# Book Reviews

**Jim COOK. *The Myth of the Stone-Campbell Movement.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019. 182 pp. $90.00.**

The analysis of primary sources is a key aspect of the historical profession, but it is also incumbent on us as historians to evaluate the theoretical and methodological assumptions we bring to our work, as well as the field-specific terminology we employ and the boundaries we have established around our respective subfields. Within the last few decades, the phrase "Stone-Campbell Movement" has generally, though not entirely, supplanted terms like "Restoration Movement" as a descriptor of the nineteenth-century religious ground swelling which gave rise to Disciples of Christ, Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, and Churches of Christ. This terminological shift has done much to aid the recovery of unity as a core guiding principle in the historical record and in the present day. (You are, after all, reading the *Stone-Campbell Journal.*)

Yet according to Cook's provocative and provocatively titled volume, this newer label distorts more than it reveals. Cook contends that Barton W. Stone "was never a leader in the movement, and not an influence on those who moved it in the direction it went after the Civil War" (vii-viii). Because Stone's influence on the "Stone-Campbell Movement" was effectively nil, the label itself is a "myth," which Cook defines not as "a story used to explain the origins of a culture or religion, [but] as an erroneous understanding or perception" (viii). Additionally, Cook seeks to demonstrate that Stone's chief historical legacy runs not through his followers who united with Campbell but instead through those who allied themselves with the Christian Connexion, which eventually became a constituent part of the ecumenical United Church of Christ.

Cook defends these conclusions across five chapters. The first two function as a single unit and make the case that Stone's and Campbell's tentative alliance was forged because they shared common denominational foes, not because they shared a specific vision of what the church could or should be. Chapter three covers a much longer swath of time, tracking Stone's followers who combined with the Christian Connexion and then narrating the series of mergers which ultimately led to the modern UCC in 1957. The remaining pair of chapters returns to the nineteenth century and explores how various internal and external challenges to the "Campbell Movement," such as missionary societies and slavery, were resolved, if not necessarily solved, in the absence of any meaningful Stoneite influence.

The current volume is, by turns, frustrating and fascinating. Cook does not engage with any scholarly works published after 2006 and, as a result, quite often argues against a strawman definition of "Stone-Campbell Movement" that is not reflected in current scholarship. To be sure, there have been overly rosy portrayals of

the Stone-Campbell relationship, but it is no trade secret that the two men had decidedly mixed opinions of each other as well as substantial theological differences on a whole range of matters. Additionally, while Cook understandably focuses on the nineteenth century, the case against "Stone-Campbell Movement" would have been greatly strengthened by historicizing the origins of that label and by more fully exploring the reasons, not all of them purely academic, why it became the preferred name for the movement. The book is substantially more successful in its depiction of the Stoneite-Christian Connexion-UCC link (an aside: does this mean Barack Obama is our fourth "movement president"?) and as a general caution to avoid anachronistically reading our modern terminology back into the historical record. This volume, while unlikely to persuade readers that another name change is necessary, is still profitable reading for movement historians with an interest in the Christian Connexion or in the broader discussion surrounding our subfield and the ways in which we define and describe it.

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**Andrew FEAR and Jamie WOOD, eds. *A Companion to Isidore of Seville.* Leiden: Brill, 2020. 676 pp. $359.00.**

This 87th volume in Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition joins preceding works about the Swiss Reformation, Alfred the Great, and Catherine of Sienna. All 20 chapters are in English since six of the chapters were translated from French or Spanish. Every chapter includes thorough footnotes and concludes with extensive bibliographies of sources, older and current, clearly dividing primary and secondary sources.

According to the editors, "The chapters of this volume, as well as much recent research, demonstrate that he was contributor to as well as a preserver of learning" (3). This fuller picture of Isidore and his influence is revealed in this text's three parts: "Part 1: Isidore's Contexts," "Part 2: Themes in Isidore's Works," and "Part 3: Transmission and Reception of Isidore's Works and Thought."

Part 1 includes the "Introduction" which introduces Isidore, his works, and the chapters of the book. The second chapter "aims to place Isidore in his historical context by looking at the way he fulfilled his role as a bishop, as the author of a series of literary works, and via his social, political, and religious legacy" (21). This is followed by an analysis of Isidore's "Literary Agenda." Graham Barrett argues that Isidore "aimed not to become catechist to centuries of priests and monks, nor indeed to achieve any great stylistic or generic innovation as such, but to carry through the scholarly project which he had set for himself: to take the full stock of classical civilization and recatalogue it for the good in the epistemology of God" (44). Chapter 4 describes Isidore's brother Leander, who preceded him as bishop of Seville, illuminating "the profound influence that he had on the establishment of a united Catholic Visigothic kingdom and on his brother's intellection and pastoral formation" (126).

"Isidore of Seville as Theologian" begins Part 2. Thomas O'Loughlin contends that Isidore had a desire "for ordered teaching and fixed concise answers," and he exhibited in his handling of Scripture an assumption—seen in future generations—that the Bible is "a set of interconnected propositions" and "that there was a single true interpretation of any passage of scripture . . . which could be ascertained by the ecclesial body of teachers" (139-140). Isidore saw "the work of theology as complete," leaving the theologian's role as one who transmits the truth and combats falsehood (144, 150). Even taking into consideration the space limitations of such an already sizeable and comprehensive volume, this chapter lacks analysis of Isidore's theological perspectives on various areas such as Christology and pneumatology. In his conclusion, O'Loughlin briefly mentions Isidore's presentation of "the humanity of Jesus docetically" (citing his own work, "Christ as the Focus of Genesis Exegesis in Isidore of Seville"), an understanding of the Eucharist "so concerned with the notion of presence that it loses sight of the inherent ambiguity of the notion of a sacrament/mystery," and provides a footnote to how Isidore is the first to use the term "double predestination" (149). Yet the body of the chapter lacks any discussion of these or other theological topics. Moreover, other than two texts from Genesis (141), the reader is left to wonder about the rest of Isidore's exegetical work.

Continuing Part 2, Jamie Wood moves "beyond the negative appraisals of Isidore as a historian," examining Isidore's understanding of history, the connections between his historical writings, and his understanding of historical writing as moral instruction (153-154). Regarding science, Isidore exhibited a positive view towards "ancient science," integrating it with "Christian truth," and becoming "the first Christian intellectual to attempt to give a full account of the material creation" and "integrate this knowledge with the disciplines of the *quadrivium*" (214-215). Chapter 8, "Isidore of Seville as a Grammarian," examines the field that Isidore saw as the basis for pursuing other areas of study. Chapter 9 concludes the chapters addressing "Isidore's most important works within broad categories" with etymology (15). The composition, structure, sources, and reception of Isidore's most famous work, the *Etymologies*, is analyzed along with the nature of etymology. Jacques Elfassi discusses how Isidore's use of sources demonstrates that he offered something original in contrast to his past reputation as a mere compiler. He also highlights the need for further research to determine all of Isidore's sources.

The remaining chapters in Part 2 "take a series of cross-sectional paths through Isidore's writings, relating them to the changing historical contexts in which he was working" (15). In Chapter 10, Céline Martin explores "the ecclesiastical side of Isidore's thought" through his writings and conciliar records, showing that he "endeavored to construct a stronger Church for his own times and beyond: enhancing its verticality, creating the ecclesiastical level of the kingdom, training and supervising the clergy so the flock would be correctly attended" (279, 297). Next, Pedro Castillo Maldonado argues that even though monasticism was not a primary theme for Isidore, or something he was remembered for, "almost all of his writings are permeated with monastic spirituality" (304). He specifically looks at two of his works, one to monks and one "to the body of converts" (315). "Isidore of Seville on Law

and Kingship" covers the saint's influential political thought making him "father of international law" (333). His definition of natural law influenced Aquinas, and his divergence from Roman law and reliance on the Bible placed rulers under the law, influenced medieval thinkers, and anticipated "*Magna Carta* by almost 600 years" (340). He used David as his model for the ideal king, and, even though Isidore would not have supported this use, his thoughts on unjust rulers were later used to defend the deposition of kings. Part 2 concludes with "Confronting the Other: Isidore of Seville on Pagans, Romans, Barbarians, Heretics, and Jews." Raúl González Salinero concludes these groups were "outside the parameters within which Isidore of Seville defined the new Visigothic kingdom: a Gothic fatherland, a repository of Roman cultural heritage under the protection of the divine providence and the doctrines of the Catholic Church" (386).

Isidore's influence is solidified in Part 3's analysis of his reception. First, covering his death in 711, Mark Lewis Tizzoni describes Isidore's recognition as a saint and scholar whose "thought dominated the world of later-7th-century Iberia" and "quickly spread to Ireland and Gaul" (419). Second, Martin J. Ryan, focusing on Latin sources, describes how Isidore was received and used in Britain and Ireland before about 750. Third, Immo Warntjes discusses "Isidore's influence on the early medieval science of computus," "the science of calculating Easter" (459, 512). Fourth, focusing on the Carolingians and Ottonians between 800 and 1050, Sinéad O'Sullivan's case studies of glosses reveal how popular Isidore and his *Etymologies* were on various topics "including Greek or Greek-derived words" (560). Fifth, Winston Black offers "the first English-language study of later medieval reception of Isidore" (13). Black demonstrates how Isidore was still a "revered, albeit antiquated and insufficient, scholar on the nature of things," and "a teacher of moral and theological truths and a guide to exploring the mystical significances of words and things" (597). Sixth, Jeremy Lawrence demonstrates how Isidore's "influence upon life, thought, and action" waned during the Renaissance (1500–1700) in Spain, but there was interest in "his nationality, his sanctity, [and] his genealogical relationship to royal families" (628). Finally, even though she recognizes that it is difficult to assess, Amy Fuller argues "that there is considerable evidence to suggest that Isidore influenced the practice of chronicling pagan culture in Mexico" (645).

The price of this book will be out of reach for students and many faculty members, but it would be a valuable asset to libraries. While I would have preferred more about Isidore's exegesis and theological perspectives, the breadth of this volume's analysis of Isidore, and its inclusion of scholarship from so many older and recent sources, would both serve as the essential starting place for any student or scholar working on the influential bishop of Seville and also provide fodder for future lines of research. "As the papers in this volume demonstrate, the field of Isidorian studies remains a vibrant one. . . . While much has been accomplished to understand Isidore and his world, it is clear much remains to be done" (16).

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**Arlin C. MIGLIAZZO. *Mother of Modern Evangelicalism: The Life and Legacy of Henrietta Mears.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 320 pp. $29.99.**

This study of Henrietta Mears offers a valuable introduction to the life of a towering figure in twentieth century evangelicalism. It provides a thorough examination of the influences in her life that shaped her choices, the theology that guided her ministry, and the personality traits that shaped her leadership style. Its explanation of Mears' context also offers a solid overview of the theological and cultural context of evangelicalism in the early to mid-twentieth century. Among the many influences in Mears' life were her mother and grandmother who both engaged in ecumenical community service and functioned as Christian educators (mostly teaching in Sunday schools). Migliazzo suggested their model shaped Mears significantly, but it was her theology and personality that shaped her ministry most clearly.

Migliazzo adroitly places Mears into a framework of Protestant theological conservatism in the mid twentieth century where she attempts to straddle the line between modernism and traditional Protestant theology through engaging American culture as much as possible without compromising the sanctity of Scripture or the importance of spreading the gospel. She clearly did not embrace much of the fundamentalist mindset of standing in judgment of all things modern but neither did she relax her theological convictions to accommodate modern culture. For instance, Migliazzo relates one incident when a convert in Mears' ministry threw his cigarettes into a fire as an emblem of his commitment to moral living. Mears retrieved the cigarettes and firmly informed the young man that God wanted his entire self not his cigarettes. This straddling of the line was also represented in Mears' founding of the Hollywood Christian Group which focused on drawing in thousands of prominent participants in the entertainment industry. Rather than condemning the perceived immorality of this group, Mears engaged them and many found faith through her ministry.

Migliazzo also provides ample documentation of Mears' leadership style and her impact on evangelicalism at the national level. He emphasizes the devotion she inspired through the love and attention that she offered to those whom she ministered to as well as her ability to raise up Christian leaders of all kinds. She identified their talents and called upon them directly to use those talents in service to the gospel. For instance, when she sought to establish a College Department during her tenure at First Presbyterian Church in Hollywood, she initially could find no young person she felt capable of leading it. In response, she learned who the local university student body presidents were and identified the University of Southern California student president, Rand Richey. She successfully converted him to faith, and he became the leader of the College Department. In the same way, she shaped the early careers of Billy Graham and Bill Bright who both credit her with much of the success of their ministries. It was Mears, for instance, who mentored Graham through a spiritual crisis where he began to doubt his belief in the authority of Scripture only weeks before the 1949 Los Angeles Crusade that launched his national

ministry. He would later credit her as the biggest female influence on his faith outside of his wife and mother.

Just as he clearly outlines Mears' pivotal role in modern evangelicalism, Migliazzo also notes her shortcomings. He details her preference for expensive clothing, housing, and other trappings of wealth as well has her high (and at times unreasonable) expectations for those who worked in ministry with her. There was perhaps some room to explore how Mears' singlehood freed her to pursue a more active career in ministry, but overall, this biography offers insightful perspectives on Mears' ministry career and tremendous contributions to evangelicalism throughout the twentieth century.

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**Steven J. DUBY. *God in Himself: Scripture, Metaphysics, and the Task of Christian Theology.* Studies in Christian Doctrine and Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019. 352 pp. $40.00.**

How is it that we are to come to know God? Is knowledge of God exclusively revealed by the incarnation alone? Can God's aseity be worked out through the task of metaphysics? Can we come to know God, and not simply God's economic works, through natural theology? Duby argues that in theology there has been a wedge between the incarnation, scripture, metaphysics, and natural theology (or as he prefers "natural knowledge of God") but that *theologia* necessitates these rightly be brought together. In this volume, Duby, a Reformed theologian, utilizes and engages a host of classical theologians, from Catholic minds such as Augustine, Aquinas, Scotus, and Ockham to Protestant Reformed thinkers like Luther, Calvin, Barth, and Jenson to answer these questions.

Chapter one begins with the affirmation that God "wills to grant us knowledge of himself in his transcendence of his economic works" (11). To support this claim Duby lays down his understanding of the object and nature of theological knowledge, distinguishing between "infused theology . . . knowledge of God built into our reception of the gospel" and "acquired theology" [knowledge gained by our effort and study] (21-22). While it is not possible for us to have God's *in se* knowledge we can have "ectypal" knowledge which is a "limited copy of God's self-knowledge" (33). While our knowledge of God is limited, Duby argues, in response to Lutheran *Deus absconditus*, it is nonetheless a knowledge of God *in se*. Duby seeks to show that we can know God *in se*—as God truly is—not by God's economy. In short, we can affirm the classical notion of God for God is not "hidden" behind Christ nor is God to be equated with what God has done.

Chapter two argues how natural theology is a medium of authentic knowledge of God. Duby surveys and concludes that scripture and various scholastic and Reformed theologians affirm natural revelation. The chapter argues four points, the first being that the origin of natural knowledge of God is God, and this knowledge is purposefully given. Second, the content of natural knowledge is God the creator.

Third, the purpose of natural knowledge is our awareness for God and our need of God's mercy. Finally, natural knowledge of God is limited and distorted. It is not salvific for it does not reveal Christ.

Chapter three is titled "Incarnation in Context" given that Duby argues that the incarnation is to "inform our doctrine of God" but "without being its first or only epistemological principle" (132) meaning that Scripture is the "'formal object' of supernatural theology" (140) because "we cannot access the person of Christ apart from the Bible" (139). Secondly, Duby seeks to show how the Son reveals God in and beyond the incarnation. The second half of the chapter explores "Christology's positive contribution to the knowledge of God's aseity and the need to ground God's economic activity in his preveniently complete being" (187).

The fourth chapter, "Theology and Metaphysics Revisited," examines the relationship between *theologia* and metaphysics (primarily Aristotelian conceptions of "being"). The goal is to use metaphysics to help us contemplate "God is aseity and transcendence" but not allow theology to "degenerate into mere metaphysics" (231). This discussion naturally leads to Duby's final chapter.

This volume concludes with Duby's discussion of the *right* doctrine of analogy. The chapter is a helpful exploration of the use of analogy in medieval and early modern thought. Duby finishes by defending the use of analogy against criticisms offered by Barth, Pannenberg, and various contemporary philosophers. Much like what he says about natural theology, Duby holds that the use of analogy points us to God and prepares us for grace (290).

Classical theists or those deeply interested in Barthian theology will find the book interesting and useful. For nonclassical theists the work may be a bit of a grind. Any reader, however, should be prepared that this text requires effort, even from those versed in theology. Latin and Greek are in heavy rotation as is technical theological verbiage. The footnotes are dense but filled with helpful and necessary information. All this to say, the book is not for the faint of heart or for the short on time.

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**Oliver D. CRISP. *Analyzing Doctrine: Toward a Systematic Theology.* Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2019. 270 pp. $39.95.**

I am neither an analytic theologian nor the son of one. Not only am I not of the analytic tribe, but I maintain not a little hesitancy, even suspicion, about the project. I therefore come to this book, an instance of analytic theology as a mode of Christian systematic theology, with a degree of wariness; it deserves a fair shake, but it bears the burden of proof nonetheless. Reader beware.

Why is that? What is analytic theology? In brief, it is Christian reflection on matters of the faith informed by Anglo-American philosophy, or what is often called the analytic tradition. Defining just what counts as part of this tradition is tricky; there are no necessary and sufficient features that constitute it. It is more of an intellectual

culture, as the book puts it: you know it when you see it. How? Among other things, by its idiom, its attention to logical rigor and discursive clarity, its interlocutors and presuppositions. But because that intellectual culture is relatively new on the scene, at least from the church's perspective, and because its philosophical origins evince a good deal of hostility toward basic Christian claims about reality, theologians in the mainstream have tended to keep analytic thinkers at arm's length, casting doubt on the legitimacy of the endeavor or ignoring them entirely.

Crisp, Professor of Analytic Theology at the University of St Andrews, would like to challenge this mainstream posture. He believes not only that analytic theology, conducted in the right way, is a species of systematic theology, but also that analytic and non-analytic theologians alike have nothing to lose and everything to gain from engaging one another.

This volume is not itself a systematic theology. It comprises, rather, a series of exercises, meant to show forth the value and potential of an analytic approach to Christian doctrines and theological conundrums. The book's chapters touch on the doctrine of God, supralapsarianism, original sin, theosis, Christ's virginal conception, two wills, and resurrection—and more. In the closing pages, Crisp voices his hope "that the virtues of an analytic theological approach to some of the traditional loci of theology are apparent." For though it is by no means the only or even the best way to think and speak about God, "analytic theology as I understand it is nothing if not ectypal, attempting to approximate our human theologizing to the divine archetype so that—*mirabile dictu!*—we might be able to think God's thoughts after him" (249).

The attempt is successful. Which is not to say that those outside the analytic fold will find themselves converted to it by book's end (though some may). Crisp is unfailingly humble. He is not stumping for the one method to rule them all. He is showing, rather than telling, how and why systematic theologians of the mainstream variety might take analytic theologians seriously, and not only as a kind of curiosity extrinsic to the main thing, but as fellow participants in a common task. That is a salutary proposal, and he won this skeptical reader over.

In addition to humility, the virtue of Crisp's approach to analytic theology is its principled rootedness in the canons of Holy Scripture, conciliar dogma, and traditional doctrine. Analytic thinkers can be prone to an outsize self-confidence that at times issues in wholesale innovation, overturning every last table of settled ecclesial thought. Crisp is allergic to this propensity, and accordingly he is clear about the status of theology's authorities: the word of God, ecumenical councils, long-standing orthodox teaching, and so on. Where these are underdetermined, metaphysically above all, Crisp believes an analytic approach can offer productive insights into the things of God—neither rejecting the church's confession nor explaining it away, but proposing models, even "world building," in such a way that illuminates the mystery while protecting and preserving it. If that is the future of Christian analytic theology, then I for one will welcome it with open arms.

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**Joseph K. GORDON. *Divine Scripture in Human Understanding: A Systematic Theology of the Christian Bible*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2019. 424 pp. $51.99.**

"A constitutive judgment" of this book is that "Christian Scripture is truthful, unified, and authoritative for Christian faith, thought, and praxis." This is a "non-negotiable within the horizon of the Christian faith" (263).

Where is this truth, unity, and authority located? It is found in the economic work of the Triune God. "The words of Christian Scripture," Gordon writes, "truthfully and usefully mediate the reality, the *res* or Sache, of the recapitulation of all things in Christ" (268). That reality is the pattern of God's activity through Christ in the Spirit for the sake of humanity. Thus, according to Gordon, "the fundamental purpose for which God gives humanity Christian Scripture is the transformation of the understanding and praxis of those who read, hear, and mediate [sic; meditate] upon it in accordance with God's unified overarching redemptive purposes" (265), which is the recapitulation of all things.

The truth, unity, and authority of Christian Scripture, then, are not so much located in the words on the page as much as in the reality of the Triune God at work in human history to which Christian Scripture bears witness and by which the *res* is mediated. This, essentially, gives space for human error, diversity, transmission processes (which is a significant contribution of the book!), and ambiguity within Christian Scripture while at the same time confessing its message is infallible and the economic work of the Trinity is real and actual.

