

Book Reviews

Michael J. KRUGER. *Christianity at the Crossroads: How the Second Century Shaped the Future of the Church*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018. 256 pp. \$30.00.

The second century is understudied, and Kruger offers readers a wide-ranging introduction not only to this period but also to trends in its scholarship. His review begins by noting the sociological tensions that existed among early Christians as they forged an identity separate from Judaism. His second chapter offers a concise, readable summary of the earliest political and intellectual opponents that attacked Christianity.

Chapter three well-describes the lack of uniformity that existed among Christians on the question of episcopacy. The evidence hints to a plurality of elders/bishops in many congregations, but as early as the emperor Trajan's reign (AD 110–117), writers such as Ignatius of Antioch pointed to a single ruling bishop.

Readers that are unfamiliar with the diversity of second-century Christianity will find chapter four informative. Perhaps most importantly, Kruger questions established, older paradigms that offer far too simplistic a look at the second century. For example, Kruger provides an insightful critique of Walter Bauer's *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (1934), a book that established the idea that Christianity began as a diverse religion holding many competing views of who Jesus was. Kruger clarifies that while offshoot teachers did exist—and we do know something about their teachings—there was at the same time a “great church” movement. This majority of Christians from a broad geographic region held to a common rule of faith, an identifiable set of shared beliefs.

The discussion of the great church in chapter five and how these communities relied on a rich textual culture to reinforce their shared identity in chapter six is a particular strength of this volume. Though widespread literacy was low, Christians embraced the public reading of Scripture, and within Greco-Roman culture, the public reading of texts was nothing out of the ordinary. Kruger does cite numerous scholars who have written on literacy in the second century, but he does not mention Brian Wright's *Communal Reading in the Time of Jesus* (2017). Though slightly outside Kruger's period of study, Wright's book fully establishes that communal reading was a prominent feature in the ancient world, especially among Jews and Christians.

Kruger offers an assessment of the process of canon formation in chapter seven, and readers who are unfamiliar with this topic will find his discussion of a functional canon to be helpful. Though definitive evidence for a final, closed list in the second century does not exist, Kruger does show what the writings in the second century reveal: numerous witnesses suggest a core canon, from the Muratorian fragment, Irenaeus, Theophilus of Antioch, Clement of Alexandria, Aristides, and Justin Martyr. Even the work of Marcion, the early dissenter against the great church, points to the desire and inclination to discern a core canon. Kruger confirms the complete absurdity of the Hollywood trope that an elite group created the Christian canon by proclamation in the third or fourth century.

At the practical level, Kruger encourages reflection on how early Christians survived with little social or cultural influence. The practices of shared sacraments, public reading, and leadership development led to a unified, great church movement. From this foundation, Christians engaged in apologetics with cultural elites, withstood the forces of persecution, and passed on

a rule of faith. They discerned what was their canon of Scripture and shared their lives in common. I recommend this volume not only because it offers an excellent entryway into this period, but because the strategies employed by the second-century church can remind readers of what is essential as they pass on their own faith.

JASON FIKES

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Abilene Christian University Press

Gary W. JENKINS. *Calvin's Tormentors: Understanding the Conflicts That Shaped the Reformer.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. 190 pp. \$27.99.

The name John Calvin rarely breeds apathy. Whether it is admiration or animosity is often up to the individual and what s/he knows about his life. Readers who come from a Stone-Campbell background may very well scoff at the idea that Calvin should be considered anything less than a theocrat who wielded unlimited power in his “Calvinist” stronghold of Geneva, Switzerland. For precisely this reason, this volume is a necessary and well-written addition to the Calvin Studies corpus. Not only does it shed light on the antagonists of Calvin’s program in Geneva, but it also rounds some of the sharper edges of Calvin’s historical reputation. Though at times uneven, this volume offers a series of in-depth vignettes on the antagonists whom Calvin struggled to address, either theologically or politically, illustrating the immense web of interaction and frustration found in the lives of second-generation Reformers.

The primary goal of the volume, according to Jenkins, is to show “how controversy shaped Calvin’s life and, to a large degree, his thought” (xv). To accomplish this, Jenkins divides the volume into a series of ten chapters chronicling individuals or groups with which Calvin was at odds. He comments on some of the more famous antagonists, like Michael Servetus who was infamously burned at the stake in Geneva for his anti-Trinitarian views but also less known and more political villains like the *Enfants de Genève*, who were political adversaries for the future of Geneva’s government and independence. The structure generally follows Calvin’s life, though Jenkins sometimes moves haphazardly making it difficult to tell exactly when these people interacted with Calvin or the other Genevan reformers. Each of the chapters also tends to focus much more on the adversaries themselves rather than on Calvin. In this regard the volume is much needed as histories on Calvin usually address controversies from Calvin’s perspective, and at times take Calvin’s side. This volume expands our knowledge of sixteenth-century Christianity in general alongside filling-in gaps in Reformed controversies, in particular. I learned a lot about what motivated Calvin’s opponents and, in turn, about Calvin’s responses.

A weakness of the volume, though, is that the content does not quite live up to the title. There were several times throughout the volume where I was left wondering when Calvin was going to be addressed or when the conclusion(s) would be hastily added. For instance, in the second chapter on Pierre Caroli, the controversy is framed more around Caroli’s own issues with vacillating between the Catholic and Protestant churches than with his conflict with Calvin. When the conflicts are addressed, it tends to be more about Caroli feuding with Guillaume Farel, Pierre Viret, *and* Calvin. I had this same reaction to several other chapters, as well. At times the volume can feel like small biographies of Calvin’s tormentors as opposed to an argument about how they shaped Calvin’s theological or political trajectory. A more focused approach on how these controversies impacted Calvin would have provided a stronger overall argument.

The readership for this volume would certainly be upper division undergraduates or at graduate level. The reader would have to know some basics about Calvin’s life first before

beginning this volume. For those of us in the Stone-Campbell movement, this volume does a service of nuancing Calvin's reputation. I myself inherited a general anti-Calvinist viewpoint, and it was often propped up by a false sense of "Calvin as dictator." While his life might have had flashes of this, the current volume aptly illustrates how, at best, this is an overgeneralization. However, if you are familiar with Calvin's life and the basics of Reformed theology, then this volume is an intriguing and well-written examination of some of Calvin's main antagonists and is recommended for those looking to go deeper into the polemical development of theology and politics in the Early Modern European world.

NICHOLAS A. CUMMING

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Brandon J. O'BRIEN. *Demanding Liberty: An Untold Story of American Religious Freedom.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018. 192 pp. \$17.00.

O'Brien, the (co-)author of books in various Christian disciplines (biblical studies, ministry, theology), delivers a uniquely constructed volume that delves into history, biography, Christian thought, and theology to track the development of how modern Christians understand religious liberty. Though he works the angle of various disciplines, he focuses on the life and times of the Revolutionary Era Baptist preacher, Isaac Backus. Through tracing key developments and struggles in Backus's life, O'Brien is able to track the individual's journey from the Standing Order Congregational Church of New England to the governmentally oppressed Baptist denomination.

This volume begins by exploring contemporary ideas of religious liberty. O'Brien recognizes and demonstrates that there is a diverse and expansive array of definitions on religious liberty that are sometimes antithetical to one another. O'Brien acknowledges that the United States has a long and complex relationship with religious liberty and attempts to address historic issues surrounding the topic. He attempts to equip his readers with more knowledge to answer questions of church and state intermingling in one another's affairs.

Backus started his life as a nominal Congregationalist who began to take faith seriously during the Great Awakening. He participated in the Standing Order church until he came to adamantly disagree with the Half-Way Covenant. He and many of his fellow congregants broke off and founded a Separate church of Congregationalists that was not authorized by the state-sponsored church. These Separates were still subject to an ecclesiastical tax, which paid for the salary of a pastor whom they did not utilize and the maintenance of a building they did not use.

Backus was later influenced by the preaching of Baptists and struggled with the practice of pedobaptism. After a long struggle of going back and forth on his stance with this practice, Backus converted and joined a growing number of new Baptists in New England. Though Baptists were exempt from the ecclesiastical tax, the Standing Order placed barriers in the way of becoming recognized as an official Baptist congregation. O'Brien also gives accounts of the seizure of Baptist property and the incarceration of those who refused to pay the tax. Isaac Backus worked hard to compile a great amount of evidence of persecution shortly before the Constitutional Convention and present a case for the Baptists to many of the founding fathers in a push to have constitutional protection of religious liberties.

Pulling various disciplines together, O'Brien is able to present a more developed repertoire of ideas in thinking about religious liberty. He engages with political and religious thought in both modern and historical contexts. In doing this, he falls short in various ways. Though it can be very useful to cross disciplinary lines for further understanding a bigger picture, O'Brien

pulls these ideas together without much clarity or organization, making his presentation difficult to follow. O'Brien often inserts modern analogies into the historical narrative in a way that seems forced, out of place, and potentially alienating to many Christians. O'Brien's strength here is his method, not his execution.

O'Brien does present a great deal of relevant material in forming how one should think about religious liberty. However, this volume has its weaknesses in that it is less of a history and more of a philosophical argument that highly utilizes historical contexts. While primarily utilizing the struggles and efforts of Isaac Backus, O'Brien explains, in part, the historical necessity and development of the Bill of Rights with special attention paid to the First Amendment and the religious liberty that it attempts to guarantee.

Though O'Brien does not provide straightforward answers to questions of the intermingling of church and state, he does provide much to think about for arriving at one's own answers. With its interdisciplinary nature, this volume would be useful in various undergraduate classes from U.S. religious history to political philosophy. The information presented would also be useful in communicating to one's congregation about the relationship between the church and the state.

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W. Bradford LITTLEJOHN. *The Peril and Promise of Christian Liberty: Richard Hooker, the Puritans, and Protestant Political Theology.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017. 314 pp. \$35.00.

Who was Richard Hooker? Unless one is Anglican, the typical response might be, "I don't know." Even in Church History classes, Hooker is generally shoehorned into a PowerPoint slide between Thomas Cranmer and the Puritans, in the "English Reformation" section. Outside of these realms, Hooker remains largely unknown. This is precisely why the current volume comes in the timeliest of fashions.

While the tension which existed between the Puritans and Hooker are central to understanding his contributions to the Church at large, Hooker's writings on Christian liberty remain some of the most important works on the topic to emerge from the 16th-century English Church. This period in the Reformation acts as a kind of catalyst in ecumenical discussions. Participants tend towards one extreme or the other: either the English Reformation served as the gateway to modern Western liberalism, or it gave Western conservative Christianity the roots needed to flourish. Rarely does one find a middle ground, to the chagrin of many Anglicans. But as this volume explores, this kind of caricature hardly stands the examination of the works of Richard Hooker.

The volume presents a broad argument which then narrows into a rather specific point that then naturally flows out into some modern application. In this sense, it is a helpful volume on Christian political thought, even if one does not agree with its conclusions. It is itself a starting point on terms and concepts which were, and remain, volatile conversation starters among Christians. The first chapter sets out a landscape view of the Reformation, the teachings of Luther and Calvin, and just what Christian liberty means, and how it relates to *adiaphora*, which means those things Scripture does not explicitly reveal regarding Christian living (43). These debatable points for the Christian life, such as the form of worship, form the foundation of Christian liberty. The essential question is, "How can the freedom of a Christian person coexist with the freedom of a Christian commonwealth?" (42) The following chapter expands those

points further, digging into such topics as Luther's *Freedom of a Christian* and the Vestiarian Controversy of 1550 in England (57, 69). These historical exercises demonstrate how early attempts to reconcile the Christian's freedom, individual and corporate, only grew in tension as each side sought to firmly establish their position in the Bible (86). And this tension leads directly to the Puritan conflict under Queen Elizabeth, which Littlejohn focuses on in Chapter 3. The Puritan problem lay with their brand of Biblicism, which Littlejohn refers to as "Precisionism," and how that affected the workings of the church at large. By anchoring the weight of interpretive authority in the clergy, rather than the governors, the Puritans created a situation where ministers told judges what to do and lawyers would have to submit to the parson's argumentation (122-123). In essence, the Precisionist simply made the local church the seat of government, even if they eschewed such language. Thus, the problem was only worsened.

Beginning with Chapter 4, Hooker's work and role take center stage in Littlejohn's analysis. Hooker's main contributions to the debate between the Puritans and the Conformists is his attempt to ease both consciences. His first step is to show that even if a form of government—for Hooker royal supremacy—is indeed the best option for a Christian society, this is not something Scripture demands (152). Therefore, another method for understanding what is *adiaphora* must be implemented, wherein Hooker turns to human reason. Chapter 5 picks up this thread, and follows Hooker's reasoned account of how conscience, reason, and corporate moral agency work together. Hooker claims that by submitting to institutional authority regarding issues on which Scripture is silent (or worse, ambiguous), the individual is freed from the incessant fear that any misstep might displease God (166). But Hooker does not suggest a blind obedience to human authority; "Hooker saw that it was necessary to invite [the Puritans] to an obedience based on *understanding*" (178). Chapter 6 explores how Hooker's Two-Kingdom theology results in a mixed polity. Since "grace does not destroy nature, but perfects it," Hooker's theology leads to a Christian commonwealth, where the ecclesial and secular work under the same view of Divine Law (228). And this is how Hooker draws in even the Puritan, for Scripture must be the basis of a Christian government (236).

One of the chief strengths of this volume up to this point lies with his treatment of the Puritans. It is not hard to find defenses of Anglicanism which turn the Puritans into horrid legalists or, worse, hypocrites. Remember the controversy around rap-artist Propaganda's 2012 song, "Precious Puritans"? It is worth a five-minute Google trip across the web. It will not take long before one will be mired in a cult of heroes and theological grandstanding, on both sides of the discussion. So, it is refreshing that Littlejohn does not treat the Puritans as villainous dissenters, out to destroy the world, but neither does he ignore that their cultural capital in the American colonies dried up by the end of the First Great Awakening. Though Littlejohn does find their theology to be flawed, he treats them as fellow members of the Body of Christ, never maligning their motives through his research.

The concluding chapter of this volume is where the various threads come together into a singular, focused argument. In summarizing Hooker's work, Littlejohn explains, "Rather than seeking in vain to resolve all uncertainties in advance, then, we must learn the art of living with uncertainty, the art of living in a culture of persuasion, by the virtue of prudence" (237). And so, a survey of David Bentley Hart, Richard Bauckham, and Oliver O'Donovan shows how the values of the modern liberal State, things like human rights and tolerance, are only possible when anchored in a theistic framework, for no secular foundation brings such high-minded concepts to the table (268). In other words, the freedoms enjoyed by the secular order today are the product of men like Hooker, who sought to balance individual conscience with institutional liberty. Hooker's "Christological politics," then, bring the Church to a kind of check on

the idea of secular governments (270). For Christian liberty can be shared with those outside the Church, but it cannot be protected by them.

Though the volume is a well-written, enjoyable reassessment of Richard Hooker’s legacy, one might easily wonder what it achieves. Even if Littlejohn’s assessment is right, that a Christian state like that described by Hooker is the ideal, in what practical way might the genie of secular liberalism go back into its bottle? It appears the ultimate assessment of the volume is that the Church needs a kind of early Modern revival, at least politically. But in what places might such a revival be most likely? England at once comes to mind, and yet the Church there, with its 26 Lords Spiritual who take part in the House of Commons, does not seem to be the bastion of Christian liberty that Littlejohn sees coming out of Hooker’s theology. Granted, there are many factors at play, but if the primary argument in support of Hooker is that the Puritan precisionism does not work, ought the Church replace it with the Conformist submission that gave the world the current problems of the Anglican Communion? Perhaps there is another long-ignored theologian out there who might help the Church finally find the *via media*? Or, maybe the pendulum will continue to swing from one extreme to the other? I guess we will have to read Littlejohn’s next book to see.

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Stephanie L. DERRICK. *The Fame of C. S. Lewis: A Controversialist’s Reception in Britain and America.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. 221 pp. \$30.00.

Most fans of C. S. Lewis will not necessarily like this volume. Most would rather read, or read again, something by the great man himself, or one of the dozens of celebratory works about him. This is not another book about his life and writings. It is, instead, a volume about why there are so many other books on those topics.

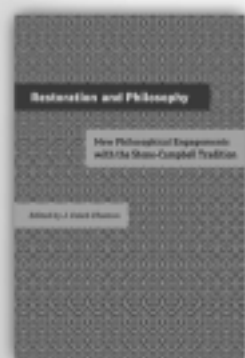
Author Stephanie L. Derrick received her PhD from the University of Stirling in 2014. David W. Bebbington, a renowned historian of evangelicalism, directed her program. The volume under review is a revision of Derrick’s dissertation. It stands as a model of painstaking research and well-argued points. Derrick breaks new ground by providing a broad historical account “for how and why Lewis became one of the most successful Christian authors of the twentieth century” (9).

The volume flows chronologically. Following a brief “Introduction,” Chapter 1 explains why Lewis, a world-class academic, wrote so much for popular audiences. Derrick observes that from the time he converted to Christianity around 1930, Lewis believed that every kind of art should serve as a channel to the divine. He also believed that the chaos unleashed by the Great War was no reason for abandoning tradition. It was, instead, reason for a return. Lewis’s conservative outlook and gift of expression led to his becoming one of several “popularizers of theology” (38) who spoke on BBC radio during the Second World War. Transcripts of his talks were the genesis of *Mere Christianity*.

Chapter 2 introduces a prominent, recurring theme, one hinted at by the volume’s subtitle: Lewis was hardly ever as popular in Britain as he was in America. Why? Derrick argues that early on it was mainly because to his peers in Britain, Lewis seemed to be acting, playing the part of an old contrarian. Edwardian expressions like “jolly well” and “mind you” tipped them off to what they regarded as a gimmick, a dialect that Americans never distinguished.

Chapter 3 begins by observing that Lewis had many admirers in Britain during the 1940s and ’50s. Yet they paled in comparison to his legions of fans in America. From the beginning,

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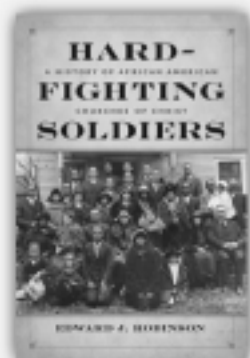


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Lewis was known in the U.S. as a literary sensation who was also a true believer, the Oxford don who defended the Christian faith. Derrick notes that Lewis appeared on a cover of *Time* magazine in 1947, the same year *The Screwtape Letters* was selected by the American Book-of-the-Month Club. His fame in the U.S., which he never visited, has hardly ever looked back.

Chapter 4 responds to the question of how Lewis grew as a figure of cultural significance during the years following his death in 1963. Derrick gives credit to those who handled the Lewis legacy, above all Walter Hooper. She also cites twentieth-century forces like the popularity of radio, the rise of the paperback, the advent of television, a growing film industry, and an education system that familiarized millions with Lewis as the author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

Chapter 5 also deals with Lewis's posthumous fame. But while Chapter 4 provided an "aerial point of view," here we have a "ground-up perspective, considering responses from scholars, readers and fans" (146). Derrick shows that since the 1970s, the growth of Lewis's renown has been accompanied by less attention to his overtly Christian books and more attention to his children's books, three of which, to date, have been made into feature films that together have netted more than a billion dollars.

In the "Conclusion," Derrick drives home her main point that a wide array of "historical, cultural, religious, and social factors" (181) came together to make the fame of C. S. Lewis possible. In this regard, as a reception history of the incredible career of C. S. Lewis and his legacy, the volume succeeds. Although it contributes to the historiography, and would be appropriate for graduate students, it would not be a good selection for a beginner's course about Lewis and his works.

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Marc CORTEZ. *Resourcing Theological Anthropology: A Constructive Account of Humanity in the Light of Christ.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. 301 pp. \$29.99.

To be more precise this volume should be titled *Biblical Resourcing of Theological Anthropology*. This volume focuses specifically upon the biblical texts that impinge upon our understanding of what it means to be human. Nevertheless, the author acknowledges that there are other important sources such as the social sciences that ought to be considered in the development of an up-to-date systematic theological anthropology.

