Book Reviews

Lee SNYDER. ***The Book of Acts according to Alexander Campbell: A Historical and Rhetorical Commentary.*** **Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2002. 1445 pp. $399.85.**

Snyder, rhetoric and public speaking professor at the University of Nebraska at Kearney since 1985, brings to the table of Stone-Campbell studies a heritage in the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement. A graduate of Kentucky Christian College (1970), he held ministries in Ohio and Kentucky, received an M.A. from Southwest Missouri State University (1978), and a Ph.D. from Ohio State University (1987) with a dissertation focused on Alexander Campbell's leadership from 1830 to 1840. In addition to the three-volume set of commentaries on the Acts, he plans to compile similar works on Campbell's writings of the Old Testament, the Gospels, the Epistles and the Revelation.

In this volume Snyder gleans nearly every notation Campbell made on every verse in the Acts (he never composed a traditional commentary like J.W. McGarvey—*Commentary on Acts*) from sixty volumes of his authorship—such as the *Millennial Harbinger*. He has arranged Campbell's thoughts into a typical, verse-by-verse commentary, along with introductory categories, like authorship and date. Bibliographic information on each of Campbell's notations has been provided in parenthetical form (this element will spare the researcher a great deal of time in cross-referencing). To give the sense of connectedness to the citations, Snyder has included explanatory notes, and at times personal interpretations/reflections. Each chapter is initiated by three of Campbell's five and one-half translations of the Acts: The Sacred Writings—first and fourth editions of 1858—and The Bible Union Translation of 1858.

Snyder has four goals. To provide: (1) an accessible compendium of Campbell's writings on the Acts; (2) a window into his theology, largely developed by the Acts; (3) sermon starters; (4) and an entrance into Campbell's rhetorical prowess. Regarding the first objective, Snyder has certainly performed a noble task for the students of the Stone-Campbell Movement by providing a timesaving resource. However, the strength of this work lies in the second goal. As Snyder contends (18), the subsequent generation of Campbell distanced itself from him and his writings because of the growing stigma attached to those of the new movement through the disparaging label "Campbellites." Snyder's work has the potential of reawakening the Movement to the genius of Campbell, a genius that both formed and led the Movement in its infancy. Therefore, this work is especially pertinent for the college/university professor.

The other two goals are not as consequential as the first two. Indeed, reading this compendium will spawn a number of sermon ideas, but the same could be achieved by performing an inductive approach to the Acts, an approach that Campbell practiced and promoted himself. As a matter of fact, the reader should be cautious of one area: Campbell's citations have been removed from their context. As stated above, Snyder has provided "connective tissue" through bibliographic cita-

tions, explanatory and personal comments; but Campbell composed his comments on various texts in Acts not to form a running commentary but as observations based on inquiries, theological situations, and the like. Therefore, the reader would be wise to track down the original sources on a regular basis to gather the original intent of the author. In addition, these volumes are a cumbersome and time-consuming method for exploring Campbell's use of rhetorical conventions. A better avenue would include a study of his debates and his work, *The Christian System*. Although Snyder has a full agenda of subsequent works on the writings of Campbell, he would perform a great service to the Movement by helping it grasp and practice the persuasiveness of Campbell through a volume on his rhetorical practices.

I fear that those in located ministries will find the price of this work to be prohibitive. As a "selling point," one should keep in mind the hours and days Snyder can spare one from gleaning the same information from sixty volumes of Campbell's writings. Therefore, this resource could be viewed as a bargain.

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Joseph F. KELLY. *The Problem of Evil in the Western Tradition: From the Book of Job to Modern Genetics.* Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2002. 245 pp. $17.95.

Joseph Kelly traces the history of the concept of evil in the West, whisking the reader through a quick historical-literary overview beginning with the Old Testament and ending with, as the title indicates, contemporary issues in science. Kelly's whirlwind historical tour is bookended with a quick overview of "paths not taken" (conceptions of evil which have been marginal in the Western tradition) at the beginning, and a brief survey of contemporary theodicies at the end. As Kelly frankly acknowledges in his preface, "the topic is vast, but the book is concise" (vii). Given Kelly's ambitions regarding scope in both subject matter and resources, it is inevitable that his treatment of history and significant figures is selective and occasionally sketchy. However, as the author's intent is clearly to provide a survey, rather than an exhaustive treatment, this is a less serious problem than it might be otherwise.

However, it quickly becomes clear to the reader that Kelly's biases do control his selection of material. He offers as a working definition of (moral) evil Jeffrey Burton Russell's characterization of evil as "abuse of a sentient being" (3). Though he discusses other categories of evil (natural evil, ontological evil, gratuitous evil, and Marilyn McCord Adams's "horrendous evil"), moral evil is clearly his exclusive concern throughout the book. The theme of "demonization of the Other" recurs often as Kelly walks the reader through episodes of history in which "pagans," Muslims, Jews, and women have been victimized. The trajectory of his historical-literary overview follows the diminishment of the devil as a viable explanation for evil and the rise of explanations of a purely human origin of evil.

Though the subtitle of the book hints at an analysis of the impact of contemporary science on the concept of evil, Kelly's two chapters on science and evil are disappointingly slim, especially with regard to the topic of genetics. Kelly rightly identifies the concept of human responsibility as that which is at stake in the formulation of a genetically influenced view of evil. Unfortunately, the discussion

quickly concludes with the bland statement that "clearly the relationship between genetics and the understanding of evil has a long way to go" (212).

One of the strengths of the book is its consistent incorporation of literary works, not only those of Dante and Milton, but also of Mary Shelley, Dostoyevsky, Thomas Mann, Albert Camus, and many others. Kelly draws on nonfiction writers as well, including the Marquis de Sade, Nietzsche, Elie Wiesel, as resources for his analysis of the historical permutations of the concept of evil. Though, again, his treatment of individual authors is necessarily brief, the inclusion of literary works in his survey provides access to detailed formulations of the concept of evil during particular periods of history. The inclusion of these sources aids Kelly in achieving his aim of avoiding an overly abstract, and therefore emotionally barren, discussion of evil.

Though Kelly identifies himself as a Roman Catholic, he clearly intends his book to reach across denominational lines to as broad an audience as possible. He writes "to students and the general reader," and succeeds in producing an accessible introductory survey to a complicated problem. The broad scope of Kelly's survey provides the reader with a sense of the multiplicity of directions for further study.

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George PATTISON. *Kierkegaard: Religion and the Nineteenth-Century Crisis of Culture.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 272 pp. $25.00

Pattison, formerly Dean of Chapel at King's College, Cambridge, and now at the University of Aarhus (Denmark), has written many books on Kierkegaard and the relationship between faith and culture. The primary purpose of this well-researched and well-written book is to provide insight into the historical context of Søren Kierkegaard's work as a writer within the context of the popular and literary culture of his time and place—of mid-nineteenth century, "Golden Age," Copenhagen. This can be seen as a kind of corrective to a view of Kierkegaard as a purely solitary thinker; the "individual" was also a man of "the crowd." The secondary purpose is to shed some light on Kierkegaard's understanding of the religious situation of his time in relation to the "crisis of religion and culture" in the nineteenth century and today (xiii).

The programmatic first chapter (that I am treating separately from the rest of the book) presents Kierkegaard as a critic of his age, which is the age of the rise of "spectacular," superficial popular culture—"the spectacular city"—in which one finds a fundamental and ambivalent experience of "the heightening and the leveling of experience, relationships, values" (21). Pattison here (in a manner different from the kind of work done in the rest of the book) presents his own constructive reworking of Kierkegaard, of connecting Kierkegaard's concept of "anxiety" with the idea of "the sublime," and then seeing this "anxious sublimity" as arising in response to the banal superficiality of the spectacular city and thus making this anxious sublime the border where the aesthetic and the religious meet, and seeing the religious in the aesthetic such that the "ordinary" can be an occasion for the "extraordinary." Again, this first chapter is largely different from the rest of the essays in that it is more about expanding a "Kierkegaardian" philosophy that is interesting in its own right beyond that of Kierkegaard himself, while the other essays are concerned with illuminating Kierkegaard's context—in order to better understand Kierkegaard himself.

Each chapter was written and published independently as journal articles. There is thus a diversity of subject matter that does justice to the purpose of placing Kierkegaard within his own diverse context. The second chapter shows Kierkegaard's extensive relation to the "feuilleton" literature of his time—as an eclectic and superficial style of writing which commonly appeared in newspapers and reflected the diversity and heterogeneity of the city and the newspaper as such. This chapter presents both Kierkegaard's critical, if not hostile, posture toward this kind of writing and his appropriation of many aspects of the feuilleton even in the critique thereof. The third chapter examines the Danish novel, *Two Ages*, that was the occasion for Kierkegaard's critique of "the present age" in his *A Literary Review: Two Ages*. The fourth chapter looks at the recurring figure of "The Wandering Jew" in Kierkegaard's writings as a kind of symbol of modern nihilism. The fifth chapter examines Kierkegaard's dissertation, "On the Concept of Irony," in the context of the academic and literary scene in Copenhagen. The sixth chapter presents Kierkegaard's relation to the literary scandal of Friedrich Schlegel's *Lucinde* as yet another example of his (SK's) deep engagement with popular culture. The seventh chapter is on the contemporary reception of Kierkegaard's *Either/Or* (and his reception of said reception) as exhibiting again his ambivalent relation to the contemporary feuilleton literary world. The eighth chapter deals with the relation of the concepts of time, novelty, and moral responsibility in Kierkegaard and in relation to his contemporaries. The ninth and tenth chapters compare Kierkegaard's writing and thought to the work of Manet and Dostoyevsky, respectively. The final chapter is on what Kierkegaard says about how to read and how that relates to reading Kierkegaard.

This book would be of primary interest to the somewhat restricted circle of Kierkegaard scholars. It would also be of interest to (more broadly) those who study nineteenth-century culture and/or the relation of religion and culture (most broadly).

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Jack COTTRELL. *The Faith Once for All: Bible Doctrine for Today.* Joplin: College Press, 2002. 624 pp. $34.99.

In this volume, Cottrell breaks from his usual practice of writing books on single topics to write a book that includes his thought on every topic, a sort of *Summa Theologica Cottrellis*. Though the book has no preface to tell us of the intended audience, it appears to aim at the seminary classroom and the minister's reference shelf. Surveying Christian doctrine in 33 chapters, it moves in traditional fashion from the nature of theology to the existence and attributes of God to the person and work of Christ to the doctrine of the Spirit. Along the way, Cottrell treats such topics as: the creation of nature, humanity, and angels; sin, human and angelic, original and personal; death and evil; atonement, justification, and sanctification; the conditions of salvation, including faith, repentance, confession, and baptism; predestination and perseverance; the church, its nature, purpose, organization, and assembles; and eschatology, with chapters on the millennium, the intermediate state, the Second Coming of Christ, the final judgment, heaven, and hell.

The book covers the waterfront of issues in Christian theology at an introduc-

tory level suitable for an upper division undergraduate or a beginning graduate student. It has few footnotes and does not often engage in complicated debates or weave intricate arguments. Rich in Bible quotations, it summarizes the biblical data on each topic and, if the argument requires, pursues exegetical and hermeneutical discussions with some sophistication. Cottrell raises and answers theological questions with obvious awareness of the history of doctrine. Though he often quotes Alexander Campbell—interestingly, as often negatively as positively—and more recent Restoration Movement thinkers, on most topics Cottrell does not attempt to defend a position distinctive of the Restoration Movement. The exceptions are the sections on the church and the conditions of salvation.

Compared to other books of its kind, its mood is neither dogmatic nor tentative, polemical nor irenic, pious nor rationalistic, sectarian nor ecumenical. It is prosaic and didactic in the best and worst senses of those terms. It informs and instructs, but does not inspire or (thankfully) discourage. Reading this book, I never once considered looking up to praise God for his greatness and goodness. Nor was I ushered into the presence of the mystery that inspires wondering silence. On the other hand, I felt myself in the presence of a theologian, whom I trust is listening to the voice of the Good Shepherd rather than peddling his opinions for personal gain—something I cannot say of some contemporary theologians. There is nothing of the debunking spirit of those theologians who cover their unbelief and despair with the façade of "honesty" and "critical" thinking.

This volume is a good book, and its publication comes at a critical time. Restoration Movement Churches are rapidly assimilating to the religious culture of popular evangelicalism, with its consumer-friendly churches, story-laden sermons, and feel-good spirituality. Cottrell's book criticizes this trend implicitly and explicitly; it is not a mere reactionary tract, however. It is progressive. Though he does not highlight this, he draws heavily on contemporary, academic evangelical theology. In his sections on the church and the conditions of salvation, he defends distinctive Restoration Movement positions, but he takes care to avoid excluding non-Restoration Movement Christians from the true Church. Cottrell's book envisions an intellectually robust fellowship, with its own doctrinal distinctives in the areas of ecclesiology and the sacraments, within the larger fellowship of evangelical Christians. Hopefully, this approach will awaken some to the forgotten breadth and depth of our faith and induce them to explore the historical riches the church universal has bequeathed us. Cottrell is one of a handful of scholars from the conservative wings of the Restoration Movement capable of writing a comprehensive systematic theology. He is to be commended for taking the trouble to do it.

