his understanding of how we got the Bible.

Section 3 is titled "Adam and Human Ancestry," and begins to synthesize his previous sections on the Bible and evolutionary theory with regard to human origins. In chapter 8, Grabbe outlines evolutionary theories of the origin of *hominins.* Chapter 9 surveys perspectives on Adam and Eve in Genesis, Paul, and theology. In conclusion, chapter 10 summarizes the previous chapters and attempts to draw the discussion to a close. In short, God is the author of creation, though the Bible does not explain how. For that, we must look to science instead of attempting to make the Bible say or be something that it does or is not.

At 182 pages, this book could not be comprehensive on any of the topics it addresses. Instead, it offers a presentation of a single approach in the discussion. Throughout the book, Grabbe adopts a positive tone. He clearly presents the ambiguity in biblical creation texts and shows the ancient worldview out of which they arose. He offers reflections on what the Bible is and how it may be used. He concisely uses whales to illustrate visible evolutionary change in a species and outlines the basic structure and changing nature of evolutionary theory. However, he does not devote any significant space to refuting creationist positions or engaging in critiques that could be inflammatory. Thus, while those that disagree with the author may find his arguments brief in places, he remains clear, fair, accessible, and very well supported.

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Kay PRAG. *Re-Excavating Jerusalem: Archival Archaeology.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. 147 pp. $55.00.

Since Kathleen Kenyon's passing in 1978, archaeology in Jerusalem continues to be measured against her findings, conclusions, and hypotheses over the data. Prag, who worked and studied under Kenyon, presents Kenyon's archived findings against contemporary excavations and conclusions in her lectures delivered at the Schweich Lectures on Biblical Archaeology. This archival record extended through seven seasons from 1961 to 1967 and consisted of twenty-one main sites in Jerusalem. This volume begins with an introduction of the data and a description of Kenyon's archive and then moves to a study of the Bronze and Iron Ages in Jerusalem

in chapter three. Chapter four discusses the various transitions in Jerusalem due to the political powers and religious influences of Rome, Byzantium, Islam, and the Crusades. Chapter five concerns itself with a host of recent excavations and publications of Jerusalem as an Islamic City in AD 1187–1516 and brings the data in hopes to consider the evidence in context. Finally, this volume concludes with a brief appendix by Michael Zellmann-Rohrer that discusses the dating, usage, and translation of an inscription of a decorated metal medallion.

The focus of the book begins in chapter three, which primarily addresses questions about city walls and the occupation during the Bronze and Iron Ages. Prag carefully examines the evidence for the dating of walls and points out where she believes Kenyon was correct in her dating or wrong in other conclusions in which better evidence has been presented. Prag does not shy away from the debate of when Jerusalem became a major city for administration in the Iron Age. Prag concludes that "evidence for a strong centralized administration belongs in the 8th/7th centuries" (40) and that fortifications were restricted to higher ground.

Chapter four is perhaps the most helpful section for the lay reader with little archaeological experience. Using both archaeology and ancient literature, artifacts within their sites are examined for the changes from a Hasmonean Jewish city to a pagan city, the departure of the Roman Garrison and the transition to the Byzantine era from a pagan to a Christian city, and then the introduction of Islam with the movement of power between the two religious influences. Finally, each of the four transitions is demonstrated by the building of central religious structures. Those mentioned are The Herodian Temple, Hadrian's Temples in Aelia, the church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Shrine of the Dome of the Rock, and the Aqsa Mosque (94–96).

Chapter five focuses on Jerusalem as an Islamic City and the lives of the inhabitants in the late 12th through 15th centuries. Prag draws from excavations as recent as 2017 as she divides her sections based on the person or power ruling the city and the various sites excavated. She discusses evidence which describes the lives of the upper class, middle class with artisans, and traders, and the impoverished class with recordings of deaths of those without family in the city.

The strength of this book is in the presentation of archaeological data and hypotheses in chapters three through five which brings Kenyon's data alongside or sometimes in contrast to conclusions from more recent excavations. However, this also presents a notable weakness in that there is not a lot of new data presented, and much of the same information has been thoroughly discussed in other archaeological publications. The reader should consider that this volume is primarily an evaluation of Kenyon's archives in light of modern, relevant questions about Jerusalem. It is helpful to have some knowledge of archaeological methodology, vocabulary, and an understanding of the expansion of Jerusalem as the various sites are examined. Without this knowledge, the reader can easily get lost on what is being excavated, where the excavation is, and its importance. Chapter four brings the most value to the NT scholar or visitor to Jerusalem as it evaluates the transitions brought by the various crises and the demonstrations of the transformation of people and buildings within the economic and cultural shifts. Overall, this volume is helpful for the reader who wishes to understand what archaeologists have uncovered and what the data means to a present-day understanding of ancient Jerusalem.

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Central Christian College of the Bible

Brandon R. GRAFIUS. *Reading Phinehas, Watching Slashers: Horror Theory and Numbers 25.* Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2018. 209 pp. $100.00.

This volume is the published version of Brandon Grafius's Ph.D. thesis from Chicago Theological Seminary. Grafius's primary argument consists of two parts. First, through the use

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of historical critical methods, Grafius interprets Numbers 25 as critical of Moses, and Phinehas's actions serve to solidify later priestly concerns about community identity and purity. Second, through the use of horror theory, Grafius illustrates how Phinehas, just as the monsters of slasher films, protects the interests of society and restores life to the norm. By combining historical-critical methodology with film theory, the author attempts to demonstrate that the biblical author(s), just like contemporary society, use violence to ensure cultural norms.

Grafius' begins in chapter one by surveying the few biblical and extracanonical texts that mention Phinehas, before surveying some of the contemporary literature on violence in the Old Testament. This chapter is short, and the survey of works on divine violence is noticeably brief and slanted toward reader-oriented approaches, which Grafius himself uses. Chapter two focuses specifically on Numbers 25, first examining texts of command, fulfillment, and authority in JE and P texts, concluding that the P strain contests Moses' action in the chapter. Grafius then examines the depiction of Midian in the biblical text, concluding that though Midian was initially an ally of Israel, later writers revised texts to cast that relationship in a negative light. Read in this manner, Moses is unwilling to carry out violence and is overshadowed by Phinehas, whose founding violence establishes the Aaronic priesthood over against Moses.

In chapter three, Grafius changes topics to film and horror theory. He begins by summarizing Freud's psychoanalytic approach to horror narratives, namely that what is frightening is something familiar that has been forgotten or repressed. He then turns to the work of horror film scholars Robin Wood and Julia Kristeva who build on this theory, suggesting that the monster of horror films does not draw attention to what is forgotten or repressed, but validates what a civilization rejects as abnormal; societal or symbolic order is the operative goal against which the monster must be evaluated. Additionally, since the symbolic order is equated with the rule of the father, and daughters struggle with leaving the rule of the mother and joining the symbolic order, the oedipal struggle is an important lens through which to evaluate horror films. Grafius continues to examine slasher films, noting the primary options of violence of the lawless and violence of authority. He notes audiences find vicarious enjoyment in the promiscuous behavior of the victims as well as in the violence of the monster since it punishes deviations from the societal norm. Their guilt at this enjoyment is assuaged when the monster itself is inevitably restrained or defeated.