The first chapter is divided into two parts. The first considers the anthropological significance of John's declaration from the mouth of Pilate, "Behold the man" [*idou ho anthrōpos*] (John 19:5). The second part of chapter one explores the meaning and relationship of the natural and the supernatural, the relationship of nature and grace.

The second chapter tackles the thorny, controversial issue of the necessity of the incarnation. The author argues that the incarnation would have taken place irrespective of sin. This is important because Christ, the second Adam, is not merely second in sequence but he is the "teleological completion of what God began in the 'first' Adam."

Next Cortez discusses the meaning of the *imago Dei*. He argues that the image is both *formally* and *materially* significant for a christologically grounded anthropology. Chapter four analyzes the biblical texts that demonstrate the real humanity of Jesus. Cortez has an extended analysis of the question of whether Jesus' humanity is fallen or unfallen. In spite of the different ways this question has been answered, he notes two areas of agreement: that Jesus experienced existentially what the fallen human race experiences but that he was, nevertheless, sinless.

Chapter five serves as a summary of the conclusions reached in the first four chapters by stating eleven theses for a christological anthropology:

1. Jesus is the unique revelation of what it means to be truly human.
2. The epistemological centrality of Jesus derives from the fact that this humanity is ontologically fundamental for the existence of all other humans.
3. The fact that Jesus is epistemologically and ontologically fundamental to humanity means that christological anthropology is inherently teleological.
4. The fact that Jesus' humanity is ontologically fundamental for the existence of all other humans does not result in either soteriological universalism or anthropological exclusivism.
5. The epistemological and ontological centrality of Jesus for anthropology entails that ultimate truths about the human person must be grounded in Christology.
6. Christologically grounded truths about humanity provide an interpretive framework for understanding other anthropological truths.
7. Christological anthropology must pay close attention to the concrete particularities of Jesus' existence.
8. The particularities of Jesus' existence mean that we must affirm both the continuity and the discontinuity between Jesus and other humans.
9. There can be a direct move from Christology to anthropology.
10. Christological anthropology must be robustly pneumatological and Trinitarian.
11. Jesus' humanity primarily reveals what it means to be truly human in the midst of a fallen world.

The final three chapters explore some of the implications of these conclusions as they impinge upon our understanding of sexuality and the relations between the sexes, racism and ethnic differences, and death.

This is a thoroughly researched and sophisticated study of the biblical texts relevant to the subject. Nevertheless, one exegetical defect lies in Cortez's apparently literalistic interpretation of Genesis 2-3, which are so germane to his task. This approach contributes unnecessarily to the difficulty of answering some of his most perplexing anthropological questions. (As an aside, I trust that the reader can distinguish between the tasks of determining the genre of a text and its truth.)

In spite of the extensive list of biblical texts referenced by the author, I am puzzled why he does not include a discussion of Romans 7, especially because it is so relevant for his arguments about nature/grace and fallen/unfallen humanity. The volume's discussion of sin ignores Rom 7:23 and its implications for understanding what it means to be a fallen human: "I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me."

I would have appreciated a clearer definition of what it means to be "truly human." What did the apostles see in Jesus that led them to make their astounding claims about him? Was it the lack of selfishness, covetousness, lust, or another vice? Or was it his total reliance upon and union with the Father, or, in other words, a mutual relationship of love that defines what it means to be human?

Who can profit from this volume? Probably not a literate lay person or even the Bible college undergraduate. Although the author writes in a clear, uncomplicated style, the most advanced theological student will have to slow down to follow some of the finer points of his arguments.

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Michael J. THATE, Kevin J. VANHOOZER, and Constantine R. CAMPBELL, eds.
“In Christ” in Paul: Explorations in Paul’s Theology of Union and Participation. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. 587 pp. \$55.00.

Few would deny that being “in Christ” is an important concept in Pauline theology. However, throughout the centuries theologians and Bible scholars have developed different practices and theories concerning how one is “in Christ,” or what it means to be “in Christ.” Additionally, in the last decade the works by Michael J. Gorman, Constantine R. Campbell, and Grant Macaskill have caused a rise in the popularity of union or participation “in Christ.” Consequently, this massive edited volume—with three editors and nineteen contributors—is an important and impressive contribution to biblical studies and theology.

While many themes and topics pervade this volume, Vanhoozer summarizes the entire volume nicely in his introduction: “The present volume contains interdisciplinary explorations of the fundamental mystery of salvation, namely, the nature of the believer’s union with and participation in Christ” (11). In other words, this entire volume wrestles with the basis of the Christian faith—humanity’s union and participation in/with Jesus Christ.

The interdisciplinary nature of this volume is ingenious, and it is how the volume is organized. “Part One consists of contributions from biblical scholars who wrestle to understand, clarify, and explore Paul’s own language and concepts in textual and historical context” (11). This section hosts a whopping ten essays from household names in NT studies (listed alphabetically): Constantine R. Campbell, Douglas A. Campbell, Matthew Croasmun, Susan Eastman, Michael J. Gorman, Joshua W. Jipp, Grant Macaskill, Isaac Augustine Morales, O.P., and two essays from Michael J. Thate. While all of these essays, in some way, deal with union or participation “in Christ” in Pauline literature, various other topics are also covered, such as metaphor, ethics, baptism, theosis, cruciformity, imperialism, and even spatiality.

Part two focuses on reception history. The six essays in this section highlight key thinkers in the early church, the reformation, and recent history: Ben C. Blackwell’s essay discusses Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria; Darren Sarisky reflects on Augustine; Stephen Chester dialogues with Martin Luther; Julie Canlis reconsiders union in Christ in John Calvin’s work; T. Robert Baylor discusses the theology of John Owen; and, Keith L. Johnson finishes the reception history highlight reel with Karl Barth. While this section covers notable key thinkers in church history, it is unfortunate that no theologians are covered between Augustine and Luther. Nonetheless, this highlight reel is a useful and insightful look at how important interpreters have understood being “in Christ.”

Part three finishes this interdisciplinary volume with three essays on contemporary issues and how being “in Christ” fits within systematic theology. Ashish Varma considers how participation “in Christ” fits into ethics and Christian virtue. Mary Patton Baker explores how the eucharist meal relates to Paul’s soteriology and union with Christ. Then lastly, Devin P. Singh insightfully investigates how the “united body of Christ” can inform and be informed by biopolitics.

Ultimately, this volume is an impressive collection of essays by pundits in biblical studies and theology. Thate, Vanhoozer, and Campbell should be commended for compiling and editing this supreme set of essays. Additionally, this volume is a must-read for students and scholars interested in NT studies, Pauline theology, and systematic theology. While pundits in each field will certainly find warrants to critique each individual essay for various reasons, the fact remains, this edited volume gives its reader access to a variety of opinions on an important topic. Therefore, this volume is a valuable addition to the shelves of scholars, students, and libraries.

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Jonathan KING, *The Beauty of the Lord: Theology as Aesthetics. Studies in Historical and Systematic Theology*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2018. 400 pp. \$24.99.

Peruse the contents of contemporary systematic or biblical theology books and one recognizes that theological aesthetics is absent from serious engagement in such volumes. King (Lecturer at Faculty of Liberal Arts at the Universitas Pelita Harapan in Indonesia) addresses this void in evangelical scholarship in the current volume. King roots aesthetics within the broader field of theological inquiry. He does so through a biblical-theological approach stating the premise that “beauty corresponds in some way to the attributes of God, and as such is a communicated property or phenomenon of the *opera Dei ad extra*” (5).

Utilizing a canonical-linguistic hermeneutic, King defines beauty as “an intrinsic quality of things which, when perceived, pleases the mind by displaying a certain kind of fittingness. . . . Fittingness functions as an overarching term expressive of the full range of aesthetic properties that identify any and all objective characteristics of beauty” (9-10). He cites qualities of aesthetics such as simplicity, unity, and symmetry along with others as evoking delight within those who recognize their presence, though recognition of such qualities is not essential for beauty to exist. King, therefore, employs a realist view of beauty which claims that beauty is an inherent quality within a given thing apart from its appreciation by an observer (13).

King’s thesis under the idea of beauty as a fittingness of God’s attributes, is that Christ’s fittingness as incarnate Redeemer, and in the divine economy in general, is the critical lens for seeing God’s beauty, serving as well to display the Son’s glory in every stage of the theodrama. The properly dogmatic (Trinitarian) ground of the Son’s fittingness is God’s beauty which, in conjunction with divine simplicity, entails that everything God does is, by definition, beautiful (i.e., God-glorifying). (23)

Therefore, he follows the idea of beauty as fittingness along the trajectory of the Christ-event seeing the theodrama of God’s work as the means by which God displays his glory and subsequently, his beauty. One of the helpful aspects of this volume is that he broadly outlines key theologians who have written on beauty. Authors such as Anselm of Canterbury, Karl Barth, and Hans Urs von Balthasar show up in the conversation on beauty. This places this volume within the historic stream of Christian thought on theological aesthetics, while at the same time demonstrating how his volume is making a unique contribution to that stream of thought.

Detailing the chapters, chapter 1 overviews his thesis, background issues, and argumentation he is making in the rest of the volume. Chapter 2 constitutes the Triune nature of beauty. Chapter 3 focuses on Genesis 1–2 and looks at how the creation prefigures the eschatological themes he will consider later in the volume. Chapter 4 follows the theodrama to the Christ event, namely within the work of the incarnation. One of his emphases throughout the volume is his attention to the image of God and the display of glory. Here this is considered through Christ’s own enfleshment and the fittingness of his identity as a slave to show forth God’s glory. Chapter 5 looks at Hebrews, Ephesians, and the atonement theory of the OT and how these texts address Christ’s priestly agenda as well as his kingly glory (beauty), demonstrated through his work on the cross. Chapter 6 again draws on the themes of Genesis 1–2 demonstrating how the consummation works itself out for both the church as reflecting Christ, and the glory of the eschaton compared to the theodrama which is leading to it. Finally, King includes an appendix (337-342) which contains the lexical information pertinent to this idea of fittingness and beauty seen in both the OT and NT. He builds upon and summarizes Jo Ann Davidson’s work, *Toward a Theology of Beauty: A Biblical Perspective*, and develops the implications of the biblical-lexical witness for understanding aesthetic language for Israel and the church.

Concerning his approach to beauty, it creates a challenge to state how he is developing a biblical-theological understanding of beauty yet advancing it from the outset with a classicist theory. Developments of Anselm, Aquinas, and Irenaeus and their views of fittingness are important, but an involved engagement with their application of Greek philosophical ideas of beauty would be helpful, especially in recognizing points of departure from these scholars as warranted by the text. In a contemporary sense, while he does address the distinctions between his theory of beauty and the commonly expressed subjective value named “beauty” (i.e., beauty as in the eye of the beholder), it would serve to situate his argument further by demonstrating how fittingness as revealing God’s glory contrasts with other contemporary ways of articulating beauty. Finally, seeking to employ fittingness as an overarching way of speaking of beauty, though helpful, may risk a reductionist approach. This is not so much a critique of King as it is addressing the unavoidable limitations of language. Discussion about the analogical character of language and how it relates to articulating beauty might help to strengthen his aim of why the language of fittingness is an effective means of explaining the inexplicable sublime.

This volume helpfully addresses the void of evangelical scholarship’s witness to aesthetics. While most works addressing aesthetics approach it from the standpoint of liturgy or the arts, which are important in their own right and underexplored within the Stone-Campbell heritage, it is refreshing to see a volume addressing theological aesthetics as a part of the discipline of theology proper. King shows that theological aesthetics deserves an important place within the broader umbrella of theological research. He does not seek to read theological aesthetics as a lens by which to do biblical theology, rather, his burden is to show an organic development from the canonical witness to aesthetic reality both inherent within and as the content of the theodrama of the text. Further, he articulates both his thesis and the contours of his argument from the outset. This goes a long way for readers to identify how his thesis plays out within the broader development of the volume.

This volume is an important contribution to theological scholarship and serves to enter broader evangelicalism into a conversation on beauty which it has been hesitant to engage. He is to be commended for putting aesthetics into theological language that helpfully aids scholarship in talking about beauty. This volume will become central for all evangelical scholars looking to dedicate themselves to theological aesthetics for years to come.

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Thomas R. SCHREINER. *Covenant and God’s Purpose for the World.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017. 136 pp. \$14.99.

This contribution to Crossway’s *Short Studies in Biblical Theology* series is yet another showcase of Schreiner’s devotion to theological scholarship by summarizing important, and often complicated, principles of biblical theology for students of Scripture. This small volume teaches both biblical scholars in academia and Christian lay students of Scripture that biblical covenants (Creation, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and the new covenant) lead to and explain redemption through Christ.

While the idea of *covenant* is a central theological theme in Scripture, Schreiner will caution that it is not *the* central theme of Scripture. Instead, he clarifies that “the idea that the Scriptures have one center is probably mistaken” (11). Rather the focus on Christ as the theme of all Scripture, as a tenet of biblical theology, is what Schreiner argues is the central theme of God’s various covenants accounted in the biblical narrative. Covenant is defined in this volume as “a

chosen relationship in which two parties make binding promises to each other” (13). Schreiner emphasizes that both parties in a covenant willingly choose to be bound in the relationship. This type of relationship is unique and is clearly defined apart from other types of relationships bound by circumstances, such as a familial relationship between parents and a child who are bound through natural relationship. Yet ancient covenants must be understood as the model of the biblical covenants between God and certain persons reflecting a type of relationship between levels of authority. A king would make a covenant with a lesser people where the two parties were clearly not equal, yet there were defined duties in the covenant.

The first covenant discussed in this volume is perhaps the most controversial. The controversy lies in the terminology that Schreiner uses to defend the existence of a *Creation Covenant*. Some scholars would consider Schreiner’s position as more properly termed an *Adamic administration* rather than a covenant (19). Since Genesis 1–3 does not mention the word *covenant*, how can one conclude that God initiates a covenant of creation? Schreiner contrasts his argument with one posed by Presbyterian theologian John Murray. Murray prefers the term *Adamic administration* over the term *covenant*. Schreiner argues that a covenant between God and Adam reflects more than simply a dominion, or administration, over the created order. He further states that covenants are always redemptive, and the term does not apply to Adam or Eve since they were first created without sin with no need for redemption.

Schreiner counters Murray by choosing the terminology of *covenant of creation* because it fits with the overarching view of redemptive history. This view of the Genesis narrative enables us to see how this covenant of creation integrates with other covenants ushered in throughout God’s history with humanity. God inaugurated history with creation and will consummate it with a new creation (20). Schreiner gives further points of evidence supporting the idea of a creation covenant including the prophecy of Hos 6:7, “But like Adam they transgressed the covenant: there they dealt faithlessly with me.” Another key argument centers on the role of Adam and Eve as priest-kings in the first created order. The tie-in with covenants between kings and subjects in antiquity cannot be denied here. As part of the dominion that God calls for with Adam and Eve (Gen 2:5-25), Schreiner points to the plausible conclusion that the first man and woman were created in the *imago Dei* to rule the world as God’s servants as sons/daughters. Scholarly evidence greatly concludes that they were to function as priest kings and queens obedient to God yet ruling over the created order with authority granted by the Creator (23-24).

This covenant of creation, according to Schreiner, was tested. As God commands for the man and woman to care for the living aspects of the garden, a boundary is set surrounding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life. Adam and Eve were not to eat of the first tree lest death come upon them (Gen 2:9, 15-17). If the priest-king and queen were successful in obeying this boundary, Schreiner speculates that they would perhaps have been confirmed in righteousness. Schreiner cites Gen 2:17 for support of his speculation and emphasizes that there is no specific textual reference to the claim of eventual righteousness through obedience alone (26-27).

Schreiner next explains the importance of the Noahic covenant established in Genesis 6–9. This chapter of the volume explains the similarities between the covenant with Adam and the covenant with Noah. The establishing of a covenant with Noah represents a renewal of a covenant already in place after Adam. But God’s covenant with Noah then ushers in a further clarification of the gospel in that God promises never to annihilate humanity even though the “intention of the thoughts of [humanity’s] heart was only evil continually” (Gen 6:5). Schreiner (35) writes: “The covenant doesn’t promise universal salvation, but it does guarantee universal preservation.” The bow of color in the sky represents a weapon of war and if God unleashed this bow and let it fly, then all humanity would be destroyed. Instead, God allows the imagery

of the bow to be a sign of the Noahic covenant where God withdraws his bow, putting down the weapon of war between the Creator and the creation never to destroy humanity again (35). This promise of preservation signifies a new beginning for humanity as life will always continue on earth until the eschatological culmination of the gospel. Despite the depravity of humanity, the *imago Dei* continues, humanity procreates and fills the earth. The flood is a witness to what wickedness deserves and is a type of the final judgement yet to come. Through preservation of humanity, redemption will be realized (39).

The Abrahamic covenant is the next in line of God's historical interaction with creation. Regardless of the Noahic covenant of preservation, evil continued in the world. The downward spiral of human pride underscored the deserved judgment through God's holiness. Corruption inhabits the human heart. Schreiner emphasizes in this chapter that God's covenant with Abraham (which Schreiner uses throughout, though he knows Abram was not changed to Abraham until Gen 17) was not dependent on obedience and righteousness as was the covenant with Noah. Rather, God initiates the covenant with Abraham through calling him out of the land of Ur (43), which is supported by Neh 9:7 and Josh 24:2-3. Although the covenant initiated in Genesis 15 was unconditional, conditional elements are pointed out in Genesis 17. The initial call to leave his homeland in Genesis 15 implies conditions that were fulfilled in chapters 1 and following. Abraham must be circumcised and leave his homeland behind in order to receive the promise (50-51). Schreiner points out that the tension between the unconditional and conditional elements of the Abrahamic covenant are resolved in Jesus Christ. As the perfect obedient one, Christ is the mediator between both covenants with Abraham. All who are united to Christ are the true offspring of Abraham thus fulfilling God's promise resulting in the covenant with Abraham as fulfilled in the new covenant inaugurated by Jesus Christ (57).

Schreiner refers to the Mosaic covenant as the gracious covenant. The chapter covering this covenant is focused on the grace found in the encounter with Moses for God's people. Some scholars and lay Christians mistakenly identify the Mosaic covenant as legalistic, as if salvation is based on works. But Schreiner teaches well that God's interaction with his people through Moses is an act of redemption. Evidence for this position can be found in Exod 2:23-25 where God keeps his promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by rescuing his people from Egyptian slavery. Likewise, Jer 11:2-5 clearly shows the continuity between the Mosaic and Abrahamic covenants. As God promised a land of milk and honey, a reference to the creation covenant in the garden of Eden, Jeremiah's prophecy declares, "I swore to your fathers a land flowing with milk and honey, as at this day." Whereas Abraham was promised this beautiful land, it was through the promises made through Moses that the people were to possess it. In conclusion, Schreiner connects common themes between all the biblical covenants in a successful effort to connect them all to Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of God's pre-ordained plan of redemption. A theme of God's people as priest-kings is seen from Adam through the people of God in the Mosaic covenant to David's role as God's chosen king for his people and as a witness to the Gentile nations. Blessings promised for obedience and curses for disobedience are also evident from the Creation covenant to the Mosaic covenant in the Ten Commandments.

Schreiner's overview of the Davidic covenant further ties in the common elements of covenant found in the creation covenant to the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants. Schreiner argues that the covenant with David from 2 Samuel 7 is a continuation of the intended vice-regency of God's image bearers. Adam and Eve were to serve in this role under God's lordship, but they disobeyed, ushering in misery and death instead. At the time of David's monarchy (1 Sam 16), Israel was living under the Mosaic covenant and trusting in the promises to Abraham. The Davidic covenant would bring about the promised blessings originated in the creation covenant. Furthermore, the promises to Abraham would be fulfilled.

Schreiner describes David as a new Adam and the true Israel, the true offspring of Abraham since he is promised a descendent through whom all of God's promises would be secured. Gen 3:15 will come to fulfillment through a Davidic offspring known throughout Jewish tradition as the Davidic Messiah. Through the Davidic covenant, God's people hoped and watched for this Christ. As David's son, Jesus Christ is now reigning as the priest-king and will come again to consummate his reign. When Jesus returns, all of God's covenant promises will be fulfilled in the new covenant.