Again, Cottrell's work is a good book for the present moment and moves in the right direction, but it suffers from many weaknesses. Most foundational are the twin ills of excessive biblicism and deficient ecumenicity. As his subtitle bears witness, Cottrell has not yet fully escaped the notion that Christian theology is simply "Bible doctrine" as perceived by the individual interpreter. Instead of saying "our faith teaches" or "the church believes," Cottrell repeatedly introduces his observations by the phrase, "in my judgment" this verse teaches so and so or "we conclude" so and so. The entire book is written as "Cottrell's theology." I cannot recall a single line that speaks in the voice of the church or defers to tradition. The second of the twin ills, the lack of ecumenicity, is intimately related to the first. Cottrell draws on contemporary evangelical theology, but he does not take seri-

ously the Great Tradition of orthodoxy that unites the major families of Christianity and goes all the way back to the first century. Cottrell is aware of this tradition, but he does not treat it as his own or as worthy of reverent consideration. The church fathers, the medieval doctors, the Reformers, and the Post-Reformation Protestant scholastics receive scant mention. Calvin is mentioned only as the founder of that benighted view referred to as "Calvinism." To move forward into the future faithfully, the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement will require a much broader and deeper foundation than Cottrell provides.

Other weaknesses in the volume are related to the twin ills discussed above. They are all instances where Cottrell goes against the Great Tradition in favor of his private biblical interpretation. I will mention a few of the more serious problems before I discuss one egregious error more extensively: 1) He contends that God's attributes of holiness and love were brought into conflict because of the temporal event of sin and that the atonement is about solving this problem within God (93ff.). 2) He employs the dubious idea of divine self-limitation to make room for human freedom and to account for evil (74, 116). 3) He argues from the Arminian position on foreknowledge, free will, and conditional election and predestination without acknowledging its source in the Jesuit Molina and the Reformed Arminius. He is completely unfair in his presentation of the view he dismissively (not to say sneeringly) calls "Calvinism." 4) His move of replacing the problematic notion of "original sin" with his admittedly Pelagian idea of "original grace" creates many more problems than it solves (180-189).

The most egregious and dangerous error, however, is Cottrell's denial of the eternal Sonship of the Son of God. He says, "In my judgment it is altogether doubtful whether the Bible ever intended the concept of begetting to apply to the eternal relationship between the Father and the Son" (256). The consensus of the Great Tradition and the vast array of theological arguments it marshals in support of the eternal sonship are cast away as casually as yesterday's newspaper. The "eternal procession" of the Holy Spirit and the "eternal begetting" of the Son, according to Cottrell, are just "empty code words" (256). He can see "no issue of orthodoxy at work here" (256). In contrast, the Great Tradition did see (clearly and rightly!) an "issue of orthodoxy here" and, apparently many heretics did as well, for throughout history they have been keen to deny the eternal sonship of the Word. Throughout the book, Cottrell refers to the eternal Trinity as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, apparently without realizing that by denying the eternal Sonship of the Word, he deprives the Father of his eternal fatherhood as well. If the Word became the Son only in the Incarnation, the Mind (as I suppose we could call the pre-Father) became the Father in the same event. Moreover, since the term "Son of God" cannot refer to a new relation the Word has acquired to the "Father"—unless Cottrell wishes to argue that the Incarnation changed the divine nature; it must refer to the relation the *human nature* acquired to God by being joined to the Word. What term can we use for this new relation? I can think of none less infamous than "adoption"? Perhaps Cottrell is a bit too sanguine in his "judgment" that there is "no issue of orthodoxy here."

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John G. STACKHOUSE, Jr., ed. *What Does It Mean to Be Saved?* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002. 203 pp. $17.99.

The editor describes this book as, "A collection of pointed essays intended to prod evangelical theology out of its comfortable spiritual individualism and toward a vision of salvation as large as God's mission to the world he loves and redeems" (10). The book questions the traditional evangelical focus on "going to heaven" as the primary goal of salvation, instead exploring the implications of salvation for life in the here and now. Together, the various essays explore a holistic view of salvation that includes the individual, the church, society, and the physical creation. Essayists include Rikk E. Watts, D. Bruce Hindmarsh, Henri A.G. Blocher, Vincent Bacote, Cherith Fee Nordling, Amy L. Sherman, Loren Wilkenson, John Webster, and Jonathan R. Wilson.

The book is divided into two sections. The first, "Basic Reconsiderations," includes three essays addressing a biblical-theological perspective on salvation, what salvation meant to the early evangelicals, and the meaning of the atonement. The second section, "Expanding Particular Zones," addresses more specific applications for holistic soteriology in areas such as oppressed communities, gender relationships, urban ministry and apologetics in a postmodern and increasingly neo-pagan world.

The authors take a variety of approaches, including biblical exegesis, historical analysis and informal social commentary. The essays vary somewhat in depth and quality and the book suffers from the lack of an agreed upon definition of "salvation." If in fact the word is to cover as many different areas as the authors collectively suggest, the reader wonders whether new terminology must then be coined to describe the specific aspects of salvation that concern atonement from sin and attainment of eternal life. Many readers would no doubt be more comfortable considering many of the areas discussed in the book as the outworking or result of salvation rather than intrinsic to the process itself. The authors also fail to address adequately the danger of downplaying the significance of sin while pursuing social activist goals, a danger that has already been amply demonstrated in many of the mainline denominations.

At the same time, the book is timely in an era when a growing segment of evangelicals are working to undo the "great reversal" of the early 20th century, which saw a broad retreat of theologically conservative churches from engagement in social issues. If the movement to reengage society is to gain wider acceptance within conservative churches and last beyond the current generation, it will require a solid theological underpinning. While this book does not provide all the answers, it achieves its purpose of stimulating the reader to recognize the broader implications of salvation and to reconsider some of our rarely questioned assumptions. It is recommended as a thought-provoking text for individual or classroom use.

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Timothy GEORGE. *Is the Father of Jesus the God of Muhammad?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002. 159 pp. $12.99.

George, an executive editor of *Christianity Today*, focuses on one aspect of

Islam, the doctrine of God, although he also tells a little about Islamic history and rituals. He makes it plain that this book has been written for Christians, not Muslims.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the book is the attitude George shows toward Muslims. After quoting John 20:21, "*As* my Father has sent me, *even so* send I you.," he reminds us "there is a direct correlation between the *content* of the message we bear and the *spirit* and temper with which we bear it" (13). This book is worth reading just to see how a respected evangelical Christian tries to steer clear of the broad path too many Christians have taken—destructive polemics and bitter conflict that have only reinforced misunderstandings and mistrust.

Is the Father of Jesus the God of Muhammad? George says, "The answer to the question is surely both yes and no" (69). If the reader wants a simplistic black-and-white answer, this book offers no help. But it is a step toward a more mature Christian position. Muslims believe God is Creator, Provider and Judge; therefore God is their God too. However, he would say their understanding of God is lacking, because they reject the ideas of the Trinity, the incarnation, and redemption by the cross of Christ.

Much of the book is spent explaining internal struggles within Christianity over the nature of Jesus and the Trinity and how from this debate Christians have found a more complete understanding of God. He also reminds us, "It is important to remember that Muhammad was born less than two centuries after Saint Augustine died. The doctrine of the Trinity had been clarified and defined by Christians only after centuries of controversy and debate within the church" (58).

I was surprised that George places such a heavy emphasis on Christian creedal statements and yet never once refers to Islamic creedal statements, called *'akida*. It is true that most Muslims are unfamiliar with creeds such as Fiqh Akbar 1, 2, and 3, but then again most Christians are unfamiliar with the creeds from Nicea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon mentioned by the author.

If George had considered Article 7 of Fiqh Akbar 1, "Difference of opinion in the community is a token of divine mercy," he might have escaped the trap of making several weak absolutist statements about what Muslims believe. Since Islam has more than a 1,400 year history as well as a current community of faith numbering over one billion people, it is always dangerous to make comments like the one on p. 70: "*No devout Muslim* [italics mine] can call the God of Muhammad 'father.'" George hasn't talked to enough Muslims (or read enough about Islam) to make such statements. I wish he had been with me when a well-known Muslim scholar said that no Muslim should be afraid to pray the Lord's Prayer, which begins "Our Father." And this scholar was not someone on the fringe of Islamic thought.

Muslims can easily find a number of places where they may disagree with George's details. I will mention only two. He seems to misunderstand how *zakat* (almsgiving) is calculated (29). Also some would challenge his assumption that Surah 5:3 is the last chronological verse of the Qur'an (21). If you want to give a piece of literature to your Muslim friend to stimulate conversations about your faith, you would do better to find some other resource.

The biggest problem with Timothy George's book is that he seems to have had limited opportunities for intelligent discussions with Muslims or close interaction with them on a day-to-day basis. That is to be expected, because of his line of work. And perhaps that creates his greatest strength. When a well-respected Christian

leader writes with compassion about Muslims, without abandoning any of his convictions, this sets a good example for the church to follow.

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Richard WINTER. *Still Bored in a Culture of Entertainment.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002. 144 pp. $12.00.

It takes a certain amount of confidence I suppose, to write a book with the word *boredom* in its title. In this volume, Winter has defined boredom, cited historical examples of boredom, illustrated contemporary reasons for boredom, and, in the process, well, you know, ended up being rather boring. At 144 pages it is not an unbearable task to wade through, but, if the author is right, and boredom is the *au courant* disease of our day, most of us need not another boring task to undertake.

Winter believes that boredom is the reason for many of the maladies of this world. In this book he attempts "to understand some of the complexities of this often-confusing world in which we live" (9). Turns out we're not surprised at the causes of boredom: Understimulation, Repetition, and Disconnection (18). Do I need to repeat those? Some repetition, it turns out, is good, and too much complexity usually means more boredom. Interesting quotes do accompany most chapters: "the uncultivated and the sophisticated are both bored, one because he notices and understands too little, the other because he notices and understands too much" (26).

The book title suggests a bigger problem today: overstimulation and "overleisure." Bernard Shaw is quoted as saying, "Hell is an endless holiday—the everlasting state of having nothing to do and plenty of money to spend doing it" (36). I'm guessing this is not a condition most in ministry can relate to. Video games, extreme sports and all forms of entertainment get treated as contributing to this state of overstimulation.

Advertisers come in for special attention on this subject of boredom. Ironically, in light of the recent demise of the Concorde supersonic jet, one quote is "Fly the Concorde around the world. The future way to fly – NOW. Everything else is boring" (47). I guess we are consigned to eternally boring air travel. Not that I disagree "that commercials are more dangerous to a child's soul than are sex and violence . . ." but is this new? It is as if Winter just awakened to modernity.

We are also led to examine personality types and are exposed to the "Boredom Proneness Scale." Is it *nature or nurture* that causes some to always be bored and others to always be engaged? We not only do not find the answer, we don't even get the author's opinion.

We are next taken on a psychological, historical, philosophical, and sexual tour of the causes and implications of boredom. The author starts in medieval times and takes us through the enlightenment and on to the postmodern present. Depression, anxiety, sloth, and the loss of spirituality are all covered in their historical context.

Chapter 10 is a survey of existentialism from to Nietzsche to Camus. The cycle is familiar, loss of God, loss of meaning, loss of the reason to live. Walker Percy sums up the predicament, "Boredom is the self stuffed with the self" (98), a quote so good it shows up in two different chapters of the book.

It is not until chapter 12 that we get practical. Six suggestions are put forth: Remember the Big Picture, Delight in the Simple and Ordinary, Cultivate Wonder,

Develop a Passion, Active Engagement, and, most significantly, Experience the Flow. Winters is fond of quoting Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and draws much of this last, and longest, remedy from his work. And it is perhaps the best part. Referencing Csikszentmihalyi's book, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, we learn a useful phrase to describe those times when we really feel alive.

This volume will provide you with a good topical survey of the literature regarding boredom. If you're looking for quotes from famous people on the subject or would like historical background, this book can prove useful. What it doesn't do is relieve me of my boredom with books like this.

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John R. BISAGNO. *Principle Preaching: How to Create and Deliver Sermons for Life Application*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002. 200 pp. $14.99.

Bisagno makes two valuable contributions. First, he emphasizes casting our sermons in contemporary language. Second, the sermons he uses to illustrate his approach to sermon writing have value read as personal devotional material.

Bisagno, a fifty-year veteran of the pulpit, identifies a key need in many sermons. Following the lead of Rick Warren, he suggests writing the "points" of the sermon in principle form. This provides the preacher and the listener with application in the very structure of the sermon. Many preachers might benefit from such advice.

Unfortunately the author does not demonstrate how to determine legitimate principles. He says, "The focus will be on learning to find and develop the principles" (18). That never happens. From page 20 forward the book is simply examples of sermons based on various biblical characters. The headings in the sermons are indeed "principlized," but no explanation is offered as to how to arrive at those principles.

For the preacher interested in being faithful to the literary genre of the text, the absence of such instruction is a critical issue. It appears from the examples that principles are simply attached to texts. Preachers interested in sound hermeneutical practices have been warned not to moralize in their sermons. It appears that most of these principles are just that.

Of the 200 pages, a mere 15 or less are devoted to explaining the practice of principle-centered preaching. The remainder is made up of examples. Unfortunately, there is too little information and instruction to be really helpful.

The author makes several sweeping generalizations that may not hold up under closer scrutiny. On page 3, "In principle preaching, the hearer has an instant connection and virtually never forgets what he or she has heard." Later in that paragraph, "Outlines are soon forgotten, but principles never are." It's hard to imagine any sermon outline being so memorable as to never be forgotten.