In chapters four and five, Grafius turns his horror theory toward the biblical text. In chapter four, Grafius combines historical critical readings with postmodern reading strategies. He adopts a synchronic reading of Numbers 25 and assumes the final authors/redactors were aware of the totality of the history of the text. With regard to Cozbi and Zimri, Grafius suggests they are representatives of Moses and his Midianite wife. Phinehas's murder of these characters represents both the critique of intermarriage with foreigners as well as the displacement of the Mosaic line in favor of the Aaronic. The oedipal struggle in the text is in the desire to kill the father (Moses) and possess his (foreign) wife. Grafius reads Numbers 25 not as condemnation of exogamy but as condemnation of incest. The desire for Midianite women (see Num 31) is an incestuous desire for the wife of the father. Grafius suggests Phinehas's actions uncover the anxieties of his society and restores and enforces social norms. In chapter five, Grafius surveys the ancient interpreters Philo of Alexandria, Pseudo-Philo, and Josephus. Reflecting their own cultural norms and interests, each of these interpreters identify with different elements of the narrative, reading their own context into that narrative in order to use it to bolster their own struggle with maintaining societal order.

Grafius presents an excellent example of how historical-critical readings can work hand in hand with reader-oriented postmodern readings. His treatment of source criticism in Numbers and his survey of horror theory are brief, functioning more as a summary of scholarly "consensus." The highlight of his work is his application of these separate disciplines onto the Numbers

25 narrative. His application of horror theory to violent biblical texts also offers a creative and convincing explanation for the presence of these texts, since contemporary society continues to produce and enjoy similarly violent media for what might be the same reasons. Those interested in postmodern readings as well as the issue of violence in the Bible will find this book incredibly convincing in its methodology as well as its conclusions.

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David J. SHEPHERD and Christopher J. H. WRIGHT. *Ezra and Nehemiah.* The Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary. Eerdmans, 2018. 243 pp. $28.00.

The few available volumes in the *Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary* have quickly launched this series to the top of my recommendation list for teachers, pastors, and lay-readers who seek a commentary that provides an even-handed assessment of the text and focus on relevant theological issues. To this standard, Shepherd and Wright's treatment of Ezra and Nehemiah does not disappoint. As common for this series, the commentary does not unpack technical introductory issues such as the perplexing historical and chronological dating of Ezra and Nehemiah. Instead, one paragraph summarizes the author's position without consideration of detailed arguments (2-3). Shepherd echoes von Rad's conviction that "retelling remains the most legitimate form of theological discourse on the OT" (8), with the revision that retelling is the most legitimate starting point for theology. Thus, the commentary is an attempt to provide a close reading of the text situated within the resonances of other parts of the Old (and New) Testament. To this end, the commentary provides a guided reading of each chapter, paragraph by paragraph, followed by a chapter summary.

The second half of the volume begins with a substantial essay on reading Ezra-Nehemiah canonically. Here, the author views the theological concerns of Ezra-Nehemiah as an ellipse around two poles: "Who is this God?" and "Who is this people?" (112), the two fundamental questions that arise in every episode of the books. In response to the first question, the author sketches seven responses: the creator God, the sovereign God, the redeeming God, the God who speaks in Scripture, the God who gives, the God who keeps his promises, and the God who is worthy of worship. In response to the second question, the author argues that this is a people with historical identity, a people called to unity, a people called to distinctiveness, a people prone to failure, and a people with a hope and future. The second chapter takes up the issue of reading Ezra-Nehemiah theologically today. First, the author poses the crucial question of what kind of community we are called to be? He answers: a community that knows its own identity, a community that knows the story it is in, a community that exalts scripture, a community committed to worship, a community committed to justice, a community served by godly leadership, and a community of ethical distinctiveness. The third, and final chapter takes up the theme of leadership in Ezra-Nehemiah: first, reading Nehemiah as a model of leadership, second, considering alternative approaches to leadership in the persons of Jeshua, Zerubbabel, Sheshbazzar, Ezra, and even Nehemiah, and finally, learning from the failures of leadership.

I find little to quibble with in the commentary or theological exposition. The theological exposition is deeply evangelical, awaiting fulfillment of the "new covenant" beyond the horizon of these books in the coming of Jesus (119). This is not a problem in itself. It is unfortunate, however, at points. For example, Wright supports such a reading with a claim the promise in Gen 3:15 states that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent (124). In fact, the Hebrew makes no such claim, but uses the same verb for the action of the woman and the serpent (*shup,* "strike at, kick"). I appreciate the seriousness with which Wright addresses the

issue of distinctiveness in Ezra 9 and the decision reached in Ezra 10 (145-150). In the end, he leaves open the question of whether or not they did the right thing, only reminding us of the importance of cultural distinctiveness.

Thus, with awareness of the limitation of detail in the commentary and the evangelical disposition of the theological section, I recommend this and other volumes in the *Two Horizons* series. Lay readers and pastors will especially benefit from the clarity of thought and theological relevance of these volumes

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David R. NIENHUIS. *A Concise Guide to Reading the New Testament: A Canonical Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. 197 pp. $23.00.

In recognizing the struggle for instructors who strive to provide a class environment that is both academically honest and confessionally anchored, Nienhuis offers a distinct alternative to typical historical-critical and literary introductions to the NT. The author offers four "orienting convictions" that guide his work: "A canonical introduction will read the Bible as *Scripture*; it will approach the Bible as an authoritative *collection*; it will privilege the interpretive significance of the Bible's *final form*; and it will focus on the Bible's function as a *faith-forming narrative*" (5). Thus, this guide stands as a NT introduction well at home in the constantly growing vein of theological interpretation.

Nienhuis partitions his guide with an introductory chapter, a chapter devoted to each Gospel and Acts respectively, a chapter for the Pauline epistles, a chapter for the Catholic epistles, and a chapter for John's Revelation. Such structuring has the effect of quickly and clearly characterizing each portion of the NT, giving the reader a general sense of each division's respective aims, tendencies, and directions—something that may only tangentially emerge for a student engaging in the early phases of a more atomistic historical-critical method. Nienhuis also consistently cites other places in the NT that clarify or relate to whichever work he is discussing, which aids the reader in following the NT canon's "faith-forming narrative" espoused in the guide's introduction.