Schreiner ties the biblical covenants together through the storyline culminating in the new covenant through Jesus Christ. He describes the new covenant having both continuity and discontinuity with the biblical covenants from Adam to Abraham and with David. Jeremiah 31:31-34 makes it clear that the old and new covenants should be distinguished. Schreiner argues that the new covenant is genuinely new, and the discontinuity between the New Covenant and the Mosaic covenant is greater than the continuity (90).

Two features distinguish the new covenant from the covenant with Israel through the Mosaic Law. First is that God will give a new heart to his people as declared in Jeremiah 31 (90-92). Secondly, every participant in the New Covenant is regenerate, a change from the Old Covenant (92-95). The new life of the participant in the New Covenant described in John 6:45 is this regenerate heart. Furthermore, Schreiner points out that the relationship of the Holy Spirit in these covenants varies; "the comprehensiveness and the universality of the Spirit's work in the new covenant represents a striking contrast to the old covenant" (95). The old covenants saw God's Spirit poured out only on prophets, kings, and some leaders. In the new covenant, the Holy Spirit is poured out on all regenerate hearts as seen in Acts 2:16-17. Lastly, the complete forgiveness of sin is argued as the most distinct feature of the New Covenant.

In conclusion, while Schreiner does make clear the *newness* of the fulfilled covenant through Jesus Christ, he also points to the continuity between all the biblical covenants (113-118). Jesus Christ as the last Adam obeyed God's law whereas the first Adam did not. Furthermore, Jesus is now God's priest-king as the first Adam was created to be (113-114).

The command to be fruitful and multiply in the Noahic covenant is fulfilled in Jesus Christ as all who now come into the new covenant exercise dominion over the world. Schreiner writes, "The mass of humanity that is saved enjoys salvation through Jesus Christ, who exercises a just and loving dominion over the new universe" (115).

The fundamental elements of the covenant with Abraham are offspring, land, and blessing. The promise of offspring is fulfilled in the new covenant in Jesus Christ. Jesus is the true offspring of Abraham since he is the obedient son.

Continuity between the new covenant and the Mosaic covenant with Israel is too detailed to fully explain here. But Schreiner summarizes that circumcision is fulfilled in the hearts of God's elect in the new covenant. Sacrifices required for atonement of sin all point to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The tabernacle and temple both culminate in Jesus Christ who causes the people of God to be the true temple. Lastly, whereas the law was written on tables of stone, now the law is written on the hearts of all believers who participate in the new covenant (116-117).

Lastly, Schreiner summarizes that the Davidic covenant of 2 Sam 7:14 points to Jesus as the true son of God and the rightful priest-king. The promise of priesthood comes as the Davidic heir will be both Lord and priest in the order of Melchizedek. Jesus is the promised true son of David, a priest-king and the Lord of the world (117-118).

This volume is beneficial for both the academic student and the lay Church member. It will serve well for use in bible study groups, personal study, or for academic reference. Crossway has presented Schreiner's extensive scholarship of covenant theology in a readable and learnable for-

mat. All who take up this volume will benefit from one of the highest reputations of biblical scholarship today. There will be no disappointment in reading this volume.

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Hans MADUEME and Michael REEVES. *Adam, The Fall, and Original Sin: Theological, Biblical, and Scientific Perspectives.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014. 339 pp. \$32.00.

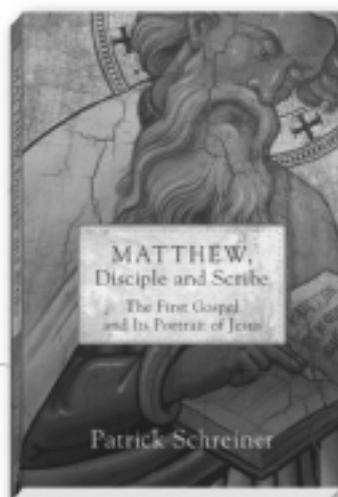
This volume seeks to provide reliable answers to Christians in regard to the historicity of Adam and Eve and the nature of both the fall and original sin. Madueme and Reeves, as editors of the volume, bring together notable scholars especially equipped to shed light on relevant topics in biblical, theological, and scientific areas. They engaged in this volume because of the movement among evangelicals away from an orthodox view of Adam, the fall, and original sin. In debates regarding human origins and the associated theological implications, there is a temptation “to think that Adam is simply one piece in a puzzle in which the fall and evolution are separate pieces that we can rearrange and shuffle around the board. But such a picture is misleading, too flat and one-dimensional. Adam and the fall do not float free in Scripture like rootless, atomistic, independent ideas. They are central nodes that hold together and are completely enmeshed in a much broader, organic, theological matrix.” (ix) If one removes these “central nodes,” the editors believe that the negative consequences for the Christian faith will be severe.

This volume intentionally takes on apologetic questions, but, with equal intentionality, seeks to tackle wider, integrative theological questions that will hopefully gain “pastoral traction in the lives of believers.” (xii) It is divided into four parts. Part 1, Adam in the Bible and Science, deals with exegetical evidence for the historicity of Adam from both the OT and NT as well as evidence from the field of paleoanthropology. Part 2, Original Sin in History, discusses the importance of original sin in patristic, Lutheran, Reformed, and Wesleyan theological traditions, as well as its diminishing position in modern theology. Part 3, Original Sin in Theology, explores the interplay of original sin and biblical, systematic, and pastoral theology, as well as modern science. Part 4, Adam and the Fall in Dispute, includes three chapters that address specific challenges to original sin, surrounding Rom 5:12-21, Genesis 3, and questions of theodicy.

This volume would serve well as a supplemental text to an undergraduate or graduate course where such topics are relevant. It likely has wider application to the reader with an intermediate knowledge of biblical and theological studies, as well as basic familiarity with science. Because of the varied perspectives from which each chapter is written, the reader may struggle more or less with the material depending upon competence in the given field of study. This volume does not purport to be the final answer on any of these issues, but it certainly succeeds in providing concise and accessible, yet thorough, evidence and support for keeping a historical Adam and Eve, the fall, and original sin as central components of orthodox theology. Thus, even if the reader finds some of the material dense, this volume does an exceptional job of answering relevant questions in a way that would help the believer navigate some of the complex questions related to human origins and Christian theology.

In terms of its broader influence, this volume is a welcome contribution in support of orthodox perspectives on the historicity of Adam, and the validity of the fall and original sin. The volume is particularly strong for several reasons. First, each chapter is both thoroughly academic, while remaining succinct and manageable. Second, the breadth and depth of the quali-

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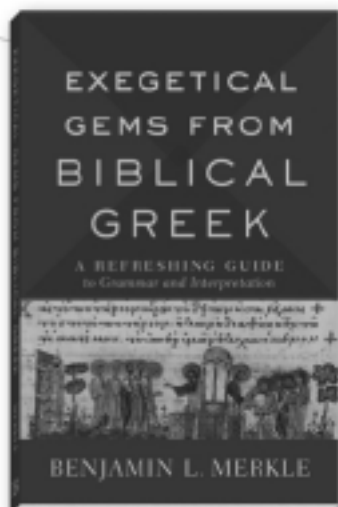
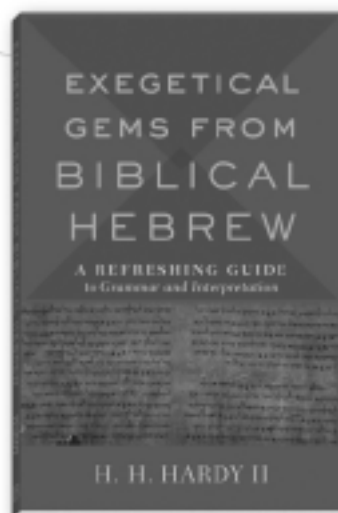
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Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

fictions of the contributors, as well as their diversity of theological backgrounds provides credibility when speaking amid these controversial issues. Third, the topics and questions addressed across the chapters are engaging and relevant, providing a wide view through which to explore these important doctrines. Fourth, the various pieces of the work across multiple disciplines pull together in an impressively unified argument. Finally, this volume is courageous both in the way that it pushes back against increasing pressure in evangelical scholarship to dismiss Adam, the fall, and original sin, as irrelevant, false, and/or outmoded components of theology, and in the way that it avoids shrinking from these complex and controversial issues that it instead confronts in a thorough, fair-minded, and robust manner.

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Nicholas TAYLOR. *Paul on Baptism: Theology, Mission and Ministry in Context.* London: SCM Press, 2016. Reprinted by Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017. 180 pp. \$23.00.

The church needs good theology. Too often, however, theology is esoteric and never offers an answer to the “so what” question. As a result, the church is left with little practical application for the day-to-day life of a congregation. Taylor sets out to make such an attempt on the topic of baptism. Considering social scientific approaches to the ancient world, he examines the texts in Paul’s writings that speak to the issue of baptism, and then Taylor explores the implications for contemporary issues of baptismal practice in the twenty-first-century church. Taylor earned his Ph.D. in Theology (NT) from the University of Durham. He is the Rector of St. Aidan’s, Clarkston, Scottish Episcopal Church. He is a member of the Doctrine and Liturgy committees of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

The volume is divided into four chapters. Chapter one focuses upon identifying a number of aspects of the cultural world of the first century. Of particular interest was exploring how personhood was understood in ancient society, along with how religious beliefs and practices functioned. Unlike the modern western notion of individualistic understandings of personhood, people in the ancient world were defined by membership in groups. Taylor expresses it this way, “To be a Christian in the world of Paul was primarily a matter of belonging, and only secondarily and consequently of believing in the sense of giving intellectual assent to the particular set of doctrines” (5). This understanding will have a significant impact later in the volume when he discusses household baptisms. The chapter concludes with a discussion of rituals as a means of controlling supernatural powers. Taylor discusses at some length the importance of viewing baptism not as a rite-of-passage but as a conversion-incorporation rite (10-16).

Chapter two is the longest chapter within the volume. In the chapter Taylor first discusses what sources can be used in a study of Paul’s view of baptism. Taylor is sympathetic to some moderate views/conclusions of Pauline authorship, “we can therefore accept the disputed letters as part of the Pauline tradition, even if there are doubts as to precisely who wrote them and when” (22). As for his view of the usefulness of Acts to constructing Paul’s theology of baptism, Taylor is more skeptical of the book’s usefulness. “Acts therefore cannot be regarded as an entirely reliable source for Paul’s teaching, but it can be used to supplement and clarify information that derives from his letters” (24). After these introductory considerations Taylor examines fourteen passages from the Pauline letters (Gal 3:26-29; 1 Cor 1:13-17; 6:11; 10:1-5; 12:13; 2 Cor 1:21-22; Rom 6:3-5; Col 2:11-12; 3:9-11; Eph 1:13-14; 4:4-6; 5:25-27; 2 Tim 2:11-12; Titus 3:5-6). After Taylor makes appropriate interpretative comments on each passage

the subsection is concluded with “Suggested Further Reading.” The suggested reading material often refers to major commentaries or journal articles relevant to the passage.

A quick summary of some of Taylor’s conclusions about the meaning of baptism that Stone-Campbell adherents would find compatible with traditional teaching of the Stone-Campbell Movement includes: placing Galatians 3 in the context of inheritance (28); baptism alone guarantees nothing, from 1 Cor 10:1-5 (45); Christ’s death is realized in the life of the one baptized, from Romans 6 (59); baptism is not the NT counterpart to OT circumcision, from Colossians 2 (67-70); baptism is a rite of incorporation, from Eph 5:25-27 (87).

While this reviewer generally appreciates Taylor’s exegesis of the meaning of baptism from Paul’s writings, in a number of places Taylor seems to force conclusions based on assumptions. For example, in discussing 1 Corinthians 1 and looking for parallels to Paul delegating the action of baptism to someone else, Taylor uses Peter and Cornelius as such an example (39). While Acts 10:48 might suggest that Peter did not baptize Cornelius, this is not a necessary reading. Another example is Taylor’s exegesis of “washing with water through the word” in Eph 5:26, in which “the ‘word’ is the liturgical formulary that accompanied and interpreted the ritual action of Baptism” (87). Taylor simply states this is the case without offering any support for this position. Perhaps the most forced exegetical conclusion in the chapter is Taylor’s proposal that making the sign of the cross on one’s forehead at baptism is when God “sealed us,” 1 Cor 1:22 (54). Rather than a modern day *gezerah shawah* of jumping from Rom 4:13; Gal 3:26-29; Ezek 9:4,6; Gal 6:7; and Rom 6:3-4, a more natural reading is that the seal is the Holy Spirit himself.

Chapter three, “The Practice of Baptism in the Pauline Churches,” is the chapter that Stone-Campbell adherents will have the most difficulty accepting. In this chapter Taylor’s ecclesiastical commitments force him to make assumptions that are nowhere suggested in the text. For example, in trying to justify a mode of baptism other than immersion Taylor says that it is “inconceivable to think that the Philippian jailer would have something large enough to immerse an adult in” (109). This is pure speculation on Taylor’s part and there is no reason to assume this when the passage provides no information regarding where the baptism took place. Another example of assumption like this is where Taylor makes a statement without any support that household baptisms would baptize everyone regardless of personal conviction (110). The support he offers is based on inferences of social factors to which he admits there are numerous exceptions and variants. Despite these special pleas for the mode of baptism, Taylor continues to make strong affirmations of a proper understanding of the meaning of baptism. “For Paul [baptism] was essential to incorporation into the Church and into the eschatological salvation founded on the death and resurrection of Jesus” (113). The final chapter brings the discussion of Paul’s theology of baptism to the necessary consideration of how the twenty-first-century church appropriates Paul’s teaching for today. “What is clear from Paul’s explicit statements is that in Baptism the Church receives into the fellowship of Christ’s body new members, confers a Christian identity upon them, and indeed a new life free of the power of evil. In the name of God the Church invokes on those baptized the Holy Spirit to guide and empower them in their Christian lives” (162).

The reading level is suitable for a wide audience; but, individuals with some theological awareness and maturity will profit the most from this volume. The volume is generally free of technical jargon. Citations are made as endnotes to each chapter and each subsection within a chapter has suggestions for further reading. Readers who hold to a traditional understanding of the meaning of baptism as expressed in the Stone-Campbell Movement will appreciate the

author's exegesis and be challenged by various exegetical nuances. Those same readers will find wanting the author's exposition concerning the mode of baptism.

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Ian Christopher LEVY. *Introducing Medieval Biblical Interpretation: The Senses of Scripture in Premodern Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. 320 pp. \$29.99.

In the Stone-Campbell Movement, historical-critical scholarship on the Bible has long shaped the way students and ministers have learned to study Scripture, investigating the relevant background history and languages in order to excavate the intended meaning of the author or authors behind the text. Yet, how does this focus on the historical meaning of the text connect to the longstanding Christian assumption that the Holy Spirit is the divine author of Scripture, which can only be properly interpreted through the guidance of that very same Spirit? Does this classical understanding of Scripture still have relevance today? In this volume Levy answers this question by offering medieval biblical exegesis as a proper synthesis between the fruits of historical-critical scholarship and the ancient insight that the Spirit continually illumines the church to the “fuller sense” of the text, both within Catholicism and Protestantism (2). By telling the story of medieval exegesis, Levy seeks to show that medieval concerns were not far from modern historical ones, though the former did have a greater sense of the coherence of historical investigation, the theological depths of Scripture, and its spiritual fruit grown and harvested in the life of the believer.

The author works diachronically through the tradition, starting with patristic exegetes such as Origen of Alexandria, Augustine, and many others. Analysis of these early Christian interpreters provides the fundamental principles that render more intelligible the thinkers of later centuries. Levy then traces these interpretive methods from the Carolingian era through the eleventh century, when theologians began to place greater value on the liberal arts for interpreting Scripture. He spends three chapters on the twelfth century, covering the exegetical methods of monastics like Hildegard of Bingen and Bernard of Clairvaux as well as those of such theologians at the abbey of St. Victor as Hugh and Richard, who placed the study of Scripture within a larger spiritual program of the re-formation of the soul. This period also saw within the cathedral school of Laon the production of the *Glossa Ordinaria*, which provided commentary on the entire Bible with quotations of patristic authorities and became a textbook for all subsequent medieval exegesis. After spending three chapters on the twelfth century, Levy explores the exegetical methods of the later middle ages in which the universities of Oxford and Paris became the centers of scriptural scholarship, including such figures as Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure. He especially draws attention to the place of Scripture in the very process of becoming a “master of the sacred page,” the highest rank for a theologian (195). Finally, Levy takes up the issue of the contemporary relevance of medieval exegesis with a brief engagement with Hans-Georg Gadamer, emphasizing the situated-ness of the reader as well as the importance of traditions of interpretation, insights shared by medieval and modern thinkers.

This volume brilliantly and concisely tells this complex and multifaceted story of medieval exegesis while at the same time showing why modern theologians, pastors, and students should take it seriously. As with all books of this great caliber, however, important questions remain unanswered. For example, how did commenting on Scripture provide unique occasions for medieval theologians to discuss theological topics left unexplored in more “systematic treatis-

es?” In fact, in dealing with so many writers in so little space, much more could be said regarding the interpretations of any of the figures in particular. On the other hand, regarding the volume’s constructive angle, how ought contemporary Christians and students of the Bible appropriate medieval exegetical methods, especially in light of the positive findings of historical-critical methodology? Should we adopt medieval thinkers’ particular readings of the Bible as well as their exegetical authorities or only the methods by which they arrived at their readings? The purpose of this volume was probably to spark these very questions and to give contemporary readers a small taste of medieval exegesis in order to provoke further interest and study. The volume certainly presents a way of reading the Bible that will interest ministers, students, and scholars alike, and will help Christians from all sides of the denominational divide look at Scripture with fresh eyes, taking seriously the historical meaning while also allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us towards deeper spiritual insights.

JOHN R. KERN
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Boston College

Keith D. STANGLIN, *The Letter and Spirit of Biblical Interpretation: From the Early Church to Modern Practice*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. 288 pp. \$26.99.

The topic of the history of the interpretation of the Bible is often treated with distaste by scholars and students alike, either because it seems dull in comparison with other topics or because the sheer volume of writings from the history of Christianity (and the difficulty of finding all the necessary sources) makes the task seem daunting. For those who do take the time and effort to study the history of interpretation, whether of a single passage or more broadly on a theoretical level, many readers today face an additional barrier: the utter strangeness of many interpretations recorded and repeated by Christian authors over time. Indeed, for anyone trained in historical-critical methods of biblical exegesis, the act of reading many early Christian and medieval authors can be bewildering. Our hermeneutical horizons do not often meet those of our ancient predecessors. As such, these interpretations are frequently treated merely as historical artefacts, which are to be viewed and even appreciated, but never used.

At the same time, many Christians who have taken the time to learn and employ the historical-critical method of biblical exegesis have found it wanting—not for lack of insight or historical illumination, but for lack of theological imagination and contemporary spiritual application. This academic approach to reading the Bible has left many seminary students and ministers with a great deal of knowledge and a lack of spiritual insight. It is precisely the intersection of these two seemingly unrelated issues that Stanglin addresses in the present volume. This volume is both descriptive and prescriptive: it provides both a broad history of methods for biblical interpretation employed in various eras of Christian history and suggests ways that these methods can and should be used by contemporary interpreters.

The descriptive/prescriptive approach is built into the organization of the volume: the first part, containing five chapters, outlines methods and specific practitioners of biblical exegesis from early Christianity (Ch. 2), later patristic authors (Ch. 3), the medieval period (Ch. 4), and the early modern era (Ch. 5). The final chapter in this section (Ch. 6), contextualizes the rise of the historical-critical method by examining a few key contributors and interpreters. The scope of these chapters is, understandably, quite limited. That is, the volume does not attempt to provide a comprehensive overview of biblical interpreters from each of these historical eras. For example, the “later patristic authors” chapter (Ch. 3) discusses Origen in detail, and then provides shorter treatments of Antiochene exegesis, Gregory of Nyssa, and (Pseudo-)Dionysius

the Aereopagite. As a further illustration of the limited scope, it is somewhat odd to read a chapter on the rise of the historical-critical method that discusses Alexander Campbell in some detail (which many readers familiar with the Stone-Campbell movement will appreciate), but does not even mention Friedrich Schleiermacher.

