

Book Reviews

Kathryn Gin LUM and Paul HARVEY, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Race in American History*. Oxford Handbooks. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. 640 pp. \$150.00.

This volume in the Oxford Handbook series offers a wonderful starting place for serious research on race and religion in American history. Scholars from fields including history, religious studies, sociology, anthropology, and theology explore the roles of religion and race in American history. As the editors describe in the introduction, “The volume addresses the religious experiences, social realities, theologies, and sociologies of racialized groups in American religious history, as well as the ways that religious myths, institutions, and practices contributed to their racialization” (3). In other words, the authors explore the various ways race and religion have interacted and shaped one another in American history. The editors note that “race” and “religion” are social constructions, yet they powerfully shape ideology, social organization, policy, and law. A common theme throughout the volume’s essays is that race and religion are “mutually constitutive” (4). That is, two terms are “constantly under construction and in formation, and yet act as real historical forces with, on, and against each other” (4).

The editors organize the book’s thirty-four chapters into two major parts with two sections in each part. Part I offers broad overviews by theory or topic. Section I, “Terms and Theories,” delineates theoretical foundations for the field. Scholars here analyze the construction, development, and uses of terms such as race, religion, gender, sexuality, popular culture, and Orientalism. Section II, “Religious Traditions and Popular Culture,” examines the intersection of race and religion in religious groups (missionaries, Mormonism, Catholicism, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism) and cultural productions and movements (humanism, music, photography, film, sports).

Part II chronologically explores historical periods. Section III, “Colonial Destructions and Creations,” describes the encounters between Europeans, Africans, and indigenous people which yielded destruction in many cases but also produced new and creative religious and racial realities. Chapters here consider race and religion in the colonial era and nineteenth century with chapters on Native Americans, Africans and African Americans, the South, Puritans, violence, and gender in Hawaiian missions. Section IV, “Immigration, Pluralism, and Civil Rights,” examines developments from the twentieth century to the present. Groups and topics covered include Asian Americans, South Asian religions, African Americans, Native Americans, White Protestants, Latino/as, immigration, and religious pluralism.

Although the chapters vary in structure and format, many include deep engagement with scholarship and proposals for future inquiry. Scholars intimately familiar with niche fields often provide chapters that ensure all readers—from beginning researchers to experts—are immersed in the scholarly consensus, debate, and lines of questioning that would otherwise take much time and effort to collect and understand. I find this feature to be the most rewarding characteristic of the series and this volume.

Any single volume attempting to relate the story of race and religion in American history will have to make hard decisions about inclusion and exclusion of coverage. All interested readers will no doubt wish for, perhaps unreasonably, extended coverage. For example, I would love to see a chapter focused on race and religion in the politically influential Religious Right or the alt-right and White supremacist organizations such as those influencing Dylann Roof, whose story the editors tell to introduce the book. Since White supremacy is an ever-present interlocutor with all the stories presented here, a chapter explaining the creation and development of Whiteness and White supremacy would be a helpful addition. Of course, chapters engage these topics peripherally.

Kathryn Gin Lun and Paul Harvey have edited a magisterial work. This creative collection of essays offers an exciting and useful resource for students, teachers, and researchers.

JAMES L. GORMAN
Professor of History
Johnson University

Dyron B. DAUGHRITY. *The History of Christianity: Facts and Fictions.* Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2019. 235 pp. \$61.00.

The current volume, which is part of the Historical Facts and Fictions series, was preceded by *The Victorian World*, *The Vikings*, and *American Civil War*. Later volumes include *The Middle Ages*, *The History of Buddhism*, *Ancient Egypt*, *Ancient Rome*, *William Shakespeare*, *Colonial America*, and *The Civil Rights Movement* (forthcoming).

The introduction affirmatively answers the question, “Did Jesus Christ Even Exist?” In the following nine chapters Dyron B. Daugherty corrects common misunderstandings:

1. “Jesus Was a Meek and Mild Carpenter”
2. “Early Christians Were Poor and Marginalized People”
3. “Early Christianity Was Bigoted toward Women”
4. “Constantine Was Insincere in His Christian Faith”
5. “Medieval Europe Was a Profoundly Christian Society”
6. “The Crusades Were a Series of Brutal Unprovoked Attacks”
7. “Christianity Is Anti-Science”
8. “The United States is Abandoning Christianity”
9. “Christianity is Currently in Decline”

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The organization of each chapter is the same: “What People Think Happened,” “How the Story Became Popular,” excerpts from primary sources, “What Really Happened,” excerpts from primary sources, and a list of sources for “Further Reading.” Each excerpt is preceded by a short introduction.

In addition to the obvious correction of fictions, the volume has some compelling features. The primary sources are interesting and informative. Examples include the martyrdom of Blandina, a letter from Heloise to Abelard, transcriptions from the Scopes Trial, Vladimir Lenin’s “Socialism and Religion,” and reports of the Azuza Street Revival. Possibly the best feature is “How the Story Became Popular” along with its associated readings. Readers get to see how characters from the past and their biases solidified the fictions. For example, with Constantine, Daugherty discusses Edward Gibbon and provides portions from the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, or with the war between science and religion, he introduces John William Draper and Andrew Dickson White and includes selections from each author. Of these “How” sections, the one on Crusades is particularly informative detailing the historiography on the subject.

There are weaknesses in a few of the chapters. Chapter 1 may move readers who are unfamiliar with Gospel texts beyond mere thoughts of meekness to a more complete picture of Jesus by exposing them to harsh words directed towards the Pharisees and brandishing a whip in the temple. However, Daugherty’s critique of the carpenter image is problematic. In addition to rejecting Jesus’ illiteracy, he argues, “While it is possible, even likely, that Jesus worked with his father for some time, the Gospels point to a man highly trained in the Jewish tradition,” and

Thus, the scholarly evidence points to Jesus being a Jewish rabbi, just as the Gospels say. In all likelihood, he was highly trained. . . . The famous scene of Jesus in the temple at the age of twelve, impressing the Jewish leaders, points to someone immersed in Torah study. An illiterate boy who spent all his time sawing wood doesn’t make much sense in the light of the Gospels (16).

Daugherty may be correct, but in his text or sources he makes no reference to, or refutation of, Chris Keith’s work such as *Jesus against the Scribal Elite: The Origins of the Conflict*. Keith argues, “Jesus was most likely not scribal-literate” (89), did not attend a synagogue elementary school (24), and may have possessed some literary abilities but not equivalent to “an educated scribal-literate Torah teacher” (45, 90). If Daugherty is correcting a “fiction,” there should be some appeal to a shift in scholarly consensus or minimally a critique of Keith’s work. Instead, the volume would have been more beneficial if the first chapter was replaced with one correcting the common misperceptions of the Spanish Inquisition or the pagan origins of Christmas.

Although chapter 7 corrects the false belief that Columbus thought the earth was flat, it should have included more context to the Galileo controversy. In addition to explaining that Galileo’s imprisonment was a house arrest (160), Daugherty should have noted the debate was not religion versus science. Galileo’s downfall resulted from challenging a dominant Aristotelian philosophical

framework and opposition from scientists who encouraged the church leaders (see Nancy Pearcey and Charles B. Thaxton, *The Soul of Science: Christian Faith and Natural Philosophy*, 38-40; Charles E. Hummel, *The Galileo Connection: Resolving Conflicts between Science & the Bible*, 119-123; Giorgio de Santillana, *The Crime of Galileo*, xx). Moreover, in addition to noting how *Inherit the Wind* falsely portrayed the Scopes Trial, Daugherty should have made greater use of his suggested reading, Edward J. Larson's *Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America's Continued Debate over Science and Religion*. Larson explains how Darwinism was connected to German militarism, eugenics, and capitalism; William Jennings Bryan's majoritarian political philosophy impacted his position on the teaching of evolution in schools; anti-evolution laws did not fail after the trial; and Bryan did not hold to a literal 24-hour-day creation. (Admittedly, the last point is revealed in the primary source document of the trial that is included.) Also, it would benefit readers to understand that many scientists were skeptical of Darwinism's reliance on natural selection in the middle of the 1920s even if they accepted evolution (Michael S. Hamilton, "The Interdenominational Evangelicalism of D. L. Moody," 250-251).

In chapter 8, Daugherty highlights the failure of the secularization thesis, how Christianity was not successful in the early years of the nation's history, and how Christianity has not disappeared from the United States. While all beneficial, he should have addressed—however interpreted—recent declines in church membership and attendance that readers may have heard or read about.

This text would provide some benefits to readers unfamiliar with the history of Christianity, but I would not recommend it to a more advanced audience. I would not require the text for a survey of church history course. Such a course would typically include a text covering the narrative of Christian history and a collection of primary source documents. These would leave little time for another volume and cover some of the same individuals and events, and even two or three of the same documents. However, supplemental readings from some of the chapters—like those on Constantine and the Crusades—could beneficially expose students to how and why popular misconceptions of historical persons and events develop.

SHAWN C. SMITH

Registrar

Lincoln Christian University

Thomas S. KIDD. *America's Religious History: Faith, Politics, and the Shaping of a Nation.* New York: HarperCollins, 2019. 320 pp. \$24.99.

Among the vast number of American religious history surveys written, this volume is a highly readable snapshot that will be great for lay readers. Kidd, a prolific and respected church historian, spends the bulk of the space examining how Protestant Christianity, and particularly evangelical Christianity, have shaped the United States, both for better and for worse. Though limited in space to tell a 500-plus year history in only 313 pages, Kidd strives to tell the complicated truth when

it comes to how Christians treated religious outsiders, including the indigenous people, enslaved Africans, and Roman Catholics. Unlike some recent popular histories, Kidd does not judge historic Americans with a prophetic voice, but he speaks frankly about their actions. His narrative style sometimes comes off as too restrained, such as when he covers slavery and evangelicals' support for now former President Donald Trump. This, to me, is what makes Kidd's work valuable, particularly for more conservative-leaning Christians. His work may well challenge them, depending on their own preconceived notions or political proclivities, but I think his neutral tone will also invite them to listen and reflect.