To describe this text as "divine Scripture" is to make a theological claim. Gordon unpacks this claim as a threefold confession: scripture is (1) inspired, (2) the written word of God, and (3) useful for transformation and participation in the divine mission. At the same time, this confession entails a particular understanding of these claims, a human understanding. This is the goal of systematics, that is, to understand what it means to say these writings are divine and how this forms us. In other words, Gordon pursues a true judgement about the reality of Divine Scripture that has such explanatory power that we may not only understand the claim that Christians confess but also articulate the intelligible and objective relationships that reality sustains to other realities (including the material culture of the Bible's transmission). This is the function of human understanding, which involves a particular way of thinking about the human being and the human *realia* of Scripture itself. Thus, in this sense it is a systematic judgment, as Lonergan, to whom Gordon is indebted, envisions the project of systematic theology.

Part of the process of human understanding, and thus systematic judgments, is to explore what one means by "Divine Scripture" when one also acknowledges that the "Christian Bible" is a human book. "Divine Scripture" can be misleading if we mean that Scripture shares the ontological status of the divine. If not ontologically such, then what is it? The confession that Scripture is divine necessitates the pursuit of understanding (as in "faith seeking understanding"), and that understanding is necessarily and inescapably human. These writings, which the church has called and

accepted as Scripture and are in some unique sense divine, mediate a true understanding of God's work and are instrumental in the performance of that divine work. In essence, Scripture is divine because it is the instrument by which God mediates the meaning of God's Triune work for humanity and by which God transforms the human person in light of the actual work of the Trinity.

In harmony with the "church fathers," Gordon suggests that "Scripture [is] a means of the divine teaching of the Triune God that facilitat[es] the deifying transformation of its readers and hearers" (250). *Theosis* is the goal of God's economic work. Gordon achieves his goal of offering a systematic theology of the Christian Bible that takes account of both its divine and human dimensions.

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**William Curtis HOLTZEN. *The God Who Trusts: A Relational Theology of Divine Faith, Hope, and Love*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019. 263 pp. $28.00.**

The current volume is a contribution to so-called open or relational theology, a mostly evangelical movement that gained prominence in the 1990s for its denial of the compatibility of determinism and human free will, of the immutability and impassibility of God, and of divine exhaustive definite foreknowledge, all of which are typically affirmed in evangelical Calvinism. The title recalls the open theism classic, *The God Who Risks*, whose author, John Sanders, provides the foreword for the present volume.

This volume may be justly summarized thus: "God believes in us, trusts us, and has hope for us—all because God deeply loves us" (227). Rather than interpreting the emotions and mental states attributed to God in Scripture as anthropopathisms, as the great Christian tradition has always done, Holtzen interprets the human analogues as "theopathic." That is, because we are made in the image of God, "it may be that emotions are not human traits metaphorically attached to God, but divine traits are imperfectly possessed by humans" (19).

Chapter 1, "Considering a God Who Trusts," lays out the basic argument and goal of the book. God must be described as having faith, inasmuch as he "is reliant on others in order to achieve the goals God has established for this world" (4). Chapter 2, "The Mosaic of Faith," traces different aspects of the idea of faith, a relational concept that includes love, belief, trust, and hope. Faith is not simply a human but also a divine virtue. The next four chapters seek to show how each of these aspects should be attributed to God. God loves (chapter 3), but because that love seeks reciprocation, it is a love that is risky and vulnerable and has faith that humans will indeed reciprocate the love. By definition love entails having faith in the beloved. God believes (chapter 4), which includes the assertion that God believes in us, who we are and who we will become. God trusts (chapter 5), for he "has chosen to be dependent upon this created world" (128). That God entrusts certain responsibilities

to his people means that he trusts them. And God hopes (chapter 6) as he anticipates a bright future. Chapter 7, "Divine Faith and the Advent of Christ," argues on the basis of the incarnation that Jesus' faith reveals and embodies the faith of God.

Most readers will find parts of the book's discussions interesting. Profitable insights about human faith, hope, and love abound. Those who are already convinced by open theism will enjoy it, evident in the endorsements on the book. Those who have never thought about such issues may find themselves persuaded. But those who do not accept the premises of open theism—that God is passible, mutable, and in time and therefore ignorant of the future—will likely not be convinced that God trusts humans in the way the author affirms.

In many ways, the key issue boils down to religious language about God. Holtzen claims that human language about God includes metaphor and analogy "along with literal and univocal statements" (68). To speak, therefore, of God's love and God's faith is to say something literal (27, 69). And so Holtzen does not hesitate to speak also of God as "a temporal being" (17), of "God's well-being" (73), of our friendship with God as "beneficial to God" (87), of God's doubts (120-26), and so on. There certainly are passages of Scripture that bear resemblance to these descriptions.

Holtzen also gives passing attention to and dismisses another way that he describes as "the conclusion some reach" (24-25), an understatement to be sure, for it is in fact the majority voice of the great Christian tradition—namely, that all language about God is analogical. Although some descriptions of God are closer to univocal than others, as Holtzen also admits (25), traditional Christian theology claims that no description is actually literal or univocal. But if the divine emotions are literal and if God's love implies his faith and even his doubt, then Holtzen's logic would press us further to analyze God's fear, pain, depression, despair, and the like. The God of open theism is very different indeed.

Because open theism trades on biblical language and gives short shrift to the theological and philosophical heritage of the Christian tradition, books like this one no doubt resonate with many readers from restorationist and evangelical fellowships. This volume is accessible to non-specialists, and, for anyone engaging open theism, pro or contra, it is worthy of attention.

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**Barry HARVEY. *Baptists and the Catholic Tradition: Reimagining the Church's Witness in the Modern World.* 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020. 256 pp. $29.99.**

When this book was originally published in 2008, it was titled *Can These Bones Live?* The title was catchy, but in the publisher's view, failed to convey the book's contents. The revised edition, now two chapters lighter, bears a new name: *Baptists and the Catholic Tradition*. Unfortunately, this title is just as inadequate as the first to describe this wide-ranging and erudite defense of the role of the gathered church in

a dis-integrated modern world. Borrowing one of the Apostle's favorite metaphors, he tells a story of how the body of Christ has been dis-membered and casts a vision for how "the bones can live again."

"Baptist" and "Catholic" are fraught terms, as Harvey admits. A professor of theology at Baylor and an ordained Baptist minister, Harvey is certainly Baptist. He admits to not knowing exactly what that means, but to avoid sectarian implications he follows James McClendon in identifying as a "little-*b* baptist," a broader term which includes Anabaptists and Restorationists. Harvey is part of a coterie of bapto-catholics ("free church catholics" in Stone-Campbell circles), scholars and ministers who try to situate their particular Protestant tradition within the tradition of the Great Church. Unlike many of his confreres, such as Curtis Freeman in *Contesting Catholicity* (Baker Academic, 2014), he is not very concerned about hanging on to baptist "distinctives" such as soul competency or congregational autonomy. Nor is he laying the groundwork for ecclesial reunification. Put most simply, this volume is the work of someone profoundly shaped by the baptist tradition doing theology for the whole church. He draws heavily on writers associated with the Radical Orthodoxy movement, including Rowan Williams, John Milbank, William Cavanaugh, but his priorities are thoroughly baptist.

The essentially baptist dimension of his work is the centrality of the disciplined community, the church visible and gathered. The body metaphor emphasizes that following Jesus is a flesh and blood affair, individual bodies sharing life in such a way as to form a corporate social body. They are united by common beliefs, practices, and habits and oriented toward the eschatological vision of the renewed earth, the new creation of justice and peace. Imitating Jesus, the community is a visible sign of the new creation which reveals God's intentions for the world. It is thus an apocalyptic community.

As a sacrament of God's presence, the church stands in contrast to the present, fallen world. Much of Harvey's book is occupied with detailing what this fallenness looks like in the West. Echoing Radical Orthodox critiques, he names the breakdown of the Augustinian-Thomistic metaphysical tradition, the rise of the nation-state, the privatization of religion, and the growth of the neoliberal economy. Each in its own way has sundered body and spirit, individual and community, faith and reason, and all together have led to the church's dismemberment.

These preliminary issues are treated in the first two chapters. In the following four, Harvey offers four ways of making the body whole again. In chapter 3 he suggests that the biblical narrative (interpreted through the *regula fidei*) provides an integrated and meaningful way to understand human history. The narrative is retold, with particular emphasis given to the role of the Israelite community, a prefigurement of the gathered church. Chapter 4 illustrates how the community itself embodies the biblical narrative to become a visible sign of God's intention for the world. He traces the failure of the church's distinctiveness witness, beginning with the Constantinian Settlement. Constantine is a classic target for baptist polemic, but Harvey does not place blame on any one figure or time period. He nuances his interpretation by continuing the story of disintegration through the middle ages, doing catholic history through a baptist lens.

In the fifth and sixth chapters, he argues that the Christian *polis* is formed through embodied practices of sacraments and spiritual disciplines. Though Harvey acknowledges the need for a coherent system of belief, practice is more important in forming a community. The goal of these practices is the cultivation of "holy vulnerability." Vulnerability is an expression of creaturely humility, a recognition that we are limited and contingent beings who depend on an Absolute Creator. Such vulnerability was demonstrated by Christ and stands against the instrumental reason of neoliberal markets and coercive politics of the nation-state. A vulnerable disposition transforms vision, allowing Christians to see the world clearly and discern together God's intentions. In the Thomistic tradition, this would be called "natural law," but Harvey uses the Protestant Bonhoeffer's concept of "the natural" to get the same point across. Baptist and catholic.

Despite the church's centrality in his work, Harvey does not offer many historical examples of the type of community he envisions. Drawing on the Baptist tradition of nonviolence, he argues in the final chapter that the community must reject the sword and carefully discern vocations within the earthly city which are compatible with heavenly citizenship. Likewise, Christians are to demonstrate an alternative economy, one based on gift and abundance rather than scarcity and exchange. Much of this points to a self-contained Christian community, though he never directly advocates any sort of Benedict option. He does commend monastics for keeping the apocalyptic spirit alive through the middle ages and early modernity; he also mentions names associated with "new monasticism" like Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker, Habitat for Humanity, John Perkins and Christian Community Development Association, and Jean Vanier and L'Arche. In my own experience the Bruderhof come closest to embodying his vision of an integrated community, both Baptist and Catholic, nonviolently witnessing the way of Jesus (though they aren't mentioned). Nevertheless, Harvey has not set out to provide an exact blueprint for the "re-membered body." Rather, he presents a prophetic vision of the Spirit breathing new life into a divided and desiccated community to stimulate the imagination and, hopefully, rattle our bones into action.

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**Yvonne SHERWOOD and Anna FISK, eds. *The Bible and Feminism: Remapping the Field.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. 709 pp. $40.00.**

Editors Sherwood and Fisk have put together a fantastic volume looking to chart the next stage of feminist biblical studies. The volume focuses particularly on the West, but includes authors from Iran, East Africa, Argentina, Hong Kong, and Iran. The thirty-six chapters utilize a wide variety of methods and frameworks, such as kyriarchy, memory and trauma, lived religion, ethnoarchaeology, queer theory, and theories on the "human." These delve into a wide range of political and social issues, such as hate crimes, migration and xenophobia, 'pinkwashing' the New Testament,

nationality, Christian and Islamic terrorism, 'the veil,' and gun legislation. Since many of these issues are newly emerged or have changed from their origins, feminist biblical criticism that stems from 1970s' so-called second wave feminism is inadequate in addressing them. Thus, a continuing evolving field is needed.

Despite changing issues and new fields of studies to work with, the editors note that "biblical studies remains a philological/textual discipline" (3). They urge working with lived religion, anthropology, theology, literature and more. The book is divided into three sections: Part I, *Prophets and Revolutionaries*; Part II, *An Unconventional Tour of the Biblical Canon*; and Part III, *Offpage*. Part I looks at forgotten or unconventional names in the field of feminist biblical scholarship, the next generation in the field, and established figures look at their own contribution to the field. Part II, which I envision as of most interest to Stone-Campbell readers, looks at many familiar biblical figures in new and interesting ways. Examples include: nomadic readings of the Hebrew Bible (Anne-Mareike Schol-Wetter), Queen Vashti's "no" in Esther (Deborah Sawyer), embodied memory in the Christian community using the idea of a wounded Jesus (Jennifer A. Glancy), head coverings in the Christian and Jewish communities in light of Europe's ban on the hijab (Fatima Tofighi), and 'pinkwashing' Paul (Joseph Marchal). Part III looks at the performance of Scripture beyond simply reading it. This ranges from looking at "political scripture" such as the second amendment in the US constitution (Rosamond C. Rodman) and the use of material goods in sexual purity campaigns by contemporary evangelicals (Sara Moslener).

The current volume has a lot of strengths. Many chapters use new and cutting-edge methodology which allows for well-worn stories to be seen through a new light. It challenges biblical studies to include more than just philological studies, which is particularly interesting for biblical scholars of faith. Many of the chapters would be a challenging yet enlightening read for scholars who are part of traditional scholarship.

Many *SCJ* readers will not agree with much of the book—but it should be read, nonetheless. In particular, Part II: An Unconventional Tour of the Biblical Canon, has rich material for text-based biblical interpretation. Working with additional fields of study in conjunction with biblical studies, such as literature, anthropology, and lived religion, opens up a lot of new possibilities for preaching, teaching, and living out religion. Since the book is so large and so varied, it is difficult to single out weaknesses that apply for the whole book. I would have liked to see an explicit chapter on changing methodologies, but that is a personal preference.

I would recommend this for use in upper-class undergraduate studies and graduate studies as well as for professors and pastors. I would not recommend this as an introduction to feminist biblical studies. Rather, this is for the reader who has some knowledge of the field. This will be most generative for those who can best make use of the challenges this presents in "remapping" it.

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**Walter BRUEGGEMANN and Clover Rueter BEAL. *An On-going Imagination: A Conversation about Scripture, Faith, and the Thickness of Relationship.* Ed. by Timothy Beal. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2019. 135 pp. $18.00.**

I have a recurring fantasy of sitting on a front porch in a rocking chair and, beside me, sits an author who has deeply influenced me, and we just talk. It's not that I have an agenda or burning questions. I simply want to peel back the curtain and better know this person whose work has formed me. Brueggemann is one of those people, and in this volume, I glimpse that experience.

Using a dialogic format, the book presents a series of conversations covering a wide range of topics from Brueggemann's writings, from exegesis, hermeneutics, and theology, to preaching and worship, to politics and Christian spirituality. In every case, there are moments where Beal, as a deft interviewer, seeks to clarify ideas or practical implications, while also probing the contours of Brueggemann's own story—his upbringing and journey into academia, the role that years spent in therapy shaped his life and theology, even his own effort to practice spiritual disciplines ("I'm not very good at spiritual discipline . . . I really have to stay at it," 106).

The result is a wonderful introduction not only to Brueggemann's thought, but also to his life. We encounter illuminating truths from a real person struggling to come to terms with who God is and what God is doing in the world. Indeed, viewed rhetorically, the book performs a communicative encounter in which we, the "audience," get to overhear this great scholar wrestle with the biblical text, in the discursive tradition of Habakkuk, where the prophet never directly addresses the congregation at all, or of Paul in Romans 7, where we eavesdrop on a performance of despair over the inability to earn salvation. As with any good conversation, of course, the topics in this book are not all pleasant. Brueggemann's discussion of "economies of extraction," for example, is most disconcerting. And yet, because it comes to us in a form through which we overhear dialog, we find ourselves considering subjects and ways of seeing God and Scripture from which we might otherwise retreat.

Although the book is short and written in a readily accessible style, it manages to address important questions with remarkable depth. As one example, Brueggemann speaks at length about what it means to take Scripture seriously, calling us to an "alternative literalism." "I am a literalist," he insists, "by which I mean, I want to pay attention to the letter of the text" in order to "maximize what is written there" (30). But then he explores what that means by insisting on a close engagement with form and language and, especially with the rhetorical texture of texts, challenging us to ask what the text is *doing* before we ask what the text *means.* He acknowledges that "the rhetoric is nonlinear and disjunctive, so it is creating a dramatic map of social reality. Which is why you cannot simply summarize or systematize it; you have to let the text do its thing" (35). Brueggemann goes on to give an example from Psalm 35, and even to provide a glimpse of how one might nurture that engagement with the text in a congregational Bible class. Woven throughout is his conviction about the foundational place the Bible holds within the church: "You can't have this God without this narrative" (32).

As another example, he explains (or better, *exclaims*) the potential for communal liturgy, each component "a radical countercultural act" (94), to create an alternative world from that of our culture's totalizing metanarrative. The opening hymn of praise affirms that "our lives are rooted in a reference point other than ourselves" (94). The confession of sin proclaims that forgiveness is available, within a world where "your records and debts follow you in perpetuity" (94). The benediction reminds us that when we depart that, as Brueggemann puts it, "the force is with you" (94). In the eucharist, where we come forward in a "parade of losses," we hear the words, "You're welcome . . . You're not alone" (97). Take any part of what we do together, even our announcements, and you find "countercultural affirmations of an alternative reality" (95).

This is a delightful and informative book, introducing us to many key ideas and convictions that permeate Brueggemann's work, in his own sometimes-irascible voice, yet also presented in a refreshing spirit of humility and vulnerability. For undergraduate and seminary students, it would make an excellent introduction or epilogue to the critical study of the Bible, or to a course in theology or preaching. For the pastor and layperson alike, the book provides a helpful orientation to many of Brueggemann's seminal ideas and perspectives. But one can even imagine using this book in a Bible class or small group at a local congregation, for people who otherwise might never read any of the author's works. Certainly, for those who wish to go deeper, it will provide a roadmap for navigating Brueggemann's writings. Of course, for those who are already Brueggemann fans, it will take you to the front porch for an afternoon of rich and formative conversation.

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**Mary T. LEDERLEITNER.** ***Women in God's Mission: Accepting the Invitation to Serve and Lead.*** **Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018. 240 pp. $20.00.**

"I have given them the glory that You gave Me, *that they may be one as We are one.*"
—John 17:22

If you judge a book by its cover, one glance reveals the heart of this volume. A woman's head bows slightly, perhaps in prayer. We immediately know her thoughts, for her surreal head is a globe, covered with all the continents of earth. When you open the volume, you hear from 95 women like that, from 30 nations, who have answered God's call to mission, committed to overcome every hardship for the glory of God.

The stories these women tell take us into the heart of day-to-day ministry. All leaders struggle with self-doubt sometimes. Sanjua, a mission Country Director in a severely persecuted nation says, "If you are sure of God's leading into the position, then he will not leave you alone, though at times you will feel lonely. Various types of circumstances will make you strong and mature. You cannot wait until you mature—your work or role will lead to maturity. If you are yoking with the Lord, nothing will be too difficult. It's very important to take the Lord's yoke and have the mind of Lord Jesus and remember that the power behind you is greater than [the] task ahead of you" (87).

Lederleitner's ethnographic study of respected women mission leaders from across the world brings new insights vital to the 21st century. The volume's 16 chapters come in four parts: "Appreciating Their Stories," "The Faithful Connected Leader," "Realities of Gender Discrimination," "What Women Need to Do Their Best Work." Abeni, a Nigerian who advises women involved in church planting, writes, "If you feel that God is calling you into ministry, it's not about you. It's all about him. And if he calls you, he will equip you" (49).

Lederleitner reexamines common, but perhaps unbiblical, patterns for men and women in mission. In chapter 9, "Strategies That Accommodate Others," her interviewees illustrate five ways to respond to discrimination through their personal stories. Chapter 10, "When Accommodation Hinders Faithfulness," illustrates several strategies for dealing with mistreatment (132-144).

Chapter 12, "A Healthier Metaphor in the Workplace," examines diverse ways women face unequal treatment in ministry leadership. For example, women are often excluded from mentoring opportunities and "are often left out of a wide variety of formal and informal settings open to men because people believe their gender predisposes them to 'cause men to stumble'" (158). Yet important planning, networking, and leadership development occurs in such settings. Lederleitner proposes the brother/sister model, "sacred siblings," as healthier and more biblical, and specific strategies to guard mission integrity (158-163).

God is moving, and all his children must answer his call. "In one Asian country, for example, God used a revival among teenage girls to burst forth the gospel in that nation, and those little girls have grown up to be extraordinary church and mission leaders" (205). Women have pioneered many mission fields; women comprise over half the world's missionaries. Lederleitner comments, "We all suffer if women do not faithfully follow God in his mission and develop to their God-given potential" (208).

This groundbreaking book offers fresh wisdom for *anyone* in leadership. Women in leadership will find encouragement, and many practical insights to help them go the distance with joy in God's calling. Men in leadership can find many strategies to reveal and reduce misunderstanding, hindrances to the gospel, and friction—and to unleash the full power of God's church in its global mission. Women—and men—whose minds and hearts are filled with Jesus and His Great Commission are our treasure! This book can help them work together as one.

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**Jürgen MOLTMANN. *The Spirit of Hope: Theology for a World in Peril.* Trans. by Margaret Kohl and Brian McNeil. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2019. 221 pp. $30.00.**

From the innovative analysis of eschatology in his first acclaimed monograph (in 1967) to his later works on creation and crucifixion, Jürgen Moltmann has consistently been a theologian of hope, expounding upon God's radical affirmations

of creaturely life and their significance for our contemporary world. With this volume of twelve wide-ranging essays drawn from his 2016 *Hoffen und Denken* and elsewhere, he continues that trend, offering vital contributions to "the upcoming ecological reformation of Christian theology and spirituality" (vii) by demonstrating the hope Christian theology still offers to a world that often seems hopeless before new and continued threats.