The final two chapters, which comprise Part 2, provide the heart of Stanglin’s argument in the volume. It is here that the author argues that there need not be a systemic divide between pre-modern methods of reading and modern critical methods. Indeed, Stanglin argues that, for Christians, there is a healthy balance that should be found between these approaches, with the strengths of each one counteracting the weaknesses of the other. As such, the volume serves as an *apologia* for the study of the history of interpretation and an appeal to modern Christians to take premodern readers of Scripture seriously as sources of exegetical insight. This volume will be of interest to scholars and students engaged in the practice of exegesis, as well as anyone who works on the history of Christianity.

J. EDWARD WALTERS

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K. C. RICHARDSON. *Early Christian Care for the Poor: An Alternative Subsistence Strategy under Roman Imperial Rule.* Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2018. 238 pp. \$29.00.

In the latest volume in Cascade’s Matrix: The Bible in Mediterranean Context series Richardson explores the socio-economic strata in the Roman Empire to help readers understand how the early Christian community cared for the needy among them. Richardson argues that the practice of the early church reflected the common practice of the agrarian and rural communities within the empire (in sharing with one another out of abundance), that this practice differed from the strategies of urban elites (who gave benevolently to gain honor within the community), and that the church’s strategy remained consistent for at least the first three centuries (the period under examination in this volume).

After noting the distinction in the Greek vocabulary between “the working-class person who has enough to live, but not enough for leisure” (*penēs*) and “the destitute beggar, who has little subsistence” (*ptōchos*), Richardson spends the bulk of the first chapter surveying the socio-economic landscape of the Mediterranean world. Adopting Scheidel and Friesen’s income distribution model, he notes three distinct classes: the rich elites and upper-tier artisans, the destitute poor, and a larger class in between who had barely enough to survive but lived on the brink of financial disaster. Critical to Richardson’s argument is the identification of a “middling class” from among the upper-tier artisans, upwardly-mobile people who had disposable income but were not among the rich elites. The early Christians called upon this “middling class” to support “efforts in creating an alternative subsistence strategy for their members” (22). The rest of the volume demonstrates that Jesus encouraged a more agrarian view of benevolence, one that both encouraged those with disposable income to share with those in need and demanded self-help strategies from the beneficiaries (ch 2), that Paul carried on the paradigm set by Jesus by encouraging upwardly mobile urban elites in the church to contribute to the needy as a way of showing honor (ch 3), and that Luke wrote the story of the early Christian community with a view toward care for the poor that was a trademark of Israel’s history (ch 4). The literature of the early church (*Didache*, *Barnabas*, *Apocryphal Acts*, *Hermas*) and its fathers (Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Cyprian) demonstrates conclusively that the paradigm

espoused by Jesus—of believers caring for one another out of their disposable abundance—remained critical to the well-being and reputation of the church for the next two centuries.

This volume is complex in scope but lucid in presentation. Presenting the very complicated nuances of the socio-economic situation in the first-century empire is daunting, requiring precision and care. Making that discussion accessible to those unschooled in the field is no small feat. Richardson's presentation excels at both tasks at every turn. From the discussions of the various socio-economic models and their weaknesses (2-5, 11-19), to the acquisition of honor by humanitarianism so prevalent within the empire (65-67, 91-98), to the way Luke evokes the meanings of "liberal" and "prodigal" taught by Aristotle, Seneca, and Cicero in his parables (117-139), Richardson presents the complicated issues in clear fashion, in a manner that encourages further study rather than quells it. For this, Richardson is to be commended.

Topical studies tempt investigators to view and interpret texts solely through a single, thematic lens. At times it seems that Richardson struggles with this temptation. He reads the parables as veiled economic critiques of Herod's taxation policies (26-29), the parable of the seed growing secretly an assertion of God's benevolent care for creation (51), the parable of the dishonest manager as an invitation to those in the retainer class to join the kingdom (59), and Luke 15 as a story about a "prodigal father" (125-129) rather than the joy demonstrated by God when Israel repents (Luke 15:7, 10, 23-24, 32). Aware of this temptation, though, Richardson is careful to note that Luke doesn't intend to write a treatise on early Christian care for the poor, but rather to instruct his readers in basic Christian theology and practice, which included care for the poor as a major component (106-107). In the end, he wipes the economic dust from his lenses by noting Scripture's larger purpose in recounting the continuation of Israel's story.

Two major contributions come from Richardson's examination of this theme. First, the early Christian community was focused on care of the poor and needy among them (149-150). Perhaps there were benevolent acts done by believers in service of the poor within their cities and villages. But the overt focus of the church was to care for the believers among them, and in this way fulfilling Jesus' command to care for "the least of these, my brothers" (Matt 25:40). Second, the criterion for action was basic human need. The discussion of the socio-economic strata in the opening chapter sets the stage for this conclusion: the early Christian community cared for those among them who found themselves falling below the subsistence level (148, 184).

This volume is informed, critical, and yet highly accessible. Anyone concerned with the socio-economic background of the Gospels, the first-century Pauline community and letters, or second- and third-century Christian practice would benefit from the presentation of data and conclusions drawn here.

LES HARDIN

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John GOLDINGAY. *A Reader's Guide to the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2017. 191 pp. \$20.00.

Goldingay has boiled down his years of biblical study into a concise and accessible introduction to reading the Bible. This winsome primer reflects well the author's lifelong commitment to excellence in scholarship as well as his service to the Church. The volume consists of fourteen chapters arranged in four parts, along with an epilogue and scripture index.

Part one includes two introductory chapters which establish a broad historical context which undergirds the rest of his study. Goldingay looks first at the events which comprise vari-

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ous epochs of Israel's existence: its origins, its settlement and eventual transition to kingship, its decline and fall, and its existence first as a vassal to Babylon and Persia and then as a province of Greece and Rome. The second chapter turns to biblical geography, outlining the three major realms involved throughout the Bible—Mesopotamia, the Mediterranean, and Canaan—before describing the notable features of the latter.

Parts two and three comprise the bulk of the volume, with the former discussing the biblical books which consist predominately of narrative. Various chapters cover the narrative portions occurring in the Torah (Genesis–Numbers), the Deuteronomistic History (Deuteronomy–Kings), and the Chronicler's History (Chronicles, Ezra–Nehemiah), as well as independent stories (Ruth, Esther, Jonah, and Daniel) and the narrative portion of the NT (the Gospels and Acts). Part three, then, examines those books of the Bible which primarily consist of God's instruction to the covenant community. Individual chapters group together material similar in genre: the priestly and legal instruction in the Torah, the messages conveyed in the prophetic books, the epistles of the NT, the advice gleaned from wisdom literature (Proverbs and Song of Songs), and the revelatory visions of Daniel and Revelation.

The fourth part reverses the direction of communication and assesses the portions of the Bible which particularly represent "Israel's response to God." One chapter outlines the various types of prayers, from lament to praise, that the reader will find in the Psalms and Lamentations. The final chapter explores the questions and doubts articulated in the books of Ecclesiastes and Job. Lastly, Goldingay offers some brief comments on biblical interpretation in an epilogue, especially focusing on the added difficulty that many modern readers face when looking at the OT.

This volume works best for those who are looking for a greater understanding of the overall arc of Christian scripture; it is well-suited for use in an undergraduate survey course or by churches as a resource for those who wish to read through the Bible. That said, it is remarkable how much insight Goldingay condenses into such a short volume. The manner in which he groups together various books according to genre and focus will help new readers navigate disorientation when transitioning from one genre to another (how many resolutions to read through the Bible end with Leviticus?). Additionally, the presentation has the potential to evoke further connections in minds of readers that are not immediately obvious when simply considering the order of the Protestant canon for example, in connecting Daniel with Revelation). The volume includes several helpful tables and figures which assist in this process, though the table portraying the chronology of the prophets incorrectly places Malachi among the seventh-century prophets (117). That no NT books appear in part four hopefully underscores the danger of neglecting the OT in one's biblical study.

Two potential weaknesses proceed from the same features which also contribute to the volume's strengths. First, Goldingay's direct and concise tone at times masks the debate or diverging positions that lie behind some of his explanations, for instance in discussions of the Bible's "history" as it pertains to the Bible's story. Second, while the grouping of various biblical texts often proves insightful, at times it seems artificial. This is often the case in books which display identifying features of multiple genres. Goldingay even admits as much in his final chapter which separates Ecclesiastes and Job from the remaining wisdom literature. These criticisms aside, Goldingay's volume serves as a helpful tool to anyone looking for an improved grasp on the Bible.

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Lois TVERBERG. *Reading the Bible with Rabbi Jesus: How a Jewish Perspective Can Transform Your Understanding.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. 288 pp. \$16.99.

Tverberg’s goal for this volume includes, “helping you mentally transport yourself back in place and time to read the Bible afresh, as one of Jesus’ first-century disciples.” She describes many modern difficulties in understanding biblical principles as a lack of knowledge about the culture in which the scriptures were written. She gives the reader tools for looking at scripture through a lens that explains Hebrew culture. She explains the difference between the Hebrew way of teaching and the Greek way of teaching and how Greek styles have affected our modern thought processes. She also describes Jesus as his Hebrew followers saw him.

To begin with, she points out that the OT was written for Hebrews, and Jesus spoke primarily to a Jewish audience, whose teaching style leaned heavily on storytelling, parables, and concrete images. As she put it, “God often expressed his truth to ancient listeners in ways that shepherds and desert wanderers would understand, in metaphors that escape the modern reader” (18). Tverberg suggests that western, or Euro/American, people use a worldview consistently different from the rest of the world. She describes it using the acronym WEIRD: Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic. Because of these features of society, westerners find it difficult to understand the Bible.

In contrast to the Hebrew way of thinking and writing found in the OT and in Jesus’ teachings, Paul used a Greek style of teaching. The Greek style is where modern teaching and learning styles originated, so modern readers of the Bible find more comprehension in Paul’s letters. Paul relies heavily on logic and linear thinking. As Tverberg states, “Greek philosophers also discovered that they could build elegant arguments by boiling down ideas into simple abstractions, which they carefully linked together according to the rules of formal logic” (86). Greeks focus on concepts instead of stories. They may use illustrations to clarify or emphasize, but they rely mainly on the ideas. For this reason, many western readers prefer Paul’s writing, finding it easier to understand. Misunderstandings occur when people read the OT and expect it to be understandable from a more Greek or western perspective.

Tverberg describes the concept of a Messiah and how it relates to the OT. She shows how Jesus’ contemporaries would have clearly understood that he claimed to be the Messiah and that the OT pointed directly at him. She discusses how the Hebrew language uses wordplay and metaphor that leaves room for interpretation. The original meaning was clear to a Hebrew audience and often is clear to a modern Hebrew, but it creates confusion for those thinking with a Greek worldview. She describes the importance of viewing the scriptures through a lens of “we” instead of “me” and thinking of ourselves in community instead of individuals. This is foreign to western audiences who focus on individuality.

The volume effectively contrasts Hebrew and Greek perspectives and describes ways that these contrasting views affect modern understanding of the scriptures. Tverberg describes this simply enough that a lay audience can easily grasp her concepts. The language is not overly technical or difficult. Some of her points seem to fall short of fully describing the truths she no doubt understands, but overall the volume leads the reader into a deeper understanding of the scripture and forces the reader to examine his or her own cultural biases and how they affect understanding of scripture. This volume would be useful for a pastor or for a layperson who wanted a deeper understanding of the cultural background of the Bible. It might be too light for a graduate level class but could be used as a solid supplemental resource for introductory Bible classes.

LAURA MCKILLIP WOOD
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John H. WALTON. *Old Testament Theology for Christians*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2017. 320 pp. \$31.50.

Writing for a Christian audience, Walton helps modern readers see the abiding theological significance of the OT. Walton traces the central theme of “God’s presence” throughout six chapters (6-7). In these six chapters, Walton sketches the following theological concepts from the perspective of an Israelite through the lens of cognitive environment criticism: Yahweh and the Gods (ch.1), Cosmos and Humanity (ch 2), Covenant and Kingdom (ch 3), Temple and Torah (ch 4), Sin and Evil (ch 5), Salvation and Afterlife (ch 6).

Walton’s analysis employs a *christotelic* rather than a *christocentric* hermeneutic. For Walton, the difference lies in the fact that a christotelic hermeneutic sees meaning of the OT as complete on its own terms and as a foreshadowing of Christ. One may rightly question the functional difference between the terms. Walton prefers christotelic to christological because it accounts for the work of the Father and Spirit. Along the way, Walton briefly considers how the theological concepts in the OT develop in the NT. However, his aim is to read the OT on its own terms. In his words, “the Old Testament offers a sound theology from a Christian’s point of view, complete in its own right, even though it is not fully developed theology in terms of modern systematic” (11).

The greatest strength of this volume is Walton’s sensitivity to OT text and its cultural context. First, Walton brings together an original, at times controversial, and creative synthesis of ancient near eastern literature and the OT that is theologically generative. The fruit of this volume results in a reading of the OT that is critical of a Western-Christian perspective. Walton’s desire not to impose a modern Western Christian perspective on the OT is a welcome contribution.

One potential weakness of this volume concerns its sparse bibliography and spare reference to secondary literature. The lack of notation leaves the reader wondering if Walton is drawing upon established scholarly theory or if his reconstructions of the ancient Near East are his own. Walton’s choice to limit his citations appears to be intentional as the volume’s implied audience appears to be an average educated lay person. For students of OT theology, however, it would have been helpful if Walton spent more time on locating his method in conversation with other scholars.

A second weakness concerns his understanding of Israelite metaphysics. Walton argues ancient Israelites operate out of “functional ontology.” In his words, they “thought in terms of what that thing did” rather than their substances (32). This reductionist claim needs to be demonstrated and carefully considered. It receives sparse treatment in this volume. It would have been more constructive for Walton to speak apophatically about ancient metaphysics rather than leave the reader with the impression that ancient people only thought in functional categories. In my view, we should be cautious when we try to reconstruct what an author intended for his audience. As modern readers, we can get close to uncovering what an author intended but never with *absolute* certainty.

I think this volume is valuable for undergraduate students, seminarians, and pastors who are seeking a constructive sketch of what the OT contributes theologically on its own terms. Professors will find this volume to be a valuable resource for their students who have interest in the relationship between the ancient Near East and OT theology.

TOMMY MOEHLMAN
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John GOLDINGAY. *The First Testament: A New Translation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018. 944 pp. \$54.00.

Goldingay's translation of the Hebrew Bible is a culmination of the translations for his *The Old Testament for Everyone* series and an impressive feat. He notes in the preface principles that guided his translation (vii–ix). His translation worked with the traditional Hebrew text word by word rather than paraphrasing. He translates into “everyday English,” most noticeably in his use of contractions. When translating significant Hebrew words, the same English words are consistently used to reinforce their use and meaning throughout the whole Hebrew Bible. He makes some interesting choices with proper nouns. He uses Yahweh for YHWH, instead of LORD. Hebrew names for places are transliterated (Bet El for Bethel, Yerushalaim for Jerusalem, Misrayim typically for Egypt) or sometimes literally translated into English when deemed necessary (The Height for Ramah in 1 Sam 15:34; Foreskin Hill for Gibeath-haaraloth, Josh 5:3). The transliteration of people's names is one of the most striking features: Mosheh for Moses, Yehoshua for Joshua, and Shemu'el for Samuel. Encountering the names of places and people in this way helps to remind one of the distance in time and culture between the text and the reader. The first time a name appears within a volume the familiar English name is given in brackets as a help.

Here is how these choices play out in a narrative text. In the book of Ruth, *hesed* is a significant word. In 1:9 Na'omi says she hopes Yahweh will have *hesed* or “deal kindly” with Ruth and Orpah. Goldingay translates it “May Yahweh act in commitment with you.” In 2:20, Na'omi sees Bo'az's generosity to them as Yahweh's *hesed* or “his commitment”—that Yahweh's actions are faithful to the living, she and Ruth, and the dead, her husband and sons. In 3:10, Bo'az identifies Ruth's actions toward him as her *hesed* or “commitment” better than her first toward Na'omi, because she does not go after younger or richer men. This choice in translation nuances a relationship and commitment between parties, rather than mere acts of kindness between strangers. Na'omi and Ruth travel from Mo'ab to Bet Lehem, or “house of bread.” “Restorer” is used for *goel* (2:20; 3:9, 12; 4:1, 3, 6, 8, 14) rather than the traditional kinsman redeemer or “nearest kin” (NRSV), which helps to frame Bo'az's actions in Ruth 4 more in light of Lev 25:23ff and the restoration/redemption of land to the clan or tribe than as the levir in levirate marriage (Deut 25:5–10). In 2:1, Bo'az is described *ish gibbor hayil*, “a forceful strong man” (*gibbor* often meaning warrior) rather than “prominent rich man”. This may give a different picture of Bo'az's influence within the town. “Everyday English” makes its appearance in 3:3 when Na'omi instructs Ruth to “put on your make-up” rather than “anoint yourself” (NRSV) in her preparations for her clandestine meeting with Bo'az.

While there is no shortage of translations, Goldingay's is terrific. (A disclosure, he was my doctoral mentor.) It is lively and as stated before, reminds the reader that The First Testament is removed by time and culture from our reading in the twenty-first century. The timing of the release of Robert Alter's three volume translation with accompanying commentary in the same year may complicate one's decision of choosing between the two. For myself, I will purchase both, but the current volume will be a resource I visit for lecture preparation and make my companion in class.

KELLY D. DAGLEY

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Randall PRICE and H. Wayne HOUSE. *Zondervan Handbook of Biblical Archaeology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. 408 pp. \$42.99.

This volume offers a book-by-book examination of the archaeological evidence relating to the Bible that also includes the intertestamental period. The volume is comprehensive, including a wealth of information regarding nearly every archaeological discovery of importance to biblical studies. The volume is written by authors who are sympathetic to the message of the Bible and believe in its historicity, but it presents a fair and accurate picture of the evidence. The authors have taken care to let the evidence speak for itself rather than assert conclusions beyond what the evidence can support. The purpose of the volume seems to be for use as a companion to the biblical text, or as a class textbook, to illuminate its meaning and historicity of the Bible by providing an account of the material culture that surrounds it.

Nearly every important archaeological discovery meaningful to the biblical texts is referenced. The information is current, and the authors even reference the newly published material by Irving Finkel (the “Ark Tablet”) and by Doug Petrovich, which summarizes his arguments regarding Proto-Sinaitic inscriptions from Egypt. Curiously missing though is any mention of the biblical city of Ai, et-Tell, or any of the new data gathered at Khirbet el-Maqatir with implications for Joshua 7–8. This section of the volume though does contain many helpful charts and figures to contextualize the information. Important clarifications regarding the limits of archeological data are given in chapter one.

A good summary of the cuneiform extrabiblical information analogous to biblical narratives is given in chapter two. In chapter two mention of the parallels between the covenant of Deuteronomy 29 and the Hittite suzerain-vassal treaties is made. The authors favor this view, but a stronger case would have been made by referencing the Neo-Assyrian vassal treaties as well, and the discussion amongst biblical scholars as to which legal corpus shares more affinities with the biblical text.

Material from the historical books takes place in chapter 3 and includes discussion of some of the older epigraphic finds such as the Tel Zayit abecedary, the Esh-Baal inscription, and the Siloam Tunnel Inscription. The fourth chapter is dedicated to the wisdom literature and includes a helpful summary of the wisdom tradition found in texts throughout the ancient near east. The fifth chapter situates the biblical prophets each within a particular historical context, based on traditional dates.

The second half of the volume is devoted to the intertestamental and NT periods, with archaeological information provided for the Zerubbabel (chapter eight) and Herodion (chapter nine) Temples in Jerusalem. The Dead Sea Scrolls occupy the tenth chapter, which is full of detailed information in the form of charts and figures. This is one of the strongest and most illuminating chapters of the volume, owing no doubt to the author’s experience digging at Qumran.