Each chapter begins with references to various ancient theological authorities; the Church Fathers are the first voices welcoming the reader to each canonical section. Nienhuis then explains each work or section's canonical location, and how it relates to the works that come before and after. This is a welcome section and helps to explain confusing canonical quirks like Matthew's placement before Mark, the split between Luke-Acts, and the nonchronological ordering of Paul's letters. He then summarizes the shape and structure of each work or division. Finally, for each Gospel, he examines the implications for Christology, or, for the other divisions, the implications for spiritual formation.

In the introduction, the author does excellent work in identifying the tension that students inevitably feel in their first encounter with the academic Bible. While the scope of this book may not have allowed for it, this guide may have benefitted from more sustained discussion on how to integrate the canonical approach offered by the author with a historical-critical or literary method—especially if (as Nienhuis seems to suggest) that includes subordinating those methods to ecclesial interests. This would better equip students to navigate the varying methods and conclusions that could come from a course that uses this guide in conjunction with other NT introductory materials.

Students will benefit from the guide's overall shape, running glossary, recommended resources, and accessible prose. Instructors will appreciate the guide's discussion questions at

the end of each chapter, frequent references to historical and textual matters that may open doors to more questions, and (for those so inclined) its unapologetically theological direction. Pastors will be grateful for the book's compact form and clear focus. This is a guide that would greatly aid in the preparation of a sermon series focused on a specific Gospel or group of letters in the NT. Nienhuis offers a vital and decidedly theological introduction to the NT canon, one that students will be thankful for as they begin to engage with scripture at an academic level, and that instructors may find significant value in as they endeavor to present students with a Bible that is historically formed, faithfully organized, and presently alive.

Jonah Steele
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Jodi MAGNESS. *Masada: From Jewish Revolt to Modern Myth.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019. 288 pp. $29.95.

Magness's most recent volume is a mixture of both ancient and modern history on both the world stage and the personal. She weaves in her own experience as an archaeologist to tie the project together. The finished project is a well-rounded look at the role Masada has played in the lives of a multitude of people over the past two thousand years. The first chapter deals with the siege of Masada and the historical figure Flavius Josephus. She describes important aspects of the Roman army such as Roman siege camps, the assault ramp, and the final battle. Her descriptions move back and forth between Josephus's descriptions of the siege and what archaeologists can confirm or can further flesh out. Moving between the use of Josephus's account and the archaeological insights from the site sets the rhythm for the rest of the book. The second part of the chapter summarizes what scholars know about Josephus, his works, and his "biases and apologetic tendencies." Chapter 2 explores the western wave of exploration that led to the rediscovery of Masada and its subsequent study through the 19th and early 20th centuries. Chapters 3–5 focus on the desert surrounding Masada, Herod's other building projects, and Judea before Herod came to power. Chapter 6 centers on the years from Herod to the first Jewish Revolt (40 BCE–66 CE) with the major focus on those who held political power in the area. Chapter 7 focuses on the rebellion against Rome (66–70 CE) mainly in Jerusalem, while chapter 8 looks at the rebel occupation of Masada. This includes day-to-day living in Masada such as food, the use of the synagogue, and sleeping arrangements. A short section titled "Women at Masada" looks at hairnets, jewelry, and types of combs that tell us about women at Masada as well as hint at the unsanitary living conditions by the end of the siege. The final major chapter looks at the use of the myth of Masada during the founding of modern Israel, Yigael Yadin as archaeologist and military commander, and Magness' final thoughts on Josephus's story of mass suicide. She concludes her book with a short chapter that offers her readers the gift of her recommended itinerary for visiting the Masada site. Also included are high definition photos of various aspects of Masada, Herod's other architectural works, reconstructed drawings of the site, and pictures of other important places nearby such as Qumran.

The strengths of this work are multiple. The pictures, reconstructed buildings, and Magness's description of Masada are like a guided tour of the place itself. The details about the desert, other architectural marvels built by Herod, and the political landscape create a vivid picture of life in the first century BCE and first century CE. She nicely balances between giving details and the bigger picture which make this an excellent introduction to Masada or late second temple Judaism for students, pastors, and scholars. The one issue I found while reading was following the organization of the book. The underlying structure was occasionally unclear when moving from subject to subject. However, this does not detract from the excellence of the book. Stone-Campbell members who identify as more traditionalist should be aware that

Magness questions the historicity of some biblical stories that do not have corresponding archaeological evidence, such as Herod's order to kill the young children in Bethlehem (Matt 2:16-18). These are mentioned from time to time and will be left up to the discretion of professors on how to address. Even so, whether for personal study, background study for pastors, or an undergraduate classroom, this volume is an excellent introduction to Masada and late second temple Judaism.

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Craig A. EVANS and David MISHKIN, eds. *A Handbook on the Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2019. 375 pp. $24.95.

Christianity is an ancient, Eastern religion that did not necessarily begin in the first century CE but is a continuation of the Israelite religion delivered by Moses many centuries earlier. In Christianity, Israel finds eschatological fulfillment as for centuries prophets anticipated a coming messianic savior. These facts disappear in favor of a modern, evangelical Western brand of Christianity that often replaces what existed from the beginning. Assembling a host of scholars and upcoming scholars, Evans and Mishkin remind modern Christians of their origins from Israel of old until the Israelite–Christian demarcation. Everything in between consists of a survey of Israel's history, liturgy, and how Jesus fit into it as the anticipated deliverer for whom the people longed. Beyond the passion of Christ, his disciples and Jewishness of NT writings continue the narrative even demonstrating the rooted belief in resurrection as a unique Jewish message.

The work has several strengths: an ensemble of contributors, a natural, readable flow, and works cited at the end of each contribution. Readers may recognize several names and find that they lend credibility to the project: Craig Evans, George Guthrie, Larry Hurtado, and Andreas Köstenberger are a few among them. Other names may be unfamiliar, but the authors bear credentials worthy of note. Several contributors appear to be upcoming scholars amid their learning. The flow of the work takes the reader seemingly from the exodus through a logical progression of time and development. When parts are isolated, the material within each part naturally flows well and makes for easy and enjoyable reading. The reader will not have to flip back and forth to discover the intent put forth because the table of contents allows easy access to specific material thus eliminating the need of a topical index. One specific telltale sign of a work's credibility, aside from authorship, is the sources used in constructing the work. This tome has many scholarly sources relied upon by the contributors to strengthen their arguments.

The book itself is a pleasant read, but some material may have been wise to include. An absence of sacramental studies and ecclesiology do not undo the work given but might have been an addition relevant to modern Christianity since the faith often appears in the context of the church and every week. Still, much insight derives from the work, and it may lay the groundwork for a study on those topics in the future. The material appears dedicated to those areas of study outside this work, but one might presume that the Jewish roots of Christianity may somehow lead to what the church does. Another weakness, though not prevailing, is that at times a contributor appears to read a belief into the source material rather than extrapolating the belief from said material. Another improvement that might have been helpful would be the language used. At times, contributors use language that, was it understood in a church setting might mislead the reader. When salvation in the OT is examined, the author handles the material very well, but a layperson or clergy might read it through the lenses of soteriology rather than how the Israelites understood it.