Bisagno also falls prey to the characterization of the preaching of "non-principle" preachers. He assumes all other preachers outline sermons like his "average sermon outline" on page 5 illustrates. That may be true of average sermons. But it is not true of good sermons.

In addition to the sweeping generalizations, Bisagno exaggerates the value of this form. Besides suggesting that "listeners never forget" principle-based sermons, he suggests that every text "has only one correct interpretation, but it may have a million applications." That overstatement characterizes Bisagno's approach to his approach to preaching. There is no other approach worthy of use.

For readers interested in some light devotional reading, Bisagno's illustrations might be helpful. As a text for improving preaching, the reader would be better off finding a more meaty text.

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Joseph M. WEBB and Robert KYSAR. *Greek for Preachers.* St. Louis: Chalice, 2002. 195 pp. $24.99.

Contemporary ministers, whose days are so often filled with tightly scheduled appointments, constant pastoral demands, and too little time for study, need real help in using Greek and Hebrew in their preaching. So it is a welcome relief to see titles like this one appearing with increasing frequency in recent years. This book stands out as a unique, collaborative effort involving professors of both homiletics and New Testament in its production. In this respect, I know of no other like it. The text reads well, is organized in helpful ways, and includes two concluding sermons that illustrate the principles articulated in Part Two: "Ten Principles for Uncovering Meaning."

This book was written "to bring the Greek text of the New Testament within reach of anyone who wishes to explore its riches" (x). More narrowly, and as its title suggests, "this book represents an effort to make the Greek text . . . both *usable* and *exciting* to preachers who have never studied Greek" (italics theirs, 7). Further, the book seeks to address problems in contemporary translations, as well as the loss of "originality, creativity, and intelligence that today's pulpit seems badly to need" (7). These are important, if lofty, goals, and the authors are to be commended for boldly embarking upon such a timely project. Unfortunately, however, the book falls short of the mark in several ways.

The value of this kind of book rests squarely on at least three crucial pillars: *currency, accuracy,* and *method*. I will address each in turn. First, it is regrettable that the authors have not incorporated the best of recent Greek titles into their footnotes. Outside the word study and exegetical resources mentioned near the end of the book (173-174), I count very few recent books directly related to Greek. While Webb and Kysar cite Wesley J. Perschbacher, ed., *New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (1990), William McDonald, *Greek Enchiridion: A Concise Handbook of Grammar for Translation and Exegesis* (1986), and the 2000 edition of Walter Bauer's *Greek-English Lexicon* (F. Danker, ed.), I did not see such current successes as William Mounce, *The Basics of Greek Grammar* (1993; second edition, 2003) or Daniel Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax* (1996). (Incidentally, Mounce's new *Greek for the Rest of Us*, 2003, is in some respects closely aligned with the approach taken by Webb and Kysar, but it came out after *Greek for Preachers.*) In fact, the only grammars I detect are J. Gresham Machen, *New Testament Greek for Beginners* (1923), Dana and Mantey's *A Manual*

Grammar of the Greek New Testament (1927), and C.F.D. Moule's *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (1959), all very much out of date. Oddly, the book has no bibliography, which makes it hard to see which resources they have put to use.

Second, there are several troubling inaccuracies in the book that raise considerable doubt as to its overall value. Three examples will serve to demonstrate the point. Commenting on μαθητεύσατε in Matthew 28:19 the authors assert, "Since this is an *aorist* imperative . . . it means that it was a command given in the past. This means that the primary sense of the sentence is in reference to an action already completed" (64, italics theirs). Even older grammars such as Dana and Mantey (177) and Machen (180) point out that the imperative mood, like all other moods outside the indicative, does not signify time, but aspect. Mounce is as clear as anyone on this point, "As has been the case in all non-indicative moods, the only significance of the imperative is its aspect. It has no time significance" (*Basics of Biblical Greek*, 315). A second significant inaccuracy appears as follows, "No part of speech occurs as often in the Greek New Testament as the infinitive" (103). I really wonder what that remark means. Surely, the authors do not consider nouns, articles, and prepositions something other than parts of speech. GRAMCORD software turns up 28,976 nouns in the New Testament and 19,867 articles, but there are only 2,291 infinitives. (I'm not really sure whether or why this matters, but it does demonstrate the fact that the authors' comment about the statistical frequency of infinitives simply is not accurate.) Finally, the treatment of οὐ and μή as "emphatic" and "qualified" negatives, respectively, is not entirely accurate (98-102). Where οὐ appears with indicatives and μή with the other moods, as the authors note (98), in what way does this make οὐ with the indicative "emphatic," as the authors suggest? Are realities in some sense more "emphatic" than things possible or future? Further, μή frequently appears with aorist subjunctives to indicate a strong prohibition (Matt. 5:17, "*Don't think* that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets"), similar to μή with the imperative mood. (One wonders whether Kysar and Webb would not also see μή with the imperative as in some sense "emphatic.")

A third and final concern about this volume revolves around method. The authors instruct those who preach to utilize "two kinds of key books on a regular basis," an "interlinear" and "an analytical Greek lexicon" (13). The interlinear "is not a translation itself, but a *guide* from which a thoughtful, even original translation can be made by anyone interested in learning to work with its raw materials" (italics theirs, 14). Chapter 2, "Writing and Reading the Greek Text," proceeds with the alphabet, helps for pronunciation and exercises in reading Greek from the New Testament out loud (a practice which, to their credit, Webb and Kysar see as vital for the preacher who uses Greek regularly). The problem here is that the second chapter assumes a relatively large amount of learning (alphabet, syllabification, punctuation, vowels and diphthongs, breathing marks, accents, and proper reading skills) without the benefit of either a tutor or a real working knowledge of what these sounds mean. More than this, do the authors really believe that it is possible for "anyone interested" in learning Greek to produce a credible "original translation" of the text with an interlinear and an analytical lexicon? *Greek for Preachers* is anything but a standard Greek grammar. And while there are helpful chapters on articles, verbs, participles, prepositions, conjunctions, particles, infinitives, nouns, adjectives, and pronouns, the authors simply do not pay adequate heed to Greek syntax, the ways in which words are combined to create meaningful units of thought. Nor

is their mechanical reliance upon an interlinear as a "guide" to translation adequate for the exigencies of Greek idiom. I fear that a little knowledge of Greek is indeed a very dangerous thing as it is sometimes depicted in this volume.

While this book is replete with examples, an inordinately large number of which relate directly to the role of women (3, 38, 52, 53, 86, 90-92, 97-98, 102, 115, 179-188; is there a second agenda here?), and offers some solid practical advice from time to time, it is in the final analysis disappointing. In addition to the problems already cited above, dangerous linguistic fallacies are offered, such as this comment related to Greek compounds: "But when a word is made by putting other words together, you need to take it apart again and 'play with' the possibilities for the merging of the two meanings into something new" (139-140). Have the authors not read James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (1961) and, more recently, D.A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies* (1984)? Out of date, at times inaccurate, and methodologically flawed, *Greek for Preachers* is probably not a text you will want to place in the hands of those who preach. D.A. Black's *Using New Testament Greek in Ministry: A Practical Guide for Students and Pastors* (Baker, 1993) is far more reliable.

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Richard N. LONGENECKER, ed. *Community Formation in the Early Church and in the Church Today.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002. 251 pp. $19.95

This volume consists of twelve essays by British, Canadian, and American scholars on the subject of ecclesiology, most of which were first presented at the Bingham Colloquium held at McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, in June, 2000. The essays, "avowedly written from a Protestant perspective" (xvii), represent an important contribution to the ongoing ecumenical dialogue on "church order" or "community formation"—the term preferred by the essayists in this book—which is defined as "the way the Christian church is structured and its life expressed" (xi).

In the excellent introduction, Longenecker surveys the development of a Protestant "consensus of scholarship" on church order, and attendant Catholic responses, from 1868 (the year of Lightfoot's seminal essay on Christian ministry in his commentary on Philippians) to the present. In the editor's opinion, however, many questions about community formation in the ancient and contemporary church remain; thus, the justification for the present volume. Longenecker also orients readers to the primary questions the book addresses: Is the organization of the church a divine ordinance or social necessity? Does the NT present a "pattern" of church order and, if so, is that pattern normative for churches in all times and places? What roles should theology and sociology play in determining the formation of the church's life and order?

The book is divided into four parts. In part one, "The Social Context," Richard Ascough, Alan Segal, and Peter Richardson survey aspects of the Greco-Roman and the Jewish social-religious environment that served as the background for, and potentially influenced the development of, church order in the early church. Compelling is Ascough's contention that early Christian assemblies should be viewed as

manifestations of the "voluntary associations" that were prevalent in the Greco-Roman world. While functional as a survey of the influence that the Jewish experience exerted on the church, Segal's essay plows little new ground. This reviewer found intriguing Richardson's exploration of the ongoing changes in the architectural features of early church buildings and the implications for church order that can be drawn from these changes. For example, the conspicuous presence of the dining hall in early church buildings seems to suggest the importance of communal meals in the formation and expression of Christian community. Conversely, the noticeable absence of theater-like structures is also suggestive. Richardson argues cogently that "the shift to a formal, official, and powerful model of church building—that is, the basilica—and away from communally oriented buildings" continues to influence Christian life and ministry to the present day (54).

Textual data from the Gospels, the major Pauline Epistles, Acts, and the Pastoral Epistles that bears on the subject of community formation is discussed by Craig Evans, Richard Longenecker, Scott Bartchy, and Howard Marshall in part two, "The New Testament." The authors draw similar conclusions from the study of their respective portion of the NT. First, the NT does not present a definitive constitution for church order, evidenced by differing forms and structures among early churches. Second, the biblical writers themselves did not intend for their instruction on church order to be prescriptive for all churches. Nevertheless, as they sought to contextualize the gospel for specific local situations, they set in place forms of church order that reflected principles inherent in the gospel.

In part three, "The Early Centuries," Alan Hayes and Francis Young assess the implications of statements from early church fathers for an understanding of community formation in Latin and Greek Christianity. According to these authors, the conventional reading of the works of Hippolytus, Cyprian, Basil, and other church fathers that supported the twentieth-century Liturgical Movement needs to be reconsidered. In short, the emergence of a monarchical episcopate may have been later and less widespread than the Liturgical Movement pictures.

Part four, "The Church Today," leaps ahead to the modern era. John Webster seeks to erect a theological foundation for an episcopal framework of church order, David Hester for a presbyterian form, and Miroslav Volf for a congregational model. This section is the most apologetic in tone. While the authors do not seek to make the form of church order they advocate normative for all Christian communities, each one apparently believes that theirs has the most theological support.

Understandably, those who identify with the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement have a keen interest in ecclesiology. For this reason alone, we should welcome this work because it represents a level of engagement with biblical and extrabiblical material of which we are capable, but exhibit too infrequently. Some *SCJ* readers may be put off initially by the book's a priori rejection of a "primitivist" or "restorationist" perspective (xvii), as was I. Nevertheless, I commend the editor and other writers for assembling and treating the relevant biblical, sociological, and historical data. As an ardent proponent of the restoration ideal, I occasionally need to be reminded that many questions about church order, structure, and life are not as clear and simple as I would like for them to be.

Reading this book also made me more aware of the importance of one's hermeneutical stance. My main frustration with the book is that the editor and individual authors never explained their hermeneutical approach to the data. A major

premise of the book is that when it comes to church order, the NT does not "prescribe" a normative pattern. Rather, community formation "must be understood primarily as *an expression of* the Gospel," and the NT writings can "*guide us* as we contextualize the Christian gospel for our own particular time, culture, and circumstances" (xvii-xviii, 87; emphasis mine). How do we know that a particular structure is an "appropriate expression" of the gospel? In what sense do the NT documents "guide us"? Such questions are not answered, which may leave some *SCJ* readers especially frustrated in part four of the book, when three different authors enthusiastically support a different model of church order on the basis that it is the most appropriate expression of the gospel, sometimes in very blunt terms. For example, Volf argues, "From these three basic theological convictions, it follows that the life and structure of the church cannot be episcopocentric (231).

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Randall BALMER. *Encyclopedia of Evangelicalism*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002. 655 pp. $39.95.

From "Bible Bill" Aberhart, early 20th-century western Canada's premier prophecy teacher and Social Credit Party leader, to Samuel Zwemer, early 20th-century Muslim missionary and "apostle to Arabia," Balmer has given us a one-volume personal *Encyclopedia of Evangelicalism*. The Ann Whitney Olin Professor of American Religion at Barnard College, Columbia University, has spent his scholarly career studying American Religion and especially evangelicalism.

From books to videos, Balmer has presented evangelicalism and in this volume, supplied many encyclopedic entries for people (Billy Graham), events (Cane Ridge), groups (Jesus Movement), institutions (Fellowship of Christian Athletes), denominations (Brethren in Christ Church), and ideas (evangelism). Balmer has broadly defined evangelicalism in theological (from Calvinism to Pietism), organizational (from Evangelicals for Social Action to Christian Coalition), and geographic (from American Family Association to African Inland Mission) terms, but has tried to show the artistic (Contemporary Christian Music), educational (Taylor University), social (Pentecostal handshake), and common (Flannelgraph) aspects of the subculture. This volume also included many Stone-Campbell references: Thomas Campbell, Abilene Christian University, Billy James Hargis, and James DeForest Murch, to name a few.