Chapter twelve is among the longest in the volume. It contains much inscriptional evidence reflective of events narrated in the Gospels and the Book of Acts. Reconstructions such as Jesus’ tomb and the Western access to the Temple Mount help to contextualize the archaeological data. Yet, the discussion of ossuaries was incomplete as no mention, positive or negative, was made of those found with controversial inscriptions such as “James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus,” and “Jesus, son of Joseph.” These artifacts could have important theological implications and some discussion of them would have been beneficial. Chapters thirteen and fourteen essentially round out the volume, providing archaeological context for Paul’s letters and Revelation within their historical period.

The value for this volume’s use in a seminary classroom is obvious. However, it is a valuable resource for anyone curious about the material culture surrounding the Bible. The volume

would also make a good textbook for a survey course in biblical archaeology in a wide variety of academic institutions beyond a seminary setting. Overall, this volume is an excellent reference resource laid out in a fashion that makes the information easily accessible.

MATTHEW D. GLASSMAN
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Kyle R. GREENWOOD, ed. *Since the Beginning: Interpreting Genesis 1 and 2 through the Ages*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018. 336 pp. \$26.99.

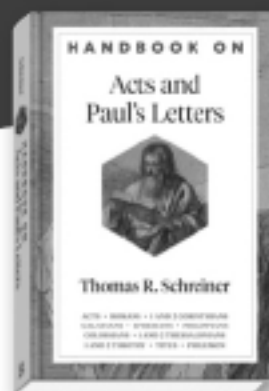
Perhaps no biblical passage is more hotly contested than the opening chapters of Genesis. In the wake of modern science, historical criticism, and cultural influence of Christian fundamentalism confusion about exactly how to read these texts abounds. Is Genesis 1–2 God’s Word in the form of science, poetry, history, allegory, or something else? This confusion is only compounded by the fact that much contemporary literature on Genesis 1–2 shows itself to be in service of either ideological agendas or is framed such that the significance of these passages is entirely subsumed into debates about origins (Creation vs. Evolution).

This volume provides much needed help in this situation. It does so not by presenting an argument for how the creation narratives ought to be read, but by offering an overview of how they have been read throughout the various epochs of Jewish and Christian history. Beginning with OT treatments and ending in our own post-Darwinian era, each age is shown to wrestle with these passages from within its own historical horizon. In this light, the current confusion about Genesis and science, for example, is shown to exist inside, and not outside, a broader more complex history of biblical reflection. As one is led through the various epochs of interpretation one begins to grasp that the texts which comprise Genesis 1–2 are far deeper and more illuminating than contemporary debates assume.

Each chapter of the volume, by and large, is structured in a similar fashion: introduction, cosmology, treatment of days, and the creation of human beings. This helps provide unity and clarity to the study. One can, for example, easily explore differences between early rabbinic and patristic views of the phrase “In the beginning . . .,” or note how the Reformation cause influenced Luther’s interpretation of the creation of Adam. Since the text is ordered chronologically, one gets the sense of a great chorus of readers all of whom are focused on cosmology, cosmogony, and anthropology. Important peculiarities about each age are also noted by the twelve authors who composed the volume.

This helpful framework is abandoned, however, after the treatment of the age of Reformation, when the authors’ attention is turned to the influence of modern Near East archaeology and the rise of Darwinism. While this is understandable, the abandonment of a consistent topical structure is unfortunate, for it suggests that our present interpretive questions are shaped primarily by scientific discoveries rather than the hermeneutical framework of our age. As such, the volume runs the risk of undermining one of its greatest insights, which is that every reading (including ours) arises within its own unique historical context, and that Genesis 1–2 has the depth to address whatever questions we might bring to it. It should also be noted that the volume is weaker for having failed to treat, even in a most summary way, non-Western Christian and Islamic interpretations of Genesis. This is unfortunate, not only because it leaves out unquestionably important traditions of scriptural interpretation, but also because it can implicitly suggest to the reader that our own post-Darwinian (Protestant) Christian reading stands as the culmination of this long tradition of biblical reflection. All roads do not lead to 21st-century America. Despite this, the volume is an extremely valuable addition to current dis-

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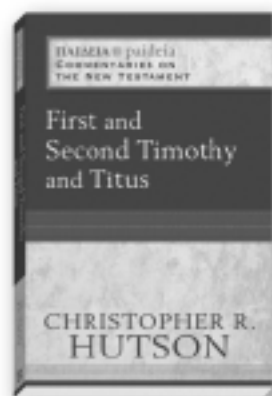
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cussions surrounding Genesis 1–2. I would suggest it to any person who wishes to probe more deeply into these chapters in a theologically and historically responsible way. It gently chastens our ambitions to grasp the meaning of the text on our own terms and encourages us to read in the company of a greater cloud of witnesses. In the current state of confusion about origins this is truly what the church needs to hear.

WES ARBLASTER

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C. John COLLINS. *Reading Genesis Well: Navigating History, Poetry, Science, and Truth in Genesis 1–11.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018. 336 pp. \$36.99.

To co-opt Collins’ own metaphor of navigation, the first third of this volume (chs. 2-4) aims to give those who are at sea in Genesis 1–11 a set of maps and navigational tools. In the latter two-thirds (chs. 5-10), Collins takes the reader on a shakedown cruise of Genesis 1–11, demonstrating how the maps and tools he has shown us in the first part of his volume might be used to better understand these crucial chapters in Genesis. Chapter 1 serves as an introduction, while chapter 12 recaps and draws out some of the implications of what he has tried to accomplish in chapters 2-11. The volume has an extensive and up-to-date bibliography, along with scriptural, subject, and author indexes.

Collins interacts with many scholars, ancient and modern. He particularly interacts with C.S. Lewis. Indeed, Collins seeks to put Lewis’s more “intuitive” approach to reading on a firmer theoretical base. Hence, Collins refers to his own approach as “critically intuitive.” Collins seeks to avoid a literalistic reading of Genesis 1–11, while at the same time retaining referential truths. He is thus attempting to pilot the reader through a very narrow strait: the strait between taking the scripture seriously and taking the scripture with a wooden literalism. While he may have a few scrapes on the ship’s hull, he largely succeeds.

As indicated by the long subtitle, this volume is wide-ranging. This is one of its greatest strengths and also one of its gravest weaknesses. The approach is strong because (as Collins notes) scholarly disciplines have too often been walled off from one another. It is good to see how various diverse disciplines can work together in understanding Genesis. However, this broad-spectrum approach has the same drawbacks as a broad-spectrum antibiotic. It may cure a large swath of scholarly ills, but if it does not cure, it may succeed only in making those scholarly diseases more resistant.

While reading the volume, this reviewer felt that Collins had bitten off more than he could chew—or, at least, more than the reviewer could chew. It is not that Collins was not able to write well about the various areas of his concern. Whether he was speaking of Hebrew semantics or the church fathers, he had much to say that was well worth hearing. And he says it well. However, there were times when it seems it would have been better if Collins had restricted his field of inquiry a bit. For example, in discussing Gen 1:1 and the idea of *creatio ex nihilo*, Collins acknowledges that the idea of creation out of nothing may be present only in seed form, if the idea is present in Gen 1:1 at all. However, the author then argues that later ancient commentators have correctly interpreted Gen 1:1 in this regard. This may indeed be related to reading Genesis well, but it strikes me as relating to the history of interpretation, rather than to reading Genesis 1–11, *per se*.

Despite these criticisms, this volume is well worth reading. While scholars will enjoy it, it may be a bit too advanced and diffuse for any but the most dedicated lay people. This reviewer

suspects that even many undergraduates would find it more confusing than helpful. For masters-level students, this volume should be both challenging and helpful.

DARYL DOCTERMAN

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Cincinnati Christian University

Daniel H. FLETCHER,¹ *Psalms of Christ: The Messiah in Non-Messianic Psalms*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2018. 244 pp. \$32.00.

Fletcher's goal is to take seriously Jesus' teaching in Luke 24:25 and 44, especially as applied to the Psalms. In first-century Judaism the Psalms were considered prophetic, especially as they focused on the coming new David to establish the kingdom of God. This perspective is reflected in Jesus' teaching. Therefore, we should be able to find in the whole Psalter christological implications, not just in those that are quoted in the NT or are considered "Messianic."

Fletcher tries to show this by exegeting twelve Psalms from the various types—wisdom, lament, Torah, thanksgiving, enthronement, imprecatory, and hymn. These are Psalms 1, 23, 29, 30, 46, 67, 88, 100, 119, 127, 137, and 148. Each chapter has two parts: history (which equates to the typical exegesis of the Psalm), and christological. The latter is the heart of each chapter where he explains the many facets of the Psalm that can have christological significance, if we consider the many analogical and typological connections within the canonical context of the whole Christian Bible. These he explores in the exegesis. For example, on Psalm 23 he explores the theme of shepherd in the OT as a part of understanding the Psalm. Then he reads the Bible backwards, based on the conviction that the whole OT points to and is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Thus, Psalm 23 he connects to John 10. This holistic perspective is one of the strengths of the volume.

Some of the Psalms he chooses are easier to understand from this perspective than others. For Psalm 1, Jesus is clearly the blameless man of verse 1. Psalm 23 and the shepherd image is obvious. Psalm 147 and the creation theme connects well to John 1. But Psalm 88 at first glance seems like a stretch. It is well known as the only lament Psalm with no words of hope or relief. Yet under Fletcher's skillful guidance we learn that it can be a description of Jesus' suffering through Gethsemane and the crucifixion. The author of the psalm is overwhelmed by trouble, near death, exposed to God's wrath, abandoned by friends and by God, and enveloped in darkness. All these Jesus experienced as well, so the words of the Psalm could very well have been Jesus' words. But on a contrastive positive side, Jesus can answer yes to all the questions asked in Ps 88:10-12. I found this perspective creative and convincing.

Fletcher concludes: "The story of the Psalter is the story of Jesus Christ, Israel's son of David in the last days, who fulfills the trials and triumphs of the psalmist, preeminently in his crucifixion and subsequent resurrection, ascension, and enthronement. This is not a story that only a handful of "messianic" psalms tell, but the summation of the story of the whole psalter" (234).

¹ In a curious twist of events the reviewer, Gary Hall (1945–2019), former Professor Emeritus of Old Testament at Lincoln Christian University, and the author, Daniel Fletcher (1974–2019), former Associate Professor of New Testament at the Turner School of Theology, Amridge University, both passed away within months of each other in 2019. Gary, on June 15th and Daniel on March 27th. A tribute to Gary by Blair Wilgus, one of Gary's students, appears in this issue of *SCJ* as well as a bibliography of his publications. And by sheer providence an article by Daniel, his last, appears in this issue as well.

Fletcher achieved his goal for this volume. He has shown for the Christian that the psalter is full of Christ and done so without violating the original meaning of the OT or special pleading. His chapters are easy to read and full of rich theological insight. He is a true biblical theologian. He has provided a model for how the Christian can both take the OT text seriously in its own context and, by tracing the trajectory of important themes, arrive at a legitimate Christian reading centered on Jesus as the Messiah.

My one disappointment with the volume was the treatment of Psalm 119. It could have used some prudent editing of some repetitious sections.

GARY H. HALL

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Glenn PEMBERTON. *A Life That Is Good: The Message of Proverbs in a World Wanting Wisdom.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. 254 pp. \$18.00.

As a former preacher, professor, and administrator, Glenn Pemberton brings the experience and academic rigor necessary to produce a fine resource for faith-based groups, teachers, and preachers. Though no longer able to teach in the traditional sense because of chronic pain, he now devotes his energy to writing. In managing this transition, Pemberton exemplifies in his own life a fundamental quality of a sage, and that is the ability to adapt to major life changes.

Throughout the volume, Pemberton makes a contrast between “a life that is good,” his definition of wisdom, and “the good life,” a lifestyle that pursues pleasure, instant gratification, and worldly success. In order to identify a life that is good, Pemberton gathers the teachings of the sages in Proverbs and organizes them around key life issues: what the wise say about God, justice and mercy, fools, speech, wealth and poverty, leadership, women, friends, and family.

The volume contains four parts with a total of eleven chapters. Part One is entitled, “The Sages, Their Book, and Wisdom.” In chapter 1, Pemberton identifies three sources of authority for Israel: the priest, the prophet, and the sage. He identifies the sage’s primary epistemology as growing out of human experience, a mode those in the Stone-Campbell Movement have relegated to the margins. With this issue, Pemberton sets up one of the underlying questions threaded through the book: what authority does experience play in understanding God and the world around? Chapter 2 addresses the overall function of Proverbs 1–9 and the various women described in the book. Chapter 3 unpacks the rhetorical power of the individual proverb.

Part Two is entitled “Major Concepts in Wisdom.” In this unit, he addresses the process of becoming a fool, the nature of God, and the relationship between justice and mercy. Parts Three, “Applied Topics for a Life That Is Good,” and Four, “Relationships in a Life That Is Good,” grapple with how the sages say we participate in a life that is good through issues we face each day. For example, what does it mean to be wise with our wealth, with our speech, our friends, and who is a wise leader?

Pemberton wrestles honestly with the derogatory comments the sages make toward women. He observes, “Gender bias is woven into the fabric of Proverbs” (201). He advocates being sensitive to the problem and the pain this raises for women. But, he concludes, the values and principles that underlie the gender bias are true for young and old, male and female alike. He accepts and interprets the proverbs in their original cultural context, then moves to see how the trajectory of the principles might call us to live today. Wisdom expects readers to adapt to cultural differences and life changes.

In chapter 4, Pemberton uses Lawrence Kohlberg’s scheme found in *The Psychology of Moral Development* (1984) and reverses the process to describe the path fools take in the defor-

mation of character. It begins with occasional foolish acts, then moves to those acts becoming habit and finally hardened into a lifestyle (67). I too have used Kohlberg's cognitive scheme for moral development (Bland, 2015). I, however, now see one important element missing in Kohlberg's theory. There is an emotional component involved in the decision-making process of character formation or deformation. Roger Fisher, *Beyond Reason* (2006), David Brooks, *The Social Animal* (2011), Jonathan Haidt *The Righteous Mind* (2012) and *The Coddling of the American Mind* (2018), all have documented the significant role emotions play in determining human behavior. Kohlberg's theory does not take this powerful human quality into consideration, a quality that is at the root of how we make choices. It is a dimension, however, the sages do not ignore. They offer powerful emotional appeals to their readers to pursue a life that is good. Further probing of the sages' use of emotion to persuade readers to follow the path of character formation could produce valuable insight.

Pemberton concludes each chapter with a most thoughtful set of discussion questions and "project challenges" challenging readers to agree or disagree with what they have read. These end-of-chapter questions are extremely valuable for stimulating faith groups and university classes to probe deeper into difficult but important life issues. Once again, Pemberton has produced an outstanding volume that will serve churches and faith communities well. This will be a textbook I use in one of my graduate ministry seminars.

DAVE BLAND

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Harding School of Theology

Lindsay WILSON. *Proverbs.* Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018, 324 pp. \$21.99.

I approached this commentary with misgivings. I have enjoyed the terse comments in Derek Kidner's commentary on Proverbs in the old TOTC series so much that I felt as if someone were trying a different recipe for my favorite dessert. I did not need to worry. Wilson has done a fine job, which may wear as well (and as long) as Kidner's good work.

Series editor David Firth points out in the series preface (viii) that the body of each volume of the Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries series has three main sections: context, comment, and meaning. The first section of each unit deals with context. However, it seems to this reviewer that, while this may work better in other parts of the OT, it is a stretch in the case of Proverbs—at least in the case of most of the latter two-thirds of the volume. Still, Wilson retains this aspect of the format.

When it comes to meaning, Wilson (142) does not have a separate section in most of chapters 10–31, "Because the full meaning of a proverbial saying is generally not found in a cluster of verses, but rather when it is nuanced against other verses on any given topic." It seems as if the same might be said for the context section, despite the fact that Proverbs scholars have increasingly recognized interesting linkages between various proverbs. Linkages do not a context make.

Also, this volume is in dialog primarily with conservative and evangelical works on Proverbs. One will look in vain for references to those who read Proverbs against the grain. Wilson's reading of Proverbs demonstrates a finely tuned, but sympathetic ear.

However, these are minor quibbles when compared to the overall sweep of this commentary. The introduction alone (1-55) is worth the price of the volume. Wilson discusses briefly historical, literary, structural, and theological issues in his introduction. Like the older work in this series by Kidner, Wilson has several thematic discussions (26-44) in the introduction.

Particularly thought-provoking is the discussion on the heart (41-44), which suggests that a merely behavior-oriented approach to the proverbs (“Do this, avoid that, and things will go well for you”) is not sufficient for understanding the proverbs.

Especially helpful to preachers and those who lead Bible studies are the guidelines for understanding proverbs, as well as suggestions for ways to unpack and repackage them for a sermon series. However, scholars and teachers at the university and seminary level may also find Wilson’s suggestions helpful in their structuring of courses on the book of Proverbs.

An up-to-date bibliography of good books (all in English) is found at the beginning of the volume, and lists many good works, some scholarly, and others oriented toward the preacher. Of course, listing all the works on Proverbs would be unwieldy for the design of this commentary.

Wilson’s basic approach to the proverbial sayings is encapsulated in the following quote (4):

A proverb makes an observation that must be confirmed by those who hear or read it. As a comment about how things are, it usually lacks an imperative. It is a generalization based on experience, or a distillation of knowledge gained by experience—it is not a revealed truth (although God may be behind the discernment process), or a law or a promise.

This volume will appeal to a wide variety of readers. It is well and clearly written. It will be especially helpful to preachers, but even laypeople who are serious students of Proverbs will benefit from this volume. Furthermore, it would be useful to instructors in undergraduate and even graduate programs. I thoroughly enjoyed reading the volume and hope that many others will.

DARYL DOCTERMAN
Biblical Studies Adjunct
Cincinnati Christian University

Peter STUHLMACHER. *Biblical Theology of The New Testament.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. 969 pp. \$95.00.

Stuhlmacher’s magnum opus (a translation of his *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*) remains as a tribute to a lifetime study of Holy Scripture in the life of a NT scholar. His approach and methodology unpacks the OT roots for the context of the NT message. An added benefit of the volume contains Stuhlmacher’s updated German scholarship that informs our twenty-first-century NT studies.

The core of the volume contains six major headings: 1. the proclamation of Jesus, 2. the proclamation of the early church, 3. the proclamation of Paul, 4. the proclamation in the period after Paul, 5. the proclamation of the Synoptic Gospels, 6. the proclamation of John and his school. He closes his volume with a discussion of the canon and the center of Scripture.

Stuhlmacher, rightly believes that concepts from the Enlightenment suppress the spiritual experience reflected in the biblical text. He criticizes Adolf Schlatter’s (1852–1938) atheistic stance in NT theology. He also considers biblical inspiration, though he varies from the notion of inerrancy. Because Scripture is inspired, he writes that it must be interpreted by faith, as we recognize that Scripture is a human and divine document.

Stuhlmacher departs from the scholarship that claims the OT remains in a Hellenistic background for NT theology. Rather he favors Martin Hengel’s assertion that Judaism was affected by Hellenism. He accepts the distinctive role of the NT canonical writings, arguing that these documents must be accepted with a commitment of faith. He contends for the historical reliability of the synoptic Gospels, affirming that the accounts of the empty tomb and the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus to the disciples are credible. Thus, Jesus was raised from the dead

and ascended to the Father's right hand. Certainly, his impressive scholarship has come a long way from demythologizing the Bible and Rudolf Bultmann's writings.

Stuhlmacher understands Paul as having an irreplaceable position in early Christianity. He accepts seven of the apostle's letters as authentically Pauline (Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon), but also thinks that 2 Thessalonians and Colossians may be genuine. He sees the Pastoral Epistles as agreeing with and extending the teaching of the seven Pauline letters. Interestingly, Stuhlmacher offers significant criticisms about the *New Perspective on Paul* by E.P. Sanders. He writes in opposition to Sanders that Jesus' reconciliation and justification are accomplished through the work on the cross and this concept is a fundamental teaching of Paul.