The value of this book in university would be in undergraduate studies of the origins of Christianity or even Intertestamental studies. The material is well written, but by the time one arrives at seminary or graduate studies, the references, resources, and source material ought to be familiar and not elementary. A scholar or even minister would appreciate this work among their library because of how easy it is to resource. One does not have to read the entire work to delineate its usefulness. The table of contents can lead the reader directly to a section applicable to any study they may undertake.

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Ben WITHERINGTON, III. *Priscilla: The Life of an Early Christian*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019. 194 pp. $20.00.

The year is AD 96. Priscilla is old, her husband Aquila long dead, and Domitian rules the Roman Empire. From a comfortable Roman household made prosperous by the hardworking former slaves who run her leatherworking business, Priscilla dictates her memoirs to her adopted daughter Julia. Based on this premise, Ben Witherington has novelized the life of the biblical Prisca/Priscilla.

The author writes the best kind of historical fiction. He changes none of the biblical details but fills in the blank spots from his informed imagination. At the same time, he makes his didactic purpose clear; the novel abounds with biblical quotations, quotations from other Christian and pagan writers, and over forty photographs, drawings, and maps of the ancient world—not to mention the footnotes, a rare feature in novels. The result: more than a sketch of Priscilla's life, since we know so little about her anyway, but an evocative portrayal of the world of the first-century church.

Witherington uses a familiar novel-writing technique by placing his characters at the center of an improbable number of events. In the story, Priscilla and Aquila know Peter as well as Paul. They both witness the start of the church in Jerusalem on the Pentecost of its founding. They experience the great fire in Rome, Nero's persecution of Christians, and the eruption of Vesuvius. Priscilla knows the Roman historian Tacitus. And so on. But in the world of the story, it all seems plausible.

Priscilla's reminiscences appear as a story within a story. Her long life emerges piece by piece as she describes it to her daughter. The focus keeps moving back and forth from the past to the "present." Along the way the writer displays the details of ancient life: the tents, sandals, and gladiator gear that the leather shop produces; the clothing, the furniture, the smells of ancient Rome; even the olives and wine the women snack on as they work.

And the frame story does not remain static. Conflict arises when Priscilla receives a summons to the imperial court. As she waits for her court date, she endures the anxiety of not knowing her fate. A neat plot twist resolves the conflict.

Along the way, the writer displays his conclusions on a surprising number of critical issues. Mark wrote the first Gospel out of Peter's reminiscences. Matthew provided material for the Gospel that bears his name. The Q document existed. Apollos wrote the letter to the Hebrews. Luke wrote the Pastoral Epistles at Paul's direction. Paul suffered imprisonment in Rome twice. Witherington's modestly critical approach to Scripture fits neatly into a historical novel like this.

The novel should appeal to a wide audience. Though not a page-turner, it holds the reader's attention well enough. At one end of the spectrum of readers, someone new to the Bible cannot tell which details come from Scripture and which from the writer's imagination. At the

other end of the spectrum, a scholar can watch for indications of the writer's presuppositions and conclusions. Perhaps the novel will work best in the middle, where readers interested in the Bible but not experts can find their existing knowledge combined with new information. Such readers will find their horizons broadened and their faith strengthened.

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William D. MOUNCE. *Biblical Greek: A Compact Guide*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019. 212 pp. $22.99.

Mounce's latest volume, to use its own subtitle, is indeed compact (6.25 x 4 inches—a bit larger, but no thicker, than a Gideons NT). Though intended specifically for intermediate Greek students, anyone who uses a GNT when away from the comfort of Bible software or a full-sized grammar would benefit from keeping this handbook within reach.

The book includes a surprisingly large amount of material. For example, it boasts a glossary of all words occurring ten or more times in the GNT. More than vocabulary and a selection of charts, it is, in part, a highly truncated version of Mounce's full grammar, *Basics of Biblical Greek* (reviewed by James Sedlacek in *SCJ* 14:1 [Spring 2011, 126-128]). But it goes beyond an elementary grammar and also includes material from Mounce's *The Morphology of Biblical Greek* (Zondervan, 1994). Not surprisingly, it will be most helpful to those who learned Greek with the help of Mounce's grammar. In contrast, some parts may confuse those who learned from a different grammar, in part because of Mounce's strong focus on linguistics and morphology.

This review concerns the book's second edition. The differences between editions are especially few and keep the book parallel to the recent fourth edition of Mounce's *Basics of Biblical Greek* (Zondervan, 2019). Those who own the first edition of the *Compact Guide* have no need to buy the second.

Mike Fightmaster reviewed the first edition of the *Compact Guide* in *SCJ* 14:2 (Fall 2011) 304-305. He noted the book's high price. I echo Mike's concern, for the second edition is priced at $22.99. Happily, new and used copies are available online for much less, as is a Kindle version.

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Craig S. KEENER. *Christobiography: Memory, History, and the Reliability of the Gospels*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019. 713 pp. $50.00.

In this exhaustive work a major NT scholar argues for the substantial historicity of the four Gospels. Avoiding the extremes of skepticism (we cannot know anything for sure about historical events) and dogmatism (the biblical text is inerrant), Craig Keener places the Gospels, especially the Synoptics, squarely within the realm of ancient historical biography. There he finds a pattern of "substance and variation" that falls "well within the bounds expected in ancient narratives about actual persons and events" (21).

Seventy percent of the book's text deals with genre studies. Keener elaborates on the arguments of Richard Burridge (1992) and others who portray the Gospels as *bioi* ("lives") in the ancient sense, not biographies in the modern sense. Using genre as a measure of what ancient readers expected of a text, he argues that the Gospel writers met the expectations of the biographical genre: reference to real people and real events; "just the gist" (465-469) of teachings

and conversations; less concern for chronology than modern biographers show; and various simplifying devices that allowed the writer to cover more events in fewer words.

So far Keener has established the Gospels as biographies. But are they *accurate* biographies? The rest of the book's text uses insights from present-day memory studies to convince modern readers that ancient people had better memories than moderns; that teachers deliberately taught their disciples to replicate their teaching; and that the emerging Jesus movement enjoyed the presence of eyewitnesses who could keep the tradition accurate.

Here Keener brings out one of the most important emphases in the book: the idea of "living memory" (476-483 and throughout). Historical works written while eyewitnesses still lived enjoyed better data and external controls on their writers. Works written generations after the fact had to make do with sources who might or might not know what they were talking about. Keener defines living memory as the time when both eyewitnesses and people who knew eyewitnesses were still alive, some 70-80 years (477-478). Historical and biographical works written within living memory of the events thus enjoy the presumption of accuracy.