This volume is an excellent reference for undergraduates and a good starting point for graduate studies. For those interested in evangelicalism, this is a page-turner. Each entry included a date, a description, and a suggestive reference section. Asterisked items in each entry pointed to other definitions included in the book. Also, Balmer showed a sense of humor and related many humorous anecdotes that may serve as classroom or sermon illustrations.

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Bruce CORLEY, Steve W. LEMKE, and Grant LOVEJOY, eds. *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Introduction to Interpreting Scripture.* Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002. 525 pp. $29.99.

This volume is a second, expanded and revised edition of the book published by these editors in 1996. It lives up to its claim to be comprehensive. In fact I know of no other single book that attempts to cover biblical exegesis, the history of biblical interpretation, the authority, inspiration, and language of Scripture, the primary genres of Scripture, and biblical preaching. The twenty-eight chapters are written by twenty-seven different scholars. One would expect, with that sort of breadth, some unevenness in the quality of the chapters, but this does not happen. Not surprisingly, some material overlaps among the chapters, but the repetition is not wearying.

The chapters added to this revision are seven chapters on the genres of Scripture: law, OT narrative, OT wisdom literature and poetry, prophetic literature, NT narrative, NT letters, and apocalyptic literature. I teach biblical preaching on the basis of scriptural genres, so I find this addition extremely helpful, especially since it is important in seminary and Bible college to help students avert the error of approaching every text with exactly the same expectations and methods.

The authors of these chapters teach or have taught in Southern Baptist institutions, many of them at Southwestern Baptist Seminary, and this likely explains the unity of approach they espouse. However, the breadth of their presentation and suggested resources is not limited. They appear to be aware of trends in biblical scholarship and homiletics across the board, and they treat methods and approaches rather even-handedly, pointing to both positive contributions and weaknesses of historical and literary models of interpretation.

In a few instances I was led to wonder if even a seminary student would understand what the author was saying. Sentences like, "Systems may be provocative, dialectical, and often synthetic; but in reality they are all too often only structural arguments housing the comprehensive 'onto-theological' notions of the architect," (361) made me stop and ponder the special vocabulary and thought patterns of philosophical theology. However, most of it is written in language readily accessible to the average student.

The book ends with a forty-page "Student's Glossary for Biblical Studies," a thirty-eight-page "Student's Guide to Reference Books and Biblical Commentaries," and a helpful index. The glossary is, of course, not as complete as Soulen's *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, but it is for that reason accessible. The commentaries are categorized as more technical or more popular, which should also be helpful.

I would be glad to recommend this book to my students, while pointing out that such a collection necessarily abbreviates the treatment of every issue. I found myself stimulated to formulate my own work on preaching from the various genres of biblical literature. For this I am grateful to the editors and other authors of the work.

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D.A. CARSON. ***The Inclusive Language Debate: A Plea for Realism.*** **Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998. 221 pp. $20.00.**

Vern S. POYTHRESS and Wayne A. GRUDEM. ***The Gender-Neutral Controversy: Muting the Masculinity of God's Words.*** **Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2000. 377 pp. $24.99.**

The English-speaking church in America has recently been flooded with new and/or updated Bible translations. Chief among these for the evangelical market are the *New Living Translation* (1996), the *English Standard Version* (2001) and the *Today's New International Version* (2002).[1] Each of these translations arises from the perceived need to produce a version of Scripture that communicates with up-to-date, contemporary English. Each of these translation projects seeks to be faithful to the original meaning of the biblical texts. For some, these two goals inevitably cause conflicts. The two books under review are expressions of the tensions existing in the evangelical community over serious matters of translation philosophy and practice.

These two books reflect the controversy that began in earnest with the publishing of the *New International Version Inclusive-Language Edition* (NIVI) in 1996. While marketed only in Great Britain, this version was quickly noticed by American evangelicals.[2] In March 1997, *World* magazine published a sensationalistic exposé of the NIVI that caused considerable reaction. In May 1997, James Dobson invited twelve evangelical scholars to his headquarters to form a response to this NIV controversy. The result was a document known as the "Colorado Springs Guidelines (CSG);" a lengthy series of points outlining what the authors believed were legitimate ways of dealing with gender language in Bible translation. Both of these books trace some of this history. Carson's book is sharply critical of the CSG, while Grudem and Poythress have the primary agenda of defending the CSG, particularly from Carson's attacks. Not surprisingly, Poythress and Grudem were part of the original Colorado Spring twelve and deeply involved in forming the CSG.

There are two central issues in the debate. First is the issue over approach. The two main approaches have been called the theory of *dynamic equivalence* (*functional* equivalence) and *formal correspondence* (*formal equivalence*). In simple terms, the dynamic equivalence approach attempts to render the text on a thought-for-thought basis. The formal correspondence approach seeks to translate on a tighter, word-for-word or phrase-for-phrase basis. In general, those advocating the approach of dynamic equivalence will choose clarity in English over strict adherence to the Greek or Hebrew/Aramaic text when that choice must be made. Those advocating the approach of formal correspondence will sacrifice clarity in English rather than stray from the original wording of the text.

The second central issue is more philosophical, that of the use of gender-neutral English ("inclusive language"). One side would say that American English of today avoids using masculine terms in a generic, inclusive way. This side finds such usage as outdated and even offensive. Furthermore, such generic use of masculine terms is a misrepresentation of the original biblical texts, because the gender sys-

1. I hope to examine the features and merits of these translations in an article still being developed.

2. The NIVI has since morphed into the *Today's New International Version*, now actively being marketed in the U.S.A. by Zondervan.

tems of the ancient languages differ significantly from contemporary English. On the other side are those who claim that generic masculine terms are still common and usable in English. Specifically, they would say, the he/his/him set of masculine pronouns may be used to refer to men and women, and should not be offensive. Furthermore, this side believes that some attempts to remove masculine generics from a Bible translation result in compromised and inaccurate rendering.

Warning: these books are not for the fainthearted. This debate has become polemic, acrimonious, and (at times) personal. It is difficult to gauge the contribution of Poythress in this; the principal combatants seem to be Carson and Grudem. This is disappointing when one realizes that for many years these two fine scholars were colleagues at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School with offices across the hall from each other!

For Grudem and Poythress, the bottom line is "whether a Bible translation systematically excludes male components of meaning that are there in the original text. If it does, the translation is 'gender neutral,' and we argue in this book that such a translation does not properly translate some of the details in the Word of God" (116). It is clear to them, then, that legitimate textual maleness may be flushed away with the dynamic equivalence approach. Grudem and Poythress want to believe that gender neutrality is not a necessary component of the dynamic equivalence approach, but that, in fact, all current dynamic equivalence translations have bent the knee to the agenda of radical feminism. "In doing this [gender-neutral language] feminists can create a kind of banner for themselves, a mark of allegiance. Feminists themselves, and those who sympathize with them, can express their sympathy by the way they talk" (137)—and presumably by the way they translate.

For Grudem and Poythress, the stakes are very high in this debate. In chapter 3, they present a closely reasoned case that ties a doctrine of inerrancy and plenary inspiration to translation methodology and results. "Faithfulness in translation is one aspect of faithfulness to God himself" (56). This, of course, takes the issue out of the arena of scholarly investigation and makes the gender-neutral debate a test of one's faithfulness to God. The authors seem to be incapable of understanding why this is offensive and divisive. Apparently, we are no longer able to disagree on these issues without having our faith called into question. But, then, these two have certainly done little to check for offensiveness. Perhaps the most egregious example is their comparison of gender-neutral advocates to German Nazis in their propaganda war against the Jews (109).

The argument of Grudem and Poythress falls or stands on the suitability of continuing to use generic he/his/him in Bible translations. They are confident that this still works and should not be offensive (117). They go to great lengths to prove their case. Ultimately, however, this case is simply not convincing. They are fighting a losing battle, and I predict that translations that persist in using masculine pronouns generically will be seen as archaic and strange in the near future. The "thee" and "thou" language retained in the RSV translation from barely 50 years ago sounds very quaint today. So will generic "he," if it doesn't already. American English did not ask anyone's permission in order to change. Languages don't do that. But to stick with usage that is offensive to a significant percentage of the American population is shortsighted and can be nothing more than a pyrrhic victory.

Carson is well known in the evangelical scholarly community for previous writings that have been harshly critical of other scholars' exegetical mistakes. His for-

mer students can all attest that he does not suffer fools gladly. Carson is no friend of radical feminism. However, he calls translators to put aside this question and listen to the English that is being spoken (and written) today. "In short, whatever the reasons for the changes in the English language now taking place, the translator's job is always the same: translate the Word of God into the *current* language" (188).

Carson is quick to point out some of the excesses of the gender-neutral camp. When Paul's statement in 1 Cor 13:11 is changed from "I became a man," to "I became an adult," Carson can say this change is downright "silly" (159). But Carson has a deep appreciation for behind-the-scenes translation issues that are hidden from the English-speaking Bible consumer. For Carson, translation always involves interpretation (71). Furthermore, Carson knows well that, to some degree, "all translation is treason" (47). By this, he means that the substantial differences between Hellenistic Greek (for example) and 21st-century English make it terribly difficult to transfer all the meaning from the ancient text to the modern version. Interpretative choices must be made because of differences in vocabulary, syntax, style, and other factors. Every English translation on the market today is the product of the interpretive choices of the translators, choices that are partially determined by presuppositions and the nature of the target market.

Carson's plea is to slow down and reduce the volume in this debate. He asks that restraint be shown as we try to find our way through the challenge of gender-neutral translation issues. We need to listen carefully to each other and quit demonizing those who disagree with us (195). Unfortunately, this plea fell on deaf ears with Grudem and Poythress.

Epilogue: D.A. Carson was on the translation team for the *New Living Translation*, which embraces both the approach of dynamic equivalence and the philosophy of limited gender-neutral translation. Wayne Grudem and Vern Poythress are both members of the Oversight Committee for the *English Standard Version*, which embraced the approach of formal correspondence and eschewed the philosophy of gender neutrality in many areas. Perhaps the marketplace will have some voice in the final outcome of this debate.

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Joachim BRAUN. *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine—Archaeological, Written, and Comparative Sources.* Translated by Douglas W. Scott. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002. 268 pp. $30.00.

Joachim Braun has written a seminal work on the archaeological study of ancient Near Eastern music. As professor emeritus of musicology at Israel's Bar-Ilan University, his passion and expertise regarding ancient music in Israel/Palestine are widely known. This edition of his book is "revised, updated, and enlarged" (xiii) from the German edition (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999). Although it is more informational than analytical, nevertheless it draws from the most current knowledge of relevant musical instruments, metal and terra cotta figures, etchings, and mosaics.

Braun's stated intent is to "focus not on 'music in the Bible' or on music in 'biblical times,' but on music in ancient Israel/Palestine" (xii). He seeks to "examine the Bible as one possible written source alongside others in constructing an

overall mosaic of the world of ancient music" (xii). However, Braun's view of the biblical resources, his exclusively archaeological point of view, and the absence of concluding analytical material give the reader occasion for concern.

Braun sees the biblical text as "of a mythological nature," with its "theological significance" having "elevated it to the status of a historical document" (1). He contends that this "one-sided focus prompted an attitude of fetishism with regard to what the Bible actually recounts . . . and led scholars to disregard completely all cultural entities and tendencies within ancient Israel/Palestine besides the specifically Israelite" (1).

Such a view excludes the biblical text from serious consideration. Archaeology carries a great deal more weight. For example, Braun concludes the fourth chapter—on the Iron Age—with the pronouncement that the paucity of archaeological evidence from this period indicates that "no one can expect any reliable interpretation of the texts relating to music in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Chronicles" (188). While Braun's point of view may be disputed, it is a guiding premise of the book.

The book is vastly comprehensive in its archaeological approach. It addresses the material regionally and by major archaeological periods. Since the book is also primarily extrabiblical in approach, it challenges the biblical scholar to sift through its contents for application and meaning. Furthermore, the absence of a concluding chapter deprives the reader of Braun's synthesis of this storehouse of material.

The reader will find Braun's introductory material to be helpful. All known ancient Near Eastern musical instruments are listed in two tables, by archaeological period, and by known frequency of their use, but without commentary of their uses in worship. The drawings here and throughout the book were executed by Braun's wife Aviva Breitbord-Braun. They are extensive, and are an asset to the book.

In this introductory chapter Braun also traces the archaeological research of music in the ancient Near East, beginning with translation errors in the Septuagint and the Syrian Peshitta. The Latin Vulgate emerges relatively unscathed in Braun's analysis of early translation errors, but the Mishnah and Talmud are suspect documents. From this point forward the "attitude of fetishism" (1) about the biblical texts came to be cultivated. Evidently the appropriate alternative was to engage in no exegetical treatment of the biblical texts whatsoever.

The center of the introductory chapter outlines the "geographical, chronological, and cultural parameters" (4) for the book, and the archaeological sources for the book. The chapter also contains extensive information about instruments of both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament.

The other chapters are arranged by archaeological age: the Stone Age (chapter II), the Bronze Age (chapter III), the Iron Age (chapter IV), and the Hellenistic-Roman Period (chapter V). In the fourth chapter Braun's analysis of archaeological evidence is especially helpful to the question of gender roles in worship leadership. In the fifth chapter Braun addresses the more complex and sophisticated Greco-Roman world, and thus a more complex role for music as well.