Part One ("Facing the Future") sets the agenda for the volume, analyzing global trends that threaten hope and articulating what theology must offer given these changes. As the first chapter suggests, our world stands in grave danger because it is no longer loved, affirmed, and accepted. The threat of nuclear annihilation remains, modern capitalism destroys the common meaning of society and erodes the possibility of democracy, and environmental destruction increasingly despoils the earth. Humankind therefore needs to construct a shared worldview organized around justice, communal solidarity, and reverence for all forms of life. The next six chapters demonstrate this possibility vis-à-vis a wide range of specific contemporary challenges, including environmental catastrophe, terrorism, economic injustice, and the growth of gargantuan "world cities."

With similar breadth, Part Two ("Learning from the Past") then considers the historical and theological roots of the world's troubles and of the hope Moltmann envisions. Topics in these five chapters include the influence and limits of Augustine's principle of "God and the soul," how Protestant denominations seek both truth and community, the eschatological and ecclesial dimensions of Calvin's doctrine of *perseverantia sanctorum*, God's passibility or impassibility, and forgiveness as the precondition for a new beginning. The book ends without a concluding chapter. However, recurring themes suggest Moltmann's ultimate point is something like this: The hope we need is grounded in God's action toward the world, especially God's indwelling all of creation via the Holy Spirit and the eschatological redemption Christ brings. These divine truths radically affirm life, secure the possibility of restoration for both victims and perpetrators (whether of violence, ecological destruction, or economic injustice), and in turn empower us to love life and resist a culture of death.

Only a theologian as prolific as Moltmann could compose a volume that so skillfully balances breadth and depth. Moltmann is as insightful about urbanization's relationship to poverty and pollution as he is about modern political failures to redress terrorism. Such topical diversity helps make his rich theology of hope accessible. His book could be used in a variety of settings, from ecclesial to academic, and would be valuable as a whole or in select pieces (noting that a few of those pieces are somewhat more technical than others, such as the chapter on divine impassibility). The volume's breadth is also commendable because of the vision behind it—one in which everything in the world is connected, including the perils we face, and thus genuine responses to these challenges must not focus on just one issue. This is an increasingly important theme in ecotheology, and Moltmann's development of it puts him in good company, though one might wish for more consistent engagement with such company. The volume's early essays engage the likes of Pope Francis, Leonardo Boff, and even other religions in constructing a life-affirming worldview, but such

interlocutors effectively disappear in Part Two. This shift may limit the second part's usefulness in settings where Protestant theological commitments cannot be assumed.

By and large, however, this volume is compelling. In an era when Christian faith often appears disconnected from hope and love for our physical world and the range of biological life therein, Moltmann gives abundant theological reasons to believe that such hope and love can spring anew in the face of contemporary crises.

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**Andrew ROOT. *The Pastor in a Secular Age: Ministry to People Who No Longer Need a God.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. pp. 291. $26.99.**

Although Charles Taylor's magisterial work, *A Secular Age,* remains an indispensable guide for understanding contemporary culture in general, many Christians long for clarity around the identity of church and pastor within this culture—for something like the map one seeks out in an unfamiliar shopping mall, with its bright red arrow and the words that say, "You are HERE." The current volume, book two in his "Ministry in a Secular Age" trilogy, provides just such a map. Indeed, this is the book I wish I had had as I began my own ministry many years ago.

Root begins with two poignant episodes that convey the book's themes, the ongoing, miraculous inbreaking of God and the vital need for pastoral ministry within this secular age. The first involves a despairing young man on the brink of suicide who hears a disembodied voice singing, "God's mercy is wide, God's love is deep, and you, dear child, are loved." The experience is enough to turn him away from his plan and toward a life in ministry. Only when he is old does he meet the person, now a woman in her eighties, who had held him and sung those very words over him when he was a small child. Second is the story of Paul Kalinithi, a brilliant young neurosurgeon who, on the verge of a successful career, is stricken with cancer. His fatal illness awakens him to the central place of the pastoral presence in human healing. As a physician, he realizes that he is, above all else, a pastor. At a moment when many church pastors find themselves becoming either custodians of declining religion or religious entrepreneurs, these stories reaffirm the place of pastoral ministry in a secular world.

The first half of this volume summarizes Taylor's story of how Western culture has evolved from the pre-modern age of enchantment, when people inhabited a porous cosmos constantly invaded by the supernatural, to our modern world where we live exclusively within the imminent frame, cut off from world of enchantment. Taylor's account highlights the shift toward inwardness that marked the focus of the Reformers, where one's intentions mattered more than one's behavior, along with their focus on public order and decorum, which they hoped would reinforce appropriate inwardness, and to which Taylor attributes the eventual rise of the modern political-economic state.

What Root uniquely offers is an explanation of what happens to pastoral identity at each phase of this cultural evolution, briefly recounting the stories of six

paradigmatic church leaders who served at key moments of transition. We go from Thomas Becket (d. 1170), a priest mediating the divine presence for ordinary people who knew and feared its reality, through the 19th and 20th centuries, where pastors like Lyman Beecher and Harry Emerson Fosdick functioned as influential public figures supporting social morality as the key to universal human flourishing and, in the case of Fosdick, increasingly located that flourishing within human psychology.

That brings us to today, where we experience the world as "buffered" selves, with the boundaries of our inward lives under our individual control, where belief or unbelief are matters of personal choice. Unlike our forebears, we experience the world through an imminent frame where all is ordinary, within a modern moral order that assures our freedom in exchange for our acquiescence to the demands of civility. And yet, Taylor insists, we still sense some kind of moral obligation to live meaningful lives. Only now, having experienced what Taylor calls the "nova effect," we choose from an explosion of options in order to find our personal, authentic, spirituality.

For Root, the paradigmatic figure for this age is Rick Warren, pastor of the Saddleback Community and creator of the wildly popular "Purpose Driven Life" conglomerate. Warren, he says, is the quintessential "pastor as entrepreneur" who, through public relations and organizational savvy, successfully carved out a huge market share for the "Christian option" within the smorgasbord of contemporary spiritualities. No longer is the church "a collective community that holds a broad identity but is instead a *resource* to help *you (individually)* finally find the authentic purpose you've been seeking" (138). The pastor labors in a marketplace where "you can only eat what you kill. Neither the denomination nor the larger society delivers people, or more significance, to your door. This leads to great insecurity and competition between pastors; it assumes that those with the bigger church are more talented, because people follow only what speaks to them. Heritage, history, or a sacralized society are long gone" (142-143).

In part two of the book, Root calls pastors to an identity rooted not in the contemporary social imaginary but in the biblical self-revelation of God. To introduce part two, he vividly recounts the 1978 Paris lectures on politics by a philosopher many would see as a primary voice in the contemporary turn toward deconstruction and critical theory, Michel Foucault. Although this at first seems out of place, what becomes clear is Foucault's insistence that the source of our modern political imagination, centered in the expectation that government oversee and care for its people—is rooted squarely in the religion of Israel, for whom God was a shepherd, for whom divine action was ministry. The divine identity then becomes the pattern for contemporary pastoral identity.

From there, Root turns to God's pastoral ministry, using as an overarching metaphor what physicists call the "event horizon," the boundary at the edge of a black hole in space where light clings to existence before being sucked into eternal, inescapable darkness. The moments when we find ourselves hovering on the edge of hopelessness and despair turn out to be precisely when God seems to arrive. The paradigmatic events of this arrival, of course, are the Exodus and the resurrection, but we find that same motif across the Bible and in the lives of contemporary believers, from

Abraham and Sarah awaiting the promise of a son, Hagar, whom God calls by name and invites to tell her story, Moses before Pharaoh, and Ezekiel looking out over the valley of dry bones, to the young man in the introduction who heard that voice singing of God's grace. These moments of God's inbreaking, to use Taylor's language, represent "cross pressures" that push against the dominance of the imminent frame.

These examples underscore the calling of the pastor in a secular age, not to "build a church of size and reputation" (185) but to nurture a community that anticipates God's arrival. Just as God encounters Hagar in an intimately personal way, the pastor creates "a space of personal names . . . where people know each other enough to narrate their stories, sharing their experience of decisive impingement and their yearning for something more" (188). The pastor facilitates the sharing of testimony as a crucial part of creating the space of anticipation, for "it is when hearing the stories of decisive impingement (lost jobs, cancer diagnosis, addicted children) of those we know by name that the community is prepared for the God who arrives as minister" (189). Indeed, in all the pastor does, whether in worship, prayer, or personal encounter, the pastor invites the community to turn its shared attention toward the acts of God in history and in our own lives, so that we come to anticipate God's miracles, which come even to "surgeons and suicidal boys" (272).

My lauds for this volume are many. The author poignantly captures the malaise that many pastors feel as they labor in a culture where pastoral ministry has lost its social legitimacy, unclear as to what their role is, and deeply uncomfortable with the impulse to reduce ministry to a "battle for market share" (5). He does an outstanding job of summarizing Charles Taylor's sometimes dizzying account of secularization, and the creative interweaving of that account with the stories of key figures in the evolution of pastoral ministry is most instructive. His call that we return to a pastoral ministry modeled after the pastoral ministry of God is well-argued and compelling. It offers a much-needed counterbalance to the danger that, absent a clear theology of pastoral identity, we will unreflectively fall into modes of ministry patterned more after contemporary consumer marketing than that of the crucified messiah.

My criticisms are few. At times, the complexity of the author's examples obscures the point he is making, as when he recounts the plot of the movie, *Arrival*, in order to introduce the black hole "event horizon" as an analogy for human experience. Additionally, his occasional use of slang phrases ("slut-shaming," 213, and "baby-momma," 214), seem jarring in such a carefully written book. More substantively, his treatment of Rick Warren and the contemporary mega-church pastor, though incisive, at times borders on caricature, as if careful attention to God's inbreaking might not be possible within a modern, multi-campus church.

Despite those minor criticisms, however, I highly recommend this book, especially to pastors, to students, and to anyone struggling to discern the place of the church in a secular age. It is well-written, biblically grounded and theologically rich, and provides a much-welcome map of the landscape within which we seek to fulfill our callings.

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**Michael PASQUARELLO, III. *The Beauty of Preaching: God's Glory in Christian Proclamation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 288 pp. $26.99.**

As an ecclesial activity that is almost entirely oral, it seems strange to describe preaching in aesthetic language. In some realms of Christianity, most notably Protestant, evangelical Christianity, preaching is considered to be a wholly communicative action that can have no connection to worship, art, or discipleship. Preaching stands apart from the liturgy in many congregations, even if those congregations do not recognize their "worship set" as liturgy. In one congregation, in an act of desperation, the preacher may attempt to "be creative" through an ill-conceived attempt at relevance by re-enacting a conference speaker's demonstration of flipping a couple of chairs around the stage. The horror was captured on Facebook to the tune of more than a few laughing-face emojis. In another congregation, however, the preacher gazed upon the worship minister leading a majestic choral hymn and came to the (false) conclusion that her humble articulation of this week's text will only faintly limp to the Communion table. And, yet, as she received the congregation, several people thanked the preacher for her sermon. Even the worship leader noted that it was "a beautiful meditation."

In his most recent volume on preaching, veteran homiletician Pasquarello reflects on such preaching. During his extensive teaching career, he has held three chairs in preaching—first at Asbury Seminary, then at Fuller Seminary and now at Beeson Divinity School. A deeply committed student to the discipline of sacred rhetoric that is firmly rooted in a rich Trinitarian theology, he offers an extended meditation on preaching that seeks to return "to the joy of knowing and making known God's glory to the world" (xv). What he offers is so much more than a handbook on how to craft sentences that ring in the ear or prick the heart. He offers a conversation on how to see the preaching moment as an extension of the preacher's relationship with God through Christ by the Spirit. The minister need not be identified by the title of "first follower" because the care and keeping of the scripture lesson brought to the congregation articulates a rich, deeply-flowing faith that embodies what Paul noted as the philosophical aesthetic of the Christian faith—things that are true, honorable, just, pure, pleasing, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise (Phil 4:8). To this end, he offers a charge to the preacher to reclaim the beauty of preaching by saving it from the mechanistic influences of the contemporary rat-race of celebrity by questing for a homiletical aesthetic that holds preaching as a converting, spoken, simple and strange theological activity.

Preaching stands at a crossroads. Peruse the shelves of any homiletic scholar and you will likely come across titles such as *The End of Words*, *Preaching Must Die* and even *Preaching at the Crossroads*. Each of these volumes, and those like them, present an ironic argument that preaching has always stood at a crossroads—the crux of past and future, of trouble and grace, of grief and hope. Pasquarello does not stand apart from such concerns. Rather, Pasquarello maintains, much like the woman who washed Jesus' feet (Mark 14:3-9), preaching that is vulnerable to delight in the love of God will proclaim the "life-giving power of the gospel" (71).

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**David S. DOCKERY and Christopher W. MORGAN. *Christian Higher Education: Faith, Teaching, and Learning in the Evangelical Tradition.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018. 576 pp. $50.00.**

During a time when higher education is experiencing disruptive change, Dockery and Morgan present a collection of 27 essays, written by distinguished scholars with extensive academic and administrative experience, that focus on the importance of evangelical Christian higher education. Such colleges and universities must be committed to creating grace-filled communities that holistically develop men and women of character who love God with all their mind (Matt 22:37). As a valuable resource to the church and society, it is critical that these institutions not lose sight of their mission to equip future servant leaders with a strong foundation of faith and a Christian worldview. Unfortunately, some universities that were once closely church-related have succumbed to mission drift and retain no semblance of their original theological underpinnings. To mitigate this risk, leaders must know what foundational commitments are essential and be sensitive to the subtle forces that are at work in each generation.

The volume is divided into three parts. The first provides a brief survey of historical influences on Christian education and traditional evangelical distinctives. These include the authority of the Bible, work of the Holy Spirit, and our creation in the image of God. This section is a reminder that biblically based education is not a new concept and it is not limited to the seminary classroom. The role of Scripture should be widely emphasized in the academic curriculum and not be limited to a single department or co-curricular Bible study or chapel time.

All disciplines deserve to be considered from a biblical framework. This focus transitions to the second part of the book that addresses how such a perspective serves as a compass to guide one in a better understanding of their field of interest. In a world where information is easily available through an Internet search, teaching from a faith perspective requires the professor to encourage Christian critical thinking at the highest level. For the student, learning from a faith perspective is more than embracing a body of doctrine or academic content. This integration of faith and learning does not take place in a vacuum and is a holistic dynamic life process. It involves interaction between students and their teachers who possess mastery of subject matter (humanities, science, mathematics, social sciences, philosophy, music, the arts, education, and professional programs) and whose love for God is reflected in their love for students.

The third part of the volume considers practical application of the principles covered in the previous two. Acquiring knowledge, embracing a biblical worldview, and developing Christ-like character in a supportive community are not self-serving goals. The primary objective of evangelical Christian higher education must be to develop global Christians for whom the mission of God is their driving motivation in life.

It is a challenge to coordinate the contribution of so many different authors and to avoid redundancy. That is seldom the case in this book. In fact, there are several instances in which the writer provides context by explaining the relationships between

chapters. With such diversity of views, the reader may not agree with every perspective, but there is ample opportunity to find common ground in supporting the potential impact Christian higher education can and does have on our culture. One should keep in mind this work is a project that originated on the campus of Trinity International University and over half of the contributors have an association with the institution.

At the conclusion of each chapter is a series of questions for further reflection. These thought-provoking inquiries serve not only to stimulate the reader's thinking, they can also become excellent discussion starters for faculty and administrators to engage in conversation on the chapter topic. This volume will be a useful resource and reference tool for professors, administrators, trustees, and all who desire to better understand the forces that have influenced our faith-based institutions of higher learning and want to consider how to stay faithful to our mission.

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

This volume is an abridgement of the author's five-volume series titled *A Constructive Christian Theology for the Pluralistic World*. The text "introduces you to all the basic Christian doctrines in their historical and contemporary perorations, including the current global and "contextual" diversity, but also puts you in continuous dialogue with four other living faiths and their teachings, namely, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Furthermore, it also delves widely into insights from natural (and behavioral) sciences as far as they have bearing on Christian theology." (xi). This abridged version is intended to be clear and accessible to those close to the beginning of their studies in theology.

Several features distinguish this systematic theology. First, it seeks to "tackle the issues of plurality and diversity," including "cultural, ethnic, sociopolitical, economic, and religious plurality." (xi) Second, it is deeply committed to Christian convictions based upon "the deep and wide tradition of biblical, historical, philosophical, and contemporary systematic traditions" (xi-xii). Third, its approach is dialogical with cultural and religious diversity, as well as the sciences and secularism. (xii) Fourth, it puts "the best of doctrinal traditions developed and tested during church history into a dialogue with the current global diversity," and "seeks to challenge the hegemony of aging white European and North American men." The author engages the contributions of theologians across many cultures and perspectives "as equal conversation partners with tradition and contemporary systematic views." (xii) Finally, this project addresses issues not normally covered in contemporary systematic theologies, including "violence, race, environment, ethnicity, inclusivity, and colonialism." (xii)

This systematic theology, after an introductory chapter concerning the task of theology in a pluralistic and diverse world, divides the subsequent chapters into ten traditional areas of systematic theology, including revelation, Christology, and salvation. Each chapter deals with several major issues in each area of theology, while interacting with biblical texts, creeds, Church fathers, and various Christian theologians from varying cultures and perspectives. Questions are raised specific to alternative theological perspectives, such as feminist theology and liberation theology, and distinctive answers are offered from those perspectives.

This volume would serve well as a core text for an introductory undergraduate or graduate course in systematic theology, especially where course student learning outcomes include interaction with diverse theological approaches and other religious traditions. The wide interaction of this text could make it less appropriate in contexts where the focus of the course is more concentrated on the biblical sources for Christian doctrine.

Though the five-volume series of which this book is an abridgement may address the following issue, the greatest weakness of this work is its limited biblical account of doctrines and their associated theological questions. Biblical interaction is certainly present, varying in degree from chapter to chapter, and it is clear that the author's presentation of Christian doctrine flows from the special revelation of Scripture. If one is looking for a systematic theology with a robust biblical account and analysis of Christian doctrines, more appropriate options exist. Though likely not practical for the undergraduate student because of the amount of reading, a good approach may be for a student to read this work along with another systematic theology that contains a more comprehensive treatment of the biblical foundations for Christian theology.

The choice to give less space to biblical information is likely intentional, since this work offers those distinctive features listed above. This would be the work's most significant strength: in a relatively concise, yet thorough, systematic theology, especially when compared to the five-volume version, readers are introduced to central Christian doctrines and important theological questions are discussed through interaction not only with culturally and theologically diverse Christian perspectives, but also with perspectives offered by other world religions. Such interactions are not only helpful for bringing greater clarity and understanding to theological questions and issues, but they also allow the thoughts of both Christian and non-Christian perspectives to sharpen the expression of one's theological positions. The author employs these various perspectives in a way that is fair and respectful to Christian theologians and theological traditions, as well as those from a non-Christian perspective. His focus is theological, rather than apologetic. Practically, this means that he does not focus on critiquing claims of an individual theologian or tradition but, instead, focuses on insights that help enhance the reader's theological understanding.

This volume is an interesting and fulfilling read even for the advanced student or professional theologian. The interaction with diverse perspectives helps one consider questions, perspectives, and positions in new ways. It is a text that teaches. It is written

not to give exhaustive accounts of doctrines and theological issues, but to help the reader understand theology in the context of a plurality of perspectives present in the modern world, thus equipping the theologian in a way not as fully undertaken by other works. This is the author's most important contribution to contemporary theology. Kärkkäinen offers, as intended, "a new kind of theology textbook, the first of its kind."

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**Joshua D. CHATRAW and Karen Swallow PRIOR. *Cultural Engagement: A Crash Course in Contemporary Issues.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018. 368 pp. $29.99.**

With all of the rhetoric surrounding culture, culture wars, and changing culture, what exactly does the term "culture" mean? How does culture affect people's everyday lives and their understanding of the world around them and their interpretation of the Bible? How can Christians effectively engage their culture without compromising morals and biblical standards? Authors Chatraw and Prior endeavor to answer these questions and more in this volume.

Describing the beginning of cultural engagement as "interacting with our neighbors face-to-face and treating them as individuals rather than simply offering sweeping generalizations," the authors emphasize that escaping culture is impossible. Although many definitions of culture exist, they contain three common components: 1) it consists of more than just beliefs or worldviews, 2) it is complex, and 3) it is communal. In other words, sweeping generalizations about "all millennials" and common simplistic definitions of culture do not go far enough. Additionally, the communal aspect of culture means people create it with their communities, not as individuals.

Living within a culture, people do not always understand the impact it has on thinking. While they may reject or accept certain aspects of it, they still understand the world through it, even without realizing that at times. According to Prior and Chatraw, culture communicates meaning, shapes our sensibilities, and replicates itself to the next generation.

No matter the perspective, Christians must understand that they all interpret Scripture through cultural lenses. They apply biblical principles to current culture and work to live out those principles. Understanding this allows people to become more aware of their own shortcomings, misapplications, and misunderstandings of Scripture. Since different Christians apply biblical teaching in different ways, it is important to look at scriptures from a variety of perspectives in order to discern those misunderstandings or misapplications. This requires cultural humility and willingness to change.