From this point Keener's reasoning goes like this: "Mark's Gospel comes from the period of living memory" (480-483). (And so does Q, which Keener dates fairly early [257].) Matthew and Luke trusted Mark; we know this because they used him, sometimes verbatim (154-155). Some of the earliest witnesses to Jesus, including the official ones (the Apostles), remained alive to correct the written tradition as it emerged. Modern historians trust ancient histories with much looser connection to the events than the Gospels show, so why not trust the Gospels as much as we trust other ancient works?

The book will serve scholars and advanced students. Keener documents his work broadly and thoroughly, mostly from English-language sources. The bibliography amounts to more than 100 pages, the indices to nearly 100. The writing is straightforward scholarly prose.

Keener has proved his point. One may believe the Gospels' claims or not, but no longer can one picture them as compilations of legends that accumulated during some free-for-all period of oral tradition. This book ties the Gospels to the eyewitnesses too tightly for that.

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Jennifer KNUST and Tommy WASSERMAN. *To Cast the First Stone: The Transmission of a Gospel Story*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019. 440 pp. $45.00.

This volume stands out for its extensive bibliography and discussion of patristic testimony regarding the story of the adulteress, *Pericope adulterae*, in John 7:53–8:11. The two authors have written eight chapters (without individual attribution) arranged into four parts. Part I (a single chapter) traces the scholarship from the beginning of printing to the present time. Part II, comprised of three chapters, investigates whether scribes attempted to suppress this passage by deleting it during the early period of transmission. Knust and Wasserman ultimately dismiss this possibility. And so, in Part III, with two chapters, the authors argue that this story first entered the biblical manuscript tradition in the third century, for the first time probably in Italy, from which it then spread slowly eastward (248, also see 253, 268, 343-344). Part IV, containing the final two chapters, deals with Roman and Byzantine lectionary, liturgy, and art. One significant finding confirms, with some reservations, the conclusions of John Burgon and Maurice Robinson that John 7:53–8:11 was intentionally "skipped" over in several manuscripts due to its unsuitability for the Pentecost lection (293-299, also see 34 n. 64).

However, this book does not provide an objective presentation of the external and internal evidence, both pro and con, for the *Pericope adulterae*. In fact, Knust and Wasserman explicitly

state that they wish to avoid questions about the original text of John's Gospel in regard to this passage (46). Yet these authors start with the assumption that the text of the NT writings existed in a very fluid state from the beginning, and that the text only became "fixed" at a much later stage. And they write from the assumption that John 7:53–8:11 is clearly a later addition to John's Gospel, and this harbored bias bleeds through their analysis and taints their conclusions at nearly every turn.

To take a case in point, in their very first chapter, when Knust and Wasserman mention Burgon and Robinson and other defenders of the Majority Text (32-35) and then quickly pit them against the rest of modern biblical scholarship in dismissing this passage as a later addition to John's Gospel, they never mention the late William L. Petersen (he died in 2006 from cancer).

Petersen was an internationally recognized NT textual critic of unquestioned ability. And he shared Knust and Wasserman's conviction that the NT text initially existed in a fluid state. He certainly was no defender of the Majority Text and was an outspoken critic of Burgon. But he shocked and surprised the scholarly guild and his colleagues with his contribution to the 1997 Festschrift for Tjitze Baarda, when he defended the authenticity of the *Pericope adulterae*. After presenting what seemed to be an overwhelming case against this passage, Petersen pointed to what looks like verbal parallels between the Gospel according to John and the *Protevangelium of James*, an apocryphal Christian romance that is usually dated to the second half of the second century. Petersen felt that the weight of these parallels could potentially tip all of the evidence that he had just recited in the opposite direction, and he chided his fellow scholars for their "obvious reluctance" to deal squarely with these parallels, with the result being these late second-century echoes of John's Gospel have been "willfully ignored."

In their array of modern scholarship in their very first chapter (32-46), Knust and Wasserman pass over Petersen in silence. Eventually they do briefly notice Petersen's paper (63-64), but they downplay its significance and cite the recent proposal of George Zervos, who in 2004 postulated that a hypothetical source lies behind the *Protevangelium of James*, and that this hypothetical, unproven source must have also contained the story of Jesus and the adulteress (Note: on pp. 63-64, "*Apocrypha* 25" at the end of fn. 47 should be "*Apocrypha* 15").

But Zervos's unsupported hypothesis ignores the fact that there is at least one other verbal parallel between the Gospel according to John and the *Protevangelium of James.* In both John 20:25 and *Prot. Jas.* 19.3, we find the words "unless I insert my finger." Now this second verbal parallel cannot be accounted for by a supposed hypothetical source containing the story of the adulteress. Petersen saw such parallels as clear evidence that already in the late second century the *Pericope adulterae* was in the Gospel according to John. Petersen felt that such correspondences go beyond mere chance and clearly imply literary dependence. The unknown author of the *Protevangelium of James* had to be familiar with the Gospel according to John, and his memory of this Gospel influenced the wording of his own narrative. For Petersen, these parallels were enough to overturn what other textual scholars describe as the massive and convincing evidence that the *Pericope adulterae* is certainly a later addition. To account for its absence from so many ancient manuscripts, Petersen accepted the testimony of Augustine (ca. AD 415) that many in his day had "removed from their manuscripts" this story on account of the Lord's failure to condemn the adulteress, an explanation that is reinforced by an earlier comment from Ambrose (AD 378) that this passage certainly caused unease among believers.

So initially, Knust and Wasserman omit (suppress?) Petersen's well-argued essay in their review of modern scholarship (32-46), and when they finally do mention him (63-64), they omit (intentionally?) the full weight of Petersen's argumentation by mentioning only the one verbal parallel, *Prot. Jas.* 16.2 = John 8:11, "neither do I condemn you." Yet the convincing

force of Petersen's argument is the other parallel that he cited. And then Knust and Wasserman spend nearly half of their book (96-248) trying to convince their readers that this passage would have never been suppressed in antiquity or removed from manuscripts, as if Ambrose and Augustine were lying.

In their notes and bibliography, Knust and Wasserman have provided me with some valuable new leads, and I have benefited from reading their take on the manuscript data and patristic evidence. But in my opinion, they have hardly written the last word on this most interesting and perplexing of biblical passages.

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Gordon D. FEE. *Jesus the LORD according to Paul the Apostle: A Concise Introduction.* Baker Academic: Grand Rapids, 2018. 191 pp. $22.00.