Braun's research suggests implications for current questions of instrumental music in the church, for questions of the nature of worship, gender roles in worship leadership, professionalism in leadership, and music with origins beyond the church. It is not a textbook, but it is a valuable source book. This book is "must

have" material for libraries of Christian undergraduate institutions, graduate seminaries, many biblical scholars, and academic students of Christian worship.

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John KALTNER and Steven L. McKENZIE, eds. *Beyond Babel: A Handbook for Biblical Hebrew and Related Languages.* Resources for Biblical Studies, 42. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002. 241 pp. $29.95.

Teachers of the cultures in which the Bible arose frequently find themselves explaining to eager students the interrelationships of the ancient languages, since language is a primary factor in culture. This collection of eleven articles by as many scholars describes each of several ancient Near Eastern languages (here: Semitic languages plus Egyptian), cites some of the primary inscriptional or manuscript evidence for it, identifies its importance for biblical studies, and offers a useful bibliography and brief literature review for further study. As a concise summary of the linguistic and literary evidence, the work has no equal.

The languages addressed are: Akkadian (David Marcus); Ammonite, Edomite, and Moabite (Simon Parker); Arabic (John Kaltner); Aramaic (Frederick Greenspahn); Egyptian (Donald Redford); Biblical and Epigraphic Hebrew (Jo Ann Hackett); Postbiblical Hebrew (Baruch Levine); Hittite (Harry Hoffner); Phoenician (Krahmalkov); and Ugaritic (Peggy Day). John Huehnergard, one of the great comparative Semitists of our time, offers an introductory article classifying the languages genetically, describing the task of historical and comparative linguistics, and sketching the shared phonological and morphological features of Semitic languages. His similarly skilled cocontributors, several of whom have edited major grammars or dictionaries in their respective languages and all of whom are leading scholars in their fields, execute their work accurately and with due awareness of the needs of students. (Honesty dictates the disclosure that two of them, Huehnergard and Hackett, taught the author of this review.)

These essays deliberately set out to describe the state of the art rather than advance new arguments, and they successfully accomplish this task. Levine's article on Postbiblical Hebrew is a model of such work, as is Hackett's on Biblical Hebrew or Marcus's on Akkadian or Greenspahn's on Aramaic.

But since the intended audience of the book is a student who has studied some Hebrew and is beginning more advanced study of the Hebrew Bible, I will confine my remarks to the book's usefulness in pedagogy. There the results may be mixed. Again, Levine's article is a masterpiece, drawing the student into Postbibilical Hebrew texts with enough guides to help her make sense of some of them. Hackett's descriptions of resources for Biblical Hebrew and treatment of its phonology (a challenge for beginning students) are helpful. Hoffner on Hittite or Redford on Egyptian also wonderfully describe the riches awaiting the student of those languages, though they offer little real description of the languages themselves. On the other hand, Day's work on Ugaritic essentially summarizes Ugaritology, a genuinely fascinating subject, but not quite the same as a true introduction to the language (which would have been easier to do for Ugaritic vis-à-vis Hebrew than for the unrelated Hittite or very distantly related non-Semitic

Egyptian). The variation in the articles is inevitable given their starting point and the limitations imposed by brevity, but nevertheless means that students will use them in different ways.

If the book is to be a reference guide for students needing to understand how Hebrew relates to other Semitic languages, or as an introduction to a second or third Semitic language, or as a manual in comparative Semitics, or as a fascinating read on a major feature of ancient cultures, *Beyond Babel* is by far the best of its kind available in English. If, however, it is to be a textbook used in a second- or third-year Hebrew class, or in a course on ancient Israelite history and culture (in its Near Eastern setting) its value is more limited. Students who might read, say, the Mesha Stele alongside Hebrew narrative prose (not a difficult task, since Hebrew and Moabite must have been mutually intelligible) in a second-year class could profit from Parker's introduction to the Transjordanian dialects of Canaanite (provided the inscription is supplied in an Aramaic script rather than its original). As they encounter non-Israelite texts in translation, *Beyond Babel* would provide a useful guide to the lay of the land, but little else. Perhaps these caveats rest on unrealistic expectations, however.

Regarding a subsequent edition of the book, the editors hold open the possibility of adding essays on Greek or Sumerian, languages with some bearing on Old Testament studies. Moreover, a second edition of the work should include line drawings of ancient scripts, at least as an interesting visual treat for the reader. While this information is otherwise available, it is so often only in technical books that not all libraries (much less students) can afford.

This book, in short, is an outstanding reference work and invitation to further study of ancient Near Eastern languages. It should enjoy a long life. The contributors deserve our gratitude.

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J.G. McCONVILLE. *Deuteronomy.* Apollos Old Testament Commentary. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002. 544 pp. $35.00.

This commentary is one of the first to be published in this series, which seeks to convey the passion for learning and instruction for which its namesake became renowned in the early church.

Readers will find in this volume a format (to be followed by other commentaries in the series) that lends itself to a competent treatment of the biblical text. Each section begins with McConville's translation of the text, followed by textual notes, an analysis of form and structure, commentary, and then an explanation of the text that examines the passage's significance in the broader context of Scripture. This latter section includes contemporary applications of the text. McConville's observations concerning the "law of war" in Deuteronomy 20 are especially insightful, as are his remarks on the Decalogue.

McConville does not accept the commonly held view in biblical studies that Deuteronomy was intended primarily as a "manual" to help advance the reform "agenda" of King Josiah, or possibly that of King Hezekiah, according to some scenarios. He sees the language in a passage such as Deuteronomy 12 (where the issue

of the "place" of worship is especially crucial) as too general to interpret as advocating a specific location. Indeed the term "place" in chapter 12 is "tantalizingly unspecific" (219). According to McConville, Deuteronomy's view of the nature of religion "cannot align itself with measures that enhance the interests of a particular sanctuary, a priestly class or a royal administration conceived along lines that owe more to ANE ways of thinking than to Deuteronomy's concept of the covenant with the people of Israel" (216). Such a keen respect for Deuteronomy's uniqueness within the context of God's purpose for his holy people is refreshing indeed.

In spite of the commentary's overall strengths, the introductory material leaves some questions about where McConville stands on the authorship and composition of Deuteronomy. He sees Deuteronomy as essentially Mosaic, but allows for considerable leeway regarding the question of actual authorship. "It will be clear that the commentary, though it is critical of the consensus opinion, does not defend Mosaic authorship" (39). He adds, "I have preferred, however, not to try to date the book exactly, but to look for the place that it had in the life of Israel" (40). One wonders why such a dichotomy must be created; if one hedges concerning the date of the book, does he not compromise or weaken his understanding of "the place that it had in the life of Israel"? The two issues are closely intertwined.

McConville also observes, "There is no reason to suppose that the content of the book may not have changed over time" (39). But then he offers no substantive explanation as to exactly what did change and states that he can offer no account of the development of the writing of the book because of "scepticism [*sic*] about the validity of criteria that are used" (39). Earlier he notes that in modern scholarship, Deuteronomy "in its present form is held to be the product of a process of editorial and theological growth continuing into the exilic and post-exilic periods" (25). Scholars vary as to where they see the greater amount of growth occurring (editorial or theological) and as to what extent they see a "process" occurring. McConville's comments reflect a degree of indecisiveness that continues to characterize introductory studies of this pivotal book.

Introductory caveats aside, this is a thorough and well-written study of Deuteronomy that will benefit both preacher and professor. If other volumes in the Apollos series are of similar quality, these volumes will prove a wise investment for the serious student of the Old Testament.

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Duane L. CHRISTENSEN. *Deuteronomy 1:1–21:9.* 2nd ed.; *Deuteronomy 21:10–34:12* Word Biblical Commentary, 6A, 6B. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001, 2002. 915 pp. $39.99; $34.99.

In 1991 Word published the first volume of Christensen's commentary 6A, as *Deuteronomy 1–11.* That volume, under a new publisher, is now thoroughly revised and expanded to include the Deuteronomy text up to 21:9. The publication of volume 6B brings to a close over two decades of Christensen's study of Deuteronomy.

These commentaries are characterized by the typical Word Biblical Commentary format: an introduction, extensive bibliographies, a fresh translation of the text,

complete text critical notes, verse by verse comments, and an explanation (application?) of the text. The latter is usually the briefest of the sections.

Christensen acknowledges that his study of Deuteronomy revolutionized his understanding and approach to the OT. Christensen understands Deuteronomy not as a law code but as a work intended for religious instruction and education for everyone from king to child. He describes it as "a work of extraordinary literary coherence, poetic beauty, and political sophistication." It is basically an exposition of the greatest commandment of 6:5. He sees Deuteronomy in its present form as a musical composition that was used in public worship by Levitical singers. The author of this great piece was Moses and ultimately God. Only a brilliant individual like Moses, under the inspiration of God, could have produced such a text as Deuteronomy. That does not mean everything in Deuteronomy is from Moses. There has been revision and updating. But the work is Mosaic.

Christensen's evidence for the composition of Deuteronomy as a musical piece is based on a very complex reading of the text based on several different but complementary analyses. He uses syllable counts, and long and short vowel counts for each line of Hebrew text to establish form and structure, what he calls prosodic analysis. He also uses the detailed work of C.J. Labuschagne on the numerical patterns in Deuteronomy. Labuschagne determined that the numbers for the divine names and for the Hebrew word "glory" were 17, 23, and 36. Counting words before and after the major accent in the middle of each Hebrew verse he discerned a distinct pattern of words worked out by scribes. Christensen uses all of these various letter and word counts to get into the structure of the text. He also finds in the macrostructure and the microstructure numerous chiastic or concentric patterns. His favorite is a seven-part chiasm or "menorah" pattern. In almost every section Christensen presents several ways of outlining the text based on these number counts and chiasms. He constantly repeats his conviction that Deuteronomy is "a unified work of literary art" by a single author.

Christensen posits a five-part chiastic macrostructure for Deuteronomy: A. The outer frame, Deut 1–3; B. The inner frame, Deut 4–11; X. The central core, Deut 12–26; B'. The inner frame, Deut 27–30; A'. The outer frame, Deut 31–34. Elsewhere he posits a seven-part macrostructure, isolating out chapters 4 and 30 from his five-part structure. However, for the commentary he outlines the book according to the eleven weekly portions used in the lectionary cycle of traditional Jewish usage as marked in the Masoretic text. These major sections, or readings, used to organize the commentary are: 1:1–3:22; 3:23–7:11; 7:12–11:25; 11:26–16:17; 16:18–21:9; 21:10–25:19; 26:1–29:8 [Eng. 9]; 29:9 [Eng. 10]–30:20; 31:1–34:12.

Besides the usual material expected in an introduction, Christensen presents several helpful excursuses. One includes a discussion of his view that the book of Deuteronomy eventually produced the impetus for a canon and was the central focus of the Old Testament canon. Another presents a helpful discussion of the triennial cycle of Torah readings in Palestinian Judaism. Another presents a solution to the so-called, and long discussed, "Numeruswechsel" problem in Deuteronomy, that is, the constant shifting back and forth from second person singular to second person plural forms. Christensen's solution is that these are stylistic devices and clues to structure. His translation makes use of this theory by italicizing the relevant verses.

These two volumes present an enormous amount of helpful material on Deuteronomy. The bibliographies are exhaustive and current up to 1999, a few through 2000 in volume 6B. The textual notes are detailed and clear. The introductions to each section are sensitive to literary context and both larger and smaller structure issues. The verse-by-verse comments are helpful and tie Deuteronomy into its context in the OT. They consistently explain difficult and controversial issues. The explanations, while brief, often offer valuable insights, though some verge on allegory.

For me the test of a commentary is, "Would I recommend it to my students?" Unfortunately it is difficult to wholeheartedly recommend this commentary for several reasons. While chiastic structures are present at both the macro and micro level in Deuteronomy, Christensen often forces them on the text. If a chiasm is defined as having matching items on the two sides of the middle point (where the X lines converge), then many of Christensen's suggestions are not chiasms. Furthermore, Christensen's discussion of the structure of each section is sometimes more confusing than helpful. A good example is his comments on 21:10 to 25:19. He offers seven different ways to outline the material chiastically and then presents Labuschagne's word counts that do not match any of his chiasms. This produces a lack of clarity and creates much repetition in the discussion. One wonders also at the value of the parallel syllable and vowel counts given with each translation section. Christensen claims to find important patterns here, but many of his syllable counts changed from the first to the second edition of chapters 1–11.

The commentary is also lacking, as are most in the Word series, in serious and in-depth theological reflection. The explanations often do not go beyond the comments section. What we need is serious thought given to what eventually the text means to the Christian and how the church can use Deuteronomy's rich theological text in its ministry. For a much more satisfactory and theologically reflective commentary I would highly recommend J.G. McConville's new commentary on Deuteronomy (2002) in the IVP Apollos series (reviewed above). Christensen's commentary is a valuable resource for a college or seminary library but not a good investment for a student or preacher.

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John GOLDINGAY. *Isaiah*. NIBCOT, 13. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002. 410 pp. $11.95.

This commentary, fundamentally based on the NIV, contains a wealth of ideas for Bible teachers and preachers true to the meaning of the biblical text. It contains seven discrete sections: a foreword, a list of abbreviations used in the work, an Introduction to the book of Isaiah, commentary on the text divided into forty-seven sections, bibliography, further reading section, a subject index, and a Scripture index.