Those in the Stone-Campbell movement will be disappointed by how little coverage Kidd gives the leaders of this movement, but that's not uncommon in large survey texts. The space Kidd gives to Protestants and to evangelicals is hard to avoid given the historical reality of how these groups dominated the United States. However, this volume gives only a few passing nods to Eastern religions, like Buddhism and Hinduism, and gives only a little more room to the experiences of Jews and Muslims in America.

More frustrating is how much space Kidd gives to developments in conservative evangelical spaces and how little space he gives to more progressive developments in Christianity. He boils down both the predominantly white and African American expressions of the social gospel to just a few pages, all of Black theology in the singular example of James Cone gets five sentences, and feminist theology similarly gets five sentences in the singular example of Mary Daly. He pays little to no attention to other ethnic or gendered theological formations. He rightfully spends significant pages covering religious divides over biblical criticism, but gives almost no space to ongoing religious debates over gender or sexual orientation. What little he does say is also sometimes colored by his own theological position, such as a false mischaracterization of Walter Rauschenbusch's eschatology (183) and his bemoaning that Fuller Theological Seminary embraced the "liberal side of the evangelical continuum" by moving away from strict inerrancy (224). Kidd briefly acknowledges his own neo-Calvinistic roots and work for *The Gospel Coalition* that helps a knowledgeable reader understand his judgmental tone when it comes to more progressive theologies (258).

Kidd writes his narrative without footnotes but ends each chapter with a "works cited and further reading." Though less intimidating, the lack of footnotes makes it difficult to fact check statements. At the time Kidd published, his volume incorporated all the latest research. However, given the plethora of new scholarship on minoritized people and women, his work is already out of date. For these reasons and because of the limited attention Kidd gives to more diverse forms of Christianity, I cannot recommend it for classroom use and I do not think scholars

will find anything original in the text. But for those seeking a volume to help lay readers navigate Christianity's role in U.S. history, this is a worthy option.

CHRISTINA LITTLEFIELD

Associate Professor of Journalism and Religion

Pepperdine University

Daniel K. WILLIAMS. *Defenders of the Unborn: The Pro-Life Movement before Roe v. Wade.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. 335 pp. \$26.49.

Despite an abundance of books about abortion, the current volume brings attention to a new aspect of the issue: a detailed history of the pro-life movement from the 1930s through the 1970s. Williams notes that “historians have mischaracterized both the chronology . . . and its ideologized origins. Pro-life activism . . . originated not as a conservative backlash against individual rights, but as a defense of human rights for the unborn” (3). The activism was rooted in the strong role played by the Catholic church; however, the Catholic church did not choose to focus on this issue alone. The Church was also interested in such human rights issues as contraception, euthanasia, and poverty. Originally, the movement was not a response to feminism, nor was it a partisan political issue. Those battles characterized the 1960s and 1970s. Overall, Williams’ analysis of the origins of the pro-life movement points toward the complexity of the abortion issue.

Williams goes into much detail as he recounts the importance of the Catholic church for the development of the pro-life movement of the 1930s. Initially, Protestant and Jewish doctors began working to promote legal abortions when the woman’s health was in danger. The doctors needed to legally justify the abortions that were being done in hospitals, and such practices also risked the possibility that the doctors themselves could be sued. The Catholic church argued against these legalization efforts.

The influence of the Catholic Church faced decline by the mid-1960s. Williams points to several factors, but one factor was the 1965 *Griswold v. Connecticut* U.S. Supreme Court case. That case granted married couples the freedom to practice contraception without government interference. Although the Catholic church had de-coupled abortion from other human rights issues of the 1930s, contraception remained closely connected to the pro-life movement. Thus, the legalization of contraception was a major blow.

From the beginning there were also political entanglements. Williams points out that “The Catholic pro-life movement had been forged in the New Deal era, when political liberalism had been based primarily on a concern for economic security, . . . which closely paralleled the social vision of the Catholic Church” (181). Over the years, the politics of abortion changed. By the mid-1960s some pro-lifers tied the movement to the civil rights movement. A good number of African Americans agreed, including Jesse Jackson, who wrote “Politicians argue for abortion largely because they do not want to spend the necessary money to feed, clothe, and educate

more people” (171). Finally, the pro-life movement aligned with the Republican Party but that was not always the case.

In the mid-1960s Williams points to abortion being controversial within the feminist movement. Many of the women in the pro-life movement identified as feminists because they supported the full equality of women; however, second-wave feminists pushed the point that reproductive rights were necessary for honoring women’s human rights. Gloria Steinem emphasized the personal autonomy of the woman and her right to choose rather than the government making that choice for her. Ultimately, Williams concludes “It was not a conflict of men against women . . . instead, it was a debate between two different groups of women. . . the two sides had radically different notions of what liberation for women entailed” (262).

Williams might have explored the many cultural changes in America in more detail, including more attention to how conservative Protestant denominations interacted with the pro-life movement. His in-depth historical account is balanced and points to past arguments that are incorrect. This volume provokes new questions on a topic that remains relevant to religion and politics. Williams provides a needed resource for advanced theological and historical studies.

KATHY J. PULLEY
Professor Emeritus
Missouri State University

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

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

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

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

Christian Scripture while at the same time confessing its message is infallible, and the economic work of the Trinity is real and actual.

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

Part of the process of human understanding, and thus systematic judgments, is to explore what one means by “Divine Scripture” when one also acknowledges that the “Christian Bible” is a human book. “Divine Scripture” can be misleading if we mean that Scripture shares the ontological status of the divine. If not ontologically such, then what is it? The confession that Scripture is divine necessitates the pursuit of understanding (as in “faith seeking understanding”), and that understanding is necessarily and inescapably human. These writings, which the church has called and accepted as Scripture and are in some unique sense divine, mediate a true understanding of God’s work and are instrumental in the performance of that divine work. In essence, Scripture is divine because it is the instrument by which God mediates the meaning of God’s Triune work for humanity and by which God transforms the human person in light of the actual work of the Trinity.

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

JOHN MARK HICKS
Professor of Theology
Lipscomb University

Richard RICE. *The Future of Open Theism: From Antecedents to Opportunities.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2020. 254 pp. \$26.00.

This volume explores the history as well as potential developments in the once highly controversial theological movement. For those unfamiliar, open theism claims that because “God’s essential nature is love, . . . God chose to bring into

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existence a world containing creatures endowed with the capacity to love him in return” (1). This means that there is a “dynamic interchange” between God and humans in which “God experiences events as they happen” (1-2). “God is open to the world, and the world is open to God” (1).

The first section explores the origins and developments of open theism. Chapter one, “Antecedents to Open Theism,” surveys several historical figures—Jacob Arminius, Adam Clarke, Lorenzo McCabe, Jules Lequyer, Gordon C. Olson, Howard Roy Elseth—demonstrating that inquiries into divine knowledge of the future in relation to human freedom have been the subject of study as far back as the 17th century. From a Stone-Campbell perspective, it was disappointing not to see T. W. Brents included in this chapter.

Chapters two and three follow the development of the volume, *The Openness of God*, as well as works which followed—both critical and complementary. The *Openness of God* certainly caused a fire storm, no doubt in part due to the vitriolic language of its more outspoken critics. For these critics, “open fearsome is a threat, a serious, insidious threat to Christian faith in life, and it must be met decisively by denominational authorities” (71). Criticisms evolved from polemical to political when the Evangelical Theological Society held several meetings and an eventual vote to decide whether “Clark Pinnock and John Sanders were compatible with the doctrinal basis of the Society” (53). While there were not enough votes to dismiss both men, the controversy hardly ended there. John Sanders would be removed from his tenure track position at Huntington College, now Huntington University (53-54).

Chapters four and five explain that open theology has also generated philosophical and theological conversations beyond the borders of evangelicalism. It is now common to see open theism discussed in philosophy of religion textbooks and the open view debated and discussed in various philosophical journals. The first section ends by discussing the varieties of open theism noting differences among open theists especially concerning *creatio ex nihilo* and the problem of evil.

While the first half of the volume was primarily reflective, the second half is thoroughly constructive. Rice proposes that “open theism may now have reached a ‘postapologetic’ phase” (121). While open theism’s major contribution to philosophical theology has centered around human freedom and the doctrine of God, these are hardly its only contributions. Rice develops ways open theism can also contribute to theological doctrines such as the Trinity, Christology, ecclesiology, and eschatology.

Rice first argues that “limit language when describing God is both unnecessary and misleading” (127). God is not limited by this creation but is able to enjoy the “richness of divine experience” (133) in ways other doctrines of God cannot. In chapter seven God’s relationship to time is explored through God’s triune acts in salvation history. Understanding God as “eternally temporal” (150) allows us to conceive of God’s relationship to both the world and God’s self in greater dynamism. The conversation in chapter seven turns to a common theme with open

theism, human freedom, discussing, among other things, ways to understand freedom in light of sin and salvation.

Chapter nine deliberates “what a Christology of open theism might look like” (176). It argues, controversially but quite interestingly, that Jesus’ loyalty to God may not have been a foregone conclusion but something Jesus willingly accepted (176). “Open theists maintain that God took a risk in creating a world where there was genuine creaturely freedom and thus suffer the pain of human disloyalty. Perhaps God took another risk in sending his Son into the world with the possibility that he too could fail the test of loyalty” (181).

Chapter ten explores the doctrine of the church, especially considering some criticisms, which suggests open theism, and its libertarian freedom, “leaves little room for a robust doctrine of the church” (194). Open theists speak of the church as individuals in community, as a corrective to individualism. “Individuality affirms the value of the person; individualism exaggerates and ultimately undermines it” (212). The final chapter may be most interesting to open theists with questions concerning human endless duration, the possibility of sin in the eschaton, whether God’s purposes are guaranteed, and even the problem of heavenly boredom are addressed.