Let me begin in a way that would not have crossed my mind before reading *Jesus the LORD according to Paul the Apostles: A Concise Introduction* by Gordon D. Fee. Rather than using it as a part of my concluding comments, I want to begin this review the way Paul closed 1 Corinthians: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (13:14). From the heartwarming Foreword—written by his daughter Cherith Fee Nordling—to the final chapter ("Conclusion: Paul as Proto-trinitarian"), the message is consistent: "The radicalism of Paul's Christology is not his emphasis on Jesus' humanity but his equation of Jesus with God: God Incarnate among us but not using that to his advantage (hence living submitted to the Spirit), crucified and resurrected, now exalted and reigning, and bringing God's Spirit-born children into the first stages of their new eschatological life together." (xv)

In terms of structure, the book is divided into four major thematic sections: (1) The Savior, (2) The Second Adam, (3) The Jewish Messiah and Son of God, and (4) The Jewish Messiah and Exalted Lord. In each section the reader will experience firsthand his daughter's reflection that her father "knew and loved Paul with empathy, gratitude, and respect" (xi). In fact, Craig Keener is correct in saying that this book is "Exegetically grounded and theologically synthetic, academic and devotionally reverent, grounded in research but practical and simple to follow." (Book cover) Throughout the book, Fee consistently demonstrates that Paul has a high Christology, "the full deity of Christ is never something Paul argues for; rather, as we have noted throughout, it is the constant presupposition of everything he says about Christ as Savior" (43).

In his Preface, Fee challenges his readers "to be as the Berean Jews" and choose to "consult the Bible on their won at each point." I was one who did just that (utilizing my Logos Bible Software frequently). From the very first chapter, the stage was set. How radical the transformation of Saul/Paul had been! This is seen in Paul's own emphasis, as he begins his letter to the Galatian Christians. Fee emphasizes how Paul realized that "he, the Christ hater, was not simply a recipient of that revelation but is himself Exhibit A of God's amazing grace" (8). I believe that Fee is correct when he opines ". . . despite what Paul says so plainly, this sentence [Gal. 1:15-17] has often been misunderstood to mean God's revelation *to* Paul, rather than God's revelation *in* and through Paul's life and calling as an example of God's grace in this regard" (8). I was a bit surprised to find that my English Standard Version has in the text ". . . reveal his Son to[5] me," and the footnote simply reads "[5]Greek *in*." That is a significant difference!

Second, this book makes a compelling case for Paul's dependence on and use of the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Old Testament. In a footnote Fee states, "This

was the Bible he would have grown up with in Tarsus and the Bible used by his Greek-speaking churches." (86) So it is that Part 4, "The Jewish Messiah and Exalted Lord," is my favorite section of the book. It is here that Fee demonstrates that ". . . where Paul uses the Old Testament phrase 'the name of the Lord,' the divine name Yahweh (=Lord) is now the name bestowed on Christ at his exaltation" (137). In a subsection titled "The Bestowal of the Name" (129-131), Fee develops how this is "the name that is above every name . . . that Jesus Christ is *Lord*" (Phil 2:9-11).

Gordon D. Fee is Professor Emeritus of New Testament at Regent College. The author of several important books, including *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (with Douglas Stuart), as well as a number of commentaries on the Pauline Epistles in the acclaimed *New International Commentary on the New Testament* series; he is truly a New Testament/Pauline scholar of note. I am now motivated to study his more exhaustive book (704 pages), *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study*.

I realize that there has been no negative critique of this book. Since I have not yet read (or even purchased) my copy of the larger volume, I might later need to amend this statement, but I was thoroughly impressed with the overall depth and breadth of this volume—at only 191 pages. The book is reader friendly, including a brief glossary of the more technical terms, as well as a subject and scripture index. The book is highly recommended! If only these two works would have been available when I was focusing on *Pauline Theology* as a part of my postgraduate studies!

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David G. HORRELL. *The Making of Christian Morality: Reading Paul in Ancient and Modern Context.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019. 328 pp. $45.00.

Horrell, professor of NT studies at the University of Exeter, author of numerous works on Paul and Pauline ethics, in this present volume of ten essays offers some of the best of NT scholarship bridging the gap between socio-historical study of Paul and important ethical challenges of today. Horrell seeks to do socio-historical reconstruction in the texts of Paul in order to "reflect fruitfully on contemporary challenges" (3).

The first section focuses on whether the churches Paul addresses should be thought of as distinctively "Pauline" groups versus early assemblies of believers. What were the socioeconomic circumstances of the lives, the communities, and the meetings of the early believers? Horrell's study turns to archaeology for assistance in understanding dwellings and possible layouts for a meal for a better understanding of the Corinthian eucharistic texts and what this might say about the Christian community. Was Philemon an artisan who owned a few slaves at most and who lived in a modest dwelling, or was he wealthy, living in a large house with many slaves? Finally, in this section, Horrell detects a shift in Pauline literature from an egalitarian community towards a hierarchical household community. Since Paul and others were in a position of authority, he describes it more as a change in the *form* of authority and power.

Examination of some significant social contexts that bring to the surface Pauline ethics is the subject of part two of Horrell's work. The focus is especially on ethical theory or the way Paul approaches ethics. For example, Horrell examines 1 Corinthians 5 using Bultmann's antinomy of indicative and imperative. He considers the identity of the man in question and the community of believers and how this tactic might aid us today in our ethical reflection. He then explores 1 Corinthians 8–10 and "idol food," concluding that Paul's instruction focuses on a

Christlike regard for others. Finally, he studies Phil 2:6-11 and its description of Christ's humility and the importance of virtue for Pauline ethics. Horrell weighs in on the recent debate over the uniqueness of the Christian tradition in relation to social humility as a virtue.

In part three of the book Horrell notes ways in which Pauline ethics are potentially useful for contemporary ethics. He considers Romans 14–15 and the work of scholars such as Jürgen Habermas, Stanley Hauerwas, John Rawls, and Thomas Ogletree and three different models of church-world relationships. The final two essays both deal with ecology, the first attempting to give Pauline texts a new perspective or reading for our age of ecological crisis. The second enters the controversial debate begun by Lynn White's famous essay and attempts to find insight on ecojustice by interpreting 1 Cor 5:14-21.

This volume is highlighted by pictures, graphics, and copious footnotes to works in English and German. The depth of scholarship and insight accompanied by caution and humility is refreshing. For example, on the question of ecojustice in the Bible, Horrell declared that an "ethical motif of other-regard in relation not only to all people, but also to 'all things'" seems reasonable. "But what this might mean, in concrete ethical terms, in the context of current ecological issues and global climate change, remains unspecified" (228). Horrell's research is up-to-date, and his analysis of ideas is clear. My judgment is that these essays deserve to be in every seminary and religious university library.

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Jackson W. *Reading Romans with Eastern Eyes: Honor and Shame in Paul's Message and Mission*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019. 208 pp. $20.00.