Goldingay emphasizes the unity of the book of Isaiah. It came into being over a long period as faithful tradents applied earlier oracles and traditions to their new situations to address the needs and concerns of their fellow-believers. In order to communicate clearly with their hearers, these tradents used forms of speech from

the palace, the law, and the temple. Yahweh is the central figure in the book of Isaiah. He is the Holy One of Israel, and thus the exalted King above all earthly kings, a God passionate in anger to protect the powerless and passionate in compassion to deliver the oppressed, and a God of wisdom and planning who devises and implements plans for ongoing human history (e.g., 9:6-7; 14:24-27; 23:8-9; 28:23-29; 40:13-14; 46:8-11; 55:8-11). Yahweh is a Father who brings up children (64:8; 1:2-3) and a Mother who nurtures them in love (49:14-15; 66:13), a King who governs his nation, a Shepherd who carries the weak and wounded, a Hovering Bird who protects his worshiping community, and a Redeemer for the exiles. Yahweh uses the nations to bring disaster on his sinful people, and to deliver and restore the penitent captives. Ultimately, the nations will bow the knee to Yahweh (45:18-25), and will unite in worship to him (19:19-25).

Goldingay presents his view of each passage without giving attention to the views of other scholars, so that the reader can follow his line of thought easily. Goldingay mentions other views briefly in "Additional Notes" at the end of each section, so that those who wish to struggle with some idea more deeply have access to additional materials. I highly recommend Goldingay's commentary on Isaiah as a well-written volume that will prove to be useful for serious students of the Bible, teachers, and preachers for years to come.

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Tal ILAN, *Integrating Women into Second Temple History.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001. 296 pp. $24.95.

In this collection of essays (originally published by J.C.B. Mohr in 1999) Ilan deals with three main topics: women and sects (chapters 1 and 2), women and sources (chapters 3–7), and women and the Judean desert papyri (chapters 8–10). The author wishes to reevaluate the role of women by a more careful analysis of the familiar sources and by an examination of some new ones. She advises in her introduction: "In some cases, however, I have been fortunate in that I was able to discover the presence of women where a less zealous observer would have missed them altogether" (4). The author has much to teach us about women in antiquity, and along the way she also has something to teach about the second temple period in general.

Ilan concludes that second temple period women found the Pharisees the most attractive sect because the Pharisees as an opposition party accepted support where they could find it (also from women; chapter 1). Within Pharisaism, however, the school of Shammai was more sympathetic toward the status of women than the school of Hillel and the Tosephta was less prejudiced against women than the Mishnah (chapter 2).

The author compares (chapter 3) Josephus with one of his principal sources, Nicolaus of Damascus, and concludes that although the former tended to ignore women in his narrative, the latter often demonized them, presenting them as the causes of many of the tragic events of the reign of Herod the Great. In this chapter Ilan demonstrates a fine sensitivity to historical methodology (she is even able to posit an unknown source for Josephus at one point.). Chapter 5 surveys the Talmudic quotations of Ben Sirah, who certainly showed little admiration for

women. The author concludes that the sages of the Babylonian Talmud liked Ben Sirah precisely because of his anti-female prejudice.

Ilan concludes her collection of studies with three essays based on the papyri found in the Bar Kokhba caves. In a fine study on identifying names in ancient texts (chapter 8) she articulates and applies a careful methodology. She insists (I think correctly) in chapter 10 on reading a document in which a woman declares herself divorced from her husband as a real document of divorce and not just a receipt of divorce. Thus, at least one Jewish woman divorced her husband contrary to the traditional view.

On the whole, I like this book. Ilan has established herself as a solid historian: creative, innovative and adept at handling sources. Not being Jewish myself, I also appreciate her allusions to the inner Jewish dialogue (11-14, 71-72) which most of us would otherwise miss.

Yet one can be critical in a few places. Two chapters in section two seem to me overreaching. In chapter 4 she suggests that the apocryphal books of Susanna and Judith and the canonical book of Esther were propaganda texts in support of queen Shalamzion's (Salome Alexandra) reign. Apart from the fact that these works are about women, I do not see how they support a woman's reign. Further, I think Ilan wrings too much out of some meager (but growing) evidence based on skeletal remains (chapter 7). Why does she suggest that Jews practiced infanticide with respect to females when sources, both Jewish and non-Jewish, insist that they did not? Further, why does she suggest that some of the women whose remains were found at Giv'at ha-Mivtar were killed by their husbands when so many others in those tombs also died violent deaths (In one of these tombs was found the famous crucified man!)?

Finally, I was disappointed when the author sought to characterize some of those with whom she disagreed as "apologists" (238, 240, 241, 257) and when she attributed ulterior motives to them: "It is important for the apologetic Jewish scholar to rest assured that his world view is indeed correct " (238). It is unnecessary for a historian with the skill of Ilan to resort to such language.

Still the book is very informative and usually well argued. Certainly any serious student of second temple Judaism will want to consult these studies.

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Jeremy CORLEY. *Ben Sira's Teaching on Friendship.* Brown Judaic Studies 316. Providence, RI: Brown University, 2002. 297 pp. $39.95.

This volume is the revision and publication of Corley's doctoral dissertation at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. It admirably fills the need for a detailed study of friendship in Second Temple Judaism by scrutinizing the 2nd-century BC work of Ben Sira, commonly referred to as Sirach in the Apocrypha. Sirach is the perfect choice for this study since it says more about friendship than any other book of the OT, including Proverbs.

Corley dates Sirach as being compiled between 195–175 BC, a period of relative calm prior to the terror and chaos created by Antiochus IV Epiphanes who dominated Israel from 175–164 and caused the Maccabbean revolt by his repres-

sive measures. He postulates that the rise of Hellenism in Palestine in the previous period, fostering the immigration of many Greek foreigners as well as urbanization, may have contributed to Ben Sira's concern to provide young people and others sound advice on what true friendship entails. Corey's methodical exegesis of seven passages in Sirach comprises the five main chapters of his study: Chapter Two (6:15-17; 37:1-6); Chapter Three (9:10-16); Chapter Four (13:15-23); Chapter Five (19:13-17; 27:16-21); Chapter Six (22:19-26). For each passage he begins by demonstrating why the passage comprises a unit ("Delimitation"), then provides the Hebrew text based on the Genizah Manuscripts when available (providing a retroversion for some from Greek to Hebrew), poetic, contextual, and detailed exegetical analysis.

Corley concludes, among other things, that Ben Sira reveals his work to be more than the copying of old Hebrew traditions or the adopting of wisdom from Greek sources (like Theognis), but by bringing them together into one work, a synthesis of cultures and times. Sirach teaches that friendship is built into God's creation when he creates man, thus making it good, that great caution must be exercised in discerning true from false friends, that faithfulness is paramount to what friendship entails, and that those who fear God and respect his laws will make good friends.

This volume is well researched and superbly organized, as one expects of a published thesis. A bit surprising given its high quality is the absence of a thesis statement in the introduction. Also, Corley's practice of providing a retroversion of the Hebrew for some of the passages he researches seems suspect for a researched thesis, especially when the Septuagint in such passages is not also supplied. I suppose that the Hebrew text lends itself to the efforts to analyze the poetic structure of these passages, but such seems pointless when Corley has created the Hebrew himself.

No doubt, the audience for this book is relatively small, but I found it profitable reading, and certainly anyone studying Sirach or friendship in Israel will find a friend in Corley's volume.

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David CHERRY, ed. *The Roman World: A Sourcebook*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001. 278 pp. $33.95.

This volume provides an interesting supplement for those interested in furthering their knowledge of Rome by delving into the writings of Romans themselves. It contains a breadth of documents encompassing topics as diverse as law and society, the family, economy, science and medicine, politics, province and frontier, the army and religion. Each of the book's nine sections contain an editor's introduction, each a carefully considered general introduction to the topic. The selections also have a brief introduction to the original source, and each of the many diverse authors receives a brief biographical sketch. Two appendices, a chronological chart of Rome from 753 BC–AD 476 and ten maps complete the volume.

The Roman World has much that is commendable. Both Cherry's own and the previously published translations are very readable; Cherry's translations follow the ancient texts closely without sacrificing modern English. Cherry also provides a

good variety of selections, fifty-seven in all, which range widely from Latin to Greek authors, Republican to Imperial, literary writings to legal texts. Refreshingly, many of the selections are quite lengthy which provides the reader with more access to the texts. Laudably, Cherry includes several works *in toto*, such as Augustus's memoirs, the *Res Gestae*, the so-called *Laudatio Turiae* and the Pliny-Trajan correspondence on Christian persecution in Bithynia-Pontus; such full text inclusions greatly strengthen the value of this compilation. Finally, Cherry includes "Suggestions for Further Reading" at the end of each section which typically provide very useful and broad bibliographies encompassing what have become standard works in the fields he considers.

There are also some weaknesses here. As the editor notes, compiling a one-volume sourcebook on a society as lengthy and varied as Rome's is nearly impossible. He admits that his selections are "idiosyncratic" (ix), though he did try to select works that would be of interest to the general reader. I agree with both the near impossibility of his task and the idiosyncratic nature of his selections. Attempting to provide selections on no fewer than nine different major topics forces Cherry to include only a few texts in each area; one could easily produce a one-volume sourcebook on any of the nine areas. For example, Cherry's political section skips from Caligula (himself an odd addition since he did not significantly impact Imperial development) to Diocletian. Surely a second-century ruler would provide more depth than an extended Suetonian excerpt (fun though it may be) on Caligula. Also, while the section introductions are generally quite sound, Cherry surprisingly notes that it was not illegal to be a Christian in second-century Rome (213). This point is much debated and not settled (see Marta Sordi, *The Christians and the Roman Empire* [Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986] 17-20; and Robert Grant, *Augustus to Constantine* [New York: Harper & Row, 1970] 77-85). A final point may reflect my own idiosyncratic character: the notes, frequently copious, are located at the back of the book which necessitates much flipping, finding the chapter one is currently reading and then finding the note; footnotes are more utilitarian.

This volume will be of mixed value to *SCJ* readers. It is certainly a scholarly collection with appropriate apparatus. It is a broad, manageable introduction to a range of Roman topics in a single volume, which many will find attractive. However, as a one-volume work, it is necessarily brief. Those desiring a fuller selection of texts, especially in the area of Roman religious practice and attitude, particularly with regard to Christianity, will find a more satisfying work in Lewis and Reinhold's two-volume *Roman Civilization* (Columbia, 1990, third edition).

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Donald L. GRIGGS. ***The Bible from Scratch: The New Testament for Beginners.*** **Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2003. 152 pp. $9.95.**

In this introduction to the NT, Donald Griggs has targeted study groups in the church. He takes into account that any particular group will have people who have rarely picked up a Bible and also people who could just as easily be teaching the class as sitting through it. Griggs's overall purpose is to increase a group member's

biblical literacy by having him or her observe the historical contexts of the books of the NT and the textual relationships between the books.

Just like the partner volume to this, which focuses on the OT, Griggs has divided the book into two halves. The first half contains lessons for the group members to work through on a weekly basis in preparation for meeting together. The second half contains the leaders' sections that offer ideas and prompts for the group discussion; these correlate with the chapters in the student section. Griggs devotes separate chapters to Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, the epistles of the New Testament, and Revelation; he also includes a general introductory chapter. Each chapter in the student section contains an introductory paragraph, a prayer, an overview of that book or books, and then an additional learning experience. In this last section the student may be looking at different themes in that text (as in the Luke chapter), or even comparing textual parallels (as in the Mark chapter).

Several aspects of this book are commendable and beneficial. Most impressive is that Griggs attempts to help church-level Bible students with that which is most important, learning an approach to the text. He includes no memorization tasks or anything of the sort. Instead he quite effectively sneaks in good hermeneutical principles without the student even knowing. He discusses genre, stresses historical context, touches on textual criticism, and offers lexical information without using technical jargon. Lenses with which to view the text are offered in the chapters as well.

For example, in the introductory paragraph to Matthew, Griggs mentions that a proper way to read the text is as the author's response to the question, "What does it mean that Jesus the Christ suffered, was crucified, and rose from the dead to be present again with his followers?" (18). In this way the church-goer is not just reading through the text looking for a scriptural catch-phrase to put on their screensaver at work; rather they are learning how to effectively read the biblical text. Also impressive is that Griggs is concerned with enriching the walks of his readers as they go through this study as a group and not just making them smarter. Practical applications of texts abound, and, as mentioned earlier, each chapter contains a section of prayer for the group based on a passage in that text.

For introverts like myself who despise working in groups, the most apparent negative aspect to this book is that almost every part of the study involves the group. Also, despite his well-intended purpose of keeping the discussion at entry-level (and overall success at this goal), Griggs still uses terms such as "motif" which are perhaps too technical for his target audience. The *SCJ* readers will also more than likely cringe at some of the "Prayer Prompted by Scripture" sections. Griggs is Presbyterian and includes some of the "high church" practices that churches in the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement are not normally comfortable with. These sections will look strangely and uncomfortably familiar to congregational "Responsive Readings" that I can remember doing as a kid growing up in a Stone-Campbell church.

These few weaknesses, however, pale in comparison to the overwhelmingly successful job Griggs does in this book. He attempts to provide a Bible-study resource for an adult church group that is serious about taking a few steps further than memorizing Scripture and he delivers just that. I would highly recommend this book to anyone looking to take their Sunday School class or Adult Bible Fellowship into seri-

ous study, but its use in the seminary or college classroom would be severely limited, as these topics should be covered as introductory material in exegetical courses.