Concerning the general epistles, in James, Stuhlmacher follows Martin Luther in noticing a contradiction between James and Paul on justification. He notes that the perspective offered by James appears inferior to Paul's and rests on a misunderstanding of Paul. However, the rupture Stuhlmacher perceives between James and Paul is not as wide as many people think, and James ultimately corrects a misleading interpretation of Paul. The letter of 1 Peter, matches Pauline thought, but it is also a fresh development of the gospel message. Additionally, he notes that the high Christology of the author of Hebrews is prominent and believes that 2 Peter and Jude have value in repelling false teaching.

The Synoptic Gospels are understood as transmitting the apostolic gospel. He follows the tradition of Mark as the interpreter of Peter, Markan priority and endorses the two-source theory. The catechesis of Matthew stands out, particularly in the five discourses and also in his emphasis on the fulfillment of the OT. Stuhlmacher has a helpful dialogue of Luke–Acts and emphasizes the reliability of the Lukan account.

For Stuhlmacher, the Johannine school includes the Gospel of John, 1, 2, 3 John, and Revelation. The author of the Gospel and the letters is not John, the son of Zebedee, but most likely John the elder. Thus, the book of Revelation represents the editing of the elder's material after his death.

In the concluding section of his volume, Stuhlmacher considers the NT canon and the center of Scripture. The focus is discovered in the revelation of the one God revealed in Jesus Christ, who is the essence of the Triune God. The message about Christ will only be accepted through the work of the Holy Spirit which is grounded on Scripture. Essentially, he believes that *we must return to the NT, which is itself rooted in the OT*. This notion remains central to Stuhlmacher's biblical theology in his writings.

In short, we can profit from his seasoned and immense scholarly volume. Christians can rejoice in Stuhlmacher's defense of the apostolic gospel in a world of hypercritical hermeneutical methods. We have much to learn from Stuhlmacher, and thank God for his contribution to worldwide NT scholarship.

CLETUS HULL

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Biblical Languages Institute

Brent NONGBRI. *God's Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018. 416 pp. \$35.00.

With the current volume, Nongbri crowns his extensive work on some of the most prominent Christian manuscripts, particularly the Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri, the Bodmer Papyri, the Oxyrhynchus Papyri, as well as a few other (in)famous manuscripts. His previous contributions to the study of manuscripts consist of peer-reviewed articles focusing on the excavation



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contexts, acquisitions, and treatments of papyri and codices. In each case, he provides a healthy dose of common sense to a field of study that has occasionally tolerated baseless conjecture. In this volume particularly, he challenges “implausibly precise (and often implausibly early) dates . . . assigned to a number of important manuscripts.” Furthermore, he calls for a more reserved way forward by means of investigating the original context of each literary manuscript: the book within which the manuscript was originally bound, the archaeological context in which this book was discovered, and what these observations reveal about the book’s first use. However, due to the nature of the acquisitions of many early manuscripts, such contexts are rarely available to us; thus, this volume serves to reveal how little we can know about the most prominent Christian manuscripts and how thin the evidence is upon which many of our theories rest.

In the prologue, the author lays the foundation for his critiques with an overview of the problem. Recognizing that “biblical scholars have for the most part focused intently on the texts contained within our earliest Christian manuscripts and papyrologists have exploited these manuscripts for the study of certain historical phenomena” (11), Nongbri argues that literary papyri are seldom analyzed as artifact books, a treatment which would entail examining their archaeological context, their codicology, the binding techniques used to assemble the original book of the manuscript, and observations made available by radiocarbon analysis. The vacuum left by a lack of hard evidence allows for unmerited freedom in the way scholars interpret and apply manuscripts, acting as if “Christian manuscripts . . . are essentially self-interpreting [with] secure dates, and clearly [confirming] or [disconfirming] some fact about early Christian history.” In response, Nongbri wishes “to raise consciousness about how messy and fragmentary our knowledge about these books is.”

Remarkably informative, chapters 1–3 serve as an introduction to the ancient task of making books and the modern tasks of dating and procuring early Christian books. Elsewhere, Nongbri echoes a concern of Larry Hurtado that most professional scholars of the NT are not familiar with NT manuscripts; chapter 1 addresses this issue by providing students and scholars alike with essential information about how ancients manufactured book materials, the practices of early scribes, and modern conservation efforts to preserve discoveries. Chapter 2 speaks directly to, perhaps, the biggest elephant in the room: the overconfidence of certain influential paleographers to provide precise manuscript dating based on scarce evidence. It is apparent that the author sides with dissenting paleographers who call attention to the problematic assumption that scribes’ letter formation neatly develops chronologically, instead of geographically or personally. Moreover, dissenting paleographers “would highlight the demonstrated ability of copyists to write in styles generally associated with different time periods. This last point especially gives pause, because it challenges the key assumption . . . that graphic similarity necessarily equates to chronological similarity” (63). Therefore, Nongbri places greater confidence in radiocarbon dating, yet he concedes that numerous challenges still remain. First, radiocarbon dating can only provide ranges of years, not precise dates. Second, there are instances in which radiocarbon dating has been skewed towards earlier dates by intentionally including irrelevant materials in the assessments. As an example, the author draws on the radiocarbon analysis of Codex Tchacos:

[the dating was calculated from] samples taken from the codex pages and samples taken from the papyri used as stuffing for the leather cover of the codex. . . . such papyrus from the covers of books is usually waste, and its creation would predate its use as stuffing for the leather cover by an indeterminate amount of time. The inclusion of these pieces in the production of the statistical mean has skewed the reported date of the codex too early (79).

Thus, although radiocarbon methods could provide reliable ranges of dates for manuscripts, it is possible to manipulate the outcomes for the sake of presenting an earlier and thus more

appealing year. Chapter 3 serves to give an accurate depiction of the archaeological origins of manuscripts and to dispel some of the fabricated discovery stories unwittingly passed between scholars concerning certain famous manuscripts. In reality, these manuscripts were procured “through licit and illicit excavation in Egypt” via a network of antiquities dealers who deliberately obscure the origins of manuscripts for self-serving purposes (85). This means that certain vital information is unavailable for exploring the archaeological contexts of important Christian manuscript collections.

In chapters 4–7, the author turns to examining the specific cases of the Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri, the Bodmer Papyri, the Oxyrhynchus Papyri, and a collection of smaller fragments of the Gospels of Luke and Matthew. With regard to the first and second, there are a number of uncertainties that challenge current scholarship. Dating the Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri has been a circular affair, which relied on paleography without securely dated comparanda and neglected better methods such as radiocarbon analysis. As for the Bodmer Papyri, there is not yet consensus on the collection’s proper contents, which obfuscates the form of its original book, and thus “its ancient context will continue to remain in question” (214). On the other hand, the Oxyrhynchus Papyri do not suffer these same issues, yet archaeological questions remain to be answered—such is the ongoing task of researchers. Finally, chapter 7 acts as a cautionary tale demonstrating that even “scholars are susceptible to the overwhelming temptation to weave fragmentary bits of papyrological evidence into coherent, even compelling stories” (268).

Appreciating his reserved treatment of manuscript evidence and his willingness to challenge some of the field’s farfetched and unchecked theories, I find little to critique in this volume. Where it does fall short is in providing enough examples of Christian books that have successfully undergone the sort of analysis which the author describes in his prologue. On this point, he concedes that much of the current volume “has . . . a cautionary, if not negative tone (‘we can’t know this’)” (269). Still, I believe, even if he was required to draw from manuscripts dated later than early Christianity, including more positive examples would demonstrate to the reader what sorts of outcomes can emerge from treating books as “three-dimensional archaeological artifacts worthy of study in their own right” (11). Regardless, this volume is an excellent contribution to works such as Harry Gamble’s *Books and Readers in the Early Church* (1995), Larry Hurtado’s *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origin* (2006), and Roger Bagnall’s *Early Christian Books in Egypt* (2009); all of these represent an interest in reeducating scholars in how they treat and perceive early Christian papyri and codices. In this task, this volume shines.

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Richard BAUCKHAM. *The Christian World around the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017 (original publication, WUNT: 286. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017). 757 pp. \$65.00.*

Bauckham ranks among the most productive contemporary scholars of the NT and early Christianity, having made significant contributions to the study of early Christology, the canonical Gospels, Acts, the general epistles, Revelation, and Jewish and Christian apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, among other topics. A previous collection treated the Jewish milieu of early Christianity (*The Jewish World around the New Testament* [WUNT 233; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008; reprinted, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010). This volume brings together

under seven headings (see below) 29 essays published between 1974 and 2015, plus two previously unpublished. Bauckham provides new introductions to the collection as a whole (1) and to the first two of the seven sections (5-8, 83-85).

The essay “James at the Centre” (325-336) includes a statement that might be taken as the overarching thesis of Bauckham’s NT scholarship: “early Christianity—whether Pauline, Johannine, Jacobite, or whatever—was a distinctive form of Judaism” (335). While the collection as a whole will likely most interest readers committed to affirmation or denial of this thesis or familiar with Bauckham’s other work, individual essays will be of value to students of any of the topics addressed.

The first three headings under which the essays are presented focus on the canonical Gospels. “Gospel Audiences” includes Bauckham’s thematic contribution to a 1998 volume he edited advocating a widespread rather than a localized intended audience for Mark’s Gospel and its successors (9-39) and his response to Margaret Mitchell’s critique of this thesis on the basis of patristic evidence (41-80).

The second section, “Gospel Traditions,” collects eight essays exploring the question, “How did the traditions of the sayings and deeds of Jesus reach the writers of the Gospels?” (83), to which Bauckham offered a detailed answer in *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006; second ed., 2017). The first essay in this section, “The Transmission of the Gospel Traditions” (87-102), published in 2008, supplements and summarizes arguments in *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*. Later essays engage the work of Werner Kelber on oral tradition (103-107, previously unpublished), Martin Hengel on the Gospel according to Mark (109-130), Raymond Brown on tradition in Luke’s infancy narrative (131-142), Francis Watson on the composition and interpretation of the Gospels (195-211), and the 2008 collection *Seeking the Identity of Jesus*, edited by Beverly Roberts Gaventa and Richard B. Hays (213-221). The two remaining essays address the genre of Papias’s lost work on the Gospels (143-164) and the relevance of the study of John’s Gospel to the Synoptic Problem (165-194).

The third section, “Gospels and Canon,” presents only one essay, previously unpublished. “The Canonicity of the Four Gospels” (225-237) contrasts the canonical witnesses to Jesus’ earthly ministry with the Gnostic Gospels, finding in the former “both the best access we have to the history of Jesus and the normative understanding of the significance of that history for the Christian faith” (236). The essay illustrates Bauckham’s interest in the implications of historical study for hermeneutics and theology.

The fourth section, “Early Christian People,” presents five essays, each focusing on some aspect of a NT personage’s biography. The first (241-253) is perhaps the most intriguing of these, offering a fresh proposal about Paul’s allusion to his call-Christophany in 2 Cor 4:6 and suggesting that the Aaronic benediction (Num 6:24-26) informed both this experience and Paul’s understanding of grace. Other essays treat Barnabas in Paul’s letter to the Galatians (255-263), Peter’s martyrdom (265-323), the central position of James the brother of Jesus in the first Christian generation (325-336), and the location of Publius’ estate on Malta (337-351; cf. Acts 28:7).

The fifth section, “Early Church,” offers two essays on the observance of Sunday in the apostolic and post-apostolic church (355-384, 385-433), one on summaries of the apostolic preaching in Acts (435-460), and an insightful discussion of the topics “kingdom” and “church” in the teaching of Jesus and Paul (461-480). The sixth and longest section, “Early Christian Apocryphal Literature,” collects surveys of Gospels, Acts, Apocalypses, Pauline literature, and other apocrypha and pseudepigrapha (503-610), along with studies of “The Two Fig Tree Parables in the *Apocalypse of Peter*” (483-501) and “Hell in the *Latin Vision of Ezra*”

(611-627), rounded out by a suggestive consideration of “Early Christian Apocrypha as Imaginative Literature” (631-653). The seventh section, “Early Patristics,” presents the essays “The Great Tribulation in the *Shepherd of Hermas*” (657-670) and “The Fall of the Angels as the Source of Philosophy in Hermias and Clement of Alexandria” (671-687).

Some will regret—or at least this reviewer does—the omission of Bauckham’s essay “James, Peter, and the Gentiles,” which significantly clarifies the first great controversy in Christian history and deserves a wider audience than its initial publication afforded (Bruce Chilton and Craig Evans, eds., *James, Peter, and Paul: Tensions in Early Christianity* [NovTSup 115; Leiden: Brill, 2005] 91-142). Also missed is “The Origin of the Ebionites” (in Peter J. Tomson and Doris Lambers-Petry, eds., *The Image of the Judaeo-Christians in Ancient Jewish and Christian Literature* [WUNT 158; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003] 162-181).

Still, all theological libraries and collections supporting the study of early Christianity should include this volume. Individual scholars, especially those concerned with the Gospels or early Christian apocrypha, should also give it strong consideration. This holds true even if one is unconvinced by the generally “conservative” conclusions that Bauckham reaches, as he is never less than informative and consistently presents arguments that merit engagement.

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Eckhard J. SCHNABEL. *Jesus in Jerusalem: The Last Days.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. 680 pp. \$60.00.

Schnabel packs a lot of information in his study of Jesus’ final days in Jerusalem. He arranges his research into five chapters: (1) People, (2) Places, (3) Timelines, (4) Events, and (5) Significance. In the first two chapters, Schnabel discusses over seventy people and seventeen places related to Jesus’ final week. Among those he discusses in detail are Jesus and Judas, of course, but even the “rich people” and the “poor widow” with the two mites (λεπτά) who cast their offerings together into the shofar chests (66-67)—hardly key players in the last days of Jesus. But regarding these and many other “people” quite tangential to Jesus’ last week, Schnabel offers up a wealth of information that abounds with insights from his complete mastery of the ancient languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin) and from his thorough knowledge of the history and culture. Yes, one tires from flipping back and forth between the main text and the endnotes, which run over 280 pages, even though their print is much smaller than that found in the main text. But one constantly finds treasures in Schnabel’s extensive notes. They provide much more than just documentation of ancient sources and modern scholarship. His notes are also rich in historical details and theological insights. And yes, his notes can be quite long; some are indeed “German footnotes” taking up two-thirds to three-fourths of a page or even more. And so, in this age of sophisticated electronic publishing software, I kept wondering why they were not footnotes.

In his conclusions, Schnabel sometimes allows himself to be too influenced by Richard Bauckham, a factor that sometimes leads him to make a misstep or even take a wrong turn. For example, Schnabel follows Bauckham in imagining that Malchus, whose ear was cut off during the arrest of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, nursed “a personal grudge against the disciples of Jesus” on that account, and Malchus’s hatred and hostility explain why the Synoptic Gospels never identify Peter as the perpetrator of this deed (83). Such speculation may explain the silence to protect Peter during his lifetime, but it cannot account for Matthew’s failure to name Malchus, whom he identifies merely as “the servant of the high priest” (Matt 26:51). For if

Matthew has no fear in naming Caiaphas (3, 57), and if in his estimation “a servant is not above his master” (10:24), then why would he not also give the name of Caiaphas’s servant as Malchus, if he knew it? It seems more likely that John alone names Malchus (John 18:10) because he, unlike Matthew, personally knew Malchus and so recognized his face in the garden (15, 26). Also Jesus healed Malchus, a fact reported only by Luke (22:51), and I wonder whether Jesus restored Malchus’s ear or merely healed the wound, and how either possibility might have affected Malchus. But such speculation is as groundless as Bauckham’s.

Schnabel also follows Bauckham in separating “Salome” (Mark 15:40) and “the mother of Zebedee’s sons” (Matt 27:56) from the sister of Jesus’ mother (John 19:25). In the very next paragraph, Schnabel notes how the mother of Zebedee’s sons approaches Jesus and asks him to place her sons on his right and left flank in his kingdom (55). But he fails to note that such a request would seem very presumptuous, almost unbelievable, if it came from a perfect stranger. It is quite understandable, however, if it came from his aunt and concerned his first cousins, whom he has known all his life.

But even on those few occasions when I find myself at odds with Schnabel’s reasoning, I remain awestruck at the remarkable richness of his research and the clarity of his expression. Equipped with a fifty-page bibliography and four indexes (authors, subjects, biblical passages, and other ancient sources), this volume could serve well as a college textbook or as stimulating reading for ministers and advanced students.

DAVID H. WARREN
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Douglas A. CAMPBELL. *Paul: An Apostle’s Journey.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. 207 pp. \$22.00.

The purpose of this volume is to provide an accessible overview and introduction to Paul for students and adults who are not conversant with the scholarly conversation about the apostle. It tracks Paul from his conversion to his death in “story” format with the goal of uncovering the apostle’s theology because Campbell is convinced that one cannot grasp Paul’s thinking unless they grasp the activity that shaped it (1-3). Campbell’s hope is that this volume provides a supplement to a series of lectures about Paul or studies of passages of prime importance in the Pauline corpus (ix-xi). This volume is divided into three sections; an introduction and two parts. In his introduction, Campbell describes the purpose of his volume and discusses sources for the study of Paul, which he acknowledges as Paul’s authentic letters and Acts of the Apostles. He judges the author of Acts’ presentation of Paul to be “99 percent accurate” except in the reordering of some stories about the apostle (4-5). Interestingly, Campbell does not identify what letters of Paul he considers authentic. However, it appears from his use of the Pauline corpus throughout the volume that he considers Paul to be the author of every letter ascribed to him except the Pastoral Epistles.

The first and second parts make up the bulk of the volume. The first part deals with Paul from his conversion, which Campbell dates to AD 34, to his planting of churches in Greece and Asia, which he contends ended in AD 52 (13-124). Throughout this first part, Campbell discusses the background behind the composition of 1-2 Thessalonians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon as well as aspects of Paul’s ethics, Christology, and ecclesiology. In the second part, Campbell traces Paul’s life from his fight against his enemies—messianic Jews who misunderstand religion as contractual and not covenantal—to the apostle’s death in Rome (125-181). Throughout this second part, Campbell deals with the contexts for 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans as well as aspects of Pauline soteriology and the relationship between

the church and historic Israel, including the latter's fate. At the end of every chapter in both parts one and two, Campbell includes questions to reinforce the main points of the chapter that are designed for the reader or for a small group.

The strengths of this volume are its clarity, readability, insightfulness, and Campbell's attempt to find parallels to modern situations for the purpose of helping the reader to better understand Paul and his world. One of the most interesting proposals that he makes is that Paul used contacts of new converts to "network." He notes that modern studies of the Latter-Day Saints have determined that many of their converts come from pre-existing relationships and networks of converts. Campbell proposes that Paul used four primary networks in his missionary travels: familial, Jewish, artisanal, and patronal (41-51). In addition, Campbell has a fantastic and timely analogy for demonstrating the already-not tension of Paul's eschatological ethics. He relates it to two songs playing in the same room at the same time on two separate devices, which are "distinct from one another." He then notes that you hear the song that is loudest. He observes that the Christian's task is to tune out the music of the Flesh and tune into the music of the Spirit (39).

There are, however, three disadvantages of this volume. First, Campbell works with an idiosyncratic dating and reconstruction of Paul's life and career. For example, he dates Paul's tenure in Thessalonica to AD 37–41, while most students of Paul date it to AD 49. Campbell, however, provides no discussion for the reader, whom he envisages as a novice to Pauline studies. In addition, he links the composition of Paul's Prison Epistles to an imprisonment in the city of Apamea that supposedly occurred around AD 50. Throughout the discussion, he fails to inform the reader that most scholars date some of these letters to a Roman, Ephesian, or a Caesarea Martimian imprisonment (75-90, esp. 76). Second, at times Campbell's discussion of Paul's theology does not present the apostle's beliefs in his cultural context, and he is guilty of reading Paul through a modern, Protestant lens. For instance, Campbell says that Second Temple Judaism is an example of religion, while the Christianity that Paul proclaimed is a covenant, even the gospel (146-148). The difference between the two is that the former has a conditional understanding of salvation that is contractual with obligations for its adherents. On the other hand, Christianity and the gospel are defined by an assurance of salvation (148, 163-169). Most OT scholars would not appreciate such a caricature of covenants in the ancient Near East, ancient Israel, and in Second Temple Judaism that fails to consider what a covenant actually is, a contractual agreement between two parties. The final disadvantage of this volume is that it tries to do too much. While his stated purpose is to provide an accessible overview and introduction to Paul to a lay audience, Campbell makes too many modern-day applications of Pauline principles for the modern church, regardless if one agrees with him. It seems to me that a better way to introduce the reader to Paul would be to spend more time discussing complex issues in Pauline studies such as Paul's Christology, his view of the Law, and the meaning of justification by faith and *pistis tou theou*.