Richard Rice has offered a thoughtful text on the ways in which open theology has grown into a full-fledged school of thought. The seeds he and others have sown are beginning to bear fruit in theological areas beyond the doctrine of God. This volume works well for both the open theology novice or erudite.

WM. CURTIS HOLTZEN

Professor of Philosophy & Theology

Hope International University

Bradley JERSAK. *IN: Incarnation & Inclusion, Abba & Lamb.* Abbotsford, BC: St. Macrina Press, 2019. 185 pp. \$17.95.

Brad Jersak, a Canadian author, translator, teacher, and seminar speaker, “serves as a reader and monastery preacher at All Saints of North America Orthodox Monastery” (bradjersak.com). In the current volume he argues that people encounter God through Christ in many and mysterious ways, not always inside the Christian tradition, and sometimes not clearly except in retrospect.

Jersak insists on “both the unique revelation of Christ and the inclusive love of Abba.” He rejects the “exclusive” idea that only those who consciously accept Christ in their lifetimes will gain salvation. At the other end of the spectrum, he also rejects “pluralism” and “syncretism” (13-14); all roads do not lead to the top of the mountain. Instead, he espouses a generous inclusivism that allows for many pathways to Christ, both inside and outside of various religious traditions. Jesus Christ remains the “one way” to the Father (John 14:6), though often incognito.

The writer’s sources of authority include Scripture, anecdotes, and “authoritative witnesses” (15, 171). The authoritative witnesses include Justin Martyr,

Irenaeus of Lyons, Clement of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, and Olivier Clément (1921–2009), a French Eastern Orthodox theologian. The anecdotal material includes an introduction (“Overture”) by the author’s wife Eden Jersak, seven stories of “radical encounters” with Christ, and an interview (“Kingdom Circles”) with Jamie and Donna Winship.

The overall conclusions cohere with much recent Christian thought, such as Vatican II’s pronouncements on salvation outside the church (*Lumen Gentium* 16) and C.S. Lewis’s fictional portrayals of the Last Things (*The Great Divorce*, *The Last Battle*). Many evangelicals will disagree with Jersak, but they will have heard such ideas before.

Another issue that might draw opposition: the author disavows universalism but sounds as if he would like to espouse it:

Though some Trinitarians are universalists, *I am not*. But my *inclusivism* means that I hope, pray and preach that all will ultimately see and respond to the revelation of Christ in them . . . as they discover they have already been forgiven and reconciled to *Abba* through the work of Christ (179, emphasis in the original).

A related issue: Jersak’s theology leaves little or no room for hell or even for the possibility that some will say no to God’s grace.

This volume makes two main contributions. 1) It sharpens the issue by insisting on a pair of non-negotiables: God’s absolute love for each of his creatures, and the absolute centrality of Christ for salvation. 2) Also, the volume puts names and faces on godly individuals who for whatever reason must come to Christ through unconventional paths if at all. Most Christians find it easier to discuss those who have never heard of Jesus in the abstract than to talk about Fatima or Yaw.

Educated general readers will find the volume accessible, especially those who struggle with the question, “What of those who never hear the gospel?” This volume does not answer all the questions, but it provides an honest discussion.

CARL BRIDGES
Lecturer in Bible
Johnson University

Matthew Nelson HILL. *Embracing Evolution: How Understanding Science Can Strengthen Your Christian Life.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2020. 152 pp. \$20.00.

The title aptly describes the orientation and purpose of this volume. The “two primary goals” are (a) “to offer a cogent, accessible understanding of basic evolutionary concepts” and the tensions generated for Christian theology and (b) to “articulate what practical benefits await the Christian who adopts an integrative approach to evolution and Christianity” (6). Embracing evolution, “should not be construed as a mere acquiescence to science but rather seen as a potential boon to our journeys toward holy living” (130).

The author’s Free Methodist background is evident in his methodology and aim. He persistently appeals to Wesley’s Quadrilateral stress on Scripture, church

tradition, reason, and personal experience (16-23, 80-82, 121-123). One illustration of this multilensed look at Scripture arises in his treatment of Adam and Eve. He says, “If the early church fathers were all over the map on Adam and Eve . . . then it seems acceptable that we can be open to a more generous interpretation of Genesis” (35). Even so, he grants that science does not necessarily rule out a historical Adam and Eve (35, note 3).

The author wants his readers to know that he is “orthodox” in his theology and “steadfast about the authority of Scripture” (16). This drives his desire to address candidly “some of the main problems of evolutionary theory for the Christian faith”—the “dirty laundry” of evolution (33). He suggests that predation and death—which occurred long before the “behaviorally modern human” evolved about 75,000 years ago (68)—is “the most difficult for Christians to reconcile with evolution,” and any answer to the problem “is not an easy one” (62, cf. 41).

At this point, one can understand why the volume was written for “someone who doesn’t get squeamish at the mention of evolution”—an audience who is “mostly comfortable with an evolutionary account of human origins, anthropology, and modern-day genetics” (5). The purported conflict between faith and science is primarily characterized as a “power struggle” between young earth creationists and ultra-Darwinists like Dawkins who view evolution as “the final nail in God’s coffin” (71-73).

Only one chapter (ch. 4) is devoted to evolutionary theory, though his purpose is not to convince so much as to get laypeople “up to speed” (45). The chapter offers helpful clarifications on common (mis)perceptions, like the notion of “theory” (46-47). He undercuts the often-used objection, “You weren’t there, so how do you know it was created that way?” because it employs a logic that “can’t articulate the veracity of any biblical events or even the existence of our great-great-grandparents” (48). Hill also dismisses the distinction between “micro” and “macro” evolution because “macroevolution *is* microevolution, just over long periods of time” (55). He uses a flipbook to illustrate. We can flip page-by-page (micro) or flip chunks of pages (macro).

The “heart of the book” is the claim that “understanding evolution can help us be more virtuous and even holier” (5). How does that work? To use an analogy, it is like an individual with “dangerous instincts” or addictions who discovers the truth about his or her genetic and environmental past. Extending this to all humanity, having knowledge of our human ancestry can help us “overcome such proclivities” (11). “Through a combination of human choice and the grace of God, humans possess the ability to continually overcome their genes and live holy lives” (113). This is “one of our spiritual tasks” (117) that is better enabled in a structured community with the “*right kind* of Christians” (119). Here is where Wesley’s instructions for accountable community are applied (118-123).

My reaction to the volume includes some relatively minor disagreements. For instance, he claims that Richard Dawkins talks about “how evolution proves that there is no God” (75). To the contrary, Dawkins persistently denies that evolution

can “prove” there is no God. Hill also poses that there is an “overwhelming amount of evidence” that points to “natural selection” as “the method by which God *formed the universe*” (29, emphasis added). But it’s difficult to envision how natural selection operates in the non-biological arena.

I appreciate Hill’s obvious biblical devotion, theological conviction, and his invitation to imagine how it’s *possible* to benefit spiritually from accepting evolutionary theory. My primary apprehension over his thesis is about the paradigm, not about the particulars. First, he rightly appeals to human freedom (58, 104) but we have that capacity because “we have evolved to a place where we don’t have to obey all of our genetic proclivities” (58, cf. 104). It’s not at all clear how evolution, which has “neither will nor agency” (46), did, or could, “free” us from our ancestral material makeup. His strong objection to (Platonic) dualism (103-104, 114) seems to imply a rejection of *any* form of dualism, without which his case for human freedom and self-consciousness seems problematic.

Second, Hill’s presumptive lens is the prism of evolutionary theory. As a result, the volume offers no mention of alternative paradigms (e.g., progressive creation, intelligent design) that are arguably more viable than the young earth perspective he vigorously rejects (73-76). To be fair, however, his primary purpose is limited to showing the practical benefits of understanding evolutionary theory for Christian living.

Third, the volume gives cursory consideration—one page—to the origin of life. Hill mentions undersea vents, the panspermia hypothesis, and an 1828 experiment by Friedrich Wohler who showed that “life could, possibly, emerge from nonlife” (60). While the origin of life is beyond the scope of the book’s purposes, the issue exposes a couple of perplexities for the paradigm: (a) Can evolutionary theory account for the origin of life without some specific action by God *within* cosmic history? (b) Given Hill’s orthodox views on God’s actions in history (e.g., in Christ and his resurrection), why should one be led to accept God’s specific actions within history *theologically* and not also accept God’s specific actions within history *biologically*?

RICHARD A. KNOPP

Professor of Philosophy & Christian Apologetics
Lincoln Christian University

Mitzi SMITH, ed. *I Found God in Me: A Womanist Biblical Hermeneutics Reader*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015. 324 pp. \$38.00.

The editor both curates essays and contributes in the current volume. This collection of essays is the first biblical studies reader dedicated to womanist interpretations of both the Hebrew Bible and NT. In addition to a large selection of biblical interpretation, it contains several important essays from early womanist interpreters. The result is an excellent collaboration by leading womanist scholars

that embodies the womanist spirit by questioning common readings and evolving the discipline further.

The essays are split into two parts. Part one consists of seven chapters that consider Alice Walker’s definition of womanism and explores womanist interpretive theory. Several classic essays from the ’90s and early ’00s are reprinted, such as Clarice J. Martin’s “Womanist Interpretations of the New Testament: The Quest for Holistic and Inclusive Translation and Interpretation.” She investigates how race, gender, and class affect biblical translations. One word she focuses on is whether *donulos* should be translated as servant or slave and convincingly argues for the latter. The importance of language is a reoccurring theme in many chapters. Kelly Brown Douglas’ “Marginalized People, Liberating Perspectives: A Womanist Approach to Biblical Interpretation” is particularly powerful and a strong conversation piece on the Bible’s historical use as an oppressive text. Part two has nine chapters and explores what it means to read the Bible from a womanist perspective. Wil Gafney’s “A Womanist Midrash on Zipporah” particularly excels at a sacred imaginative reading that assists in flushing out overlooked characters such as Zipporah. She makes the experience of black women the starting point for her interpretation which allows her to further understand Zipporah as clergy spouse, survivor, and much more. Another especially strong chapter is Smith’s “Fashioning Our Own Souls: A Womanist Reading of the Virgin-Whore Binary in Matthew and Revelation.” Her essay is grounded in how African American women have been seen as “dirty” or “whores” through American history in direct contrast to white women. The critique of the arbitrary binary often has no grounding in any sexual ethics and gives permission for the abuse of women. Not only is it “a means of patriarchal control of women’s sexuality . . . and identity” (159), but women should define themselves as they wish. Culturally constructed labels can be challenged.