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Christopher A. ROLLSTON, ed. ***The Gospels according to Michael Goulder: A North American Response.*** **Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 2002. 165 pp. $19.00.**

The collection of essays is the derivation of a symposium in the winter of 2000 that was funded by Johns Hopkins University and sponsored by the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the university. Rollston, who organized the symposium, assumed the task of editing the volume. The volume provides readers with a critical examination of Michael D. Goulder's often avant garde approach to critical issues in NT studies.

The volume begins with an essay from Goulder, "Matthew's Gospel Round the Year" (1-11), that builds upon his proposal—which was first presented in a series of lectures in the late 1960s and early 1970s (collected and published in *Midrash and Lection in Matthew*)—that Matthew's Gospel is structured around a cycle of lections. For partial corroboration, Goulder culls a fourth-century example of a Christian pilgrim named Egeria, who reports that Matthew 24–28 was read in *lectio continua* during her holy week visit to Jerusalem. He then maps different segments—which are identified based on five markers: citation, clear opening sentence, closing sentence, three subunits, and inclusion—against major Jewish festivals. To confirm the proposal, Goulder tests his lectionary mapping via readings that would have occurred during the three major Jewish festivals (Pentecost, New Year, and Tabernacles), the two minor Jewish festivals (Dedication and Purim), and two fast days (Ab 9 in memory of the fall of the temple in 587 BC and Yom Kippur).

While intriguing and innovative, as often the norm with Goulder, the essay does little to advance his thesis beyond his earlier work on the subject. Perhaps the most glaring omission is the absence of any discussion of the arguments that have been presented against his case (even in annotation). Overall, Goulder's analysis hinges upon a couple of highly debatable premises. Foremost is the existence of a well-developed Jewish lectionary at the time of the Gospel's writing, something that, at bare minimum, warrants detailed discussion in footnotes. He also makes a "huge leap" from the fourth-century example of Egeria and apparent divisions and breaks that he identifies in the narrative of Matthew based on the five aforementioned markers to the conclusion that the Gospel was written with the intent of it being integrated into a presumed Christian lectionary cycle. In addition, when Goulder's proposed lectionary cycle is scrutinized in close detail, it becomes apparent that he has "force fit" some of the lections in order to accommodate the appropriate number of readings in the liturgical calendar (e.g., Matt 22:15-46, a passage that ostensibly conforms as one lection, is broken into two separate lections).

The second essay by Bruce Chilton, "Festivals and Lectionaries: Correspondence and Distinctions" (12-28), addresses the festival calendar of Second Temple Judaism and liturgical linkages to Goulder's proposal that Matthew was written to correspond with the annual lections of the church. He begins the essay by calling into question the legitimacy of those who dismiss Goulder's thesis on the basis that

there is no proof that a Jewish lectionary existed prior to AD 70, contending that such can be said about almost any issue related to Second Temple Judaism. He then proceeds to overview the festival structure of early Judaism, with specific reference to its correspondence with data contained in the NT. Chilton unfortunately fails to demonstrate the potential results of his analysis, concluding the essay with two short summary paragraphs. Based on the evidence he has culled, Chilton notes the correspondence between Jewish calendrical festivals and the composition of Matthew is "plain," though he comments at the same time that many of the linkages "could easily have been associated with other calendrical moments" (28). He also points out that the likelihood the Gospels were composed with festivals and lectionaries in purview is "implausible" (28). Chilton simultaneously applauds Goulder for looking at the text of the Gospels as a whole, rather than dividing up the text "until there is no meaning left" (28).

John S. Kloppenborg, in perhaps the most thorough essay in the collection, "Goulder and the New Paradigm: A Critical Appreciation of Michael Goulder on the Synoptic Problem" (29-60), presents a critical overview and evaluation of Goulder's challenge to the Two Document Hypothesis. (Goulder denies the existence of Q and proposes that Matthew used Mark, Luke used Matthew and Mark, and then John used all three Synoptic Gospels.) The foci of the essay are twofold: refutation of Goulder's contention that his approach to the source and redactional issues of the Synoptic Gospels is a new paradigm, and demonstration that the Two Document Hypothesis, including the existence of Q, is the most credible source-critical approach. The basis for Goulder's source-critical theory—which is also the key to the Two Gospel Hypothesis (Luke used Matthew, and Mark used Luke and Matthew)—is the presence of agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark. *Contra* Goulder, Kloppenborg argues the agreements can be explained via multiple versions and instability in the early textual history of the Synoptic Gospels. Further, against Goulder's claim to a new paradigm, he contends Goulder has not presented a new paradigm (being closer to Karl Popper's scientific theories than those of Thomas Kuhn), noting that a new paradigm can be claimed only when adequate anomalies have accumulated to the extent that the paradigm cannot bear their weight and moreover that Goulder's theory involves no new practices or tools. In regard to the latter, Goulder, per Kloppenborg, remains a mere redaction critic. All who are interested in source- and redaction-critical issues related to the Synoptic Gospels will find Kloppenborg's essay useful. The most glaring weakness is his resolution of Lukan and Matthean agreements against Mark via claims to an early history of textual instability—versus the arguments of Christopher Tuckett, Frans Neirynck, et al.—a point to which he does not even include commentary or supporting bibliographical research.

Robert A. Derrenbacker Jr., in the fourth essay "Greco-Roman Writing Practices and Luke's Gospel: Revisiting 'The Order of a Crank'" (61-83), provides a critical overview and challenge to Goulder's description of Luke's use of Matthew and Mark. Goulder argues that Luke used one scroll at a time, closely following the Markan order and, to a lesser extent, certain segments of Matthew such as Matt 1–12. In the case of Matt 16–25, however, which appears in Luke 13:22–18:8, Luke goes through the scroll in reverse order. As such, Derrenbacker challenges two underlying premises to Goulder's argument. To begin, he contends Goulder's claim that Luke wrote from a writing table and had space for only one scroll at a

time is historically flawed, in that writing desks did not come into use until sometime after the fourth century AD. Rather, he proposes that Luke probably wrote in a squatting position with his tunic stretched over his knees as a crude writing surface. Derrenbacker subsequently concludes the likelihood of Luke working backward through the sequence of Matthew 25–16 while working forward through each individual pericope—dealing with a papyrus scroll of approximately 35 feet in length—is problematic. The second challenge concerns the use of memory in antiquity. Goulder explains instances where Luke diverts from Matt 25–16 and minor agreements between Matthew and Luke against the Markan triple tradition on the basis of memory in antiquity, suggesting that the memory of the "text-on-the-floor" or other Matthean pericopes draws Luke's mind away from the text in front of him. Derrenbacker contends that memory related to the organization of data and not to actual detail, which remonstrates against the near verbatim recollection of Goulder's Luke in various instances. At the same time, he points out that Goulder's claim that Luke follows one source at a time is not entirely correct; redactional analysis of Goulder's Luke shows "a more complicated procedure of regularly moving back and forth between the physically present visual text and the text 'stored' in memory from individual pericopes, often just for brief phrases or words" (75). Readers will find Derrenbacker's analysis of ancient writing postures intriguing. He fails, however, to pinpoint specific implications concerning source- and redaction-critical issues related to the Synoptic Gospels, the next logical step in his investigation, something at which he hints but does not elaborate. On a related note and as Goulder posits in his response essay, he does not adequately explain how the availability of a writing desk makes it that much easier for Goulder's Luke to work through Matt 25–16 in reverse order (versus a "portable laptop" tunic, a descriptive term found in Stendahl's essay).

Gary Gilbert presents an alternative understanding regarding the list of nations in Acts 2:1-13. He challenges, in the fifth essay of the volume, "From Eschatology to Imperialism: Mapping the Territory of Acts 2" (84-110), the widespread view that the list of nations is related to and draws upon the Jewish eschatological ingathering. In particular, he suggests it is unlikely that the exact source upon which Luke drew in composing the list will ever be identified. Rather than attempting to uncover the underlining *source(s)*, as a result, he proposes that an endeavor concentrating on the *function* of the list is more appropriate. Examining the function of nation lists elsewhere in Greco-Roman antiquity and citing Tertullian's (the son of a Roman military officer) interpretation, Gilbert contends Acts 2:1-13 presents Jesus and early Christianity as ruler of the world that stands in contrast to the Roman Empire. Accordingly, per Gilbert, Luke-Acts should be included among the literature from antiquity that expressed opposition to Rome. Most obvious, while valuable in its own right, the essay does not correspond with the title of the volume in that it is *not* a "response" to any specific interpretive approach of Goulder (not to mention that Acts is technically not a Gospel). (A more detailed version of Gilbert's examination of Acts 2:1-13 is forthcoming in *JBL.*) Further, though Gilbert's assertion that the use of nation lists in Greco-Roman antiquity must be included in deciphering the ultimate construal of Acts 2:1-13 is a recommendation interpreters of Luke-Acts will do well to heed, his disavowal of LXX intertextual connotations and their implications upon potential meanings engendered by the first readers (listeners) of Luke-Acts is certain not to be embraced by all.

Alan F. Segal, in the sixth essay "Transformation and Afterlife" (111-130), evaluates Goulder's contention that ecstasy and vision were an element of controversy between Peter and Paul. Segal specifically addresses Goulder's view that 2 Corinthians 12 is ironic and satirical, with the result being that Paul counters Petrine claims to possess special spiritual revelations. The ascent depicted is to be taken by a close friend, about whom Paul is boasting. In contrast, drawing upon argument contained in his early works (viz., *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* and *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism*), Segal proposes Paul is overtly claiming that his spiritual gifts go far beyond anything that his opponents claim. He also counters Goulder's assertion that "vision" denotes a heavenly journey explicitly and not merely any vision. Further, Paul's portrayal of salvation and the transformation of the believer is based on his understanding of Christ's glorification—an experience that partakes of early Jewish apocalyptic mysticism—and that Jewish *merkabah* mysticism never claims to have seen God but rather the angels of God (viz., with whom Jesus would have been identified). Based on this analysis, Segal suggests Goulder is incorrect in asserting that Paul is opposed to the spiritual experience itself, but rather he is simply against using it to legitimate one's position over opponents.

A summary of the six preceding essays is provided by Krister Stendahl in the final essay of the volume, "Personal Reflections on the Goulder Symposium" (131-136). Assessing Goulder's work in the context of the various essays, Stendahl reminds readers of the etymology of the word *baroque* (Portuguese *barroco* for "pearl"), the word Goulder uses to describe his hypotheses, and concludes that "Goulder's proposal may not be a perfect pearl, but is a pearl nonetheless" (136).

Something readers will value, Rollston includes an appendix by Goulder, "Michael Goulder Responds" (137-152), in which he responds to each of the preceding essays. He begins by reciting the origination of his source- and redaction-critical analysis: his study of the Books of Chronicles and their adaptation of the earlier history found in the Books of Samuel and Kings. He subsequently asserts that the midrashic expansion—found in the Books of Chronicles and later Jewish literature—mirrors the midrashic activity of Matthew (and, though he does not include Luke in his discussion, presumably Luke). An in-depth overview of Goulder's individual responses is not possible within the confines of this book review. His more salient points include: (1) notation that scholars tend to embrace the Two Document Hypothesis because it gives access to an early view of Jesus (something Kloppenborg even notes in his essay); (2) contention that the construction of Q is skewed in that over half of the words—as determined by the International Q Project—are not common to both Luke and Matthew; and (3) assertion that ancients were familiar with reverse-order transcription (he uses the word "exposition" and cites *Lamentations Rabbah* and its use of Lam 1:1-22 as evidence). In regard to Gilbert's essay, which unlike the others is not really a "response" to Goulder's work, he expresses incertitude, rejecting the recent predilection for Jewish eschatological meaning but proposing the often-cited "reversal of Babel" as the most plausible interpretation.

While the volume is stimulating at points and poses compelling interpretive approaches to several long-debated areas of research, various deficiencies detract from its overall value. The most obvious relates to the title of the collection, which is somewhat misleading in that the essays are not confined to Goulder's scholarly

endeavors concerning the Gospels, addressing not only issues related to the Gospels but Acts and Pauline studies as well (in the case of the essays by Gilbert and Segal, respectively). The subtitle ("A North American Response") is also misleading, as, though the six contributors (not including Goulder) currently hold positions at universities in North America, several hold doctorates or have completed postdoctoral studies in Europe (Chilton, Kloppenborg, Stendahl). (In addition, if this is the North American response to Goulder, then what is the response of Europe? Asia Pacific? Latin America? Africa?)

Perhaps the most glaring detractor of the volume is the absence of an introduction to the various hypotheses of Goulder addressed by the essays and preceding dialogue, including complete bibliography, on each topic. Indeed, without any preliminary overview, readers are thrown into the midst of issue discussions, some of which date twenty or thirty years. Also obvious, though several are sympathetic to Goulder, the contributors on a whole stand in opposition to his work. For the sake of objectivity, an additional essay or two from scholars who more closely align with Goulder's theories would provide the volume with a greater degree of objectivity.