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N.T. WRIGHT. *Paul: A Biography*. San Francisco: Harper One, 2018. 464 pp. \$29.99.

N.T. Wright for some time has been known as an outstanding speaker and writer. His writing prowess and proliferation is acknowledged by admirers and critics. Once again, Wright brings his scholarship, creativity, and articulation to write a biography about the main proponent of first-century Christianity: Paul of Tarsus.



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Paul is presented as a powerful, well educated, articulate, driven man who is fully committed to Jesus Christ, but who fully demonstrates his own humanity. He is able to perform miracles, is brilliant in his responses to opponents, and able to persuade and manipulate crowds, but is very, very human.

At least twice (90, 411) Wright describes Paul's faith (*pistis*) and ours in terms of 'loyalty' and 'allegiance.' Faith is trust, but more. Faith is belief, but more. Faith can be expressed even in doubt when understood as loyalty and allegiance to Jesus even in the midst of struggles. Paul exemplifies that kind of faith.

Wright uses his imagination and educated guesses to describe Paul's possible and probable responses to the various situations he finds himself in. In analyzing 2 Cor 1:8, 9, 4:8, 9 Wright sees Paul in deep depression and psychologically struggling. All the while he keeps pledging his allegiance and loyalty to Jesus. In the author's opinion Paul makes a "bad mistake" in crossing the Aegean for a "quick visit to Corinth." Wright comments, "He was made to feel decidedly unwelcome. He found it best to leave in a hurry" (243).

In describing Luke's account of the offering for Jerusalem, Wright states that no one knows what happened to the money. He gives several possible answers, each with a "Perhaps." These educated guesses about the narrative give life and possibility to the story. Wright, furthermore, gives his take on how Paul responded to such situations. Of course, it is speculative, but his thoughts give the reader the opportunity to look into the mind of Paul for what motivated him and what may have been his thought process.

During the shipwreck narrative Paul seems to succumb to the "I told you so" syndrome. He warned them. They did not heed his words. On another occasion, not to be put in his place, Paul talks back to the High Priest. He is slapped for that discretion and apologizes for his words. While questioned by Agrippa, Paul states he wishes the King would be: "as I am"—and then, with a smile and a gesture to the visible signs of his own status—"apart, of course, from these chains"(371). Who knows, perhaps, Paul did smile once in a while!

In a section near the end of the volume (416), Wright gives several characteristics of Paul. With each characteristic Wright gives subpoints to further explain those points. Paul has energy and is relentless. He is blunt with a crowd, the high priest, the Sanhedrin, the Roman governor, and the ship owner. Paul is vulnerable and will not ask anyone to do what he is not willing to do. He is loyal to God and has loyal co-workers. "Paul had insisted that what mattered was not just what you thought but how you thought" (420). Paul took seriously the Apostles instruction to him to "remember the poor."

Wright has tackled a formidable task to create a biography of Paul. He has done so with his usual scholarship and insight. He narrates Paul's travel, writing, and speaking. For novice and scholar alike, this volume is a helpful focus on Paul. The educated guesses help fill in the blanks and make Paul come alive, not only in action but in thought. The reader will be instructed, engaged and inspired by Paul.

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Dean

Hope International University

Andreas WILLI. *Origins of the Greek Verb.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. 812 pp. \$155.00.

Willi is Diebold Professor of Comparative Philology at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of Worcester College. He is author of *The Languages of Aristophanes: Aspects of Linguistic Variation in Classical Attic Greek* (2003) and is editor of *The Language of Greek Comedy* (2002) and co-editor of *Laws and Rules in Indo-European* (2012).

The current volume combines comparative philology, classics, and historical linguistics as it seeks to outline the development of the Greek verbal forms from the earliest recoverable Indo-European stages of proto-Greek to the time of Homer and other early Greek texts. This is performed to explain how the Greek verb system came to exist (26). The expressed desire is to contribute to the debate regarding the meaning of components of Greek morphology. The author sees himself as facilitating a dialogue between reconstructionists, philologists, and typologists, who often bypass each other. The findings from all three are handled evenhandedly, although the limitations of the volume prevent engagement with all persons in the three fields.

The volume is arranged into ten chapters where the first is the introduction. The second chapter deals with theoretical issues such as tense, aspect, and *Aktionsart*. The conclusions of this pivotal chapter determine the direction and conclusions of the remaining chapters. This chapter portrays aspect as developing out of *Aktionsart*, particularly perfectivity developing from telicity (56), and tense-based systems as developing from aspect-based systems (44, 56).

The third, fourth, and fifth chapters are devoted to reduplicated Aorists, Presents, and Perfects respectively. The function of reduplication as a perfectivizing morpheme is proposed for Aorists (61). Intensity is placed on the grammaticalization cline leading to perfectives (120). This placement is contrary to where most grammaticalization theorists place it, which is usually placed on the cline of imperfectives rather than perfectives. The reason the author places it with perfectives, is because intensity involves object affectedness, which is similar to telicity, another item on the perfective cline. He uses this to support the perfectivity of Present tense-form reduplication. His analysis of reduplicated (plural entity) nouns leads to the understanding that they are bounded (121), while regular plural nouns are unbounded. This argument also connects reduplication to perfectivity of verbs where boundedness relates to the whole action. The author agrees with Cowgill that the Perfect paradigm is derived from a deverbal agentive nominal (284). This helps to account for endings being unique. The author defends perfectivity for the reduplicant through all three chapters.

The next three chapters cover different forms of the Aorist, with theme vowel Aorists in chapter six, Aorists with augment in chapter seven, and sigmatic Aorists in chapter eight. The author suspects that a perfective reduplication was the origin for the augment (381). He rules out the idea that the augment was either a past-time marker, or an adverb, and notices that the augmented Aorists in Homer were either resultative or recent past that link to the speaker's present (416). The sigmatic Aorists exhibit transitivity. The ninth chapter relates ergativity to tense and aspect, where the author concludes that the Greek verbal endings were originally pronominal endings (501). The final chapter relates the discussion of the previous chapters to the Greek language and draws several conclusions. This is followed by an Epilogue, Bibliography, and two indices, one of verb forms, and another of key words.

This volume shows agreement with some relevant literature on the Greek morphology but disagrees with others. It especially agrees with Crellin (2016), regarding the transitivity of kaptive Perfects (20), and with Giannakis (1999) regarding perfectivity of reduplicated Presents (120). When οἶδα is understood to be non-reduplicated (19), this disagrees with Lehmann (1952), who shows it is reduplicated from a laryngeal-initial root. Likewise, when the development of aspect distinctions of perfective and imperfective is understood to take place just after Anatolian broke off from Indo-European (much earlier than Homer's time), the temporal placement of this transition contradicts Moser's hypothesis (2014) that this transition in the Greek verbal system occurred after NT Greek when Greek lost the synthetic Perfect tense. In spite of this third disagreement, this volume still maintains the same order of historical transition of the verb system as that of Moser, from *Aktionsart* to aspect, and then to tense.

This volume analyzes verbal data from a wide range of Indo-European languages to provide a fresh understanding of the morphology of the Greek verbal system. It offers solutions for the origin of several morphemes, along with their respective meanings. Several of the meanings offered in this volume are relevant for the verbal aspect debate, while others are related to debates regarding temporal reference. Much of this volume impacts how one understands the development of the Greek language over time, and the specifics regarding how grammaticalization processes affected the verb system. This volume also answers why certain components of the verb are mirrored between various tense-forms, and others are not. This volume is a reference tool for anyone interested in a historical linguistic approach to the Greek verbal system. This volume will be a resource for years to come for those analyzing the meaning of Greek verb forms and their individual morphemes.

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David WENHAM. *From Good News to Gospels: What Did the First Christians Say about Jesus?* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. 124 pp. \$16.00.

The present volume, slim and accessibly written, forwards the thesis that the content of early Christian preaching comprised “regular and systematic teaching about Jesus, including about his life, teaching, death, and resurrection” (8) and, further, that this oral traditional material was “carefully preserved” in transmission (12). Following a foreword from Donald A. Hagner, prefatory material and an introductory chapter, the argument tracks the development, contents, and transmission of the oral Jesus tradition in the Gospels, Acts, and Pauline letters.

Wenham follows Birger Gerhardsson and others in arguing for a proto-rabbinical model for the oral Jesus tradition, based in large part upon rabbinic sources post-dating Jesus and the earliest NT documents. The argument cites passages in the Gospels and Acts to emphasize the apostles’ role as faithful learners and proclaimers of the Jesus tradition. Both the Gospels and Acts are read straightforwardly as historical documents, though some gesture is made toward the critical issues in Acts (21-26). In the following chapter, Wenham turns to Paul’s letters for evidence of a robust and carefully preserved body of oral tradition. He finds in 1 Cor 11:23-26, Gal 3:1, and Rom 14:14 evidence that the oral traditions Paul received were narratively shaped and passed on (40). These and other passages are marshaled as further evidence of a “carefully preserved” body of tradition in the apostolic period.

Chapters five and six host an interesting but incomplete discussion of “whether there are things in the canonical gospels that look like oral traditions or are best explained as such” (65). Whether written texts may “look oral” and, if so, whether that suggests their oral derivation is a contested topic in current scholarship, but this debate is not engaged. Instead, Wenham argues against the Two-Document Hypothesis, supplanting Q with his own theory of a carefully controlled narrative oral tradition to explain the Matthean-Lukan overlap (71). On Wenham’s reading, the Synoptists “are all drawing on a common oral tradition in different ways” (82). This insight places a welcome emphasis on tradition as a body of meaning and material accessed, used, and instanced by multiple tradents in different ways through time. Chapter seven forwards the possibility of “a complete oral narrative of Jesus’s life and ministry” (90), but without apparent consultation of Antoinette Clark Wire’s *The Case for Mark Composed in Performance* (Eugene: Cascade, 2011), wherein such a case is cogently argued in monograph form. The volume concludes with a summary and statement of implications for its argument.

The volume is not without genuine insight but is hampered throughout by recurring

lacunae in engagement with vital secondary literature on the topic of oral tradition. Instead of engaging recent theories of oral tradition and the NT, Wenham bases his argument largely on the quite dated theory of Gerhardsson and some of his inheritors. “Gerhardsson has critics,” readers are told, but Wenham interacts with none of them (14n2). Gerhardsson’s model is a serious option, but it is a serious option among many others not engaged in the present volume. There is irony and a missed opportunity, then, as Wenham characterizes recent NT scholarship as having given “surprisingly little attention to the content of the earliest oral gospel tradition” (11). There is a substantial body of recent, relevant scholarship missing from Wenham’s bibliography that would necessarily challenge and nuance his thesis and argument throughout. Without such engagement, however, this short volume represents a narrow and dated view of oral tradition and the NT. Its critical consultation should therefore be supplemented by wider reading in the interdisciplinary subfields of oral tradition, social memory, and biblical performance criticism.

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D. H. WILLIAMS, trans. and ed. *Matthew: Interpreted by Early Christian Commentators*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. 570 pp. \$65.00.

The present volume is the fourth in The Church’s Bible commentary series, edited by Robert Louis Wilken. The Church’s Bible is an anthology of patristic comments on specific books of the Bible, much like the Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (ACCS), edited by Thomas C. Oden. Notable patristic writers such as Augustine, Chrysostom, Jerome, Origen, and Tertullian feature in both series. Unlike ACCS, The Church’s Bible includes entries from the Cappadocian Fathers. Also distinctive is The Church’s Bible tendency to select entries from patristic commentaries more often than from theological treatises.

In the general editor’s introduction titled “New Testament Interpretation,” Robert Wilken writes, “Our aim is not a comprehensive survey of early Christian exegesis of the books of the New Testament, but commentaries that we hope will be interesting, theologically significant, and spiritually uplifting to readers of the New Testament today” (xxi). Beneath this aim is an ambivalence toward modern critical exegesis. Wilken asserts, “We are so accustomed to think of context as literary or historical that we forget that the words of the Bible have a life that transcends their original setting” (xix). Wilken is not appealing to a postmodern reader-response theory of interpretation. Rather, he contends the NT is rightly located in the context of Christian worship. Interpretation is driven by “the Church’s faith in the triune God confessed in the baptismal creed, made present through Christ in the consecrated bread and wine of the Eucharist, whose power and love were confirmed in the lives of the faithful by the searing flame of the Holy Spirit” (xvi).

D. H. Williams further points out, “Among Latin or Greek writers, there is a working assumption that it was possible and preferable to follow the apostles’ practice of scriptural exegesis” (xxiv). Unlike some modern scholars who consider it disingenuous to emulate the NT authors’ exegetical methods, the church fathers regarded apostolic interpretation a model for subsequent generations of the Church. The governing principle of patristic interpretation is the *skopos* (aim) of scripture, the mystery of Christ. This is especially apparent in Matthew’s use of the OT, for whom the “author’s intended meaning” seldom determines the scripture’s application to the story of Jesus. Likewise, Matthew’s intended meaning does not determine a passage’s spiritual significance for the Church. In the words of Peter Chrysologus, “The historical

narrative of Scripture should always be raised to a higher meaning . . . we should unfold by allegorical explanation what mystical teaching is contained beneath the outward appearance of the text” (quoted in xxv). Spiritual interpretation seeks to “display on the basis of the biblical text God’s plan of salvation in Christ” (Williams, xxxvi). The meaning of the biblical text itself is not found in critical exegesis, but in the Church’s teaching, liturgy, and practice.

The body of the volume begins with a preface containing preliminary remarks on the Gospels from Chrysostom, Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius, Chromatius, and Augustine. Discreet sections are devoted to each of the twenty-eight chapters of Matthew. Each chapter opens with summary comments from Williams followed by entries containing patristic commentary on smaller units of text. Williams has freshly translated each text for this volume. The breadth of commentary on individual passages varies based on the accessibility of patristic material and the passages’ significance.

This commentary on Matthew will serve as a valuable sourcebook for Matthew’s history of reception in the patristic era. Size restrictions preclude comprehensiveness. The entries will provide the researcher with food for thought, but the selectivity of sources limits the commentary’s usefulness for patristic research. This volume is a welcome resource for pastors and students.

KORY EASTVOLD

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Adam WINN. *Reading Mark’s Christology under Caesar: Jesus the Messiah and Roman Imperial Ideology.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018. 204 pp. \$21.60.

This volume is a popular version of, and a correction of Winn’s Fuller Theological Seminary Ph.D. dissertation. The dissertation was published as *The Purpose of Mark’s Gospel: An Early Christian Response to Roman Imperial Propaganda* (WUNT 2: 245; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008). Corrections in the current volume include a balancing of his earlier thesis that Mark’s Christology must be read as a “Christology of Power” throughout the second Gospel, and specifically as a response to Flavian propaganda. Winn acknowledges his “missing of the mark” vis-à-vis Markan Christology as presented in his original study, but rather than abandoning his thesis, he confesses to pushing deeper into the Roman imperial world in order to make sense of the seemingly disparate pieces of Mark’s Christology (ix-xi).

According to Winn, Markan Christology—a puzzling mixture of Jesus as powerful Christ vs. Jesus as suffering Christ—has too often been portrayed as an “either/or.” Instead of choosing which Markan vision of Christ should be dominant, Winn argues for the unity of Markan Christology—both the powerful Christ and the suffering Christ—and interprets both images in light of the impact on a Markan community of the Flavian propaganda aimed at Jews (and Jewish Christians) after the fall of Jerusalem, Judea’s defeat at the hands of Vespasian and Titus. Flavian propaganda—that Vespasian fulfilled Jewish prophecy—pointed to divine affirmation of Vespasian’s military victory over the Jews, further legitimized Vespasian’s rule by tying him to sacred texts, as it sent an ominous warning to Jews against using their sacred texts to justify rebellion (46-47).

During the Jewish war, Josephus had criticized the Jewish fighters for their insistence that an oracle from their scriptures (Num 24:17?) prophesied the rise of one of their own number to become king (*J.W.* 6.312-13). Josephus, proclaiming himself to be a prophet and prophetic Scripture interpreter, identified the coming “savior” of the “ambiguous oracle” not as a Jewish messianic figure, but as Vespasian himself. In a striking development, the Roman historians also mention the misinterpretation of their scriptures by the Jewish rebels (Tacitus (*Historiae* 5.13; Suetonius, *Vespasian* 4.5; cf. Dio Cassius 45.1.4; cf. Winn 44). This confirmation by Roman

historians strengthens Winn's suggestion that Flavian propaganda in this connection was intended, among other things, to prevent the Jews from invoking their sacred texts in an attempt to foment resistance to Roman rule.

Winn begins with a brief historical sketch of representative positions on Mark's Christology. Those of the past century who emphasized the powerful Christ tended to favor a "divine man" Christology. Wrede found his unifying ideas in Mark's so-called "Messianic Secret." Form critics, says Winn, often saw the Gospel writers as mere compilers who strung together existing pieces of tradition (story units, sayings, parables) like pearls on a string (8). Redaction critics understood that the Gospel writers were creative authors and theologians who were intentional in shaping the existing tradition units included in their respective Gospels (9). Unlike those earlier approaches, Winn's method can be described as "historic-narrative" (24, 69), which focuses on the final form of Mark, a unified narrative from beginning to end, intended to be read as such.

Winn favors Narrative Criticism, arguing that the christological pieces can only make sense within the narrative (14). This approach wisely avoids undue focus on christological titles outside of their narrative context. The situation of the first recipients of the second Gospel allowed Mark to affirm Jesus' identity as God's sole eschatological agent (52, 66), specifically contrasted to the Caesar who was proclaimed as "Son of God," "Savior," and "Lord."


Winn provides a narrative analysis of "The Powerful Jesus of Mark 1–8," followed by a historical analysis of Mark as it might have been read by Roman Christians living in the shadow of Flavian propaganda (69–88). Mark 1:1 forms a title, or incipit, which probably functions as a programmatic statement as to how the rest of the Gospel should be read (70–73). Winn notes that the language of Mark's incipit strongly echoes the language of the Roman imperial world, and proceeds to show how Mark brings together Isaiah's language with that of Roman imperial cult.

In dealing with the "Messianic Secret," Winn builds on an argument put forward by David F. Watson (*Honor among Christians: The Cultural Key to the Messianic Secret*, Fortress, 2010; Winn 120–123). The majority of Winn's fifth chapter, "A Roman Reading of Mark's So-called Secrecy Motif," is from his article "Resisting Honor: The Markan Secrecy Motif and Roman Imperial Ideology" (*JBL* 133.3 [2014]:583–601). The Roman political strategy of *recusatio*, practiced by the emperors, involved the regular refusal of public honors. Winn says this Roman imperial strategy offers one of the only meaningful paradigms for Jesus' rejection of public honor, i.e., his regular commands to silence and "secrecy."

Other chapters include discussions of "the Suffering Jesus of Mark 8:22–10:52," "Jesus and the Temple," and "Jesus in Mark's Passion Narrative." Winn has written a fascinating contextual study of Mark's Christology. Much of his emphasis on reading Mark in light of Roman imperial ideology resonates with current interest in Roman imperial ideology. Winn has done a good service in seeking to draw together seemingly disparate parts of Mark's Gospel.