After a thorough and enlightening description of culture and the Christian's engagement with it, the authors provide essays written by prominent Christian

teachers, writers, and theologians who approach several hot topics from different points of view. They present these without commentary to expose the reader to different worldviews.

The essays in this volume are short and easy to understand, but they do not provide much depth. This book would be good for a beginner course in worldview and apologetics or a Sunday school class considering other Christians' worldviews, but it would not be useful for a serious study of the issues our culture faces. It might help a Christian leader who needed discussion material for a congregation struggling over contemporary issues. The introductory material written by Chatraw and Prior give a more in-depth understanding of the term "culture" and Christians' appropriate engagement with it. The book would be useful as a resource for someone who wants to connect with others and understand the points of view that differ from their own, and it is a good attempt at explaining that different believers may come to differing points of view with good intention and solid biblical exegesis.

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**Melissa ROGERS. *Faith in American Public Life*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2019. 338 pp. $34.95.**

In an increasingly pluralistic and polarized society, every year the United States Supreme Court seems to take at least one or two contentious cases that raise legal questions about the exercise of religious faith as it interacts with the government and public life. The attendant conflict calls out for a voice that can bring light to cut through cultural murkiness and order to its chaos. Rogers, an attorney with experience in academia as well as public service on President Barack Obama's White House staff, ably provides that clarity and light in the current volume. This succinct statement of the law of religious liberty in the United States, with particular attention to American constitutional law, will provide policymakers and their staffs at all levels of government with a valuable tour of the law of religious liberty. Instead of a legal treatise, Rogers provides a useful description of how the law addresses concrete issues like employment law, faith-based organizations [FBOs] and government funding, and discrimination law.

Each chapter lays out a helpful statement of the general applicable legal principles on a topic in almost executive summary fashion before moving to a thoughtful analysis of the ways the law has worked out those principles—often recounting Supreme Court cases but also describing legislation and executive branch policies. In so doing she evenhandedly lays out the issues and how the Supreme Court (or others) resolved those issues. After introducing relevant constitutional law and concepts concerning the First Amendment's Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses, this Baptist lawyer closes subsequent chapters with a few pragmatic recommendations for practices that flow naturally from her analysis.

After introducing constitutional law, Rogers examines the role of religion in the American presidency before moving to barring of religious tests for participating in public life, religious expression on government property, public partnerships with FBOs, limits on the use of federal funds to support religious activities, religious exemptions and accommodations, respecting religious freedom in the workplace, and hate crimes. In concluding she makes a more aspirational call for common ground in recognizing that the ongoing American settlement concerning faith in public life "has created space for people to draw on religious as well as civic ideals to push the country to new heights." (232)

Rogers identifies principles that reflect the law and her underlying commitment that "[p]roviding robust protection for free exercise is a necessary complement to a strong constitutional prohibition on government promotion of religion." (5). While she sees the biggest "threats to religious freedom and pluralism" in "hostility against religious minorities" (3), she also finds threatening an "overreaching on free exercise issues" joined with scaling back the "prohibition on government advancement of religion." (4)

As might be expected, Rogers is appreciative of President Obama and rather critical of President Trump—yet it is a principled criticism of Trump. She also gently critiques developments in Supreme Court case law. Sometimes she observes, when the Court changes course, that nothing has changed but the composition of the Court. That observation subtly makes a point about shifting politics and the judiciary and it has bite as a short-term explanation. Yet it ignores the reality that over the long term all developments in the law reflect changes in the Court's composition in dialogue with changing circumstances and trends of thought.

Naturally when Supreme Courts hand down significant religious liberty decisions every year, Rogers' 2019 book cannot address those subsequent decisions, but readers can apply the principles and historical framing her book provides to understanding those decisions.

I wish this resource had been available to many a legislator, department head or staff for explaining a point I had to make on occasion as a government lawyer concerning why the government could fund this but not prohibit that. Additionally, this book can aid ministers and educated laity in more responsibly framing their understanding of church and state issues than social media allows. This volume could even provide a needed refresher on religious liberty law to general practice attorneys. I heartily recommend this book as a guide to a non-specialist.

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**Willie James JENNINGS. *After Whiteness: An Education in Belonging.* Theological Education between the Times. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 175 pp. $19.99.**

Scholars write books. It is part of the academic grind for some. Between grading

exams and supervising thesis projects, the obligatory writing project awaits more work. Some scholars find a niche field and write consistently in that field. Some scholars run a gamut and write about a number of topics related to their larger field. Then, every now and then, a truly noted scholar will author a book on pedagogy, the craft of teaching. And, on very rare occasions, the truly exceptional scholar, the ones who have achieved a Zen quality amongst the rat race that is academia, will author a memoir. Noted academic memoirs include William Willimon's *Accidental Preacher: A Memoir* (Eerdmans, 2019), Eugene Peterson's *The Pastor: A Memoir* (HarperCollins, 2012) and Richard Lischer's *Open Secrets: A Memoir of Faith and Discovery* (Broadway Books/Random House, 2002).

It is this idea of secrets that connects to Willie James Jennings' latest book. With his opening words, Jennings writes about secrets. He writes about the secrets that he learned as a seminary dean, secrets that he cannot share but that he can explain what they mean. These secrets, Jennings notes, are ordinary but severe. These secrets are locked up in our bodies and in our institutions. A generally-accepted narrative has dominated the telling—or excluding—of these secrets. The seminary, Jennings argues, while dedicated to the training of men and women for ministry or, more likely in the case of America's more noble institutions of theological higher education, theological scholarship. These secrets are engrained. Most of us in academia keep them without even realizing it. We keep them in the books we select for our students to read, choosing one author over another. We keep them in the way programs are designed—such as faculty promotion procedures, where the quality of the CV should matter but often does not. And we keep them in the way we relate to students, promoting one view of manhood (or, even, womanhood) over another. We keep secrets. They are ordinary but severe.

Part of a new series from Wabash Center fellowship alumni, Jennings' book—and the books in the series—seeks to explore theological education within an increasingly multicultural milieu. Jennings confronts the whiteness that is deeply evident in theological education. These are the secrets that we scholars keep. Until we choose not to. Wrapped in a poetic prose that could rival the writings of August Wilson, Toni Morrison or Maya Angelou, Jennings blends memoir with original poetry, blending stories of student interactions, many of them drenched in the trauma of unrealized oppression or segregation with his own reflections versed in lyrics which connote a depth of emotion rarely seen in an "academic book." Jennings uses his platform as a respected theologian and noted author to lift up the voices of those students who have not been able to live into their God-ordained calling because of the color of their skin, definition of their gender or even reluctance to support the hierarchical narrative. Jennings calls this mentoring, yet what he is really calling us to is pedagogical discipleship.

The primary issue with this volume is whether Jennings can articulate a pedagogical approach to discipleship that will be relevant in the post-Covid educational context. The jury is, honestly, out on this issue. However, Jennings book is both provocative in its challenge to the continuation of secret-keeping present in

theological education and generative in a series of conversations about the future of theological education that is desperately needed.

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**Christopher J. H. WRIGHT. *The Old Testament in Seven Sentences: A Small Introduction to a Vast Topic*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019. 184 pp. $18.00.**

In this volume, Wright introduces the OT to readers unfamiliar with it—a daunting task. The titular "seven sentences" function neither as chapter titles nor as summaries, but more as epigrams to each chapter. Each sentence partially reveals its corresponding chapter's focus. Chapter 1, "Creation" (Gen 1:1), discusses what it means to live in a world created good, but marred by human sin. Chapter 2, "Abraham" (Gen 12:3), examines themes of promise and blessing. Chapter 3, "Exodus" (Exod 2:2), moves quickly from a theology of redemption into a treatment of Pentateuchal laws. Chapter 4, "David" (1 Sam 13:14), surveys Israelite leadership from the wilderness to the dissolution of Solomon's kingdom, with only a brief focus on David himself in the last third of the chapter. Chapter 5, "Prophets" (Micah 6:8), discusses prophets' social roles and rhetorical devices, then briefly treats several prophets from Elijah to Jeremiah. Chapter 6, "Gospel" (Isa 52:7), focuses on the prophetic hopes for and reactions to Judah's post-exilic rebuilding. Chapter 7, "Psalms and Wisdom" (Ps 23:1), mostly takes an ahistorical, literary survey approach to the books indicated.

The book's structure invites comparisons with Victor Matthews' *Old Testament Turning Points* (Baker, 2005). Setting aside Wright's final chapter, both books summarize the OT in a blend of canonical and historical sequence, from creation to post-exilic Judah. Stringing Matthews's chapter titles together produces a sparse but coherent paragraph summarizing the Protestant OT storyline of Genesis through Nehemiah. Stringing Wright's chapter titles together produces a sequence of bullet points. Similarly, Wright's seven sentences, read in sequence, do not produce a coherent summary paragraph. The title of the book thus seems a bit of a misnomer.

While no treatment can exhaust the subject matter, Wright covers a lot of ground in just 150 pages. Not content merely to rehearse the storyline, Wright also systematizes larger theological themes. In this regard, however, the book's brevity limits Wright's opportunity to support his claims with evidence and reasoning. At several points, specialists may feel that Wright's summaries and lists do not naturally arise from the text, or that they inappropriately elevate one text at the expense of other relevant passages, giving novice readers too "tidy" a view of the Old Testament's contents.

Use of the term "Old Testament" signals the book's pervasive Christianness. Readers of *SCJ* will sympathize with this approach, but it affects the overall

presentation in nontrivial and perhaps unhelpful ways. Most notably, Wright does not allow the Hebrew Bible to stand apart from the New Testament, with its own integrity and character, and this cascades down to the Hebrew Bible's individual components. This may be most obvious in the "problem-solution" pattern by which Wright occasionally relates the Hebrew Bible to the New Testament. For example, Wright presents Jesus as the solution to the failures of Israel's and Judah's monarchies (chapter 4), and to the questions posed in Job and Ecclesiastes (chapter 7). In this way, Wright's overall presentation requires readers to view the Protestant Christian Bible as a thing planned, as a whole, from the start. Wright does not quite come right out and say this, but only God could be the agent of such planning. Thus, Wright does not just describe the contents of the Old Testament but anchors those comments to a debatable view of the Bible's origins and character.

Professors could assign this book as a brief introduction to the OT through a Christian theological lens. For a chiefly historical or literary presentation, better choices exist.

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**Jonathan S. GREER, John W. HILBER, and John H. WALTON, eds. *Behind the Scenes of the Old Testament: Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. 615 pp. $49.99.**

Engaging with the cultural context is a vital part of reading and interpreting the OT well. While most OT introductions give some attention to this aspect of the interpretive process, the subject matter is so vast and complex that a separate volume introducing this study is warranted. This substantial volume is designed to supplement "traditional literature-based, canonical surveys" by providing an introduction to the ancient world and its study (xviii).

The book itself is divided into ten sections which are structured around a play metaphor. Just as a play is performed on a stage, a section is devoted to the "Stage" of the biblical text. This section includes articles on historical geography, geology, the climate, and plants and animals of the biblical world. In a section titled "Sets and Props," the editors introduce the field of archaeology and provide articles summarizing the archaeology of the standard historical periods. The section on "Scripts" includes articles on the literature of each major ANE culture (Egyptian, Ugaritic, Mesopotamian, Hebrew Inscriptions, and more). In the "Acts and Scenes" section, the historical context of Israel and the ANE is summarized. This section nicely outlines areas of agreement and dispute in the analysis of Israel's history. The section related to "Scenes" in particular details the background information relevant to several significant moments in history where there is convergence between the biblical text and other sources (archaeology and ANE accounts). For example, articles include one on Sheshonq's incursion into the Levant and another on the Mesha Inscription among several others. These articles illustrate different ways of analyzing

the biblical text in light of other ANE documents and sources. In the section on "Themes," articles outline areas like monotheism, the temple, priests, and worship (both public and private/familial). There are also articles related to the family, economy, governance, and social organization. In summary, this book provides a comprehensive introduction to all the major areas and disciplines utilized in the study of OT backgrounds.

The editors are to be commended for assembling a wonderful group of over sixty contributors who are experts in their respective fields. Each article is roughly seven to ten pages and in general they provide an excellent introduction to the area under investigation. The relatively brief length of each essay makes them ideal to assign as supplementary reading in an OT introduction, or hermeneutics course. As the introduction states, the scholars contributing do not all come from the same perspective regarding how to relate the biblical text to history. The goal of the volume is not to advocate for a particular approach to the history of Israel, but to introduce the full breadth of scholarly investigation in these areas. This creates some tensions, or different views on Israel's history, within the volume itself. This can be pedagogically useful in a classroom setting, one of the goals of the book (xviii).

This is an outstanding and unique reference work. In one volume, the editors have compiled a gold mine of quality essays, which will be a benefit to students, pastors, and scholars. While the book seeks to be an "entry point" to the study of the ancient world (xvii), many of the articles assume prior knowledge and/or are overly technical for the introductory reader. The book would be enhanced by including a glossary of technical terms to serve the uninitiated. These minor criticisms aside, this volume will serve as an indispensable reference work for years to come.

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**H. H. HARDY, II. *Exegetical Gems from Biblical Hebrew: A Refreshing Guide to Grammar and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. 224 pp. $19.99.**

A typical biblical Hebrew textbook may introduce a grammatical concept, describe it abstractly, and illustrated it with example sentences from the Hebrew Bible. The table of contents of this volume, with chapter titles like "Construct Phrases" and "Verb Conjugations 1: *qatal* = *wayyiqtol*," might imply a similar procedure. What the volume really delivers, however, is a series of short studies illustrating the interpretive benefits of attending to biblical Hebrew grammar, as indicated in the verse references that supply the chapter subtitles.

Each chapter follows the same basic pattern (as Hardy outlines on xiv). Each opens with a quotation from the Hebrew Bible, generally half a verse to two verses. Hardy introduces the passage, reviewing the literary context and usually pointing out some interpretive question that arises from the passage or some grammatical feature that is more significant than an inexperienced reader might think. Hardy then reviews the relevant grammar, often going into a little more detail than one typically finds in

an introductory textbook. At the end of the chapter, Hardy returns to the focal text, showing how careful attention to grammar yields an interpretive insight. All of this occurs briefly; chapters average about seven pages each. Unavoidably, some of Hardy's insights are more interesting than others, but overall, the book is very effective.

Hardy suggests (xiv–xv) that the volume could supplement any biblical Hebrew class, from the first year onward (plus independent review after formal instruction has concluded). However, using the book in the first year seems too ambitious. By the third semester, students should be sufficiently skilled to read (with lexical assistance) the sample verses provided and follow Hardy's explanations and interpretations. The only drawback—inevitable for any book of this type—is the need to synchronize the chapters with the rest of the syllabus. Each of the thirty chapters commands attention, but professors may need to "double up" on readings to fit the whole book into a single term. Additionally, some of the chapters stand alone, but more than a few (helpfully indicated by sequence numbers in the chapter titles) make the most sense when read in order. Thus, instructors can specify a reading order that coordinates with other course activities but must take care to avoid any confusion arising from a presumption of sequential reading. The benefits will repay the extra effort.

Instructors considering supplemental texts for a third-semester biblical Hebrew course may wonder how this volume compares with Milton Eng and Lee Fields's *Devotions on the Hebrew Bible: 54 Reflections to Inspire and Instruct* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015). The titles themselves point to the key difference: Hardy aims for *exegetical* insights, while Eng, Fields, and their contributors aim for *devotional* experiences. Although the reflections in Eng and Fields make extensive use of Hebrew, a number of the devotions could forgo the use of Hebrew with no change in substance. Not so for Hardy, as interpretation of the Hebrew text is the whole point. The Eng and Fields collection offers more spiritual nourishment; this volume offers more understanding of the Hebrew language.

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**Ben WITHERINGTON, III. *Isaiah Old and New: Exegesis, Intertextuality, and Hermeneutics.* Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2017. 524 pp. $34.00.**

I had the benefit of taking a class from Ben Witherington on Romans and participating in a weekly biblical seminar with him in my classwork for my PhD studies at Asbury Theological Seminary. Not only is he a gifted NT scholar, but he is also an exemplary Christian. Although I did not always agree with his exegetical conclusions on some NT passages, I never found him to be disagreeable—only gracious and humble.

Many scholars have found the intertextual dynamic between OT and NT to be an exciting endeavor. One such scholar is Richard Hays whose work on intertextuality, allusions, and echoes within the NT has piqued the interest of many others, including Witherington. Hays brought intertextual studies to the forefront in the 1980s, and his

goal was to demonstrate that the wording and thematic ideas of the OT saturate the text of the NT. A well-informed student of the OT can find its messaging coursing through the NT. The OT was the only text for early Christians. Thus, early Christian writers cite the OT regularly, allude to it often, and use it as a foundational text for teaching about salvation in Christ. Remember that early Christians did not have a NT because it will not be finalized until the latter part of the first century. They simply had an OT and the teachings of Jesus to launch Christianity.

Witherington's approach to intertextual exegesis is straightforward, and he keeps the reader carefully informed as he moves from passage to passage. Witherington's primary goal is to show how the influential ministry of the Prophet Isaiah had a dramatic effect upon early Christian leaders. In fact, many of these leaders wrote and taught from a deep well of understanding of God's salvation plan progressing through the nation of Israel, found fulfillment in the ministry of Jesus, and led to the establishment of the church. These NT writers, as Witherington often shares, looked back to the OT through the ministry of Jesus and explained the unfolding of God's gracious act of salvation in Jesus and how this salvation act progressed to a new covenant and a final eschatological outcome. In other words, "they looked back in order to look forward" (this is my paraphrase of Witherington's recurring quip). This approach does not negate the progressive development of Scripture; in fact, Witherington wholeheartedly advocates progressive revelation. However, he notices that the interpretive methods of the NT writers are different than those derived from the modern approach of hermeneutics and explores their interpretive methodology. Anyone who has read a citation of an OT text in a NT passage has found, at times, that the means of connectivity is often curious. The NT writers do not strictly practice the modern hermeneutical method, even though many Jewish hermeneutical principles have similar principles ("Let Scripture interpret Scripture whenever possible"). How do modern Christians understand and unravel the usages of Isaiah within the NT? This is the question behind Witherington's research in the use of this prophetic book in the NT.

One of the strengths of his discussion is his keen instinct to understand the OT context fully before moving to its use within a NT passage. His exegesis on select passages from Isaiah is stellar, and although he is not an OT scholar, he does provide helpful exegetical intuitions about passages within their historical and cultural backgrounds. Witherington translates each passage of study from the Hebrew OT and the LXX, which is beneficial because NT writers cite the LXX more than the Hebrew OT. This is the reason why some NT citations seem to be more paraphrase than actual quotation. In addition, Witherington's work in the NT concerning the use of an OT passage is informative.

For me, Witherington's willingness to force some interpretive nuances onto OT texts based on the NT use of a text is debatable. However, his hermeneutical principles follow Wesleyan means, which endorses a quadrilateral approach: Scripture, experience, tradition, and reason. This leads him to lean on reason at times, which can approach eisegetical interpretation rather than exegetical analysis. The Wesleyan approach allows space for individual import of information into a text, which can

distress textualists in the Stone-Campbell tradition. Nonetheless, the strengths of Witherington's insights and his keen discussion of the use of Isaiah in the NT exceeds any negative assessments that I have offered. For that reason, I recommend this resource to anyone who has interest in intertextuality and the interesting hermeneutical practices of early Christian leaders.

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**Bruce K. WALTKE & James M. HOUSTON. *The Psalms as Christian Praise: A Historical Commentary.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019. 354 pp. $36.00.**

This is the third book in a series of commentaries exploring the book of Psalms in its context within the Christian community of the church. The first two volumes are *The Psalms as Christian Worship* and *The Psalms as Christian Lament.* Those first two volumes generally cover Books I-III of the Psalms, and this one focuses on Book IV of the canonical collection (Pss 90–106).

The stated intentional purpose of the book is to edify the church by "hearing both the Voice of the Psalmist through the careful exegesis of the selected corpus and by hearing the Voice of the Church in response" (Preface, xii). Note that not every psalm in each canonical book exactly aligns with the overall theme of worship, or lament, or praise. But there are general tenors of each collection, so, without trying to awkwardly conform every psalm to the theme of the volume, the authors simply skip it and leave it to another time.

In the book's Preface, the authors clarify that "[p]raise is the essence of the Psalter, but since so many psalms are entirely songs of praise, we have mostly narrowed the focus to a subspecies of praise psalms: those that proclaim 'I AM reigns'" (xi). They cite that the proclamation, "God reigns," occurs five times in the Psalms. Four of the five are in this collection (Ps 93:1, 96:10, 97:1 and 99:1); therefore, the authors build their approach around praising Christ, who reigns the earth.

The authors are each a Professor Emeritus at Regent University in Canada. Waltke's specialty is biblical studies, especially Old Testament, while Houston focuses on spiritual theology in his research and teaching. Resultantly, Waltke writes the first part of each commentary exploring The Voice of the Psalmist, and Houston adds historical notes on the Voice of the Church in Response. The resulting book (and series) is an impressive and sweeping study in the long relationship of the church with the book of Psalms. And, while the authors seem to lean in a relatively conservative theological direction, the scope of their presentation is consistently fair to scholars of varying opinions, without surrendering or arguing over their positions. Such inclusive breadth and reserved restraint allow the purpose of the book (praise) to receive the most words and to remain at the center of the work.