This volume does an excellent job understanding the embodied nature of existence and including it as a central part of its epistemology. It artfully weaves American history with biblical narrative and is not afraid to push back against dangerous beliefs many hold. This makes for excellent storytelling and for exemplifying the iconoclastic and prophetic nature of womanism. Smith intends the volume for courses in womanist studies as well as HB and NT courses in both introductory and upper-level courses (3-4). The volume works as an introduction to womanist studies as well as for those who are familiar with the topic. Nearly every chapter has at least some type of definition and some history of the field, making most chapters work as stand-alone for professors to assign their students. Most scholars and pastors will be stimulated by their interpretations and will find it a fruitful read for teaching as well as preaching. This is an essential read for students, professors, and pastors alike. Those in the Stone-Campbell tradition will most likely

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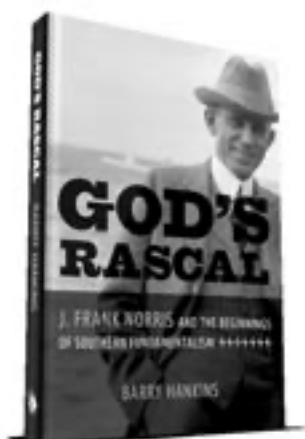


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AMY SMITH CARMAN
PhD Candidate
Brite Divinity School

Leah D. SCHADE, and Jerry L. SUMNEY. *Apocalypse When? A Guide to Interpreting and Preaching Apocalyptic Texts*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2020. 181 pp. \$25.00.

“Apocalypse” seems an apt term for describing a time marked by ecological crisis, political turmoil, economic disparity, and pandemic. Preachers face an extraordinary challenge in an age where crisis determines context, and trauma invariably marks congregations. Biblical texts that have been classified as apocalyptic literature seem to have emerged in such turbulent times, and give rise to a worldview that enables survival and faithful response. In this collaborative volume, a homiletician and a biblical scholar turn to the apocalyptic texts of scripture as a vital resource for a church enduring its own perilous moment. Each scholar brings their own expertise to this interdisciplinary project, with Sumney offering insights from biblical scholarship on matters of historical context and textual details, and Schade offering and modeling homiletical methods for preaching apocalyptic texts.

The volume begins with an introduction to apocalyptic thought, which briefly introduces readers to key features of apocalyptic texts. Sumney designates apocalyptic texts in relation to their historical milieu as “crisis literature” which emerges and thrives in social contexts marked by relative deprivation and cognitive dissonance (5). Here, Sumney rightfully anticipates a challenge to the premise of the book: the prevalence of contemporary American appropriations of apocalyptic thought. How does one account for the pervasiveness of an apocalyptic worldview among a people who have known far greater freedom and privilege than the ancient writers could have imagined? By broadening the contextual criteria to relative deprivation and cognitive dissonance, Sumney makes room for this possibility. He writes, “So a comparatively well-off group could develop an apocalyptic mind-set if they were convinced they were being deprived of something of significant value because of their religious beliefs.” (5) Thus, despite the lack of violent persecution and religious suppression of Christians in the United States, the apocalyptic worldview remains a relevant framework. A significant challenge for preachers, then, is to reclaim the witness of the apocalyptic scriptures in a context already inundated with variegated apocalyptic imagination and expression.

In the following chapter, Schade approaches our contemporary context with a deft eye for the proliferation of apocalyptic concepts in public consciousness. She challenges readers to discern apocalyptic fiction in popular culture (such as that which was popularized in the *Left Behind* series), from the witness of the scriptures. She writes, “Preachers, then, have a profound challenge—to reintroduce their listeners to the apocalyptic texts in a way that takes them on a journey that is

different from either the secular or fundamentalist Christian paths.” (27). Where popular appropriations of apocalyptic thought often result in passivity and nihilism regarding the world’s biggest crises, Schade directs her readers to the call of the ancient texts, to be oriented to God’s horizon and to be transformed. The apocalyptic scriptures extend visions of hope and inspiration to those who endure crisis and empowers readers to respond with ethical integrity.

The following ten chapters focus on specific apocalyptic texts for preaching, including Dan 7:13, 15-18; Mark 13:24-37; Matt 24:36-44; Luke 21:25-36; 1 Cor 15:19-26; 1 Thess 4:13-18; 5:1-11; and three passages from the book of Revelation. Each chapter begins with an exegetical commentary from Sumney, followed by homiletical insights from Schade. Each chapter concludes with a sermon on the text written by Schade. These chapters offer preachers critical insights into the texts, as well as practical approaches for preaching them. For churches who are presently rocked by terrors of apocalyptic proportion, ministers will find in this volume an invitation to rise to the occasion with the Bible’s own enduring tradition.

AMY McLAUGHLIN-SHEASBY

PhD Candidate

Boston University School of Theology

Matthew KAEMINGK and Cory B. WILSON. *Work and Worship: Reconnecting Our Labor and Liturgy.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020. 304 pp. \$29.99.

On the Indiana farm where I grew up my father insisted on applying the fourth commandment to Sundays. While neighbors made hay seven days a week, Dad refused to work on “the Lord’s day.” Like most farmers, we owned two sets of clothing: chore clothes and church clothes. These experiences reinforced, in my young mind, the demarcation of work and worship.

Reintegrating work and worship is the focus of this new volume. Kaemingk, the John Mouw Assistant Professor of Faith and Public Life at Fuller Theological Seminary, and Wilson, the Jake and Betsy Tuls Associate Professor of Missiology and Missional Ministry at Calvin Theological Seminary, write from a Reformed perspective. Their love of liturgy is palpable in its pages.

Their stated purpose is “how work and worship can begin to cohere and flourish” (117). After detailing how the “modern divorce between faith and work” (13) fails workers and diminishes worship, the authors survey the integration of work and worship in the OT and NT. There were no divisions between church, state, and market in Israel (121). The tabernacle, and later the temple, served as the nexus for work and worship, for occupation and vocation.

While positing that there is not enough historical data to accurately describe ancient Christian worship (142)—an especially interesting observation for readers from the Stone-Campbell tradition—the authors explain how the “first fruits offering” described in the Didache sheds light on the intersection of work and worship (168-169). Of particular interest are a series of illustrations of early fourth-century

mosaics (170-173) that show worshipers bringing their work into worship to “serve one of three functions in the global work of Christ: poverty relief, ministry support, and worshipful communion” (165).

In the final section, the authors suggest specific practices modern worshipers can add to their liturgy to foster the reconnection of work and worship. They offer examples of hymns, both ancient and modern, prayers, poems, and responsive readings from Christians throughout the world that bring the work into the worship and send the worship into the workplace. The gathering of workers and scattering of worshipers they advocate is similar to the way Alan Hirsch, Neil Cole, and Reggie McNeal describe the centrifugal and centripetal forces that drove the first-century expansion of the Kingdom of God and which are the focus of today’s resurgent missional movement.

I suspect the liturgical changes the authors recommend may prove too difficult for some congregations. By their own admission, the authors recognize adding such elements to Sunday worship “means that worship is going to be awkward for everyone for some time” (239). Few liturgists and pastors have an appetite for *awkward* on Sunday mornings. Consequently, the worship elements they promote will likely find a more hospitable welcome in churches steeped in high church traditions. I suspect Christians in Disciples of Christ churches will find them easier to adopt than their less liturgical Stone-Campbell Movement cousins.

That being said, I believe this volume will be useful for pastors, educators, and students who desire a more thorough and integrated theology of work and worship.

FRANK WELLER
Senior Minister
South Lansing Christian Church
Lansing, Michigan

Scott CORMODE. *The Innovative Church: How Leaders and Their Congregations Can Adapt in an Ever-Changing World*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2020. 272 pp. \$24.00.

As the church leader peruses through this volume, they, no doubt, approach the volume with a hint of both skepticism and excitement. The leader is excited about the possibility of applying new leadership techniques to their ministry context, but skeptical as to whether this new volume houses innovation. It could be that the author has just regurgitated old ideas with a modern twist, and not actually sought to change the conversation as to how church leadership brings innovation to their congregation. The latter thought is quickly set aside as one approaches the book’s third sentence: “The church as we know it is calibrated for a world that no longer exists” (1). Clearly, this volume is seeking to change the conversation.

Cormode sheds light on the question that vexes all church leaders: How does the church remain innovative in a world that is consistently changing? In the secular world, an organization will simply develop new programs or products to remain

innovative. This means that secular organizations will rid themselves of obsolete programs or products to make way for the newer ones. The church is not able to abandon tradition to make way for the future. Cormode notes, “Every Christian’s faith depends on the inherited Christian tradition. . . . Christian innovation cannot abandon the past, but it must find new ways to express itself for the future” (3). To accomplish this, Cormode presents five questions every church leader should ask to guide innovation in their ministry: *Who are the people entrusted to your care? How do these people experience the longings and losses that come with life? What Big Lies do your people believe that prevent them from hearing the gospel? How do you make spiritual sense of those longings and losses? How do you express that spiritual meaning as a shared story of hope?*

In basing his thesis on the aforementioned five questions, Cormode asserts that innovation is based upon the leader’s ability to be empathetic, communicate truth, and establish community. All these things help a leader accurately communicate the gospel to those under their care which, Cormode noted, was the entire point in writing the volume (31). An empathetic leader is an effective leader. To communicate the truth of the gospel, the church leader must be able to share the feelings of those under their care. Leaders not possessing an empathetic spirit risk becoming like the Pharisees, who consistently condemned those who sinned more obviously than they. Jesus, on the other hand, responded with empathy. The premier example of this is the account of the adulterous woman in John chapter eight. The Pharisees were ready to stone the woman for her sin, thus subtly communicating that her sins were far worse than their own. Jesus, the only one who could have thrown a stone and did not, responded to the woman with empathy. He did not condone her sinful behavior but knew that the woman was his child who was hurting. Those under the care of a church leader listen and respond to those who connect with them, and when people connect and community is created, an organization thrives. Jesus turned the culture of Israel upside-down not only as one who had authority, but as one who empathetically met people as they were. In short, Cormode suggests that if church leaders want to be innovative, they must share the heart of Jesus.