There are other less significant issues. Though the footnotes provide readers with useful annotations, there are various places where bibliographical support is missing and others where supplementary commentary is warranted. The paucity of annotations in the first essay by Goulder has already been noted. His final essay continues the oversight (the specific monographs and essays of Christopher Tuckett, David Catchpole, and Ronald Piper on page 145 are not cited). This problem is not only confined to Goulder's essays but indicative, though to a lesser extent, of others in the volume (Chilton's essay has various points where documentation and commentary would add value; Kloppenborg assumes a volatile textual production and transmission history for the Gospels without any supporting annotations)—apparent evidence of the need for additional editing by Rollston. On a similar note, while the volume includes indices on ancient texts, authors, and subjects, it is unfortunate that Rollston chose not to include a bibliography, an inclusion many readers would find useful.

Despite these inherent flaws, the volume advances debate regarding Goulder's research—primarily source- and redaction-critical issues surrounding the Synoptic Gospels—and is a welcome addition. In particular, several of the essays (viz., those by Kloppenborg, Derrenbacker, and Gilbert as well as some of Goulder's observations in his response) are certain to prompt further discussion on the issues they raise and even engender new interpretive constructions and meanings.

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Lauri THURÉN. *Derhetorizing Paul: A Dynamic Perspective on Pauline Theology and the Law.* Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 2002. 226 pp. $20.00.

Thurén's underlying premise is that theology is dependent upon rhetoric. "'Derhetorization' means identifying the persuasive devices in the text in order to filter out their effect on the theological ideas expressed" (Preface). While a lofty goal, does the book live up to its heightened expectations? Furthermore, while the method employed is classified as engaging "in the new wave of Pauline studies aimed

at a more realistic understanding of the apostle and his thought" (2), the question that lingers in the background is just how "modern" is Thurén's approach?

At first glance, Thurén's theory of derhetorization seems viable. However, often it is best to evaluate an interpretative method by the final product. In Part One, "The Dynamics of Paul's Writings," instead of unifying the text, the process of derhetorization raises more questions than answers and more confusion than clarity. For example, Paul's response of anger to the Galatians "is consciously produced by utilizing effective contemporary rhetorical means" (63). In other words, Paul's anger comes into question since "one would expect less orthodox ways of expressing perplexity, if the apostle *actually was infuriated*" (63, emphasis mine). Thus, the rhetorical integrity of Paul comes under the direct line of fire, which only has the potential to fragmentize his personae.

Rather than an integral part of his character, rhetoric is seen as a separate entity from the apostle Paul. An examination of Paul's background and training in rhetoric or the nature of letter writing in antiquity would be a critical addition to the volume. Without knowledge of such information, the reader is only left to wonder about Paul's training in such matters. When one takes into account the vast number of epistolary genres which flow from the pen of Paul in the NT, one can logically conclude that Paul possessed extensive training in rhetoric. Thus, it should come as no surprise that he does think in these terms. Rhetoric is not a means of manufacturing Paul's emotions; rather, it is integral to his personhood.

In Part Two of the book, "The Law in Paul's Theology," Thurén does make some headway, providing a sound analysis of the law in the context of Paul's letters and uses comparisons and contrasts to highlight the differences. However, some premises are debatable, such as Paul not being aware of *prosopopoiia* (speech-in-character) in Romans 7 and neglecting to employ this approach (118-120). Thurén draws the conclusion that "evidence from ancient rhetoric shows that no such commonly known device existed" (119). Nevertheless, no solid evidence exists to bolster his viewpoint. Furthermore, Thurén takes *prosopopoiia* to require training as an actor or an orator to ensure vocal inflection to imitate the speech-in-character (118). However, Paul's letter was in written form; hence, the question arises to what degree training as an orator is relevant.

Despite exhibiting unconventional viewpoints, this volume does make room for common ground. Thurén calls on readers to appreciate Paul's rhetoric throughout the book, saying, "We only need a better comprehension of his rhetorical techniques" (49). Rhetoric adds a unique flavor and richness to the biblical text that cannot be properly understood without a clear understanding of Paul's use of rhetorical devices. Thurén highlights a number of these features throughout the book, such as *peroratio*, *recapitulatio*, and *indignatio* in discussions of Galatians 6 (174) and in viewing Galatians as drama (70-72).

In summary, this is an insightful book to aid readers to gain a greater appreciation for the rhetorical devices that Paul employs but also demonstrates premises that could be deemed problematic for biblical exegesis.

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James R. BECK. *The Psychology of Paul: A Fresh Look at His Life and Teaching*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002. 296 pp. $16.99.

Beck's latest book is a work of integration that demonstrates an impressive command of the broad landscapes of Pauline theology and personality research. Importantly, Beck remains true to his educational and theological roots (Dallas Theological Seminary and Rosemead School of Professional Psychology) in that his theological stance is evangelical—strongly upholding the inspiration and centrality of Scripture—and his psychological approach is balanced and scientifically sound.

Many Christians have questioned the feasibility of integrating Scripture and psychology in any substantive sense, given psychology's foundations in modernism, materialism, and humanism; yet Beck communicates an abiding faith that biblical and empirically substantiated truth will ultimately be found to be consistent. Importantly, Beck's approach upholds the authority of Scripture rather than making it the fodder of any particular personality theory. For example, he does not succumb, as some have, to the folly of interpreting Paul's writings based upon Paul's childhood parental conflicts when, in fact, we have no record of those conflicts. In addition, a discussion of the psychology of conversion admits, in the end, that the supernatural elements in Paul's conversion cannot be fully explicated by psychological processes alone.

One may wonder if a book entitled *The Psychology of Paul* is a treatise on the personality of Paul himself or on Paul's ideas about personality functioning. The answer is: both. The book is composed of two broad sections; one on the life of Paul, which explores his pre-Christian experiences, conversion, and personality, and a second which explores Pauline thought in the light of the broad areas of personality theory: personality structure, motivation, development, pathology, and change.

One highlight of the book is the chapter on personality structure, which reviews various psychological approaches, including the psychoanalytic theory of id, ego, and superego, and compares these with Paul's concepts of heart, body, flesh, soul, and spirit. This chapter also provides a good analysis of the issues surrounding the "divided I" conflict in Romans 7. Beck is consistent in not pushing the comparisons too far, noting the dangers of overstating similarities that are only apparent. That said, I wish he would have explored the relationship of Paul and Freud in more depth because this is a common area for discussion in classes on personality theory at Christian Universities, and because it would be fruitful to further explore the ultimate truths that underlie the reflections of both Paul and Freud.

The suggestion that more detailed analysis is needed in certain areas is not one Beck would argue with. He clearly states that his purpose is not to be exhaustive or to offer a detailed apologetic but to offer a "preliminary look at how the life and work of Paul can inform modern personality theory." Indeed, the strength of his work is in the outstanding breadth of seminal research that he describes, both theological and psychological. At times, however, I believe the force of recent psychological research demands a more detailed discussion. Various streams of cognitive and neuroscience research have challenged our understanding of human nature (see Steven Pinker's 2002 book entitled *The Blank Slate* for a review), and it would have been helpful to read Beck's response to some of these ideas. For example, how do Paul's conceptions of heart, flesh, soul, and spirit relate to modern studies of brain organization and function? Also, Beck uses the generic term "self" on several occa-

sions without acknowledging that this is a hotly debated term in the psychological literature. Many scientists believe that we do not possess a unified self, but that we are a conglomeration of loosely integrated biological processes with an illusory sense of self and free will. Materialist scientists have also attacked the concept of spirit and soul, including an assault on the concept of the "ghost in the machine," the body inhabited by an eternal spirit or soul. It might surprise scientists to know that Beck's biblical exposition of spirit and soul similarly makes no mention of the "ghost in the machine" as often conceptualized, and a further discussion of these issues would be fruitful. Again, I do not believe these were oversights on Beck's part, but matters of space and priority.

Additional chapters of interest discuss personality change, the healthy personality, and the abnormal personality. Beck discusses at length the concepts of sin and human "vices" as they relate to personality disorders, and presents a comparison of health psychology and the Pauline virtues, including the fruits of the Spirit. Beck includes an exhaustive table of Pauline vices and virtues based upon the Greek terms and their English translations that will be helpful for further study.

Ultimately, this is a useful and readable book that successfully meets its purpose of laying a broad foundation for the integration of Paul's life and theology with modern personality theory. It is written at a level appropriate for the college-level student and above, and would be especially useful for classes focusing upon integration issues. Theologians unfamiliar with the current field of psychology will appreciate the clarity and breadth with which the psychological material is presented, and psychologists will appreciate the focused discussion of the Pauline literature.

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Grant R. OSBORNE. *Revelation*. ECNT. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002. 869 pp. $49.99.

Commentaries on Revelation can be classified according to the four predominant methods of interpretation: preterist (focusing on the original context), historicist (focusing on fulfillment throughout history), idealist (focusing in timeless truths and applications), or futurist (focusing on ultimate fulfillment in the end-times). In the introduction to the commentary, Osborne explicitly identifies his approach as a combination of preterist, idealist, and futurist. He acknowledges his debt for this approach to previous commentators such as George Eldon Ladd, George Beasley-Murray, and Robert Mounce. He adopts a preterist approach because images and events of John's day were used to describe the events to be fulfilled in the future. In sympathy with the idealist approach, he acknowledges the validity of applying the book's teaching to every age.

The futurist approach, however, receives the most attention and emphasis throughout the book. Repeatedly, Osborne notes the inability of the preterist and idealist approaches to explain the meaning of the text adequately. He especially criticizes the extreme form of preterism that believes that everything in the book was fulfilled by AD 70. Although he does not engage extensively the writings of the increasingly popular preterists (primarily D.C. Chilton), his critique of their views sets this commentary apart from others who largely ignore this approach.

Osborne also explicitly identifies his approach as that of historic premillennialism, which he calls "classical premillennialism." In this view, the church will experience the tribulation period, Christ will return after the tribulation, and then he will reign on earth for a thousand years. Readers who are not sympathetic with this school of eschatology should be aware that it thoroughly informs and guides Osborne's exegesis. Those who are sympathetic with that approach will consider Osborne's commentary the premier work of that school. Its thoroughness, clarity, and currency of scholarship cause it to supersede the excellent commentary of Mounce.

Osborne's commentary combines several virtues. First, he exhaustively and clearly explains the various options for interpretation. Second, unlike other commentators who infrequently reveal their own understanding of the text, he always states which view he finds most convincing. Third, he states his views with the humility and restraint that should characterize all commentators on Revelation.

The commentary begins with a relatively succinct introduction of forty-nine pages that presents the standard evangelical views. The book was written by John the son of Zebedee in the mid-90s in response to the increasing popularity of the emperor cult and the impending threat of persecution. Osborne's frequent connections between his dating of the book and his exegesis throughout the commentary reflect a certainty about the date that the evidence may not support.

The commentary includes Greek phrases, but they are always transliterated and translated. Those anticipating in-depth discussions of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax will be disappointed because those are minimal for a commentary of this length. However, numerous text-critical notes can be found in the footnotes.

Although some readers may be intimidated by the hefty size of the book, it achieves its stated purpose, which is "to address the needs of pastors and others involved in the preaching and exposition of the Scriptures as the uniquely inspired Word of God" (ix). The commentary is accessible and readable, but the extent and depth of its exposition make it suitable only for the more serious student.

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Colin J. HEMER. *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans: 2001. 338 pp. $29.00.

This volume is a reprint of a work originally published by JSOT Press in 1986, a year before the author's death. The book was a revision of the dissertation Hemer wrote under the direction of F.F. Bruce. Many insights and conclusions in the work influenced commentators on Revelation, but unfortunately the book had gone out of print. Eerdmans and Dove have joined together to reprint this classic resource on the Book of Revelation. David E. Aune, author of the three-volume Word Biblical Commentary on Revelation, wrote the foreword in which he provides personal reflections on and evaluations of Hemer's work.

Hemer's research involved reassessing Willam M. Ramsay's classic work *The Letters to the Seven Churches* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1904). Like Ramsay, he examined the seven letters to the churches to identify references to their local situation. He evaluated evidence from inscriptions, numismatics, ancient literature, archaeological excavations, accounts by modern travelers, and local topography to

reconstruct the *Sitz im Leben* of the seven churches of Asia. He also drew on his own personal travels and studies in the region. The result of his efforts is an impressive, but often difficult and complicated, analysis of each letter.

Hemer begins the book by discussing the standard introductory issues of authorship, date, setting, genre, and destination. His conclusions represent the standard views of scholarship at that time, but in light of more recent discussions his presentation seems outdated. For example, he sets the book in the midst of a widespread persecution of Christians by Domitian, which most historians now regard with a great deal of skepticism. His discussions of the date and the genre also appear simplistic in light of more recent analyses of those issues.

The heart of the book is its focused analysis of each letter. Much of the evidence he provides for establishing connections between the letters and the local situation is indirect and inconclusive. Hemer admits that he is trying to build a cumulative case that will prove convincing overall, even if every detail is not: "The strength of the whole case is in the whole argument. Many parts are acknowledged to be tentative, if only because the fragmentary nature of the evidence precludes a false dogmatism" (7). The nature of his approach means that some of his arguments seem speculative. In the foreword, Aune provides examples of one such interpretation that he finds convincing and one that he does not. Some of Hemer's more convincing and insightful conclusions have been taken up in later commentaries on Revelation.

Hemer's argumentation is often so technical and detailed that many readers will find it difficult to follow. Consequently, the book is most appropriate for those scholars whose specialty is the Book of Revelation. They can be grateful that such an impressive and important work has been made available once again. Students, ministers, and others will find that the more useful and convincing conclusions are accessible in some of the recent commentaries on Revelation.

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