The book begins with a chapter answering the basic questions about Christian praise: What, Why, Who, Where, When, and How to praise. The object of praise, they

explain, is YHWH, which they translate as I AM, but which was usually replaced by the scribes with Adonai ("Lord"). Providentially, they say, the less-specific name "the Lord" could be equally applied to both Father and Son, making the Psalms more easily accessible for coming generations of Christian worshipers. The authors make a strong case for the place of praise in the life of believers, which helps it to transcend merely perpetuating common corporate practice within the organized church.

*SCJ* readers may note the brief mention of the verbal root of the Hebrew word *mizmor*, which means "to make music." They write, "So a 'psalm' is a song with musical accompaniment." (25) They then go on to say, "In the MT, every word has, above and/or below it, an 'accent' mark that adds dignity, solemnity, beauty, and clarity to the readings. These accent marks may have symbolized hand signals or musical notes. The Chronicler says that various Levitical musical guilds were led 'under the hands of' directors, perhaps meaning by chironomy." (26)

Each chapter of the book is given to the exploration of one of twelve of the individual psalms in this collection (Pss 94, 101–102 and 105–106 are not included individually). In turn, each chapter has four parts: Voice of the Psalmist (translation), Commentary (introduction and exegesis), Voice of the Church in Response (three or four examples of how the church has used the psalm in praise historically), and Conclusion (generally, context and message). Each chapter is 20-40 pages of material, indicating that it is rather complete in its scholarship. Yet this reader appreciates that application of the use of the psalm in Christian praise is the guiding principle for the book, so it is not intended as merely a reference tool for translation or commentary, without using them in the context of Christian praise.

"PART I. VOICE OF THE PSALMIST: TRANSLATION" is an in-depth look at the authorship, and especially at the text of the psalm itself, with far more print given to footnotes than to the actual translation. This resource is worthy of a book itself, as it is translation and commentary in one. Helpful to most readers is that Hebrew and Greek words are phonetically spelled with English letters, rather than showing other alphabets. Alternate possible meanings, or textual variations, are mentioned, though briefly.

"PART II. COMMENTARY" consists of two sections: Introduction and Exegesis. Dr. Waltke seems to be generally conservative in his views as to authorship and dating but is inclusive in his presentation of varying views of scholarly consensus.

These parts focused on the biblical text itself are extremely helpful to anyone who wants to read the psalm and know what and why various versions might translate the text differently. And his short forays into cultural context or alternative views makes for a fascinating backdrop, allowing the reader to navigate his or her own passage through the textual nuances. As an example, in Psalm 90, he ruminates on phrases in verse two ("before the mountains were born, and before He gave birth to the earth and the world"). He writes, "In the ancient world's cosmology, the mountains are the foundations of the earth in the midst of the primeval ocean depths, so here they are mentioned first (Jonah 2:6[7]; Ps 104:6-8). . . . the mountains represent the oldest parts of the earth, which sustained life at the beginning of historical time (Mic 6:2). "Were born" may be a figurative echo of an ancient mythological idea that mother

earth suffered labor pains in giving birth to the mountains. And "you brought to birth" clearly identifies Israel's God as the Agent. Thus, Moses polemicizes against the pagan motherhood-earth myth, just as Milton polemicized against Greek myths using their own subject matter." (39)

In less than a paragraph, Waltke has taken readers from the text itself, to cross references in Scripture, to pagan myths and even to Milton, and brings readers back around to nuance the syntax of the verse itself. He refrains himself from speculation on the origin of the cosmos but mentions what is important in order to understand the intention of the psalmist himself. This is the sort of interplay of background and textual criticism that occurs throughout the book.

"PART III. VOICE OF THE CHURCH IN RESPONSE" begins Dr. Houston's contributions to each chapter. Waltke compares views of various scholars on a particular translation or interpretation, while Houston gives more of an historical sweep of varying use and application of the psalm.

By way of illustration, again using Ps 90, it is Houston who discusses whether this psalm fits as the last psalm of Book III, as the church fathers tended to do, or the first of Book IV with the Reformers. Such discussions might well belong in the realm of scholastic discussions of the text, rather than its application in Christian spiritual practice. However, its placement does not have to do with the text itself, but with how the church categorized and used it; therefore, it reasonably is addressed by Houston.

Then he mentions an overview of use: "Psalm 90 was sung in early Christian liturgy as a morning psalm, while in Jewish liturgy it had been a Sabbath psalm. . . . it has traditionally been quoted at funeral services. Isaac Watts (1674–1748) paraphrased the psalm in the well-known hymn, 'O God, Our Help in Ages Past'" (56). He then spends a few paragraphs comparing use of the psalm by Athanasius of Alexander (295–373), who writes that singing the Psalms is therapeutic, by Augustine of Hippo (354–430), who speaks with a bit more spiritual application, then by Gregory of Nyssa (332–395), who "discerns musical harmony between the cosmos and the human person" (58), and then by Martin Luther (1483–1546), who was more polemic in arguing for Mosaic authorship and using the psalm as a lament over sin than a comforting musical expression of faith and spirituality.

"PART IV. CONCLUSION" provides a brief summary of the meaning and application of the psalm for today's reader. As such, I personally find it to be very helpful to lift my head from out of the weeds of the particulars and focus on the big picture of what I may have gleaned from the chapter, and especially from the psalm itself. It effectively brings me around, both as a worshiper and as a worship leader, to know how to use this psalm in Christian praise. In a very real sense, I feel like I have "been to church" with each chapter and am looking forward to the next volume.

The body of Christ can be deeply grateful for the work of these two scholars, who have compiled years of study and reflection into this volume. I would recommend it for any thoughtful worship influencer in a congregation. The book of Psalms has been neglected and all but ignored in recent generations of Evangelical churches, and a work such as this can help to restore the pertinence and primacy of the Psalms in contemporary worship practice. Through this volume, today's church can learn from

carefully reading the text, and from listening to our forebears in broadening our own culturally myopic practice of worship.

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**Brian Neil PETERSON. *Qoheleth's Hope: The Message of Ecclesiastes in a Broken World*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020. 216 pp. $90.00.**

Peterson challenges a common understanding held by a number of scholars that Ecclesiastes takes a pessimistic view of life. However, he maintains that neither is the book overly optimistic. Qoheleth instead is a realist. He describes what living in this sinful broken world is like "when God is not central to one's life" (3). The book is about Qoheleth's desire to instruct readers on how to wisely navigate the difficulties, injustices, and brokenness they encounter every day (166).

Peterson follows the more optimistic tradition of scholars like R. N. Whybray whose classic 1982 article identified seven "joy" passages that serve as summary statements in the book (2:24-26; 3:12; 3:22; 5:18-20; 8:15; 9:7-9; 11:9). Peterson, however, develops it further and shows how the book offers a sustained argument on enjoying God's good gifts which is not limited just to these seven passages (3). For example, in 4:7-11 God gives simple pleasures such as family and friends. In 6:1-6, Qoheleth speaks of those who don't enjoy God's good gifts (94). Such persons have been given many good things from God but refuse to enjoy them (6:3). Peterson shows how this theme is a strain woven through Ecclesiastes. Thus, Ecclesiastes contains a message of hope for a broken world.

Peterson claims the rhetorical structure of Ecclesiastes develops this theme of hope. He argues that the book is not haphazardly put together but is a unified whole. Chapters 1:12–2:26 contain Qoheleth's close and personal examinations on his own life. Chapters 3–6 are his observations of others and society. Here he observes the lives of ordinary persons. Chapters 7–10 make up the way in which one is to live in this broken world through wisdom and proverbial sayings. Here Qoheleth examines what is good through the "better/than" proverbs in these chapters. In 7:5-12 he "encourages his readers to live in the present and enjoy what God has given despite the brokenness, inconsistencies, and injustices of the cosmos" (104). In chapters 11:1–12:8 Qoheleth draws his instructions to a close by reminding readers of the brevity of life and the finality of death. He advises readers to financially plan for the future (11:1-6) but at the same time enjoy one's youth in the fear of God (11:7-12). Finally, in 12:9-14 the epilogist affirms Qoheleth's orthodox teaching. Peterson identifies a "yes/but" scenario that runs through the book: Yes, life is fleeting *but* there is also joy (169). Many scholars, he observes, focus on the "yes" negative side and ignore the "but" positive side. Yet there is almost always a "but" that follows the "and." "*But*, wisdom is better than folly; *but*, enjoy life and the good things God has given people; *but* fear God, *but* know that you will be judged" (169).

Central to his argument is his translation of the word *hebel* as breath or fleeting (40), even though he acknowledges that Qoheleth uses it in other nuanced ways as well. One of the reasons Peterson reaches this conclusion is related to the rhetorical structure and the message of the book. Ecclesiastes is framed by poems dealing with the agelessness of the universe (1:3-11) compared to the brevity of human life (12:1-9). Humans are a "proverbial blip on the radar screen" (167 also 47). Peterson presents a thoughtful and well-informed study worthy of serious consideration, even though some might conclude he has overstated his case.

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**William L. KELLY. *How Prophecy Works: A Study of the Semantic Field of* נביא *and a Close Reading of Jeremiah 1:4-19, 23:9-40, and 27:1–28:17.* Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 272. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2020. 332 pp. €64.99.**

This new book began as a dissertation, and reads throughout as such, but it contributes in an important way to the field of OT introduction—specifically in achieving a deeper understanding of how the prophets understood their role. Kelly uses three passages from Jeremiah to shed light on just what it is, in connection with the OT, that "we talk about when we talk about prophets" (19-23). The book is centered mainly on the use of the term נביא (and the root נבא), and on comparisons within the biblical text between true and false prophets. Comparisons of the prophet's role to that of the priest—an important area of research during the past twenty years—appear throughout the work. The usefulness of Kelly's study is strengthened by the length of Jeremiah's book, and by the fact that Jeremiah's portrayal of the prophetic office appears to be as paradigmatic as it is accessible. (Jeremiah was one of the earliest prophets to be called a נביא.)

This attempt to define נביא depends, to no small degree, on carving out a place for the נביא's technology, calling, and style of prophesying, in contradistinction from other prophetic models. Kelly rightly moves the discussion away from close readings of the Hebrew term's Semitic cognates, and toward matters of the background narrative within Jeremiah. This includes a partial rehabilitation of the "ecstatic" element in prophecy. (The co-opting of Jeremiah and the others by modern social critics has unfortunately obscured numerous features of the historical prophets.)

According to Kelly, his is the first work to employ a "semantic method" in uncovering the nature of prophecy in Jeremiah (65). He fills this need with a detailed discussion of all the ways in which נביא is used, including the especially rich field of terminological "collocations" (see the table on 72). Among the insights yielded by this study is an appreciation of YHWH's "sending" of the נביא within an international context.

This is an important contribution to the study of the OT prophets, and belongs in every serious library concerned with that area. Although the book never gets

weighed down in technical terminology or sociological models, some readers will find its dissertational flavor less than appealing. The book's insights are definitely worthwhile for serious students—especially with regard to understanding the נביא within the context of Near Eastern prophetism in general.

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**Bruce W. LONGENECKER. *In Stone and Story: Early Christianity in the Roman World*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020. 304 pp. $34.99.**

In this volume, Longenecker presents the reader with an approachable and visually appealing synthesis of his scholarship on early Jesus devotion and the material cultures of Pompeii and Herculaneum. In his own words, his goal is to develop an interpretive bridge between the modern reader and the first-century Roman world so that we as readers may read the NT texts within their earliest contexts (7). While this is by no means the first volume to attempt this, Longenecker's contribution is in his focus on exploring the realia of the Roman world with a view toward understanding the experience of the average city-dweller and directly interfacing between this and NT people, events, and texts. This he accomplishes with abundant pictures and diagrams of material culture from Pompeii and Herculaneum, interfaced with Hellenistic texts that shed interpretive light on the realia. Longenecker's presentation is engaging and informative without falling into dry descriptions or overly involved explanations.

The volume is divided into four major sections: general overview, cultural expressions of cultic devotion, social status, and household dynamics. Because, as Longenecker notes, life never organizes itself neatly into distinct quadrants (25), the overlaps between these areas create a small amount of repetition. However, Longenecker uses these opportunities to add depth to the discussion instead of simply repeating himself or referring the reader back to previous discussions. The author expressly intends his work to be most useful in a teaching environment (25), and thus limits his interactions to primary sources (mostly material culture but abundant textual as well) and the NT. In fact, each chapter is divided into first a discussion of insights gained from the Vesuvian sites, and second, their intersections with the biblical texts. Those wishing more dialog with current scholarship should look to his bibliography and other published academic works.

As a textbook, this volume will be most appropriate at the college or introductory seminary level since the work does an excellent job of setting the stage for more complex and deeper exploration. Chapter 3 in particular is geared toward those with minimal experience accessing or researching archeological databases. Longenecker also provides in this chapter the information readers need to virtually access the physical sites and photographs of their material discoveries. With these tools in hand, lifelong students outside the formal classroom will also be able to step onto the stage he sets and begin to see the world through first-century eyes.

One note of warning may be necessary: Longenecker does not shy away from the role sexuality played in the first-century world, whether it be in the household, in economy, or in the temple. Longenecker is tactful and respectful in his interfacing between material culture and Scripture, and he serves as an excellent model for the type of dialog we should be having—and not avoiding—in our critical engagement of the first century and of our own. That said, a wise professor should have a plan in place for addressing this material in the classroom!

The greatest criticism, though, that could be leveled at this volume is its length: it feels too short. Yet increasing its length and interaction with scholarship would decrease its approachability and certainly change its audience. Longenecker's brevity makes the volume the perfect first-century wading pool: readers who are ready to get their feet wet will find themselves intrigued without being overwhelmed, and those who take his material to heart will find their reading of the NT permanently changed for the better.

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**Bruce W. LONGENECKER. *In Stone and Story: Early Christianity in the Roman World.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020. 304 pp. $34.99.**

This volume by the Baylor University professor and scholar is a welcome introduction to the life and longings ("fire in the bones") of some first-century Roman inhabitants of Pompeii. Pompeii and neighboring Herculaneum were buried in the eruption of 79 CE. This book immerses the reader into the artwork, archaeology, inscriptions and graffiti of Pompeii, along with some relevant classical literature, in a masterful introduction to the Roman social world of the first Christ-followers which "selectively explores some points of the interface where the world of the Vesuvian towns intersects with themes and issues evident in the New Testament texts" (24).

This book is Longenecker's entrant into an increasingly popular Biblical Studies sub-genre, the study of NT culture and history via the archaeology of Pompeii. While we have no indication that the apostle Paul or other early Christian leader ever visited Pompeii, the extremely well-preserved ruins are instructive. "Despite the diversity of urban centers throughout the Mediterranean basin, certain features characterized life in Roman urban contexts in general" (23). Longenecker avers, "I consider myself a better scholar of Jesus-devotion precisely because I am also a scholar of the Vesuvian towns" (2).

After a brief overview of the history of the area, Longenecker explains his approach and methods. Although various topics require different methods, the book exhibits a consistent approach to each subject. Readers gain visual access through lavish use of illustrations (mostly the author's own photographs), and cognitive access through inscriptions, and the prolific amounts of graffiti from the time. Longenecker's student-friendly approach walks readers through the MANN inventory

numbers (*Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli*), as well as numbers locating an artefact on the Pompeiian archaeological grid. Likewise, he explains the *CIL* designations, the inscriptions generously distributed throughout the work (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*). Also very helpful for students (and instructors) is the glossary at the end of the book, the chapter-by-chapter list of study questions, as well as "Further Reading," and a useful index of "Scripture and Ancient Writings."

Following the opening section ("Protocols of Engagement"), the book is divided into three additional "protocols" of various social categories: popular devotion, social prominence, and household effectiveness. Each section is filled out with five or six chapters on various topics within the "protocol." While handsomely illustrated with charts and photographs, Longenecker has resisted the urge to sensationalize the famous castings of the bodies of those killed in the volcanic eruption—pictures to which virtually everyone familiar with the archaeology of Pompeii has been exposed. He also resists the common tendency to showcase the sexually explicit nature of much of the art work. Neither subject is ignored, but Longenecker clearly downplays these familiar tropes. His discretion is welcome for those of us working in a conservative Christian environment.

The strengths of this book are compelling. Longenecker artfully brings to life the stories of many of the inhabitants through his impressive interpretation of the archaeological *realia* in conjunction with texts (inscriptions, graffiti, and classical texts). We learn a great deal about different members of the various social strata, and how they lived together. Each chapter contains convincing discussions of the intersection of his Pompeiian findings with topics within the New Testament. Particularly helpful are the parallel presentations of death, resurrection and afterlife in the early Jesus movement and in devotion to Isis. His section on local politics provides a fascinating lens through which to view Paul's discussion of the Corinthian partisans ("I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas, I am of Christ"). Understanding Roman domestic religion—veneration of the *Lares* (household gods, or "lords") and celebration/worship of the *genius* of the householder—puts into sharp focus the challenges faced by early Christ followers when later confronted by the demand to "swear the oath" to the *genius* of the Caesar.

The few minor weaknesses of the book include the lack of footnotes or endnotes. There are some places where a strategic endnote could have enriched a discussion necessarily too brief in the body. One such topic in need of expansion was the implied question about Gentile converts both to faith in Christ but also away from the practice of the old domestic religion—often in the same exact domestic space. Thinking of "sacred space," what did it mean in terms of the physical domestic space for a Gentile convert, formerly a pagan adherent to the *lares,* and celebrant of the *genius* of the householder, to worship the one true Creator God, father of Jesus Christ, in what amounted to "enemy territory" (a household or workshop dedicated to traditional gods)? The "Further Reading" section was indeed helpful, although the sources did not fully answer my question (above), or the extent to which such Roman-specific practices were in play in the Hellenistic east, where most of Paul's ministry was conducted—Roman colonies such as Corinth and Philippi notwithstanding.

Some of Longenecker's interpretations of the evidence are open to challenge. I was surprised to learn that the famous dog mosaics from Pompeii probably did not refer to literal guard dogs, but to canine spirit-forces invoked to protect a particular residence. Other such mosaics at the entries of houses include representations of a wild boar and a wounded bear—surely not literal guard animals. However, I question the "either/or" interpretation of the *Cave Canem* mosaic ("Beware of Dog"), given the well-known plaster cast of the "chained dog," discovered at Pompeii in 1874. Another interpretation I questioned was the implied literacy of prominent women portrayed posing with wax tablet and stylus. The section on literacy contains two of these illustrations—including the more famous one often mistakenly identified with the poet Sappho (147). The pose also appears in the portrait identified as Terentius Neo and his wife, which is found in the section on Family (207). Not only are the three women depicted with the trappings of literacy, their poses are exactly the same—a wax tablet in the left hand, right hand raising the stylus to her lips in contemplation. With such a stylized pose, do the images accurately portray literacy, or rather, do they show that wealthy inhabitants desired to be perceived as literate? The considerable recent literature on the subject of literacy in the ancient world has raised anew such questions. At the same time, Longenecker correctly notes that local graffiti and political "posters" clearly imply a relatively high level of literacy in Pompeii which transcended social classes.

To conclude, this book is a very welcome offering in the area of the Roman social contexts of the early Jesus movement. I will use this book in my courses, and warmly recommend it to teaching colleagues and to pastors looking for serious but accessible writing on the subject.

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**Raymond F. COLLINS. *Wealth, Wages, and the Wealthy: New Testament Insight for Preachers and Teachers.* Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2017. 347 pp. $34.95.**

In this volume, Collins presents an analytic study of what the NT teaches about wealth, wages, and the wealthy. In a brief preface (xiii-xix), he notes that, while there are nineteen passages that speak about greed, along with others that address "the love of money, the lure of wealth, or the mammon of iniquity," many of which reflect Jesus' own teaching, "greed and the proper use of wealth are . . . not at the top of the list of most preachers' favorite topics" (xv). Through this study, Collins hopes to encourage preachers to give greater attention to the ethical teaching of Jesus with regard to the use of money and, specifically, "to help the pastor who wants to preach on a particular text" related to wealth, wages, and the wealthy (xvii).

Collins begins with the letters of Paul, which he regards as the most ancient Christian witnesses. In Chapter 1, "Paul" (1-15), he discusses Paul's socio-economic background, and suggests that Paul "came from a reasonably well-to-do family, at least one sufficiently rich to send the young Saul off to Jerusalem for an education and provide for him during

the time of his studies in the Holy City" (2). Collins infers from the circumstantial catalogue of 2 Corinthians 11 that "Paul voluntarily embraced a life of poverty for the sake of his mission," but that "he knew several relatively affluent people on whose support he could count" (3). These included Phoebe, Prisca and Aquila, Lydia, Cloe, Philemon, Gaius, Crispus, and Erastus, all of whom were instrumental in providing various kinds of assistance to Paul. At the conclusion of the chapter, Collins stresses that "Jesus was not against wealth," and briefly explores ways that wealth can be used for the benefit of others. In Chapter 2, "Paul's Letters" (16-67), Collins discusses passages in 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans and Galatians, Philippians, Philemon, and 1 Thessalonians. These passages deal with various topics, including the collection Paul had agreed to gather for the Jerusalem saints, decorum in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, ministerial payment, greed, wages, taxes, and other topics. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how these topics relate to contemporary issues, particularly those of living wages, the withholding of wages, and wage theft.