This recent volume on Paul's letter to the Romans carries an aura of intrigue, in that the author writes under the pseudonym "Jackson W." This is particularly enticing for those of us in the field of biblical studies who approach biblical texts with a keen interest to determine authorship as a key to understanding content. According to the editor's note, the pseudonym is "for security reasons." Born, raised, and educated in the West, Jackson W. is not ethnic Chinese, but has lived and worked in East Asia for two decades, "taking a Chinese name out of respect for his host culture and with the missiological aim of connecting most effectively with those he's in immediate contact with." In this light, the author promises a reading of Romans in Eastern context, exposing cultural blind spots of dominant Western readings of the epistle that present not only a hindrance to effective missions, but also fall short of the full intent of the letter. Specifically, the book wants to offer a "new cultural lens" for viewing Romans. This corrective lens aims to bring clearer focus to the elements of honor, shame, collective identity, and hierarchy that are more prevalent in Eastern culture (and better aligned with cultural values of Paul's original audience) than what we see reflected in modern Western culture.

This volume is not a "commentary" on Romans in the usual sense. The author approaches the major sections of the epistle thematically, demonstrating how honor and shame help to illuminate the overarching themes of the letter. The first chapter addresses the methodology of the book's approach and the question as to what extent it is actually possible for Western readers to utilize a non-Western cultural lens. Chapter 2 takes up the theme of Paul's mission as laid out in Romans 1 and 15, highlighting the nature of "high context" cultures and their proficiency in "communicating indirectly." The author argues that Paul's mission challenges conventional categories of honor and shame through a reorientation of collective identity around the person of Christ, *versus* an orientation around Jewish or Roman elitism. This reorientation of collective identity provides the framework for interpreting Paul's message throughout Romans.

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The book's remaining chapters 3-12 seek to apply the cultural lens of honor and shame to the major themes of Romans as they appear in: Romans 1–3 ("Dishonoring God and Ourselves"); Romans 2–3 ("Distinguishing 'Us' and 'Them'"); Romans 3 ("Christ Saves God's Face"); Romans 4 ("Who Is Worthy of Honor?"); Romans 5–6 ("Faith in the Filial Christ"); Romans 5–8 ("The Hope of Glory through Shame"); Romans 7 ("Shamed from Birth?"); Romans 9–11 ("They Will Not Be Put to Shame"); Romans 12–13 ("Honor One Another"); and Romans 14–16 ("The Church as 'Harmonious Society'"). In some instances, the reader readily discovers new, fresh insights into Paul's theology through this Eastern cultural perspective. Good examples are the author's approach to Romans 8 and the theme of God's people being saved "through" the shame of suffering to the freedom of glory, or his interpretation of the "I" in Romans 7 as a "collective I" or "we." In other places the application of the honor/shame lens appears contrived, and readers may find themselves repeatedly revisiting the author's unique definitions for honor and shame. Some readers may be disappointed that their "favorite" Romans texts (for example, Rom 11:26) do not get the attention they expect. Though the author does not address this directly, he may well intend these seeming omissions themselves as part of the corrective lens for Western readers, reorienting our attention to the more important themes of the epistle. Overall, the book achieves its purpose and offers a genuine contribution to Pauline studies by applying a cultural, missional lens that is foreign to most Western readers and exegetes.

This volume is probably best suited as a companion text for an upper division undergraduate or a seminary course on Romans, or, more generally, on Pauline theology. Pastors and theologically trained church leaders will also find this a useful volume in their personal libraries. The book contains a discussion guide with study questions for each chapter. The extensive bibliography includes titles from a number of Eastern scholars who do not routinely appear in Western studies on Paul. The volume is further enhanced by its three indexes: an author, subject, and scripture index.

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Craig S. KEENER. *The Mind of the Spirit: Paul's Approach to Transformed Thinking.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. 402 pp. $34.99.

Keener writes on Paul's understanding of the mind, particularly in relationship to the Greco-Roman moralists' concern for the passions. Further he carefully designates Paul's use of the mind *in conjunction with* the Spirit, avoiding a prioritization of mind over Spirit or vice versa. The argument is advanced in eight chapters: the corrupted mind (Rom 1), the mind of faith (Rom 3–4), the mind of the flesh (Rom 7), the mind of the Spirit (Rom 8), the renewed mind (Rom 12), the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2), the Christlike mind (Phil 2), and the heavenly mind (Col 3). The study launches from Romans, especially anchored by Rom 8:27 with its phrase "mind of the Spirit," before finding similar trajectories through Corinthians, Philippians, and Colossians. First Corinthians ("mind of Christ") and Philippians ("have the same mind") are clearly necessary based on vocabulary within the semantic family of terms for cognition. Colossians ("set your minds on things above") seems based on spatial categories linked to Philippians 3 ("earthly" and "in heaven"). This argumentative link may give some pause, in addition to the Colossian authorship issue.

Keener situates Paul's words and instructions within the appropriate Greco-Roman and Israelite traditions of the time, utilizing his understanding of ancient sources and correlating with his own research on Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel of John. He is careful not to make

Paul just another player in the moral traditions of the time, but to show how Paul could connect to, contextualize, adapt, and make persuasive the gospel message among the forms of his day. The discussion of the fleshly mind (Rom 7) is extensive and well thought out. Keener maintains the majority view but also asks how Paul's audience members would have heard this in the context of Roman self-mastery and control. Keener's attention to Romans 8, is a helpful corrective to an exclusively rational Paul, and it posits holding the experiential and rational modes together in "the mind of the Spirit." Ultimately the initiative is with God, but cooperation of the human mind is expected. For Keener, to think like the Spirit is closely connected to thinking like Christ and this seems to structure the final part of his taxonomy.

In the end, with the nicely laid out scheme, it is not about classification so much as about human anthropology, connection to the divine (or lack thereof), and the God-given source of a pattern for redeemed human communities. So Keener writes, "For Paul, *the mind of love [first and only appearance of this category]*, the mind of faith, the mind of the Spirit, the heavenly mind, the mind of Christ focused on the weakness of the cross, *and so on* are the same mind. They are simply different entrances into the same reality in Christ and in the Spirit, approached from different angles, varying according to Paul's emphasis in a particular passage" (253; my italics). Fair enough. I wonder, however, how power and freedom as aspects of the Spirit might be shaped by the rational processes of mind that discern God's redemptive plans and purposes (see Keener's fine articulation of "God's plan" in Appendix B (279-280). For instance, in 1 Corinthians 14, Paul thinks that the Spirit unleashed without proper thought can be quite dangerous! I am attracted to the "mind of the Spirit" without collapsing it too much into all the other categories. Spirit as "God's purposive power" might help to frame the dual quality of true Spirit as both rational (articulated/revealed purpose) and experiential (power).