Worth asking are a couple questions about this volume, which are more hesitations—pauses to ponder—than they are criticisms. One question forms when Winn seems to accept at face value Augustus's ostensible rejection of public honor, and especially his refusal to be worshiped as divine. However, it is not clear how strenuously Augustus actually resisted such worship. Evidence to the contrary exists, not least in Augustus's ubiquitous portrayal as Olympian Zeus and *Divi Filius* on the coins of the realm, a powerful form of propaganda (see Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990); Larry J. Kreitzer, *Striking New Images: Roman Imperial Coinage and the New Testament World* (JSNTSup 134; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996).

Regarding the secrecy motif, at times Winn's case seems overly subtle. In addition, insofar as the Roman Caesar was understood by the public merely "to go through the motions" of



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rejecting public honor, one is left wondering how forceful such a political image would have been for Christians seeking a meaningful interpretation of Mark's use of the secrecy motif.

Winn argues that Mark's Gospel was written for Christians in Rome immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish War. But what if Winn's date and location for Mark's Gospel are wrong? This might be seen as a weakness in his interpretation, although it is not hard to imagine a slightly later situation in which the Flavian propaganda found in Josephus and echoed in the Roman historians was perhaps repurposed against Christians. Indeed, we know from Roman sources that such "repurposing" took place seamlessly, as evidenced in the emerging awareness that Christians were distinct from Jews (cf. the suffering of some believers "as a *Christianos*," 1 Pet 4:16), and the accompanying denigration of Christians in various Roman writings using the same pejorative descriptions widely used against Jews from slightly earlier times.

I found the volume useful for undergraduates, and perhaps I would also use it in a church setting if the situation were appropriate for an extended academic discussion. As an experiment, I used this volume as a supplemental reading in my undergraduate "Gospel of Mark" class last semester. The volume is quite readable and of manageable length. I found it engaging and stimulating, as I think most students did also. When we thought Winn's point might be weak, we had a ready opportunity for discussion. Overall, I count it a successful exercise in engaging students in a difficult subject which is too often presented in an overly esoteric and historically context-less manner. I expect to use the volume again this way the next time I teach the class.

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Ben C. BLACKWELL, John K. GOODRICH and Jason MASTON, eds. *Reading Mark in Context: Jesus and Second Temple Judaism*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018. 288 pp. \$24.99.

This volume is a collection of thirty short essays on a variety of Second Temple Jewish texts, and how those texts might illuminate our understanding of the Gospel of Mark. It joins a previous volume in the series, *Reading Romans in Context: Paul and Second Temple Judaism* (Zondervan, 2015), and anticipates the release of *Reading Revelation in Context: John's Apocalypse and Second Temple Judaism* (Zondervan, Sept. 2019).

The brief foreword by N. T. Wright introduces the uninitiated to the need for familiarity with the Jewish context of the Gospels, and speaks especially to those readers who might resist such study on the basis of a commitment to the Reformation ideas of *sola scriptura*, the perspicuity of scripture, and the canonical exclusion of apocryphal literature.

After reading Wright's foreword, one could be excused for assuming that this volume is primarily intended for lay people. But the longer, more involved introduction by the three editors makes it clear that students are the target audience. The volume includes a helpful if somewhat limited glossary of terms, which are highlighted with bold type when they appear in the essays. In addition to an author index, there is also a good "passage index" which includes both scriptural citations and also the relevant Jewish literature under discussion. Oddly, the all-too-brief subject index, which (appropriately) overlaps to a degree with the use of glossary terms, also includes a section of Dead Sea Scroll citations—a list of which has already appeared in the "passage index."

The editors' introduction—twice the average length of each essay—consists of a brief overview of the history of Markan scholarship—and NT scholarship in general—as it brings us

to a present-day point of view vis-à-vis study of the Gospels in relationship to the study of Second Temple Jewish texts. This introduction echoes concerns touched on in the foreword, namely an evangelical commitment to Protestant ideas which causes some to resist any consideration of non-canonical literature. In addition, it addresses the “fair concern” about the “illegitimate *imposition* of external meaning onto the biblical text” (31, italics original). Although one wonders whether the uninitiated will understand the reference, Sandmel’s famous warning against “parallelomania” is given lip service, yet the reader is admonished that “the appropriate solution to the misuse of comparative literature is not its outright dismissal but its responsible handling by the students of Scripture” (31).

The bulk of the introduction is given to a short sketch of OT history from the First Temple Period to the Second (but which starts at the Exodus), and then an introduction to the Second Temple Jewish literature in view in the volume. As does each of the essays, the introduction ends with a “For Further Reading” section, including a list of standard translations of the Jewish literature in question, followed by a brief bibliography of secondary literature.

The thirty essays average seven pages each (including the “for further reading” material), and in terms of both content and length are quite manageable for students. The essays are arranged in order of the Markan passages which are discussed alongside the illustrative “Second Temple” material. The literature invoked includes several passages from Qumran (Dead Sea Scrolls), and several texts from apocryphal and pseudepigraphical works. Also included are passages from Josephus, and at least one section from Philo. Of the literature discussed in the introduction, the LXX is noticeably absent as a major topic in the essays, although the *Letter of Aristeas* is invoked. The Mishnah is represented in a couple essays, as is the Babylonian Talmud, although technically the later rabbinic literature is not “Second Temple” material.

While some of the contributors are older evangelical scholars (K. Snodgrass, D. Bock, C. Evans), several are younger scholars. I am encouraged to see that some of the younger contributors are women—something that has been a long time coming in conservative evangelical circles.

After reading the volume, this reviewer came away with a couple of reactions: first, I am grateful for an entry-level student introduction to Second Temple literature. Although I do not (nor do most of my students seem to) share an aversion to the very idea of such a study—a sensitivity carefully addressed in the foreword and introduction—there is no question that the study of this literature is vital to a basic understanding of the Jewish contexts of the NT writers, in general, and to certain passages in Mark, in specific.

That being said, there are some questions raised by the approach of this volume (and presumably the two companion volumes to date). Several of the parallels are quite general, as anyone who has worked with this literature would anticipate. There are good, legitimate reasons to illustrate the NT with readings from Second Temple literature. Yet in this case few of these parallels are very specific, and fewer still are relevant only to Mark. Some seem to be a “stretch.”

My impression is that the Markan parallels chosen were handy, if general, opportunities to introduce the relevant Second Temple literature to students (disguised reading assignments?), and that in several cases other Second Temple passages could easily have been substituted for the ones invoked. Could not other passages be cited to illustrate faith (“I do believe, help my unbelief,” Mark 9:24), instead of Tobit 14:4, especially given the complication of Tobit’s quasi-magical burning of a fish’s gall, heart, and liver to exorcise a demon? Does the Eschatological Admonition (1 Enoch 108) really illustrate the problem of wealth, poverty, and the faithful (Mark 10) better than, say, the Wisdom of Solomon and Sirach? Instead of invoking the Babylonian Talmud, would not Mark’s use of “Abba” (Mark 14:36) be understood better in terms of the Targums on Gen 22:7 (*Onkelos*, *Neofiti I* (Vatican Codex) and *Pseudo-Jonathan*),

all of which render Isaac's address of Abraham as "Abba"? Does 4QConsolations really illuminate Mark 6 any better than Isaiah and the other OT passages it cites and alludes to? Most of the essays could be questioned in a similar manner. Moreover, much of the material cited to illustrate Mark applies equally to the other Gospels—as is suggested by the subtitle, "Jesus and Second Temple Judaism" (one example: C. Evans' "Burying the Crucified," on 11QTemple^a and Mark 15:15b-47—reminiscent of the old debates with the Jesus Seminar's "dogs beneath the cross").

Methodological concerns include invoking of literature later than Mark (4 Ezra, Testament of Solomon, the final form of Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Babylonian Talmud). Such "parallels" are less related to illustrating Mark, and more about the general Jewish literary context. More problematic is the near-complete blurring of Mark's context and that of Jesus, as if reading Mark *is* reading Jesus unmediated. Although I doubt the individual contributors would make that claim, there is too little discussion of what Mark's context(s) was/were, and how those contexts shaped Mark's presentation of Jesus.

With only a couple of minor exceptions, there is no significant treatment of Mark's Roman context. To be sure, the point of the volume is to introduce Second Temple Jewish literature, but by packaging the material as "reading Mark in context" while virtually ignoring Mark's Greco-Roman literary or social contexts, as well as the social setting of Mark's original readers, the title is potentially misleading.

I also reviewed Winn's *Reading Mark's Christology under Caesar*. While Winn acknowledges his limited point of view (mostly excluding Second Temple Jewish literature), a comparison of that book with this one is "like night and day." One is all about Mark's Jewish context to the near-exclusion of the Greco-Roman setting. The other is about parallels to Greco-Roman rhetoric in a Roman sociological context. Both approaches have important insights to offer, but neither captures Mark completely. A "red flag" with this volume is that, seemingly, it would allow us to forget that.

All of us who teach undergraduates in the Gospels and the rest of the NT, as those investigations cover early Christian worldview issues, should be glad for this volume introducing the literature of Second Temple Judaism. The helpful essays and wide-ranging discussions of a variety of Second Temple texts will be most valuable in teaching students that the "illegitimate *imposition* of external meaning onto the biblical text" is more likely to result from a narrow and tendentious theological upbringing than from an open and honest investigation of Jewish literature from the time of the NT. If I decide to require this volume the next time I teach the Gospel of Mark, I will use it as a supplement to a text which also addresses Mark and his readers in their Greco-Roman context.

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William LOADER. *Jesus in John's Gospel: Structure and Issues in Johannine Christology.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017. 532 pp. \$45.00.

In Part One of his volume, Loader distills the Gospel of John into a creedal like simple structure that is determined by frequency as well as the combination of themes and motifs. According to Loader, the following fourteen points constitute the central structure of John's Gospel:

1. The Father
2. sends and authorizes the Son,

3. who knows the Father,
4. comes from the Father,
5. makes the Father known,
6. brings light and life and truth,
7. completes his Father's work,
8. returns to the Father,
9. exalted, glorified, ascended,
10. sends the disciples
11. and sends the Spirit
12. to enable greater understanding,
13. to equip for mission,
14. and to build up the community of faith

According to Loader, this structure is the result of “a careful sifting verse by verse and passage by passage of the whole Gospel from beginning to end, but this—which I have indeed done—will have to be assumed as background to what follows” (46). This reader, however, would like to see Loader's sifting process, in addition to its outcome, since that process affects the issues in Johannine Christology.

In Part Two, which is based upon these basic structural elements, Loader examines John's Christology with a heavy emphasis on John's soteriology. On the surface Loader's central structure is a condensed story of John's Gospel; however, this central structure at a deeper level is ambiguous. For example, and one that Loader addresses throughout the remainder of his volume, is where does the issue of atonement in John's Gospel fit into the central structure. Loader finds issues of atonement peripheral to John's Christology/soteriology because the atonement is not pertinent in the central structure which Loader identifies as “the revealer-envoy, where the sent one comes from, reports, and acts for the sender” (122). Yet, Loader is judicious in his analysis and does not deny or force an alternative interpretation of passages that do indicate atonement or a vicarious death (notably, John 1:29). Due to the primacy of the central structure (especially the Father's sending the Son), over against the isolated references to Jesus' death as a vicarious sacrifice, Loader stresses that salvation was already present in Jesus' ministry.

Nonetheless, Loader allows the tension to remain in the text of John's Gospel between the atonement passages and the central structure. It is important to note, therefore, that Loader is exegetically not theologically driven in his analysis and this is the main contribution to the study of John's Gospel. Throughout this volume, Loader is keen to strike a balance between opposing views by frequently appealing to statements similar to “this text needs to mean no more than this although it is possible that it does.”

Loader is as meticulous as he is judicious. This meticulousness, however, makes the value of this volume a reference work to be studied. Since this volume does not argue towards a single thesis but rather offers multiple analyses on particular issues in John's Gospel, it is perhaps better suited for a seminary student or an emerging Johannine scholar.

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Jerry L. SUMNEY. *Steward of God's Mysteries: Paul and Early Church Tradition.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017. 209 pp. \$28.00.

Paul's place in the origins of Christianity has long puzzled scholars. At the dawn of the 20th century, William Wrede famously declared Paul the second founder of Christianity, while Adolf

Deissmann described him as a *homo novus* who shrouded his originality in the traditional language of the church. Alternatively, Wilhelm Heitmüller drew out Paul's dependence on earlier "Hellenistic" traditions—an approach refined with lasting effect by Rudolph Bultmann. Over a century later, this still unsettled question provides the impetus for Jerry L. Sumney's exploration of Paul's letters, which seeks "evidence of beliefs of those who were in the church before him and who were influential before he was" (8) in order to demonstrate that Paul more often adapted these beliefs to new situations rather than created them himself (see 172-174). In this light Paul is more often *interpreter* rather than *originator*.

Sumney, Professor of Biblical Studies at Lexington Theological Seminary, frames his investigation against three modern proponents of the "founder" theory—Hyam Maccoby, Barrie Wilson, and James Tabor. The introductory chapter presents an overview of these scholars' arguments and a brief survey of the diversity attested by Paul's opponents (a topic the author is well equipped to discuss). Before closing, the chapter offers a collection and synthesis of criteria for identifying pre-formed traditions in the epistles.

The following main chapters share a similar format by opening with an overview of the views of Maccoby, Wilson, and Tabor and then discussing the pertinent "traditions" found in the apostle's letters. After these more thorough discussions, Sumney offers brief engagement with less-sure verses under the heading "Other Possible Citations" before closing with a synthesis of the prior evidence. Chapter 2 counters the claim that Paul was the first to give theological significance to Christ's death and the analysis of 1 Cor 15:3-5 serves well as a representative of the general approach. The technical language of "receiving" and "handing on" indicate that this material did not originate with Paul; the clarification that Christ's death was "on behalf of our sins" indicates that theological significance had already been ascribed to the cross; lastly, "according to the Scriptures" means the church had already sought to justify this death with their sacred texts. Thus, Sumney concludes that this tradition developed in "a community that gives sustained attention and emphasis to the death of Jesus—and this within the earliest years of the predominantly Jewish church" (23).

Against claims that Paul was the first to elevate Jesus beyond his human status (ch. 3), Sumney points to traditions that reflect on God's raising of Jesus, the assigning of the title "Lord," his designation as son of David and God, as well as hints of his pre-existence. Similarly, Paul was not responsible for assigning salvific effect to Christ's death (ch. 4), but rather the church before him already spoke of this act in terms of redemption, salvation, and rescue. Paul did not convert the earthly kingdom of Jesus into a heavenly aspiration (ch. 5), but instead reflects the views of his predecessors who, with their declaration of *Maranatha*, looked with apocalyptic eyes to the eschatological coming of Christ and anticipated their own "raising up" with him. Chapter 6 gives sustained attention to the Lord's supper, offering a review of claims that Paul stands as inventor of this memorial meal. The traditional material of 1 Cor 11:23-25 is employed to highlight shared features with the independent traditions found in Mark and the Didache (an important source for Sumney's arguments elsewhere as well). The volume concludes by drawing together the above individual ideas to illustrate the extent to which Paul makes use of these prior traditions and also the early need for such ideas in a community that suffered so traumatic a loss as the death of their leading figure.

By pulling these examples together into one volume, Sumney illustrates the extent to which Paul makes use of earlier material, his agreement with those doctrines, and the significant developments which appear to predate Paul's own influence in the movement. This collection of traditions also lays a foundation for further study on Paul's relationship to early church teachings. While Sumney has effectively demonstrated Paul's reliance upon these earlier doctrines, a fuller picture of his role in early Christianity can now explore how Paul adapts these traditions in order

to appreciate his role as innovator (a role recognized at various points in the volume, 69, 84, 112, 132, 171-174). Second, one may wonder how beliefs of the early church manifest in Paul's letters aside from formulaic expressions. Admittedly, this is a much more difficult task, but one that is not impossible (see 92-93 for an example of how such study might proceed).

Sumney's gathering and organizing of these scattered traditions provides a valuable resource to the NT reader—especially given that such traditions are often treated only in passing within larger works. The writing is clear, organized, and engages directly with modern authors. Prior knowledge of the scholarly debates is not presumed; thus, the volume lends itself well to the advanced NT student or interested minister (likewise, all Greek is transliterated and translated). The gathering of pertinent passages and modern conversation partners makes each chapter a helpful primer for gaining a grasp of the many difficulties involved in identifying preformed material in Paul's letters and discussing his use of said traditions. A careful and thorough read of this volume will prove beneficial for anyone interested in the earliest stages of Christianity's development and Paul's place within it.

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Mark D. NANOS. *Reading Corinthians and Philippians within Judaism.* Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017. 228 pp. \$25.00.

This volume is the fourth volume of *Reading Paul within Judaism*—a series of collected essays in which Mark Nanos suggests Paul practiced and promoted Torah as a matter of “covenant fidelity” (xiv). To defend the legitimacy of such a provocative thesis that rejects typical reconstructions of Paul's Torah-free lifestyle, Nanos exegetes, in this volume, three passages within Corinthians and Philippians oftentimes perceived to support the traditional conceptualization of Paulinism.

Essays one and two address 1 Corinthians 8–10. It is commonly held by commentators, Nanos observes (6-11), that this passage demonstrates Paul's indifference towards certain kosher laws, especially those that prohibit the consumption of idol-food. Nanos opposes this determination, however, because he believes it presupposes an erroneous historical reconstruction of the passage's situation. Contrary to the prevailing view that classifies the ‘weak’ in 1 Corinthians 8 as Christ-followers, Nanos identifies the ‘weak’ (or ‘impaired’) as polytheistic pagans who “ate idol food without any qualms” (18); and he identifies the ‘knowledgeable’ as Christ-believers who “most likely did not eat idol food, just as Christ-believers would not be expected to do” (43). Therefore, Paul, Nanos continues, commands the ‘knowledgeable’ to abstain from idol food for the sake of their pagan brothers, for whom Christ also died (20). Otherwise, the polytheists will be “strengthened in their misguided sense of what is right” (42), rather than convicted to abandon their paganistic lifestyle (41-42).

Essays three and four navigate 1 Corinthians 9, a passage in which Paul seemingly admits to adopting and conceding certain values (like Torah-observance) for the expediency of the gospel. Yet Nanos, recognizing the duplicitous ethical concerns this chameleon-like missional model raises (52-62), argues that Paul never actually compromised his conduct or convictions to “become like” his target audience. Rather, by “becoming all things to all,” Paul means that he “reasons like” his audience so that he might “meet people where they are” (77). In other words, this passage describes Paul's rhetorical adaptability in the mission field, rather than behavioral or convictional adaptability (98-100).

Essays five and six discuss Philippians 3. Although many NT scholars conclude that Paul, in this passage, degrades certain Jewish Christian missionaries in Philippi as “dogs,” “evil work-

ers,” and the “mutilation” for their advocacy of circumcision, Nanos finds such interpretive decisions tenuous because they lack explicit textual evidence (142). Instead, Nanos finds it more probable that Paul, as a Jew, “is expressing opposition to ‘pagan’ alternatives,” rather than Judaism in this passage (134). To buffer his case, Nanos even proposes alternative pagan referents to the negative epithets in Philippians 3 (159-182).

All in all, this volume is a welcome contribution to the field of NT study, especially as it helpfully identifies and questions various scholarly assumptions surrounding Corinthians and Philippians. Additionally, even if one disagrees with Nanos about the degree to which Paul maintained a ‘Jewish lifestyle’ after becoming a Christ-follower, this volume offers a needed reminder as to the importance of reading Paul within his Jewish background.

However, not all will find Nanos’s conclusions compelling. Nanos’s commendable attempt to re-read Paul from “within Judaism” has precipitated some creative textual interpretations. But, although such interpretations are possible, this does not necessarily mean they are the most probable. For example, since Paul oftentimes uses the term “brother” to designate other Christians (1 Cor 1:1, 10, 26; 2:1 . . .), isn’t it more probable that the ‘weak’—whom Paul identifies as “brothers” in 1 Cor 8:11—are also Christ-followers? This interpretation is certainly preferable to Nanos’s, especially since Nanos cannot produce an unambiguous instance in which Paul calls a nonbeliever “brother.” In short, readers may be suspicious of the hermeneutical backflips Nanos performs to reconcile his “Torah-observant Paul” with certain texts.

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