The next four chapters cover the Synoptic Gospels and Acts. In Chapter 3, "Mark" (68-94), Collins points out that this Gospel generally does not say much about money, but he does make some important points. He argues, for example, that the parable of the sower (Mark 4:1-9; 13-20) was originally about money (74) and debunks the idea that "the eye of a needle" was one of Jerusalem's gates (Mark 10:25). Chapter 4, "Matthew" (95-138), contains studies of a number of important passages, including the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5–7), and several passages that deal with money and the Temple. In Chapter 5, "Luke" (139-188), Collins studies every passage that deals with money, and also gives attention to Luke's special material, as well as a number of stories about rich men. Chapter 6, "Acts" (189-213), contains a number of important stories, includes several descriptions of the ideal Christian community in Jerusalem (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35; 5:12-16), introduces a variety of pertinent characters, and contains a record of Paul's farewell discourse.

In Chapter 7, "The Deutero-Pauline Texts" (214-242), Collins studies passages in Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Timothy, and Titus, all of which he considers pseudepigraphic (214). Chapter 8, "The Catholic Epistles" (243-270), includes the examination of passages in James, 1-2 Peter, and Jude, which are sometimes referred to as the "General" or "Universal Epistles," since they are not addressed to any particular local church or specific individual. The discussion of passages in James dominates this chapter, since "the rich and the poor are a major focus of the author's concern" in that book (244). Chapter 9, "The Johannine Corpus" (271-286), considers passages in the Gospel of John, the three epistles of John, and the book of Revelation.

In the final chapter, Collins presents some "Concluding Thoughts" (287-305). He notes that his study "leads to one singularly important conclusion, namely, that there is a remarkable consistency among the various authors and their different writings with regard to wealth, wages, and the wealthy" (287). He criticizes the prosperity gospel and cautions about proof-texting to justify greed. He emphasizes that, in order to develop a proper approach to wealth, the entirety of the scriptural witness needs to be taken into account (289-290). He discusses the differences between the ancient and

modern economies and warns against the love of money. He considers how wealth can be used in the service of God and God's people, norms for almsgiving, filial responsibility, and the payment of taxes. He devotes special attention to discussions of wages (299-301) and the wealthy (301-305). The book concludes with a bibliography of scriptural commentaries (307-312), a general bibliography (313-324), a Scripture index (325-336), an index of Classical, Jewish and Patristic sources (337-340), an index of modern authors (341-344), and a topical index (345-347).

My only criticism of this volume is that sometimes Collins's discussions of the relevance of NT teaching on wealth and wages seems to go beyond the general to advocate partisan perspectives. In his discussion of taxes, for example, Collins criticizes both individuals and businesses for "finding . . . ruses to avoid their divine-mandated social obligations," which include paying their full tax burden (91). In another example, in his discussion of the early Christian community in the book of Acts, although he repeatedly acknowledges that the early Christians only sold "some" of their possessions in order to provide for those in need (195), he later insists that almsgiving in the early church was "the alleviation of individual and collective poverty" (295). He maintains that "the aim of almsgiving is equity, a fair balance between our abundance . . . and the needs of others" (295). He goes on to aver that Jesus and the NT authors asserted "the demand to share resources with the poor in order to eliminate poverty and create equity" (295).

On the whole, however, Collins's volume presents a balanced study of every passage in the NT that deals with wealth, wages, and the wealthy, and several of these studies will be of special interest to readers of the *SCJ*. For example, he corrects the tendency to spiritualize passages that are really about money, such as the parable of the sower (Mark 4:1-9; 13-20). In another case, he carefully examines Paul's teaching that "those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel" (1 Cor 9:14) (34-37) and highlights the argument that "wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due," which Paul states as a principle in Rom 4:4 and argues at length in 1 Corinthians. In yet another example, he concludes that "there is little doubt that the Bible does look upon wealth as a gift of God (288) and highlights the Palestinian Targum's paraphrase of Deut 6:5, which reads, "You shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mammon" (293).

I recommend this volume for anyone interested in the issues reflected in its title. Its accessibility, solid exegesis, comprehensiveness, bibliography, and indexes will make it a particularly useful tool for professors, students, and pastors.

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**Heinrich von SIEBENTHAL. *Ancient Greek Grammar for the Study of the New Testament.* Oxford: Peter Lang, 2019. 738 pp. $85.85.**

After nearly sixty years, we finally have a new advanced grammar for the study of the Greek New Testament. English-speaking students have never gone this long

before without a new advanced grammar since the first one appeared in 1825, the famous, groundbreaking grammar of Georg Winer, which was translated from German into English by Moses Stuart and Edward Robinson. The last time we had a new advanced grammar in English was when Robert Funk translated Blass and Debrunner's famed *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch* in 1961. Like the first grammar by Winer, and like the previous one by Blass and Debrunner, this new advanced grammar is also a translation from a 2011 German original, *Griechische Grammatik zum Neuen Testament*, produced by Heinrich von Siebenthal (1945– ), which was a revision of a grammar with the same title that he co-wrote with Ernst G. Hoffmann (1903–1985) in 1985 (2nd rev. ed. in 1990).

Siebenthal has organized his grammar into four basic sections: (1) Writing System and Phonology, (2) Structure of Words—Morphology, (3) Syntax, and (4) Textgrammar. The first section deals with what other grammarians traditionally call "orthography" or how the sounds of the language are represented by written symbols. It also includes discussions on accentuation, diacritical marks, and sound changes like "quantitative metathesis" (§9) and compensatory lengthening (§10).

The second section, dealing with morphology or word formation and inflection, contains a feature not found in previous advanced grammars of the New Testament: numerous paradigms of noun declensions and verb conjugations. In this regard, this grammar resembles the older advanced grammars of Classical Greek like those of William Watson Goodwin and Herbert Weir Smyth. There are no such tables of noun and verb forms in the advanced NT Greek grammars of Winer, Buttmann, Robertson, and Blass and Debrunner, although Howard did include some in the second volume of Moulton's grammar. This situation has always forced students to fall back on an intermediate grammar like Robertson's *Short Grammar* or Dana and Mantey's *Manual Grammar* for such tables. But the second section is so replete with paradigms that the user may never need to consult another grammar for them.

The third section of this grammar, dealing with syntax, is by far the longest, as one might expect. In this section, Siebenthal regularly contrasts the differences between NT Greek and Classical Greek, just as Blass and Debrunner do. And yet, whereas Blass and Debrunner assume that the users of their grammar are quite familiar with Classical Greek, Siebenthal never makes this assumption. Instead, he is always careful to explain the syntactical usage found in Classical Greek and then shows how it is the same, similar, or different in the NT (an appendix summarizes the differences between Classical and NT Greek). In this vein, it is significant that earlier in this same year (2019) a new advanced grammar of Classical Greek appeared, the *Cambridge Grammar of Classical Greek*, the first since Smyth's a century ago. And later this same year, a beginning grammar by Michael Boler appeared, offering "a unified approach" that introduces students to both Classical Greek and NT Greek at the same time.

Siebenthal avoids getting bogged down in matters that are still under debate. For example, during the past two decades, scholars have fiercely debated the nature of voice in verbs, especially the middle voice, and the concept of deponency without ever reaching a consensus. Most of these scholars will be unhappy with the terseness and traditional sound of Siebenthal's treatment (§64b). Siebenthal also rejects Stanley

Porter's timeless view of tense in the indicative mood (§193a), as do the authors of the new *Cambridge Grammar of Classical Greek*, in spite of its popularity among NT scholars.

In the fourth and final section, Siebenthal discusses what he calls "textgrammar," which is similar to discourse analysis. Here he analyzes how an entire text is constructed and structured at a macro level. "The most important feature characterizing a text is its coherence" (§300). Siebenthal has produced an epoch-making grammar. Every serious student of the Greek New Testament needs to obtain it.

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**Daniel KING, ed. *The Article in Post-Classical Greek*. SIL International Publications in Translation and Textlinguistics 10. Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2019. 194 pp. $39.95.**

I find it surprising that there are still so many varied and conflicting scholarly opinions about the basic nature and function of the definite article in ancient Greek. After all, it is by far the most common word in ancient Greek (19,756 times in the NT), far more than double the occurrences of καί, the second most common word (8,947 times in the NT).

In this volume, King has collected six essays. He prefaces these essays with a good introduction that provides a historical background. Beginning with the famous monograph by Thomas Fanshaw Middleton (1769–1822), *The Doctrine of the Greek Article* (ed. Hugh James Rose; [4th ed.]; London: Rivington, 1841), King traces what other scholars have said and then highlights the contributions made in this book.

In the first essay, Maria Napoli argues that the article in Greek developed from the demonstrative pronoun as "a dedicated marker of definiteness" (17). She then distinguishes between *logical definiteness* and *pragmatic definiteness*. Logical definiteness describes nouns that refer to unique persons or things. She then breaks this category down further into two subcategories. *Logically derived definiteness* refers to someone or something that is "unique in all the world" (the sun, the moon, the atmosphere), while *logically inherent definiteness* refers to someone or something "unique in a relative world," that is in a specific time and place: the Queen of England, the Prime Minister of Italy (21). *Pragmatic definiteness*, on the other hand, is "dependent on the linguistic context" (24). Napoli further breaks pragmatic definiteness down into two subcategories: pragmatic definiteness dependent on the linguistic context (e.g., the anaphoric article) and pragmatic definiteness dependent on the extra-linguistic context (e.g., the wash basin in John 13:5 that everyone knows is always present). Napoli looks at several passages primarily in the Four Gospels and concludes that "in the New Testament the definite article has the same functions and distribution as in Classical Greek" (51).

In the second essay, Cristina Guardiano agrees with Napoli that the article in Greek developed from the demonstrative pronoun (68), but she conceives of

definiteness differently: A noun is definite when "its referent is marked as accessible or identifiable by the hearer on the basis of information available in the extralinguistic or linguistic context . . . or of general knowledge" (60). She reaches the same conclusion, however, as Napoli in regard to the article in Classical Greek and NT Greek having "the same rules" (59).

Ronald D. Peters, however, presents a provocative thesis in the third essay. Contrary to Napoli and Guardiano, Peters insists the Greek definite article did not develop from the demonstrative pronoun but rather from the relative pronoun (89). He also argues that the article makes a noun "concrete" rather than "definite" (90-91).

The last three essays belong together. All three reject Peter's claim that the article developed from the relative pronoun, and all three unite around the notion that the article primarily "has to do with cognitive identifiability rather than definiteness" (101). In the fourth essay, Stephen H. Levinsohn and Mark Dubis focus their study on the use of the article in 1 Peter and conclude "the Greek article indicates that the entity concerned is cognitively identifiable rather than definite" (122). They argue that a noun is initially introduced without the article and thereafter always has the article unless it is "salient" or "focally prominent" (123), where special attention is being drawn to it by the absence of the article.

In the fifth essay, Steven E. Runge makes his defense for "identifiability as the core semantic meaning of the article" (133), and in the final essay, Jenny Read-Heimerdinger seeks to confirm this thesis with the names of persons and places in the book of Acts, comparing the texts of *Codex Vaticanus* and *Codex Bezae*. Like Levinsohn and Dubis, she finds "salience" as the primary explanation for the absence of the article with the subsequent mention of a name (182).

I found this book to be a challenge to read. The technical, often idiosyncratic terminology used by the authors obscures their analyses of the data. And the title of the volume is really a misnomer, for each contributor focuses too much of their attention, sometimes exclusively, on the Greek of the NT. In order to see the true trajectory in the development of the definite article and of the indefinite article in Greek, one must present data from Homer to Classical Greek, Hellenistic Greek (including the Septuagint, the NT, and papyri), Medieval Greek, and Early Modern Greek. Only then can one adequately examine and evaluate the proposals put forth in this volume.

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**David Alan BLACK and Benjamin L. MERKLE, eds. *Linguistics and New Testament Greek: Key Issues in the Current Debate*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020. 288 pp. $29.99.**

Black is Senior Professor of New Testament and Greek and the Dr. M. O. Owens, Jr. Chair of New Testament Studies at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He

has written a number of books, including *Learn to Read New Testament Greek,* Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2009, now in its 3rd edition; and *Linguistics for Students of New Testament Greek: A Survey of Basic Concepts and Applications*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995, in its second edition. He has edited *Rethinking New Testament Textual Criticism*, Grand Rapids, Baker, 2002, along with several other volumes. His contributions to other volumes include chapters on linguistics, textual critical matters, and biblical interpretation. His articles include several on authorship issues, background concerns, translation matters, and discourse. Merkle is Professor of New Testament and Greek at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has written several books, including *Exegetical Gems from the Greek New Testament*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019; and *Ephesians*, Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament, Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2016, along with a number of books on elders and deacons. His co-authored volumes include *Getting Started with New Testament Greek*, Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2020, with Robert L. Plummer; and *Going Deeper with New Testament Greek: An Intermediate Study of the Grammar, Syntax, and Exegesis of the New Testament,* Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2016, with Andreas J. Köstenberger and Robert L. Plummer. His edited volumes involve 40 questions about a number of topics. His contributed chapters and articles often focus on Church leadership and lexical aspect.

The current volume is a collection of essays that were presented at a conference called by the same name as the title on April 26-27, 2019, hosted at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. The current volume includes all of the eleven papers presented at the conference, although in a slightly revised order. Black prefaces the eleven papers that constitute the eleven chapters by pointing to the progress that has been made in nine areas, which he published earlier (seven in 1991 and nine in 2001). Merkle follows the eleven chapters by synthesizing three of the main issues addressed by the eleven chapters in the postscript: linguistic schools, verbal aspect, and pedagogy. Under linguistic schools, he compares and contrasts single-method approaches with eclectic ones. Under verbal aspect, he highlights areas of agreement and disagreement. Under pedagogy, he highlights the value of and complications in performing a living language approach.

Within the chapters, the authors address several areas that have impacted the study of biblical Greek and have energized debates regarding their use. Stanley E. Porter provides an overview of several schools of linguistics that have made a significant impact and discusses the merits of each. Constantine R. Campbell highlights a number of issues related to emergence of verbal aspect studies, including tense, *Aktionsart*, pragmatics, and narrative function. Michael G. Aubrey discusses the debate around the Greek Perfect tense-form by analyzing transitivity and usage. Jonathan T. Pennington addresses issues of transitivity and markedness while analyzing the Greek middle voice. Stephen H. Levinsohn provides a discussion of discourse analysis through a look at Galatians, while connecting scholarship from wider linguistic discussion on discourse. Steven E. Runge relates discussions within construction grammar to the analysis of constituent word order and connects this to discourse context. T. Michael W. Halcomb next presents a plea to revise curriculum

to incorporate living language approaches, followed by Randall Buth, who discusses phonology, speech production, and textual variants as they relate to pronunciation. Thomas W. Hudgins presents a number of digital tools available to the NT scholar, and he encourages engagement with them. Robert L. Plummer discusses six characteristics of ideal Greek grammars. Nicholas J. Ellis relates a number linguistic discourses to the process of exegesis, biblical translation, and several other practical concerns.

Taken together, these essays represent an up-to-date review of the field in terms of how linguistics relates to the study of biblical Greek. As the subtitle suggests, these essays do not solve the issues they raise, but instead provide what the main concerns are for growth in linguistic acuity for scholars of biblical Greek. The editors of the current volume have enhanced the world of biblical Greek both in the conception and planning of this conference and in the production of this fine collection of essays from the conference. This volume is certain to aid other NT Greek scholars in guiding their research, and might serve as supplemental reading for an upper-level course on Greek language, or any course on Greek linguistics.

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**Rafael RODRIGUEZ. *Jesus Darkly: Remembering Jesus with the New Testament.* Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2018. 191 pp. $29.99.**

This volume is comprised of an Introduction and five chapters, each treating a portion of the NT corpus. The Introduction supplies the theoretical framework for his argument: "To understand Jesus rightly means to understand him in relation to Israel's scriptures" (xv), and the OT provides the story in which Jesus is understood. The full story unfolds in six scenes: 1) Creation, 2) Fall, 3) Redemption Initiated, 4) Redemption Accomplished, 5) The Mission of the Church, and 6) Redemption Completed (xix); the dominant images are "covenant" for the OT and "the kingdom of God" for the NT.

Chapter 1 treats Jesus in Paul's letters, with extended commentary on passages in 1 Thessalonians, Galatians and Romans, and 1 & 2 Corinthians. For example, in 1 Thessalonians, Rodriguez explores Paul's uses of allusions to OT passages, especially Zech 14:5. In Galatians and Romans, Rodriguez turns to a discussion of the function of Torah in light of Christ; he demonstrates that it functions both positively (i.e., as fulfillment) and negatively (i.e., pointing out sin). Jesus is the lens that Paul uses to work through his understanding of the Christian faith.

Chapters 2 and 3 cover the Four Gospels and Acts and mark a general transition from "thinking with" to "thinking about" Jesus. In some ways, this section is the most substantial and creative part of this book. Rodriguez explores how memory interacts with history with two claims: 1) "the Evangelists' interpretive work is the very thing that preserves our connection with the 'Jesus of history'" (74) and 2) "distortions of reality can, sometimes and paradoxically, provide authentic access to

reality" (77). At first glance, these moves might unsettle some readers, but Rodriguez is a faithful guide, explaining how Mark's ironic use of "king" in Mark 6 serves to show how Jesus is the true king in Mark 15. Matthew uses the language of fulfillment to explain how Jesus brings Israel's story to its climax. Luke-Acts moves beyond Matthew's portrayal to demonstrate how both the resurrection and the activity of the Spirit are in accordance with the scriptures. In his treatment of the Gospel of John, Rodriguez emphasizes the idea that remembering always "involves interpretation of the past" (83). In the example from Revelation, John uses sheep imagery to "explode" (109) the limits of the symbol by portraying a Lamb that goes to war, marries, and establishes a new Jerusalem.

Chapter 5 covers the General Epistles. Rodriguez, for instance, shows how the writer of Hebrews uses the metaphor of Jesus-as-high-priest, even though Jesus was not a Levite. Chapter 6 explores how memory both depicts and refracts experiences. These refractions can be as informative as actual depictions are because they give us more than mere data; they reveal interpretations of Jesus that are meaningful and relevant for us today.

In terms of weaknesses, I'll mention two questions and one correction. Questions: 1) Among the many options, what criteria does Rodriguez use to decide which images of Jesus to treat? and 2) Modern readers still need to discern the "bounds of authentic representations of Jesus" (111): what would an example of this process look like today? Correction: the masculine participle used by the author of Hebrews in 11:32 counts against the writer of Hebrews being female (116 fn. 6; 134). While this book's strengths are many, I'll identify three: Rodriguez's use of memory studies to illuminate NT texts, his careful and insightful exegesis, and his accessible and helpful illustrations. Founded on sound research and written in accessible prose, this book deserves a wide audience in our churches and in undergraduate NT courses.

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**Gregory A. BOYD. *Cross Vision: How the Crucifixion of Jesus Makes Sense of Old Testament Violence.* Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2018. 280 pp. $19.99.**

In this volume, Greg Boyd condenses and popularizes his formidable two-volume argument in *The Crucifixion of the Warrior God* (Fortress, 2017). In both works he aims to exonerate the God of Scripture from the violence attributed to him in the OT while affirming the inspiration of all Scripture without seeking to justify divine violence. He foreswears approaches that affirm God is violent, that disregard passages portraying God as violent, or that soften passages highlighting God's violence. Such approaches fail to grapple with God's ultimate self-revelation in Jesus, deny the inspiration and authority of all Scripture, or resort to special pleading that strains credulity.

The way forward, Boyd argues, is to recognize that God has condescended or stooped to allow OT authors to sinfully misrepresent him by falsely though

unwittingly attributing to him violence that he never directly committed. This does not make their inaccurate writings any less inspired, to Boyd, since God's Spirit works through them to reveal God's willingness to meet us where we are in our sinfulness. God desires to cooperate even with our faulty notions of him insofar as they propel salvation history forward to God's ultimate, fully accurate revelation in Jesus. Since the NT identifies Jesus as the exact representation of the Father, which surpasses all prior representations, we are obligated to evaluate all prior representations of God in light of Jesus. Where they fall short, we are not encouraged to excise misleading passages from Scripture. Rather we must view them through the cross. The cross, which stands at the heart of Paul's theology of divine self-disclosure, reveals God's willingness to communicate his love through human sinfulness and error. As God condescended to allow brutal crucifixion at the hands of ignorant sinners to reveal himself, he stooped to utilize incomplete divine depictions from his inspired servants. God so values human freedom to choose or reject him that he will not override our desire to kill his Son or cast him in the image of ancient Near Eastern warrior gods. Instead, he enfolds fumbling human efforts into his relentless love for all creation.