The book is thought-provoking, a wealth of information, and a reliable guide through a number of sticky issues in examining Paul and his correspondence. Much more could be said about it. It is appropriate for the college or seminary classroom with strong guidance, the learned pastor's study, and certainly the scholar's bookshelf. It fits nicely with the attention to moralist traditions surrounding the NT that have been a concern among Stone-Campbell scholars, particularly those following in the footsteps of Abe Malherbe and his students. I appreciate the strong attention Keener has given to making application to the life of believers and churches in an extended conclusion (257-265).

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Michael J. GORMAN. *Participating in Christ: Explorations in Paul's Theology and Spirituality.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. 320 pp. $30.00.

For centuries theologians and Bible scholars have pondered the "center" of Paul's theology. Although "justification by faith" has dominated this discussion in the centuries after the protestant reformation, the New Perspective on Paul has caused scholars to reconsider the center of Paul's theology. In recent decades, the discussion has focused on "participation," "union," or "being" in Christ. One of the leading contributors to this discussion is Gorman, and the current volume is a noteworthy addition to the scholarly discussion.

Gorman's central theme is participation, but it is not a systematic treatment of participation theology in Paul. Instead, "it is a set of interconnected explorations in Paul's participatory theology and spirituality that look in depth, and in new ways, at certain critical components of that theology and spirituality. . . . My intent is to offer a coherent reading of Paul that helps all interpreters . . . see him and his efforts through a fully participatory lens" (xxiii). Therefore,

Gorman's work has a connected presentation and logical structure, but each chapter can also be read independently. This allows first-time readers of Gorman the opportunity to read what interests them, and readers familiar with Gorman to see his theological development and broader theological aims. Regardless, Gorman's work as a whole presents a strong case for understanding Paul's theology through participation.

The first nine chapters (Part 1) are focused on "Paul and Participation." Chapter 1 is a helpful introduction to the topic of participation in Christ. The second chapter—in typical Gorman fashion—focuses on the cross and the revelatory function of Christ's cruciformity, or kenotic, self-sacrificial love. In chapter 3, Gorman responds to the criticisms that he over emphasizes the cross and under emphasizes resurrection; he argues that "cruciform participation in Christ is also, paradoxically, participation in Christ's resurrection" (55). Then, in chapter 4 Gorman returns to Philippians 2 and proposes a new translation of 2:5 that emphasizes a "community that is . . . shaped by the person the community inhabits," i.e., Jesus (93). Chapter 5 investigates Paul's apocalyptic and covenantal theology in Galatians. Gorman concludes that the "church is to be an apocalypse of the apocalypse, a living manifestation of the surprising new covenant" (112). Chapters 6–8 focus on justification in key Pauline texts. Gorman's analysis surprisingly reveals that "Paul's theology of justification . . . is inherently ecumenical" (146). In chapter 9, Gorman argues that "because justification is transformative participation in the life of God who is revealed in Christ, justification itself entails what Christian tradition has called theosis, or deification" (209). In Part 2 Gorman focuses on the contemporary significance of Paul's participation theology. In chapter 10, Gorman creatively imagines what a letter from Paul to the Church in North America would look like, and then he writes that letter. The result is challenging and incisive. Then, in chapter 11, Gorman delineates the significance of preaching the resurrection of Jesus in the Church's daily life.

Ultimately, this volume is an insightful read that presents complex theological topics with clarity and sophistication. This volume is a significant contribution to Pauline theology and NT Studies. It is particularly noteworthy because it expands and strengthens Gorman's previous work, and it applies participation in the body of Christ to today's ecclesial context. Therefore, this volume is spiritually enriching and academically invigorating, which makes this book essential reading for students, pastors, and scholars.

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James P. WARE. *Paul's Theology in Context: Creation, Incarnation, Covenant, and Kingdom*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019. 264 pp. $30.00.

Ever since the Protestant Reformation and the championing of the apostle Paul's "justification by faith," the Pauline epistles have held a prominent place in Christian theology. Then with the emergence of the "New Perspective on Paul," a whole new wave of Pauline scholarship arose, and in the field of biblical studies—aside from Jesus—Paul is likely the most discussed and debated. Consequently, Pauline theology is an incredibly complex and convoluted field. Despite the breadth and complexity of Pauline theology, the current volume has managed to synthesize many scholarly discussions and present Paul's theology clearly, skillfully, and succinctly.

Ware accomplishes this task in a twofold manner. First, Ware studies Paul through a Jewish context. He writes, "We will discover that the Jewish character of Paul's thought . . . is the key to unlocking the riches of his theology" (1). Second, Ware illuminates Paul's message by placing it within the larger religious, philosophical, and social contexts of the ancient world. He writes, "We will view Paul's theology . . . considering not only ancient religion but also ancient philos-

ophy . . . within the Greco-Roman world, such as the Stoics, the Epicureans, and the followers of Plato, but also . . . the teachings of the Buddha and of the Hindu sages" (2). These two lenses reveal that Paul's theology is indebted to his Jewish context, but they also reveal that Paul's theology was utterly unique in the ancient world.

There are four main sections to this volume that Ware argues are "the four pillars of Paul's gospel" (3). Additionally, there is a fifth section that places Paul's gospel in the context of other NT writings. The first pillar is creation. Ware argues, "The heart of Paul's gospel presupposed his doctrine of creation" (39). Yet, the first pillar is integrally connected to the second pillar: incarnation. Ware writes, "Paul believed that the eternal creator God . . . had become human in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. The creator had entered his creation" (56). The bold claim that God becomes human, Ware argues, is the epicenter of Paul's theology because a number of important theological concepts are dependent upon it—redemption, reconciliation, resurrection, new creation, and so on (88). The third pillar of Paul's theology is covenant. Ware writes, "Unpacking Paul's rich covenantal theology in its ancient Jewish context not only reveals the coherence of Paul's own thought, but helps to open up for us the unity and coherence of the entire Bible" (136). Paul's fourth pillar is Kingdom. "The kingdom is the restoration and fulfillment of creation" (175). This restoration comes about through the new life Christians have in Christ. "The new life in Christ, the outworking of the creation-renewing power of his resurrection, brings about a moral renewal, whereby those who belong to Christ are set free from slavery to sin" (183). In the fifth section Ware debunks historically inaccurate claims about Paul's relationship to the founding of Christianity, and, instead, argues that Paul is one of the pillars of Christianity alongside Peter, James, and John (232).

In summation, this volume is a noteworthy contribution to Pauline theology. He should be commended for insightfully and skillfully synthesizing large swaths of Pauline scholarship in a digestible and relatively brief book. Additionally, this volume is a unique contribution to biblical studies because it continually incorporates, not only western religion and philosophy, but also eastern religion and philosophy. Ultimately, this volume is a helpful synthesis of Pauline theology, and it would be a useful introduction to new students of Paul or a helpful refresher to scholars and lay church leaders.

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