Cormode changes the conversation as to how church leaders and their congregations can adapt in a world that is always changing. Rather than encouraging leaders to change their programs, Cormode asks the leaders to change themselves and truly be empathetic towards those under their care. For Cormode, it is a commitment to faith that produces empathy, truth, and community that is truly “innovative.”

JUSTIN BUTLER
PhD Student, Johnson University
Senior Pastor, Highland Christian Church
Maysville, Kentucky

Barbara J. McClure (Brite). *Emotions: Problems and Promise for Human Flourishing*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press. 2019. 365 pp. \$59.95.

The title alone was enough to raise investigative curiosity among friends. Nestled within a stack of my four or five current reads, visitors most often picked this volume to browse and discuss. A spiritual director, an evolutionary biologist, a counselor, and a pastor of youth readily sensed the pertinent and complicated terrain McClure navigates. In her estimation, we need help understanding emotions' origins, functions, and "relationship to human flourishing" (12).

The current volume takes up the broad arch of western philosophical and scientific approaches to the emotions: from Plato, the Stoics, Aquinas, and Darwin, all the way to modern neuroscience, psychological and social constructivism. Even in broad strokes, McClure writes with accessible nuance while masterfully navigating minefields such as nature and nurture, mind and body, evolutionary biology and freedom, animal and human, individual and community. Along the way, readers discover less widely known but fascinating contributors such as Antoinette Feleky, Paul Ekman, and Magda Arnold among others. This volume is a brave and useful map of the often-hidden intellectual history that frames our everyday encounters with emotions like happiness, pleasure, pain, and anger.

Chapter seven, "Emotions as Crucial," is the heart of the volume and summarizes the historical movements covered in earlier chapters while providing an up-to-date heuristic for human emotional life. "Individual's emotions," McClure writes, "are phenomena that arise within people in the interplay of psychology and between people in the experience of interpersonal relationships and sociopolitical contexts" (178). She suggests that our emotional lives are an essential part of human survival, communal belonging, and a meaningful life. At the same time, our emotional lives can be unhelpfully self-limiting when unreflective, embedded in destructive life patterns, or manipulated by unjust social or political systems. According to McClure, our emotional experience unfolds over a lifetime and ideally supports and calls for maturing character and discerning wisdom.

Chapter seven also provides theological perspective on the emotions by drawing from the work of philosophical theologian John Caputo. The author points to a "Sacred Insistence" at work in all of life. It invites human beings to stay engaged in the tensions between "the conditional material realities of life" and the "Goodness Beyond Being" (173). In these tensions, the emotions support human flourishing by asking human beings to "concern themselves with what really matters (that is, what we all ought to 'set our hearts on') and develop the capacities and discipline to actualize it" (181). In this chapter she also provides a nuanced and needed definition of "flourishing," which has become an important term in pastoral theology (rather than liberation, empowerment, or salvation).

Some readers will be disappointed that this volume does not substantively engage the Christian theological tradition beyond a few key early contributors. Readers might get the false impression that Christianity has been uninterested or wholly negative in assessments of emotion, desire, or an engaged "earthiness." This

impression feels especially painful when it ends with a call for maturing wisdom and discernment around the emotions. In fact, this discernment is at the heart of a long history of Christianity spirituality which includes Jullian, Bonaventure, Ignatius, and Weil among many others. “What is it that you desire?” the Ignatian exercises ask, believing it is crucial to take seriously the affect. This history is pertinent to the conversation but less well known than the broader history McClure has in focus.

Even still, this historical survey will become a go-to text for integrative understandings of how and why our emotions matter. This volume belongs in most collegiate and theological libraries, and the chapter on “Emotions as Crucial” should become at minimum standard reading for courses on pastoral care and human wellbeing.

MIRIAM Y. PERKINS

Professor of Theology & Society

Emmanuel Christian Seminary at Milligan

Jerusha Matsen NEAL. *The Overshadowed Preacher: Mary, the Spirit, and the Labor of Proclamation.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 267 pp. \$35.00.

Textbooks on preaching generally fall at one of two ends of a philosophical spectrum. On one end, there are books that are more homiletic in nature. They discuss theory and theology, often articulating the author’s concept of how preaching’s nature and function should be understood. On the other end, there are books that are more sermonic in nature. They discuss the practice of preaching, focusing on conducting exegesis and crafting the sermon. And while an ever-growing number of volumes fall in the middle, seeking to blend theory and practice together, very few volumes in preaching discuss the embodied humanness of the preacher.

This is where this volume enters the conversation. Neal currently serves as Assistant Professor of Homiletics at the Duke University Divinity School. This volume’s contribution to the preaching field has already received note, as it received a 2020 *Christianity Today* Jesus Creed Book Award for the Preaching Life. A former actor and playwright, Neal previously published a series of dramatic monologues that engage the Gospel narratives related to Mary entitled *Blessed*. All of this experience comes together in the creative act of birthing the volume of this review.

In this volume, Neal seeks to understand the practice of preaching through Mary’s conceiving, birthing, and naming of Jesus in the Gospels. Neal challenges the modern notion of preaching that relies on the personality or performance of the preacher, where there is more focus on the linguistic gymnastics conducted in prominent pulpits throughout (mainly Western) Christianity, favoring instead to keep the sermonic focus on the “*particular, permeable, and provisional* character of Christ’s body” (136). The incarnation is more than simply God coming in human form as the person of Jesus of Nazareth. It includes the embodied Word of God

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coming to speak and be spoken of. The preacher who ascends the pulpit stairs must always remember that Jesus Christ came in an embodied fashion to deliver God's word through physical as well as oral articulation. Human preachers, then, must remember that Christian faith is an embodied experience. We often seek to avoid the body when speaking about faith because of the corruptible nature of the body. Yet, as Neal further notes, "*If human bodies marginalize other bodies, they marginalize Christ*" (136). Preachers are not disembodied spirits appearing and disappearing like an apparition. We who preach also have *particular, permeable* and *provisional* bodies, unable to speak from beyond the capacity of our embodied experience. Whereas many focus on the act of delivering the sermon, Neal challenges the preacher to focus on the conceiving (crafting) of the sermon, to see the hermeneutical and homiletic components of sermon development as acts of labor rather than a rhetorical means to an end. Word and body should not be seen as disconnected but, rather, as an integrated whole.

In the end, the discussion here is deeply rooted in the grand stream of incarnational theology and sets itself alongside the growing body of communicative and sociological literature related to embodied practice. My only critique comes early in the volume, where it seems to dismiss classic rhetorical thought, seeming not to replace it with another model due to the manipulative nature of rhetoric that is political in nature. This is certainly admirable, as we have certainly seen the toxicity of manipulative rhetoric used as a bludgeoning tool in contemporary American politics. However, rhetoric has an ethical component that must be maintained, something that Neal does return to later in her discussion. There is also much here to challenge the patriarchal, white, normative approach to preaching, which provides a word of hope to the oft-discouraged preacher that "nothing will be impossible with God" (Luke 1:37, NRSV).

ROB O'LYNN

Associate Professor of Preaching and Ministry

Director of Graduate Bible Programs

Dean of the School of Distance and General Education

Kentucky Christian University

Amy-Jill LEVINE. *Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven.* Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2020. 131 pp. \$16.99.

This brief beginner's guide to the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5–7) introduces the genius of Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount in six chapters. Levine instructs the reader on how the first four chapters of the Gospel of Matthew prepare nascent disciples to hear the sermon. Not only does the theme of righteousness find a place in the stories of the women in Jesus' genealogy, according to Levine, but even Joseph struggled with how to be righteous in his relationship with Mary though at that time he thought she had been unfaithful (xv). John the Baptist, moreover, fulfills "all righteousness" in submitting to baptize Jesus. But he loses his

head because he called out Herod Antipas for not dealing righteously in taking his brother's wife, Herodias (xvi). These vignettes set the stage for the kind of righteousness Jesus seeks in his followers.

The simplicity of this volume veils the depth of Amy-Jill Levine who serves as University Professor of NT and Jewish Studies, while holding the Mary Jane Werthan Professor of Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt Divinity School and College of Arts and Sciences. Levine's familiarity with the study of the NT and first-century Judaism blends the best of both for a rich encounter with the Sermon the Mount. The author, consequently, illustrates the meaning and implication of the Sermon with rabbinic insights with references to the Mishnah (19, 32-33), the Talmud (19, 25), and other Jewish sources. Additionally, she reflects the OT intertextual background of the content in the Sermon, drawing connections that illuminate the teachings of Jesus.

Throughout her book, she guides young disciples in reading the Sermon and seeing its functions in and its relationship to the entire Gospel of Matthew (127-128). As a specific example, Levine pulls the story of the rich young ruler (Matt 19:16-22) into her discussion about Jesus' teaching about wealth (97-98). The one command, she observes, that Jesus omits in his list of commandments to the rich young ruler is "Do not covet" (Matt 19:18-19), though "love your neighbour" (19:19 mirroring 5:43) and the call to be complete or mature (19:21 echoing 5:48) ties the narrative to the Sermon on the Mount. Here Levine demonstrates that Matthew's Gospel has more interconnections and layers than meet the eyes. And these interconnections and layers frequently weave back in to the Sermon.