This volume contains four parts. In part one Boyd sets forth his case, grounds it in his Christ- and cross-centered interpretation of Scripture, unpacks the NT's Christocentric reading of the OT, and demonstrates how such a reading echoes and builds upon theological and hermeneutical approaches of notable Reformation and pre-Constantine theologians. In part two Boyd advances his case by analyzing various OT passages in light of the ancient Near Eastern theology that poisoned their portraits of God. God's willingness to accommodate such tainted pictures parallels his willingness to accommodate polygamy, kingship like the nations, animal sacrifice, and a law-based relationship with his people. In part three Boyd offers an alternative frame for interpreting how God enacts judgment over wickedness in the OT. Rather than violently destroy sinners, in Aikido-like fashion he allows sin's negative momentum to carry sinners into its negative consequences. For instance, God does not destroy Israel like a surface reading of Jeremiah suggests; he removes his protective presence so cruel world powers like Babylon have their way with Israel, which leads to destruction and death. Where human agents do not appear to be involved, Boyd supposes that God stopped holding back destructive forces of natural and supernatural powers (e.g., flood waters and Satan), which are always pressing in on creation. In part four, Boyd applies his approach to the OT passages most commonly associated with divine violence.

Boyd is to be commended for attempting to bring together a high view of all Scripture and the NT's teaching that Christ most fully reveals God's character. Though I'm not convinced that he has adequately solved his problem, I believe he asks the right questions for the right reasons with the right spirit. There are a few questions his proposal raises that this volume does not answer. Are NT authors like Matthew, John, or Paul also sometimes wrong in their portrayal of Jesus? If so, could Boyd's baseline NT view of God also be flawed? Does the NT say that the incarnate Jesus fully reveals ALL aspects of God's character? Is it possible that when he emptied himself and took on the form of the servant that part of that emptying included

aspects of God's character that may be captured better in OT history and prophecy than NT reflection of Christ's earthly ministry? What does it say about God's love that he created a world in which destructive personal and impersonal forces constantly threaten to destroy his creation and have not done so only because God perpetually holds them back? What kind of love does God show by sometimes letting them loose to destroy and other times not? If someone holds a bloodthirsty dog on a leash and occasionally drops that leash so they will maul someone else, is that person not responsible for the violence committed by the dog? Finally, why does God, who corrects his people in both Testaments for misrepresenting him in all manner of ways, never critique them for wrongfully implicating him in violence?

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**Helen K. BOND. *The First Biography of Jesus: Genre and Meaning in Mark's Gospel*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 336 pp. $42.99.**

This volume is the product of a seasoned NT scholar laying bare the implications of interpreting the Gospel of Mark as an ancient Greco-Roman *bios*, or biography. Although it has been *de rigueur* in the last few decades to view the canonical Gospels as instantiations of ancient Greco-Roman biography, Bond is convinced that this generic identification has not been adequately mined for its interpretive implications.

On Bond's reckoning, an otherwise unknown church leader named Marcus, perhaps living in Rome, produced a novel and remarkably influential literary achievement shortly after the Jewish War of 66-70 C.E.: the first (at least the first successful) biography of Jesus. In the style of ancient Greco-Roman *bioi*, especially the Greek lives of philosophers (specifically "Philo's *Life of Moses,* Lucian's *Demonax*, Philostratus's *Life of Apollonius of Tyana,"* and "Diogenes Laertius's *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*" [76]), Mark fused a number of anecdotes about Jesus' adult life with a rather extensive narrative of his passion and resurrection. In so doing, Mark expanded the word "gospel," which had earlier referred to the proclamation of Jesus' saving death and resurrection, to include a series of character-revealing actions, sayings, and teachings, which in turn climaxed in a manner of death at one with Jesus' earlier ministry. (Bond's thesis is an adaption of Rudolf Bultmann's contention that the purpose of Mark was to effect "*the union of the Hellenistic kerygma about Christ,* whose essential element consists of the Christ myth as we learn of it in Paul . . . with the *tradition of the story of Jesus*" [*History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 1963, 347-348]. Of course, for Bultmann, Mark's genre was unique.)

As ancient biographies in general, and those focused on philosophers in particular, were designed to produce admiration and emulation of the hero in question, so the author of Mark created a portrait of Jesus designed to induce Christ followers to imitate him—not imitation of his specific deeds, but of his character and manner of life. For a church living in the throes of persecution, as intimated by some Markan texts, the Markan Jesus emerges as the prime example for Christians facing potential martyrdom.

Moreover, there are other virtues of Jesus that Mark wanted his auditors to admire and imitate so far as possible. Some, such as mastery in debate with opponents, authoritative speech, *philanthrópia*, or loving concern for others (exhibited in Jesus' healings and exorcisms), *sóphrosyné*, or self-control (evident in Jesus' patience with the crowds), moderation (exhibited in Jesus' humble self-designation "Son of man"), and willingness to die in accord with values espoused during one's life embody Greco-Roman culture, and therefore were quite at home in ancient *bioi*. However, Mark breaks generic expectations with a Jesus who rejects "the striving for greatness endemic within the Roman world," calls on "followers to deny themselves," and suffers "a state execution" (89). In Mark's *bios* "believers are called on to reject the honor codes so prevalent in the world around them and to embrace . . . one based on service, suffering, and debasement" (153).

A number of other characters appear in Mark's story, but all of them owe their place to the way that they are able to illuminate Jesus. "Some enable Jesus to perform his ministry, others conspire against him; some exemplify the values of the kingdom, and others throw the character of Jesus into relief (this is particularly true of the Twelve)" (220).

According to Bond, Mark the biographer had access to a number of sources (though not a "pre-Markan passion narrative," whose existence she rejects), including eyewitnesses, but if Mark proceeded like most of his fellow-biographers, we should expect that he used traditions whose historicity was unconfirmed and that he invented connections between anecdotes if such would help him "lay bare the essence of the man, to re-create a living character" (71)

In conclusion, Bond avers that the argument of her book is that Mark's *bios* is a very specific reception of earlier Jesus tradition" (253). "Situating Jesus at the heart of a biography was not an inevitable development but a bold step in outlining a radical form of Christian discipleship patterned on the life—and death—of Jesus." For a variety of reasons Bond maintains that "we can no longer get behind Mark's account" to encounter the historical Jesus. "Whether we like it or not, the story of Jesus is *Mark's* story of Jesus" (258).

Bond's work is to be applauded as a stimulating contribution to the generic identification of Mark's Gospel and the implications therefrom. Her familiarity with the Greco-Roman biographical tradition is impressive indeed. In particular her book sheds light on how pagans and gentile converts would have found in Mark both the familiar and the unsettling.

However, Bond's work raises several questions. 1) In light of the number of points at which Mark's Gospel veers away from generic expectation (its lack of a literary prologue, its almost nonexistent authorial voice, its absence of family and childhood details, its absence of a physical description of Jesus, the ignoble manner of Jesus' death, and Mark's highly unusual ending), how useful is it to call Mark a biography? How many significant deviations from the standard biographical genre would require us to stop naming Mark a *bios*? Or would it be possible to view Mark as a subversion of Greco-Roman biography? Readers may not be persuaded by Bond's brief dismissal of David Aune's suggestion that Mark reacts against Greco-Roman *bioi* and parodies

the values that they promote (90). 2) To what extent does Bond's interpretation of Mark depend on its identification as a biography? I encountered several fresh interpretive insights (that the predicted baptism by Jesus with the Holy Spirit [Mark 1:8] is fulfilled in Christian baptism) that seem unrelated to genre. 3) Does Bond's categorization of Mark as a *bios* of an ancient philosopher heighten the Gospel's *pagan* background at the expense of its *Jewish* horizon? After all, Bond herself distinguishes between Mark's "*content* and *genre*," the former of which is profoundly Jewish (29). 4) How do we know, as Bond seems to believe, that the catechetical and homiletical combination of *traditions concerning Jesus' ministry* with *the preaching of Jesus' death and resurrection* did not predate the composition of Mark? In other words, how novel was the Gospel of Mark in this regard? And 5) in the first sentence of her Conclusion, Bond writes, "The argument of this book is that Mark's *bios* is a very specific reception of earlier Jesus tradition" (253). But how does this claim relate to the purpose stated at the outset of her work: "to see how such a generic assumption [Mark as *bios*] might affect its interpretation" (12). Moreover, how noteworthy is her concluding claim in contemporary NT scholarship? Is it not widely accepted that *all* Christian Gospels are very specific receptions of earlier Jesus tradition?

Whatever the answers to these questions, we are indebted to Prof. Bond for providing us yet another incentive to wrestle anew with the first biography of Jesus.

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**Nijay K. GUPTA. *Paul and the Language of Faith.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 225 pp. $34.99.**

In this relatively concise volume, author Nijay Gupta trawls through a virtual mountain of scholarship on the understanding of "faith" (*pistis*) in biblical theological perspective and serves up a very useful primer on the language of faith in the New Testament, and particularly in the writings of St. Paul. Gupta contends that the English term "faith" has been "flattened out" through centuries of overuse with the result that, in modern vernacular, the term has been loaded with nuances and connotations that no longer accurately reflect "the depth and richness" of how NT authors understood and employed the Greek vocabulary of faith. He argues for a more robust and dynamic understanding of faith in terms of "faithfulness"—a faithfulness that incorporates believing and trusting and doing.

In the opening chapter, Gupta sets forth his agenda. He identifies the inadequate categories which have largely come to characterize faith in current thought, e.g., faith as "opinion," faith as "doctrine," and faith as a passive inward emotional or intellectual phenomenon. As a corrective, he points to the OT use of faith language—including the Septuagint's use of the *pistis* vocabulary to translate the Hebrew faith vocabulary—as the more appropriate context for Paul's use and understanding of "faith." In pursuing a clearer understanding of Paul's faith language, Gupta employs a methodology with a threefold focus on semantic domain, cultural linguistics, and contextualized meaning.

Before specifically addressing Paul's own use of faith language, Gupta devotes three chapters to exploring more broadly the pre- and post-Pauline uses and understandings of faith vocabulary in order to establish a clearer context for the Pauline corpus. He begins with a brief historical review of post-Pauline interpretation from the second century up through the modern era, giving summary attention to key Church Fathers, medieval scholastics, Protestant reformers, and twentieth century (mostly German) theologians. He calls special attention to Teresa Morgan's monumental work on *Roman Faith and Christian Faith* (2016)—especially in her treatment of Paul's understanding of faith. In a further chapter on *Pistis* in ancient literature Gupta highlights the most important pre-Pauline and contemporary Hellenistic uses of the faith language that would have framed Paul's usage, as well as the understanding of his audience. Gupta considers pagan Hellenistic uses (Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Plutarch, and others) as well as Hellenistic Jewish uses (Septuagint, Philo, Josephus) of the *pistis* vocabulary. The final chapter of this background trilogy focuses on faith language in the Jesus tradition of the four canonical Gospels. Gupta admits that Paul's use of faith language is not identical to what we find in the Gospels; but, nonetheless, he sees significant parallel themes between the Jesus tradition and Paul's faith language, particularly in common nuances of faith that involves "seeking, believing, trusting, and obeying."

In the main body of the book, Chapters 5–10, Gupta explores Paul's use and understanding of faith language by way of highlighting prominent themes and nuances that arise from specific pericopes within the Pauline corpus. Chapter 5 highlights the nuance of "faithfulness" in 1 Thessalonians and Philippians; Chapter 6 explores the unique relationship between faith and wisdom in 1 Corinthians. In a further chapter Gupta picks up the concept of living by faith, not by sight in 2 Cor 7:15 to extract a theology of faith in contrast to idolatry. Chapter 8 addresses the use of *pistis* in Galatians where Gupta underscores the shift from "covenantal nomism to covenantal pistism," and Paul's emphasis upon faith(fulness) as the operative basis for relationship with God. In Chapter 9 the author turns to the prominent "faith theme" of Romans and the relationship between faith (trust) and righteousness as presented in Rom 1:16-17 and in light of early interpretations of Hab 2:4. Finally, Gupta offers a very brief chapter reflecting on the current "faith of Christ" debate in light of the foregoing discussion. Those interested in this debate will note that Gupta bypasses the traditional objective genitive *versus* subjective genitive options, in favor of Benjamin Schliesser's "relational genitive." He proposes a translation of *pistis Christou* as the "Christ relation(ship)." Chapter 11 concludes Gupta's volume with a summary and synthesis, where he argues for a "religion beyond faith"—an awareness that Paul's language of faith is much more robust, dynamic, and engaging than what we commonly assume with the English word "faith."

This book provides one of the best concise overviews of the context, use, and understanding of faith language in the writings of Paul (and, more generally, in the New Testament) that I am aware of. It exhibits both the advantages (thumbnail synthesis) and the shortcomings (lack of in-depth analysis) of a "primer" on the topic. The lack of in-depth discussion, however, is ameliorated by the author's obvious

engagement with a wealth of secondary source material, as demonstrated by extensive footnotes and 22 pages of bibliography. There is plenty here for the reader who wishes to dig deeper at any point in the discussion. The volume also provides a useful index of names and subjects, as well as a thorough index of scripture and other ancient text citations. This book lends itself well as a companion text for upper division undergraduate or graduate-level courses on Pauline theology, but it is also a volume for the pastor's library, and very accessible for the informed lay person as well.

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**Grant MACASKILL. *Living in Union with Christ: Paul's Gospel and Christian Moral Identity*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. 176 pp. $24.95.**

From the start, this volume is a gripping analysis of Christian identity from a Reformed perspective. This can be a pleasant surprise for the reader who digests a steady diet of academic writing or doesn't fall within the camp of Reformed theology (or both!). The introduction offers a compelling argument for the conversation his book is intended to contribute. First, Macaskill believes the discipleship characterized by much of Protestant Evangelicalism lacks a theology of the Holy Spirit to help Christians identify with Christ through a participatory union. Instead, it settles for a theology of mere imitation, making the Spirit out to be a divine empowerment meant to aid humans in their journey of personal self-fulfillment. Second, he believes that human identity has been so fully corrupted that there is no hope of a person getting better. Humans must be inhabited by the Spirit and participate in the person of Christ by union in order to be transformed. Lastly, he believes legalism is an anthropological fault within human nature, saying that humans are "constitutionally idolatrous" (8), which means we are always, both consciously and unconsciously, attempting to acquire value or status in the eyes of our communities, churches, and God. While what exactly the phrase "moral Christian identity" means isn't spelled out, for Macaskill it encompasses the Christian's whole relation to God by union with Christ through the Holy Spirit.

Chapter one is an insightful examination of the schools in biblical studies with whom Macaskill disagrees: the New Perspective, the growing emphasis on virtue ethics, the Apocalyptic Paul, and theologies emphasizing an ethics of imitation. The criterion for Macaskill's distinction from these schools is rather simple: they demand the Protestant-based justification theology must conform to their theologies of a Pauline Christian life, whereas he believes the Christian life should conform to a (Reformed understanding of) Pauline justification, which means imputed righteousness (16). Macaskill both graciously and skillfully parses through each of the schools, affirming what he can in helpful ways, even allowing them to offer correction to popular level misconceptions of 2nd Temple Judaism, or identifying a place for them on a lower rung within an overall system of theology.

The second chapter attempts to define the Christian moral identity in terms of agency. The method moves exegetically through Philippians 3 and Galatians 2. The

crux of the argument focuses on Galatians 2:20. Macaskill proposes that Paul's, and every Christian's, individualized or autonomous agency and identity has been subsumed "in Christ" through their union with Christ by the Spirit at the moment of imputation (40-41). Participation, then, means the human identity of privation has been replaced by a moral identity of union with Christ so as to allow Christ Jesus to inhabit the Christian's fully embodied personhood in the Spirit (53, 56). Throughout there is the specter of Reformed theology's fear of faithful works of obedience in the life of the believer, fearing that such actions in the people of God are merely there to gain status before the eyes of others (51, 57-58). It is precisely to address this aspect of Reformed tradition that Macaskill here stresses the importance of a participatory moral identity through union with Christ: good works of obedience are enacted by Christ's agency in the Christian, and not in cooperation with the Christian because the human is ontologically incapable of good actions untainted by legalism.

The next two chapters, three and four, are dedicated to understanding how baptism and eucharist are used by Paul to symbolically encourage this moral Christian identity. Macaskill opens by defining baptism and eucharist from a fully Calvinist perspective that would make Theodore Beza proud: the sacraments are moments of distilled teaching by ritual, in which Christians are meant to reflect upon their union with Christ Jesus (59, 71-72). The sacraments do not have direct, substantial effect on the Christian. Instead, through them Christians appropriate the narrative of Christ as their own memory to know Christ Jesus, whose identity the sacraments declare is now the Christian's own identity (94-95). The sacraments, understood according this justification theology of imputation, are not affecting moments resulting in transformation but declarative rituals indicating an internally transformed identity constituted by union with Christ (74, 80, 87).

In chapter five, Macaskill moves on to give the contours of a pneumatology within his moral Christian identity of participation. The emphasis is that Christians are only able to participate in Christ's identity through the enactment of the Holy Spirit. Macaskill desires to relocate the language of participation in theology from the ethical imitation of Christ Jesus by the empowerment of the Spirit, which inevitably turns into legalism because of human fleshly constitution. He believes a better placement of participation theology is within the filial relationship of the Father and the Son (100-101). Undergirded by the conviction that God acts in creation through the Spirit (144), Macaskill offers an interesting idea that the Holy Spirit mediates the two natures within the incarnation, which then corresponds to the Spirit's bringing Christians into union with Christ and participation in the life of the Trinity (103-103). This theme of participation in the life of the Trinity is carried into chapter six as the basis of Christian hope. Since Christians have lost an individualized identity of privation through their union with Christ, then as they suffer and die it is actually Christ Jesus who is suffering and dying in their bodies. Christians have the hope that through their bodies Christ Jesus will resurrect again because they are morally identified as Christ (120, 125).

In his conclusion, Macaskill seeks to address the most glaring concern of his proposal: have Christians lost agency and personhood through their union with Christ

by the Spirit? He rejects this. Using the language of identity, he explains that persons are formed in relation to others and now Christians have entered into the ultimate relation to God (129). But this rejection becomes somewhat precarious as he doubles down that it is Christ who inhabits Christians, it is the Spirit who is the agent in Christians rather than themselves with him or by his empowerment, and Christians only interact with God by God's own action through them (130-131). Here at the end, the language of agency struggles to provide a coherent theological expression for how Christian moral identity can hold together the good works demanded by Paul for Christian life and a rigid Protestant justification theology.

Macaskill produced a beneficial volume that offers much to its readers. Throughout his method, he explains and applies helpful concepts of agency, identity, memory, and narrative that will benefit many who desire to draw biblical and theological studies closer together. Finally, the attempt by Macaskill to find a proper theological place for Pauline good works within his Reformed tradition of justification as imputed righteousness is commendable. This is an essential correction for many, not simply on the popular level, and is peppered in thoughtful (2-3, 58), but best stated in the end, "The work of the Spirit to transform is not a consequence of the gospel but it is part of that gospel" (137). Truly, Macaskill's most salient point is proven. Christian moral identity is a transformation by our participation in the life of the Trinitarian God because Christ Jesus lives in and through us by the Holy Spirit.

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**Chris S. STEVENS.** ***History of the Pauline Corpus in Texts, Transmissions and Trajectories: A Textual Analysis of Manuscripts from the Second to the Fifth Century.*** **TENT 14. Ed. by Stanley E. Porter and Wendy J. Porter. Leiden: Brill, 2020. 460 pp. $153.00.**

The author of this volume obtained his PhD from McMaster Divinity College (2019) and has written a number of chapters in edited volumes along with several academic articles. Many of these deal with various aspects of textual criticism, the canon, linguistics, and Paul. This volume is the published version of his dissertation.

The volume begins with a short introduction, followed by eight content chapters, a longer conclusion, two appendices, and three indices. The first chapter details the history of textual criticism and comments on how the goal of reconstructing an "original" text has affected the methodology on analyzing the manuscript differences. The second chapter discusses the differences between several current methods, indicating their complexity and precision, but highlighting that their goal collectively is still the same as that seen throughout history, thus always affecting the results in the same way. The third chapter sets forth the thesis of the current volume which answers three questions: a) what is the degree of uniformity among the *mss* during the $2^{nd}$–$5^{th}$ centuries; b) what category of variation occurs; and c) where does the variation occur? These questions seek to evaluate evidence

supporting free textual development during the 2nd century, evolution from corrupt texts toward uniformity, and a particular theory of collection and publication of the Pauline corpus. The author utilizes *Systemic Functional Linguistics* toward this task by applying the rank scale to textual unit delimitation and using its unit labeling system. The approach here is similar to that of Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts, in *Fundamentals of New Testament Textual Criticism*, Eerdmans, 2015. The fourth chapter presents the data from analyzing the manuscripts and summaries regarding the data. The fifth chapter begins the analysis of the data where the scribal habits are identified and evaluated. The author points out that the scribes were inconsistent regarding category of differences. This means it is more difficult to speak with precision regarding a particular scribe's tendencies, since they are inconsistent. Two consistencies were observed: a) that more textual differences were observed near the end of longer letters, suggesting tiredness on the part of the scribe, and b) fewer textual differences with linguistically significant elements were observed than with elements of lower significance linguistically. This suggests that the scribes were linguistically competent, introducing fewer differences in places where that difference would more greatly affect the meaning.

The last three content chapters deal with assumptions regarding the composition and transmission of the Pauline Corpus. The sixth chapter addresses the Aland system of manuscript textual agreement and finds that the uniformity among early Pauline material is 40% greater than suggested by Aland, and that the Pauline corpus is more stable than other literature in the 2nd–5th centuries. The seventh chapter critiques Epp, Parker, and Ehrman's approaches of Narrative Textual Criticism, and discovers that the evidence does not support the idea that the scribes were progressively theologizing toward a goal with their editing of the text. The author's conclusion is based on a broader analysis including more variants than typically used by this camp. The eighth chapter addresses the Pauline canon. The author concludes that since the text of Pauline corpus was so stable from P46 onward, that its canon was standardized before P46 and likely had Paul's involvement. The whole corpus was early and best explains the textual evidence without inventing scenarios.