For such a careful piece of work, the author is mistaken when she notes the Greek text of Matt 6:25 reads "Amen" before Jesus' "I tell you, do not worry about your life. . . ." (The text actually reads, "Because of this, I say to you"; *Διὰ τοῦτο λέγω ὑμῖν, κτλ.*) (100). Levine also missed an opportunity to strengthen her presentation of righteousness (see 20) by neglecting the importance of Hos 6:6 which Jesus cites twice in Matthew (9:13; 12:7).

While not written for scholars, scholars will appreciate the way the author communicates with those for whom this was written, that is, beginners who want to walk as if they are living in the kingdom of heaven (xxiii).

STANLEY N. HELTON

President, Professor of New Testament
Alberta Bible College

Charles KIMBALL. *Truth over Fear: Combating the Lies about Islam.* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2019. 158 pp. \$16.00.

The author of a course in *The Great Courses* series and professor at the University of Oklahoma writes this volume for "individuals and congregations who seek to overcome fear and misinformation with an accurate overview of the world's second-largest religion" (118). Kimball writes from exceptional life experiences as a

scholar and a Baptist minister who has interacted with Muslims in Egypt, Iran (even had a meeting with Ayatollah Khomeini), and the Middle East (as Middle East Director for the National Council of Churches).

The first half of the volume identifies some root causes of the fear of Islam in the West. The second half of the volume offers a path forward in understanding our Muslim neighbors and professionals in our community. Each chapter concludes with questions for reflection and meaningful group discussions.

The first chapter identifies sources of Islamophobia from terrorists, politicians, and Christian leaders. Chapter two provides a useful description of the Five Pillars of Islam in a way that Muslims would consider accurate. The third chapter scans the history of the Christian-Muslim encounter from early Islam to recent interfaith efforts by Protestants and Roman Catholics.

Chapter four explains why Muslims are not monolithic communities, politically divided in nation states formed after World War II following decades of colonial control. In chapter five Kimball shares two imperatives that reflect his life experiences: the missionary mandate (Matt 28:18-20) and interfaith dialogue (Luke 10:25-37). He learned how mission for Middle Eastern Christians focuses on presence, witness, and service in Islamic nations where it is illegal to evangelize (102). The final chapter offers practical suggestions for anyone who wants to make a difference and serve God in faith rather than in fear.

Kimball courageously touches on some of the daunting issues for Christians whose fears distort their understanding of what Muslims believe, especially about Allah, Sharia, and the identity of Christ.

His experiences convinced him that Christians and Muslims worship the same God, Allah, but they have a different understanding of God. The most common reason Christians give for Allah to not be the God of the Bible is based on Islamic rejection of the incarnation and the Trinity. However, he appropriately observes that if the same argument is applied to Jews one would have to conclude that Jews and Christians do not worship the same God (28).

In the 2010 elections in Oklahoma, 70% voted for a referendum to ban Sharia from the state—which was later overturned by the federal court as unconstitutional (90). This volume could have changed the outcome of that referendum. Kimball explains why Muslims have no interest in Sharia becoming law in the USA because most Muslims are Sunnis, who follow a less rigid approach to Sharia (84-85).

Kimball offers an appropriate apologetic for Christ (rather than the Bible) as the dynamic equivalent to the Qur'an, when he contrasts their rejection of the divinity of Christ with their view of the Qur'an as the "perfect, eternal, and uncreated" word (131).

This volume is a "must read" for those seeking truth or who lead churches on a path more consistent with our ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:16-21). Kimball provides motivation and insights for spiritual growth in developing a Christian worldview toward Muslims. If the volume succeeds in helping the reader overcome fears and misinformation, consider reading *The Cross and Crescent* by Kenneth

Craig (InterVarsity, 2003) and *Journeys of the Muslim Nation and the Christian Church* by David Shenk (Harold Press, 2003) as excellent next steps to being a good neighbor and disciple of Christ.

Two factors in overcoming fear that could greatly enhance the impact of this volume would be more attention to shared values and the influence of honor through hospitality in the Muslim worldview. My experiences in a three-day consultation with the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan confirmed the impact of the discovery of shared values on reducing distorted perceptions. Also, stories abound of how the hospitality of Muslims transformed fear into friendship.

EVERETT W. HUFFARD

Professor Emeritus

Harding School of Theology

Tremper LONGMAN, III. *The Bible and the Ballot: Using Scripture in Political Decisions.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 310 pp. \$24.99.

Having just endured a turbulent and divisive national election in 2020, Christians generally and the shrinking audience of evangelicals more particularly might benefit from an approach that seeks to look at public policies in relation to a variety of biblical sources. Biblical scholar Longman provides such an attempt in the current volume. Longman's self-consciously evangelical approach is somewhat nuanced and generally beneficial. He does not produce a screed from the religious right even as he definitely affirms mainstream evangelical views in a somewhat bourgeois manner. As a divinity school educated attorney with over thirty years in public service, I found real value in Longman's effort, though it has significant limits. Still one of Longman's conclusions is solid: "Christians should not base their vote on whether a candidate has faith. But they should look for people who have practical and ethical wisdom that would enable them to put into place just and fair public policies that help their communities." (71)

Longman begins with a discussion of how to read and interpret the Bible before giving brief discussions of ten separate issues in American public policy. Laying a foundation in hermeneutics is a strength of his approach. He works out of a creation/fall/redemption evangelical theological frame as opposed to traditions that might emphasize the formation of a people of God. In discussing each policy issue, he identifies biblical principles that he finds compelling, but he gives insufficient attention to interpretive contexts for those principles or to alternative traditions (like the virtues tradition).

His chapter on nationalism is rather tepid and is essentially a discussion of the state rather than examination of nationalism as a factor in foreign or domestic policy. He encourages Christians to guard religious liberty but not to demand it. His chapter on criminal justice and the death penalty is rather weak and does not cohere. On immigration his conclusions seem rather moderate as he tries to balance border security concerns with biblical notions of neighbor and *imago dei*. As he

makes some effort to be appreciative of science, his chapter on environmental issues somewhat helpfully highlights care of creation and the *imago dei*. His safe discussion of same sex marriage gives a traditional evangelical reading of biblical texts that does not sufficiently engage opposing views on sexuality (such as from Countryman or Coogan). The chapter on poverty is excellent on a biblical call to help the poor while it is marred by his rather unsupported argument for capitalism that seems to come out of nowhere. His examination of war develops from a casuistry that makes this lawyer wince. Also, as a general matter, I was disappointed that he pays little attention to economics.

Two chapters deserve a little more attention. His chapter on abortion was a surprise to this non-evangelical reader. While remaining firmly in the antiabortion camp, he does so with a restrained and responsible nuance concerning biblical texts. While abortion is an offense to developing life, from the biblical text he clearly believes that it is not murder. He convincingly dispatches popular evangelical reliance on proof texts like the Exodus miscarriage pericope, Jeremiah, and certain poetic Psalms.

Similarly, his chapter on racism engages the issue and the texts, but he does so with blinders on. From a vantage point of the *imago dei* and equality of all under sin, he commendably rejects racism, but he does so with little attention to biblical calls to justice and resistance to oppression. Surprisingly he shows biblically grounded openness to contemporary calls for reparations, affirmative action, and corporate responsibility. He effectively dismisses several traditional racist proof texts (the curse of Ham, for example). However, his argument pays little attention to whiteness or privilege though the furor over critical race theory did not seriously arise until after this volume was published.

Overall, for mainline evangelicals this volume should be a profitable read. The master narrative of evangelical theology controls his analysis but he still manages to challenge the reigning evangelical conservatism from time to time. With a well-prepared study leader who can push Longman's theology or policy, this volume could be very useful to an adult study class in an evangelical or mainline congregation.

JESS HALE

Attorney

Hendersonville, Tennessee

John GOLDINGAY. *Old Testament Ethics: A Guided Tour.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019. 288 pp. \$30.00.

There are a variety of ways to approach the OT from an ethical perspective. One begins with the standard topics addressed by moral theologians (e.g., violence, sex, ecology) and explores what the OT says about them. Another asks whether the OT has its own inherent approach to ethics, which grows out of a careful reading of the text's own concerns. Goldingay neither accepts nor rejects such approaches and,

instead, employs what may be described as an “everything but the kitchen sink” approach. He sometimes begins with a topic and then examines what some part of the OT says about it. At other times he begins with characters or passages and asks what we might learn from them ethically.

This volume organizes the material into five parts: qualities, aspects of life, relationships, texts, and people. Part one examines eight common virtues such as compassion, honor, truthfulness, and contentment. Part two addresses nine topics frequently discussed in ethical tomes, including wealth, violence, justice, and work. Part three focuses on eleven different types of relationship, including familial, romantic, professional, and national. It addresses several trending topics like gender, sexuality, and immigration. Part four highlights eight chapters of the Bible and uses them to discuss ethical topics like war, rest, authority, and sex. The fifth and final part tells the stories of seven people or groups of people whose virtues and vices contribute to ethical reflection.

Each of these 43 chapters is quite concise, offering only a few pages of exploration and then a list of discussion group questions. These questions give a sense of Goldingay’s intended audience. He makes no attempt to be thorough or academic, though he works from his own translation of the Hebrew text and exhibits the wisdom born of multiple decades of Bible study and teaching. His language is quite casual, and he reinforces his points with short winsome anecdotes rather than scholarly conversation or argumentation (don’t expect footnotes or even a bibliography).

No consistent method is argued for or illustrated throughout the volume. Some chapters simply list a bunch of Proverbs about a topic and draw a few general conclusions. Others recount a brief Bible story and bring out an ethical truth or two. No topic is examined in light of the entire Hebrew Bible or Christian canon to argue for some sort of unfolding progressive revelation. Nor are we exposed to a plurality of voices that readers need to either hold in tension or resolve with some sort of ideological or hermeneutical method. Though Goldingay sometimes brings up a NT passage that sheds light on a given subject, he makes no attempt to address the perennial challenges of relating the OT and NT to one another.

Goldingay is content to offer thoughtful and informed popular level reflection on a specific passage, person, or topic in light of a narrow pericope of his choosing. So, if one is looking for a seminary textbook that addresses the pressing ethical questions and hermeneutical challenges of moral theology, one will have to look elsewhere. But if one is seeking to mine nuggets of truth from the diverse genres and voices that make up the Hebrew Bible, one will be rewarded.

This volume is a light and quick read from beginning to end. Though it offers depth-level analysis of no matter that concerns theological ethicists, someone who

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questions whether the OT might contribute anything of value to Christian living today will find the cumulative force of this volume compelling if not convicting.

JOHN C. NUGENT

Professor of Bible and Theology
Great Lakes Christian College

Craig G. BARTHOLOMEW. *The God Who Acts in History: The Significance of Sinai.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 265 pp. \$29.99.

Craig Bartholomew, director of the Kirby Laing Institute for Christian Ethics at Tyndale House, Cambridge, has written extensively on areas related to the intersection of hermeneutics, biblical theology, and philosophy. He brings his unique expertise and approach to address the Sinai narrative (Exod 19–24).

Bartholomew compellingly outlines a tension in scholarship related to Sinai. On the one hand Jewish scholars take Sinai to be formative and foundational for Jewish thought (4). At the same time, these scholars also are agnostic at best about its historicity (5). In Christian scholarship, there is a “lack of serious theological engagement with Sinai” (6). But in what engagement there is, it also demonstrates the same tension between theological importance and historicity (6-7). Bartholomew has two goals in mind for this book. For Christian scholars, he desires to affirm more robust theological reflection on the Sinai narrative in line with Jewish scholarship (15). His second goal is to probe the tension between the theological importance of Sinai and the consistent denial we can really know what, if anything, happened there (15). The second goal dominates the content of the book.

Bartholomew explores this problem through a close reading of Benjamin Sommer’s celebrated work, *Revelation and Authority: Sinai in Jewish Scripture and Tradition*. He lauds Sommer for laying out “all the components that shape his view of Sinai” (17). After a careful review, he notes that Sommer philosophically grounds his work in Maimonides’ assertion that God cannot speak (24). This provides an anchor in Jewish tradition for his minimalist approach to historicity (24).

Bartholomew then unpacks Maimonides’ approach to biblical interpretation, philosophy, and history (35-45). He demonstrates how Maimonides attempted to interpret the Torah through the lens of Aristotelian and Neoplatonic philosophy. His philosophical commitments drove his understanding of revelation and inspiration. Thus, “Maimonides was torn between philosophy and theology” (45). Bartholomew demonstrates that Maimonides’ approach to the Sinai narrative is not the only robust one in Jewish tradition by contrasting it with the work of Judah Halevi. Halevi defended the Jewish faith by articulating a “theology of history to which philosophy is made subservient” (47).

Bartholomew helpfully clarifies how central philosophy is to one’s approach to interpretation and understanding of special divine action in history. Maimonides and Halevi end up describing two very different views of God. For Maimonides, “God is distant, impersonal, and deistic” (53). Whereas for Halevi, “God is the

living God of the Bible—personal and transcendent but immanently involved in the creation” (53).

Christians have their own parallel to Maimonides in Thomas Aquinas. Bartholomew attends carefully to Aquinas’ understanding of the relationship between philosophy and theology. While Aquinas has a nuanced approach to revelation and history, his “conceptual framework develops not from Scripture but from the largely accepted philosophy of his day” (86).

Bartholomew demonstrates the profound impact of philosophy on exegesis in the rise of modern biblical criticism through an analysis of Baruch Spinoza and Immanuel Kant. Far from being unaffected by philosophy, these interpreters and their descendants have been profoundly shaped by their philosophical commitments.

Bartholomew articulates an alternative way of understanding God’s action and history through engaging with the generative work of Colin Gunton. He critiques classical theism grounded in Aquinas and grounds his understanding of God through revelation in history rather than nature and unaided human reason (157). His clear distinction between God as the Creator and creation makes possible revelation through language.

Building upon this work, Bartholomew articulates his own approach to “models of divine action” (159-189). In his final chapter, he provides a rich interdisciplinary reading of the Sinai narrative. He shows that many of the reasons given to doubt the historicity of Sinai are not defeaters for the position. Admitting that it is not possible to prove that the Sinai event took place, he shows that the “reasons for doubting the historicity of Sinai are not persuasive and that there are good reasons for affirming it, so that scholars like myself and many others are rationally justified in affirming that Sinai happened” (xvii). He also persuasively argues that the rich theology of Sinai is grounded in and carries with it a commitment to its historicity (232).

In his concluding summary, Bartholomew muses, “I imagine that for any readers this has been an unusual and uncommon journey” (230). This is certainly the case. His probing of the history of philosophy and deep roots of contemporary approaches to biblical interpretation are not often found in the academy. His work is a good reminder of how indebted we all are to our cultural context and how persuasive our philosophical commitments can be in our understanding of God and his relationship to history. Bartholomew’s work deserves wide readership. He is right that the “issue of God” is central to one’s interpretation of Scripture. He laments that “a legacy of modernity is that this is the one subject that is often taboo in scholarship and academic biblical interpretation” (232). This work goes some way toward addressing this taboo head-on.

RYAN J. COOK

Associate Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament
Moody Theological Seminary

R. W. L. MOBERLY. *The God of the Old Testament: Encountering the Divine in Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020. 282 pp. \$34.99.

What does it mean to “know that the LORD is God” (Ps 100:3)? Moberly sets out to answer that question in his own way in this poignant and evocative short volume. While affirming the value of attempts to work through the OT in canonical sequence on the one hand and attempts to reconstruct the historical development of religious thought in ancient Israel on the other hand, Moberly nevertheless prefers to present a suggestive and representative (rather than comprehensive) “theological grammar” for encountering the God of Israel’s scriptures (3). This takes place by way of six main chapters, each of which focuses on a particular quality or aspect of God’s characterization. To know the God of the OT, then, is to understand and experience God as wise creator, mysterious, just, inscrutable, the only God, and trustworthy. In each case, Moberly anchors his discussion around a particular OT text, several of which are refreshingly different than traditional systematic starting points. His analysis of God as creator, for example, does not revolve around Genesis 1 and 2, but around Proverbs 8 and its personification of wisdom. His exploration of God as just begins not with the prophets, but with the portrayal of God among the divine counsel in Psalm 82.

Rather than reading the Bible as ancient history or cultural classic, Moberly’s focus is on “reading as Scripture,” which he summarizes as “[reading] *the received form* of the biblical text with *a second naïveté* in a mode of *full imaginative seriousness* that probes *the subject matter* and recognizes its *recontextualization into plural contexts* in relation to which [he brings] to bear *a text-hermeneutic and reader-hermeneutic* and also utilize *a rule of faith*” (5, emphasis original). Thankfully, he concisely explores each of the various components of this program in his introductory chapter, so that the reader is well-prepared to follow his method. Even more thankfully, Moberly consistently models this program in each of the successive chapters, so that by the end of the volume the reader has become well acquainted with what such a method actually looks like. Chapters begin with a close reading of the anchor text, which is followed by further interpretive and hermeneutical reflections. The latter of these vary in scope and focus as necessary; in several cases, Moberly uses these sections to propose literary-theological readings of the texts over against common scholarly interpretations dependent upon historical constructs (such as Psalm 82 as the mythopoetic depiction of YHWH’s dethroning of El/Elyon, or Psalm 46 as representative of a “Zion theology” that is later critiqued in Jeremiah 7 or Micah 3). Helpfully, Moberly marks off the particularly technical portions of his chapters, so those with less training can still follow his overall argument without getting bogged down.

Moberly admits in an epilogue chapter that there is far more that could be said about God from the OT than the six topics covered in this volume. Most regrettably, he is unable to give much attention to the self-declaration of God in Exod 34:6-7. For any attempt to provide a foundational “theological grammar” of God, this would seem to be a crucial text, and its absence here is unfortunate.

Furthermore, in his attempt to propose alternatives to “putative” (a favorite, if slightly pejorative, descriptor) historical interpretations, Moberly’s reflections occasionally feel off balance. Still, it is rare to finish a volume feeling both that one’s mind has been stimulated and one’s heart refreshed to the extent that Moberly affords. This volume will make a fine addition to a seminary course or scholar’s library.

JOSEPH W. MUELLER

Assistant Professor of Bible and Theology
Manhattan Christian College

Christopher J. H. WRIGHT. *Here Are Your Gods: Faithful Living in Idolatrous Times.*
Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2020. 165 pp. \$18.00.

What relevance do ancient idols have to disciples of Jesus today? OT scholar Christopher Wright not only connects the dots between historic idolatry and modern day but issues a stern warning for Christians to beware the ever-present lure idols hold for us today.

The volume is divided into two primary sections. Part One, in four chapters, delves deep into biblical idolatry, especially in the OT. The author spends considerable time examining the biblical reality of idols and their connection to culture, national identity, individual living, and even the demonic realm. Part Two, in two sections totaling four chapters, moves from ancient Israel to modern times. Wright examines political idolatry, then and now. In the final two chapters, he provides both biblical and practical guidance for God’s people as we live in an idolatrous world.

Three strengths of the volume are noteworthy. First, Wright’s treatment of OT idolatry is both thorough and insightful. He handles both major themes and minute details with skill and effectiveness. Second, Part One establishes a firm biblical foundation to build his assertions of Part Two upon. Either section would be an incomplete treatment without the other. Finally, Part Two takes a potentially esoteric topic of ancient idolatry and brings it forward as a serious discipleship concern for Christians today. Wright’s application points are firmly grounded in his scholarly research yet displays the necessary discernment of a pastor.

The weaknesses of the volume arise from the origin of the material. Wright is upfront in the Preface that the volume is a combination of previously published material and lectures given later. This structure leads to a kind of literary whiplash for the reader. Part One is a deep dive into biblical exposition while Part Two radically changes the approach and style, given the material was originally lectures. Another weakness is the intended audience. Wright is British while the lectures he gave were in the United States. Thus, he gives practical examples to readers on both sides of the Atlantic. As a reader in the United States, many of the examples of British government and political issues were not tremendously meaningful to me. I would imagine the same would be true of his British readers with his critique of

American politics. A final weakness is not with the material, but with the publisher. A volume that focuses so much on current discipleship should include group discussion questions to allow for greater use in a church context. Alas, no discussion questions are included.