The quite large Appendix 1 (200 pages) details the textual differences within the Pauline corpus, including a rank from *Systemic Functional Linguistics*, Scribal action type for each difference, grammatical markings for each difference, and a linear commentary for each letter of the corpus. For those who appreciate Metzger's *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2nd edition, Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2002), this appendix is a welcome addition. Appendix 2 examines the differences associated with Christological tendencies, and largely informs the seventh chapter.

This volume is a reference tool for those interested in textual criticism and in the application of linguistics to that task. This volume provides an independent analysis of methods for textual criticism and suggests a different way forward than others are currently using. This is likely to remain a useful tool for many years, and will aid in exegesis, commentary writing, and specialized discussions of textual matters. This volume might be useful as supplemental reading for courses involving advanced

textual critical matters, or for courses combining linguistics with traditional exegetical concerns.

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**Craig S. KEENER, *Galatians: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. 848 pp. $59.99.**

Keener's commentary offers a thorough and in-depth historical-critical analysis of Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. This is a dense volume, with just under 600 pages dedicated to commentary proper and another 300 pages of apparatus (bibliography and indexes). This work follows Keener's earlier Galatians commentary published by Cambridge University Press to provide a "larger, more fully documented" volume. In the preliminary sections of the book, the 23-page double-columned table of abbreviations provides a clue to the extent of the secondary documentation that the reader will find in the body of the commentary. The preface materials include Keener's own translation of the Epistle, which the author describes as a "colloquial, dynamic-equivalent" rendering of the text. (Examples include: "community" and "assemblies" as alternate terms for "church(es"); and "commissioned agents" instead of "apostles"). Keener's translation offers clues to many of his theological conclusions which he addresses later in the commentary (concerning the *pistis christou* debate). Following the translation, he provides a brief working outline of the epistle.

In the Introduction, Keener addresses the usual introductory questions (authorship, date, audience, genre, and major emphases). The section where he addresses the history of interpretation of the epistle is relatively brief and focuses on Martin Luther's subsequent influence. Keener lays out in the Introduction many of his working assumptions (he considers Luke's chronology in the Acts of the Apostles as compatible with Paul's ministry and writing). He prefers the Jerusalem Council as the peg date for the epistle and the southern Galatian churches as the primary audience. He is particularly interested in identifying Paul's opponents in Galatia and the nature of their opposition. This topic occupies the largest section of the Introduction. Keener is further interested in examining Paul's letter through the lens of classical and contemporary rhetorical convention, a lens which he applies throughout the commentary.

The reader of this volume is struck by Keener's extensive referencing of sources. There are literally thousands of footnotes. The Bibliography extends over 120 pages, and the range and depth of scholarship is impressive. Although these bibliographical sources and references reflect a broad history of interpretation of the Galatian epistle, Keener concedes that his research primarily engages with the more recent scholarship of the past century, and he employs these as a filter for earlier studies. It is also readily apparent from his index of authors cited upon which of these modern sources he relies most heavily. Authors such as James Dunne, E. P. Sanders, Richard Longenecker, and W. D. Davies appear with great frequency in the myriad of footnotes and most

certainly belie Keener's own theological framework. Even so, he does not hesitate to bring divergent voices into the discussion for a critical and balanced hearing.

The commentary proper follows the familiar format of verse-by-verse exegesis. The running headers throughout the volume clearly indicate the section (i.e., from Keener's outline) and the specific chapter and verse(s) under discussion so that this is a very user-friendly reference work. Beginning with his own translation of each verse, Keener applies the full toolbox of critical analysis and provides detailed attention to geographical and historical context, rhetorical device, socio-economic-political factors, congruence with the corpus of Pauline literature, as well as with other contemporary accounts (especially Acts of the Apostles), and philological nuance (with plenty of insights from LXX usage and other ancient Greek sources).

Sprinkled throughout the text are frequent excursuses designated as "Closer Look" and "Bridging Horizons." The Table of Contents includes a register of the 34 "Closer Look" sidebars. These tend to focus on major themes, both theological and exegetical, that arise from the text of the epistle. Typical examples include triple excursuses on "Justification," "Christ-Faith," and "Law-Works" in the exposition of Gal 2:16. There is also an extensive excursus on allegory (Gal 4). Other sidebars offer deeper insights on a wide range of topics such as magic, adoption, baptism, circumcision, and crucifixion. The "Bridging Horizons" essays are fewer in number and more practical in nature, attempting to provide a contemporary interpretation for some modern complex questions that arise from the text. For example, the most extensive of these essays addresses the topic of "Male and Female" in Gal 3:28.

With its almost 900 pages, this is first and foremost a volume for the reference shelf, and it belongs in the library of any respectable seminary or theological school. It will certainly be of interest to Pauline scholars, especially those who focus on Galatians and Romans. The scholar-pastor also, and perhaps even the enthusiastic lay reader, will find the material accessible and enlightening (though the material will require a good deal of digestion before finding its way into the Sunday homily or the adult education hour!). The reader who invests the time to read cover to cover will readily notice overlapping material and repeated themes (adding to the heft of the volume), along with internal cross-referencing, but none of this is cumbersome. Along with the Bibliography, the appendices include a brief index of subjects, an extensive index of authors cited, and a complete index of scriptures and other ancient sources cited in the volume. There is sufficient breadth to provide a well-informed and balanced presentation of the entire range of scholarship relating to the epistle; and the extensive footnoting lends itself well to the researcher who wishes to drill down deeper at any point along the way.

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**Christopher R. HUTSON. *First and Second Timothy and Titus.* Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. 336 pp. $30.00.**

This volume is part of the outstanding *Paideia* series and as such is aimed at MA students and advanced undergraduates. Volumes in the series deal with larger rhetorical units, rather than proceed verse by verse. Each section of exposition in the commentary begins with a brief statement of "Introductory Matters," then concentrates on "Tracing the Train of Thought," with a summative segment on "Theological Issues." The book is enhanced throughout with helpful sidebars and excursuses, as well as excellent indices.

Hutson, professor of Bible, missions, and ministry and associate dean for academic programs and services in the College of Biblical Studies at Abilene Christian University, credits as his influencers well-known scholars including some with Stone-Campbell credentials (A. Malherbe, L. Keck, and J. Sumney). The book is dedicated to Malherbe *in memoriam*.

Hutson resists the popular approach to the Pastorals as "church order" manuals, and (as he says) turns this on its head: these documents are not about "church order," but about training young ministers. Indeed, we speak today in terms of young "Timothys" being trained up in churches. Hutson correctly notes that, whatever one concludes about authorship and date, the three letters belong together and should be interpreted together (they first appear as a unit in early canon lists).

In the introduction, the discussion commences with authorship and date, twin poles of critical commentary writing. The author concludes that the date for the PE is before 120, and likely before 100. Given these parameters, he poses the question: "If the PE were written in the first century, is there anything about them to indicate that Paul could not have written them?" (12). But he purposefully remains ambivalent on the authorship question. Wisely, I think, he takes a pragmatic middle ground regarding authorship, and throughout refers to the author as "Pastoral Paul." His point—which is well taken—is to sidestep the old arguments over authorship and canonical pseudepigraphy, in favor of allowing the text to bring forward its own agenda. He thus invites readers to hear his arguments about the content without getting hung up on authorship questions. The hope is to avoid the "Catch-22" involved when readers use authorship as the determining factor in reading a commentary, such that staking out a firm position one way or another causes certain readers immediately to pass judgment on the rest of the book. Undoubtedly the ambiguous approach to authorship (and dating) will not satisfy everyone, but it is a reasonable one in light of scholarly polarization which has characterized *Pastoral Epistles* scholarship, especially since the latter part of the 20th century.

In another section of the introduction, the author asks about the PE's relation to Gospels. He does not cite 1 Tim 5:18 in this connection in the introduction—"for the scripture says: 'You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,' and, 'The laborer deserves to be paid' (NRSV)." The first part is a quote of Deut 25:4 followed immediately by a Jesus-saying known to us from Luke 10:7. The entire

citation is introduced as *graphé*, "scripture," with the second statement appended with *kai* ("and"). Scholars debate whether the second statement is also intended to be understood as "scripture."

In his commentary on 1 Tim 5:18, he poses three possible interpretations: 1) *graphé* implies that both quotations have authoritative status as "Scripture"; 2) *graphé* refers to both quotations in a generic sense of written texts without implying special, authoritative status; or 3) *graphé* refers only to Deuteronomy as "Scripture" (134). Noting that Paul uses *graphé* to refer to "Scripture," never to a generic "writing," the author seems to lean towards non-Pauline authorship here: "If one assumes pseudonymity, then option 3 seems like special pleading. Option 2 is possible. Option 1, following the consensus that Luke was written in the 80s, offers evidence of a post-Pauline date for 1 Timothy, and 2 Pet 3:16 offers evidence of a tendency in the late first century to refer to Christian writings as 'Scripture.' Further, our verse fits in the thought world of *Did* 13.1, written around the turn of the second century and quoting Matt 10:10" (134).

Hutson presciently invokes scholarship associated with post-colonial interpretation and discusses the PE in light of the use of "hidden transcripts" necessary for early Christ followers to navigate a hostile social and political landscape. This interpretation helps explain the invocation of Hellenistic virtues and social *mores*, not as an abdication of Pauline norms, but as a means of correction, importing Jewish-Christian ethics and theological assumptions, while flying beneath the political and social radar.

To the statement in the PE which is often taken as the "smoking gun" for dating and authorship ("Avoid the antitheses of what is falsely named 'knowledge,'" 1 Tim 6:20; 152), the author adds a discussion of the younger widows who should remarry. While a later context for the PE could include celibate women within Gnosticism or Montanism, or other celibate women (130), "defenders of Pauline authorship should seek evidence that at least one of these movements had antecedents in the first century" (130). For some, the "the antitheses of what is falsely named 'knowledge'" evokes mid- to late-second century conflicts with Marcion and Gnosticism. But the author correctly emphasizes the statement's context within the admonition to reject combative rhetoric and money-grubbing methods (152).

Perhaps inevitably, one's approach to the critical issues—the aspects of the PE which bind them to each other while at the same time marking them off from Paul's undisputed letters—define one's understanding of the PE. The letter greetings; "sound teaching"; "faithful sayings"; "guard the deposit"; the language of Greek education (*paideia*, 1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 2:25; 3:16; Tit 2:12; *gymnazo*); themes of teaching and learning (*didaskalia; sofronizo,* cf. Tit 2:4). These features of the PE continue to raise questions which will not go away.

To this list we could add some unique aspects of 1 and 2 Timothy: Paul as "Herald, Apostle, Teacher" (1 Tim 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11); Timothy as "Man of God" (1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 3:17); and Timothy's role in the PE as prophetic interpreter of scripture (through the charism, 1 Tim 4:14; cf. 1:18; 2 Tim 1:6). The author identifies Timothy as the "Man of God" in question, in his treatment of 2 Tim 3:16-

17 on "God-breathed scripture" (*theopneustos*), while demurring over the possible meanings of this unusual word. Ultimately, Scripture is "able to make you wise unto salvation," which seems to be a major part of the point. However, in my opinion Timothy as prophetic interpreter (195), the basis of his role as teacher, is the key to this passage, as well as in the larger discussion of opponents who would be "teachers of the Law" (expounders of Scripture), as well as the prohibition of women to teach (1 Tim 2:12).

In terms of methodology, Hutson anticipates possible objections to his citing later rabbinic sources to support his interpretations of earlier NT texts. Nonetheless, while acknowledging the problem of anachronism, he finds rabbinic statements on why women die in childbirth informative for understanding the problematic phrase, "saved through childbearing" in 1 Tim 2:15. In his article, "'Saved through Childbearing': The Jewish Context of 1 Timothy 2:15" (*NovT* 56 [2014]: 392-410), the author traces Jewish interpretations which connect death in childbirth to the breaking of specific commandments: "In light of these [Jewish] texts, it is plausible that the author of the PE knew a tradition that moved from Eve as the first sinner to a discussion of why women die in childbirth" ("Childbearing," 402-403).

In the commentary, the author says the Mishna offers circumstantial evidence that the tradition about women dying in childbirth was established as early as the first century. Yet another plausible explanation—one arguably closer to the PE than rabbinic ideas that death in childbirth are connected to the breaking of specific commandments—can be made by an appeal to earlier Jewish sources which already point to a solution. Specifically, the Greek version of *Life of Adam and Eve,* from the first century, shows evidence of the trajectory of Jewish thought moving from "pain in childbirth" in Genesis to the focus on "death in childbirth" (Greek *LAE* 25:1-2; cf. also the Armenian and Georgian versions).

Another methodological issue worth examining is the decision to privilege Greco-Roman Hellenistic sources in analyzing the Pastorals. There is little doubt that the readers of the PE were attuned to Greco-Roman thought. But as the author rightly notes, there is no "either/or" in the quest for backgrounds for Paul (and "Pastoral Paul")—either Greco-Roman, or Jewish—even if the audience of the PE was primarily tuned in to Greco-Roman rhetoric and philosophy. Nevertheless, the author still privileges Greco-Roman (non-Jewish) sources in his analysis of the text. This is problematic in a few instances of his treatment of possible backgrounds to the PE. Examples include the testamental nature of 2 Timothy (see esp. 2 Baruch), and the description and function of scripture in 2 Tim 3:16-17 (also informative are the comparison of Paul and Moses, Timothy and Joshua, esp. in Philo, *LAB,* and *Testament of Moses*).

Specifically, while the author acknowledges the testamental character of 2 Timothy, his statement echoes an earlier (in my opinion, dead-end) view of genre discussion, noting that 2 Timothy does not measure up to the classic examples of testamental genre (esp. *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*). This alleged deficiency notwithstanding, 2 Timothy has a "testamental feel" about it, he states, and leaves the discussion there. But a helpful way forward in genre discussion was presented some years ago by Eckhard von

Nordheim (*Die Lehre der Alten*, Brill, 1980), with his understanding of "Teiltestamente," partial testaments. Both 2 Timothy and 2 Peter participate in what seems to be an obvious development of "partial testaments," namely the blended genre "epistolary testament." In turn, our two NT examples of epistolary testament exhibit several important similarities to the epistolary testament portion of 2 Baruch, while also containing significant parallels to the "classic" examples of testament. Further explorations of this literature will prove fruitful in understanding 2 Timothy.

Also helpful is the exploration of 2 Tim 3:16-17 in light of Jewish Wisdom literature. Wisdom, which is equated with Torah (Sir 24:23; Bar 4:1), came forth from the mouth of the Most High God (Sir 24:3; Wis 7:25). Wisdom "pours forth instruction" (Sir 24:27); and "pours out teaching like prophecy" (Sir 24:33; cf. Pr 6:23). The Lord "rebukes, trains, and teaches his people" by his Torah/wisdom (Sir 18:13). "The Lord reproves whom he loves" (Pr 3:11-12; cf 6:23). The Lord "corrects those . . . who sin" by his Torah/Wisdom (Wis 12:2). And Torah/Wisdom is *paideia en dikaiosuné,* "training in righteousness" (Bar 4:12-13; cf. Sir 18:13; cf. Pr 4:4; 6:23). As the Lord through Torah/Wisdom accomplishes these things, so is the "Man of God" equipped by *theopneustos graphé* precisely for these actions ("teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness").

To conclude: this volume is excellent. The writing is lucid, engaging, and thought-provoking. It is a gold-mine of helpful information and perspectives for interpreting the Pastorals. It is well suited for Master-level students and advanced undergrads, as well as informed pastors. I have found my new favorite commentary on the Pastoral Epistles.

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**Tony BURKE, ed. *New Testament Apocrypha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, Volume 2. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 655 pp. $75.00.**

This is the second of what will certainly be three volumes, and perhaps four or more (Burke is currently editing vol. 3; the first volume, which appeared in 2016, was never reviewed in *SCJ*). This second volume is quite similar to the first in both its contents and arrangement. It features the English translation of twenty-nine medieval texts, many of them presented here in English for the very first time (nos. 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 22, 25, 26, 27—see the next paragraph to identify these works). Burke envisions this multivolume work as a continuation of J. K. Elliott's *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), which itself is a revision of Montague Rhodes James's *The Apocryphal New Testament: Being the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypses, with Other Narratives and Fragments Newly Translated* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1924; corr. ed., 1953).

The twenty-nine medieval texts are as follows (the names of each translator are enclosed in the parentheses that follow each title): (1) *The Adoration of the Magi*

(Adam Carter Bremer-McCollum); (2) *The Rebellion of Dimas* (Mark G. Bilby); (3) *A Homily on the Life of Jesus and His Love for the Apostles* (Timothy Pettipiece); (4) *A Homily on the Passion and Resurrection* (Dylan M. Burns); (5) *The Book of Bartholomew* (Christian H. Bull and Alexandros Tsakos); (6) *The Healing of Tiberius* (Zbigniew Izydorczyk); (7) *The Legend of the Holy Rood Tree* (Stephen C. E. Hopkins); (8) *The Story of Joseph of Arimathea* (Bradley N. Rice); (9) *A Homily on the Building of the First Church of the Virgin* (Paul C. Dilley); (10) *The Life of Judas* (Brandon W. Hawk and Mari Mamyan); (11) *The Life of Mary Magdalene* (Christine Luckritz Marquis); (12) *The Acts of Nereus and Achilleus* (Richard I. Pervo); (13) *The Act of Peter in Azotus* (Cambry G. Pardee); (14) *The Exhortation of Peter* (J. Edward Walters); (15) *The Travels of Peter* (J. Edward Walters); (16) *The History of Philip* (Robert A. Kitchen); (17) *The Acts of Thomas and His Wonderworking Skin* (Jonathan D. Holste and Janet E. Spittler); (18) *The Epistle of Pelagia* (Slavomír éplö ); (19) *The Dialogue of the Revealer and John* (Philip L. Tite); (20) *First Apocryphal Apocalypse of John* (Rick Brannan); (21) *Second Apocryphal Apocalypse of John* (Rebecca Draughon, Jeannie Sellick, and Janet E. Spittler); (22) *Third Apocryphal Apocalypse of John* (Chance E. Bonar, Tony Burke, and Slavomír éplö); (23) *The Questions of James to John* (Kathleen Gibbons and Tony Burke); (24) *The Mysteries of John* (Hugo Lundhaug and Lloyd Abercrombie); (25) *The Investiture of the Archangel Michael* (Hugo Lundhaug); (26) *Homily against Heretical Books* by John of Parallos (Christian H. Bull and Lance Jenott); (27) *The Investiture of the Archangel Gabriel* (Lance Jenott); (28) *The Apocalypse of Thomas* (Matthias Geigenfeind); and (29) *The Teaching of the Apostles* (Witold Witakowski).

The listing of twenty-nine works in the table of contents (vii-ix) is actually misleading. No. 10 represents two different but similar works, one in Latin and the other in Armenian; they are not really recensions of the same work. No. 22 actually involves three separate works. No. 26 is not an apocryphal work at all but a sermon by John of Parallos (ca. 540–620) condemning the reading of no. 25 and other heretical apocrypha in churches where unsuspecting Christians often accept them as true, holy scripture (*Hom. against Heretical Books* 1.1; 2.6). No. 28 is a longer version of the text published in Elliott, *Apocryphal NT*, 645-651.

These works range in date from the fifth (nos. 5, 6, 28) to the twelfth (no. 13) century. Most of them are complete, but some are fragmentary and are missing the beginning (no. 19), the ending (no. 26), or both (nos. 1, 3). While most are translated from Coptic (nos. 3, 4, 5, 9, 17, 19, 24, 25, 26, 27), others are from Latin (nos. 2, 6, 7, 10a, 12, 28), Greek (nos. 11, 13, 20, 21, 22, 23), Syriac (nos. 14, 15, 16, 29), Armenian (no. 10b), Ethiopic (no. 18), Georgian (no. 8), and Old Uyghur (no. 1), with some witnesses involving other languages like Arabic and Slavonic. Several are preserved in only a single manuscript (nos. 1, 2, 13, 15, 26).

The contents of these works are quite varied and often fascinating. No. 2, for instance, is about Dimas, the penitent thief on the cross to the right of Jesus, who was the son of an unnamed Roman procurator. He unknowingly helped Joseph and Mary escape with the infant Jesus from the wicked King Herod on their way to Egypt. For this kindness, his father disowned him, and he turned to a life of crime, until he met

Jesus again during the last hours of his life. No. 5 relates how Jesus condemned Judas to hell, where he is attacked by thirty serpents, one for each of the thirty pieces of silver. No. 7 tells how the cross of Jesus was made from a "rood tree," which grew from seeds taken from the tree of life in the Garden of Eden. Such stories remind me more of modern-day Christian fiction based on biblical characters (e.g., Diana Wallis Taylor, *Lydia, Woman of Philippi* [New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 2017]) rather than works intended to rival those in the New Testament. Burke provides two indexes, one for modern authors and the other for ancient texts, including the Bible, enhancing this volume's usefulness in research. It could also serve as a textbook in a college or seminary course.

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