In the final estimation, the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses. This volume earns a place on the bookshelf of both the scholar and pastor. OT courses would benefit from adding this work as a textbook while the local pastor will find a wealth of material for sermons and group curriculum.

DON SANDERS

Director, The Merold Institute of Ministry

Leadership Development Pastor, Harvester Christian Church

St. Charles, Missouri

Duane GARRETT. *The Problem of the Old Testament: Hermeneutical, Schematic & Theological Approaches.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2020. 408 pp. \$40.00.

Garrett's work is an excellent introduction to most issues surrounding the present study of the OT. As a textbook it would serve well at a Master's level in a course on OT Issues or in specifically interpretative approaches to the OT. The work is a simpler and more user-friendly version of the older *The Face of the Old Testament Studies* by Baker and Arnold, though to be fair, Baker and Arnold try to cover more than what Garrett is trying to do. Garrett divides his volume by first looking at hermeneutical (like Alexandrian vs. Antiochene), schematic (One covenant theology vs. dispensationalism), and Conceptual (historical-criticism) approaches to the OT. In each of these discussions, Garrett is even-handed with the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. In the second part, he gives alternative solutions to these interpretative problems whether they be Law, Narrative, or Prophecy.

In addition, Garrett gives a bonus appendix discussing the interpretative problem that is Isa 7:14, the passage classically known as the Virgin birth prophecy. He discusses issues that have long troubled scholars including the use of the term *almah*, the difficulty of this being a "sign" unto Ahaz, and makes mention of Matthew's hermeneutical method in quoting Isa 7:14. Overall this volume is an excellent introduction to a student wishing to dig deeper into the OT and helps students by letting them know where the problems lie. But Garrett does not leave them only with problems, but proposes possible solutions for potential scholars to weigh, review, and accept or reject.

CHAD SUMMA

Professor of Old Testament

Central Christian College of the Bible

Don C. COLLETT. *Figural Reading and the Old Testament: Theology and Practice*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020. 208 pp. \$24.00.

The Theological Interpretation of Scripture (TIS) movement is double-fronted, with an opening onto philosophical hermeneutics and another opening onto the history of scriptural interpretation. The current volume takes the latter approach and does so with considerable sophistication. (He is appropriately wary of some philosophical hermeneutics, but mostly shies away from that discussion.) Collett's main key for unlocking the potential of the history of interpretation lies in the notion of the literal meaning—a topic that TIS has made almost completely its own. This provides him with a strong (theoretical) basis for discussing allegorical reading as a practice. The fineness of Collett's grain in discussing literal meaning is the reader's main reward and is easily the book's best feature. Future discussions of literal meaning will likely begin with Collett.

Collett mainly wants to know what “an exegetically responsible use of figural and ruled readings of the Old Testament . . . might look like in practice” (26). In pursuit of this goal, he retraces TIS efforts throughout his book, but situates himself so as to benefit from the *ressourcement* movement as well—a movement overlapping TIS at many points. It is clear throughout the volume that Collett shares the ecclesiological starting point of TIS and *ressourcement*, although he (thankfully) doesn't espouse any philosophy of the community's privilege. He appears to grant authority to any reading approach that enjoyed a following in the early church, irrespective of Scripture's stance, although he is keen to work in references to Scripture's own approach whenever he can make them sound supportive. This sometimes leads to strange and uneven arguments: at one place he appears to acknowledge that Origen's interpretation of the letter/Spirit distinction in 2 Cor 3:6 is out of keeping with what Paul intended (see 34), and yet he continues to employ the Origenist distinction in his own argument for figural reading. Quite a number of theologians are capable of doing exactly that—with eyes wide open—but it doesn't fit the impression Collett wants to leave of being faithful to Scripture itself.

Collett's program is similar to that of Brevard Childs: he wants to find a way of reading the OT in a way that can be described as truly and *distinctively* Christian, but without allowing the OT to be caught completely within the shadow of the NT. This leads to such pronouncements as “The New Testament is not somehow ‘closer’ than the OT to the theological reality it renders, since the two testaments speak of one theological subject matter, rather than two” (157), and this: “[The New Testament's] genre is perhaps best described in terms of a *transformed Old Testament* that receives its place alongside the Old on analogy and in accordance with the OT's antecedent authority (1 Cor. 15:3-4)” (158). There are, in fact, numerous extended passages in the volume that sound like they were written by Childs (or Christopher Seitz)—e.g., “the problem with much of today's biblical exegesis is not that it is obsessed with ‘original’ context but that such exegesis is not original enough” (44). (It is not clear whether the interchange between competing

understandings of the word “original” here is supposed to go unnoticed, which makes a big difference in trying to decide what Collett is trying to argue.) And when Collett tells us that allegory “is not an imposition on Scripture but a consequence of the Bible’s relation to its theological *res*” (55), he traces an argument that only devoted allegorical readers will be willing to accept.

The current volume stands out in a crowded field, in that most of its arguments extend below the surface of common sentiments and finds root in a real (albeit debatable) *theological* discussion. Those wishing to understand what is at stake in the debate over the literal sense will want to read this book, and those wanting a better understanding of the recent turn to “theological interpretation” will find in it a readable volume that (at points) engages real theology at a deeper level than the standard introductions to TIS.

JOHN C. POIRIER
Independent scholar
Germantown, Ohio

Stephen B. CHAPMAN. *The Law and the Prophets: A Study in Old Testament Canon Formation.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020. 430 pp. \$55.00.

The recent publication of this momentous work on canon formation is in essence a reprint of a previous volume by the same title (Mohr Siebeck, 2000), with a new postscript and additional bibliography filling in the two-decade gap since the original publication. It is refreshing to find a volume from one of the top German biblical studies series [*Forschungen zum Alten Testament*] in a far more accessible (affordable) format. Any scholar with interests in the development of the OT canon, would be well served reading this book, if for nothing other than the exhaustive bibliographic review. Chapman traces the development of canon formation models with a tour de force, from the rise of the so-called ‘standard theory’ at the end of the 19th century, through the rise of the canonical approach, and culminating with L. M. McDonald’s proposal for a still open “Jewish canon” in the first century AD (68-69). Chapman spends considerable time on the scholarship of Brevard Childs, proposing an evidence-based model for canon formation drawn out of the ‘final form’ of the OT itself.

The core of Chapman’s thesis is that the so-called “standard theory” of OT canon formation, has “unraveled to the point where it can no longer account adequately for the complexity of the processes it seeks to describe” (1). Chapman traces the common tripartite progression of “Law→Prophets→Writings” to H. E. Ryle. Ryle argued that the “Law” was canonized under Ezra in the mid-fifth century BC, the “Prophets” in the early-second century BC (based on references in Ben Sira), and the “Writings” by the end of the first century AD in conjunction with the theoretical Jamnia council (3-7). Underlying tenets of the theory are the concept of “intervals of time” between the final acceptance of each section, and that

each individual book did not become authoritative until the entire section was deemed canon.

A major concern for Chapman is the ambiguous relationship between canonical “closure” and canonical “authority” within the standard theory. Were OT texts given authoritative status before canonization or was it only through canonization that authority was bestowed? For Chapman this ambiguity is most evident in the incongruity in presupposed relationship(s) between “prophet” and “law.” He ties Ryle to the late 19th-century Wellhausian zeitgeist that the canonization of the Law represented the emergence of nomistic Judaism under Ezra, which was held to be in opposition with the “pure” religion of the prophets. However, if the prophetic writings were recognized as representative of pre-exilic Israelite religion, how was it not until the second century BC that these traditions became “authorized as canon”?

Chapman leans heavily upon philosopher and literary critic C. Altieri’s work on the relationship between “self-interest and canon formation” (94-97). For Altieri the function of canon is not preservation of the past through dogmatic projection, but to provide a “permanent theater” for ideological contemplation. For Altieri, the function of canon can be summarized through three key purposes: 1) to institutionalize an ongoing cultural process of idealization, 2) to establish a source of social authority by providing a “cultural grammar,” and 3) to set the “projective dimensions” for contemporary writing by new authors and critics (96). Chapman states, “Thus in [Altieri’s] view canons *subvert* ideals just as much as they enshrine them. . . . The subversive quality of canons and canon formation also means that a canon’s ‘ideals’ are never reducible to one single historical or ideological context.” (95) Building on Altieri, Chapman sets out to “reweigh the evidence concerning OT canon formation in an effort to identify and amplify the ways in which the biblical tradents not only subordinated their own interests and contexts, but actively worked to construct formulations and frameworks which would communicate a *range* of theological *ideals* to future generations” (102).

Chapman’s response to the standard theory is that both the Law and Prophets were understood as simultaneously authoritative in a “dialectical” relationship. He argues that the final form of the OT canon preserves a “hermeneutical intentionality” through a series of editorial markers, most notably Deut 34:10-12 and Mal 3:22-24 [4:4-6 Eng.] Chapman argues that the Law and Prophets shared a simultaneous canonical trajectory, being conceived from the beginning as a “dialectical construct in which the present reality of their tradents could be profoundly reviewed and adjudicated” (104-105). There is an inherent awareness of substantial similarities and differences within the two “subcollections” which Chapman sees evidenced through the framework of salvation-history. Chapman’s dialectical approach to canon formation is insightful and a must-read for anyone doing research on the topic. It is unfortunate that his work was glanced over in recent major publications on the topic of the development of the OT (Schmid, 2018). Hopefully this new edition will rectify this oversight.

Chapman writes from an unapologetic confessional voice. For example, he retains the traditional designations of “Old Testament” and BC/AD throughout the book, eschewing what is often seen as “neutral” nomenclature (Hebrew Bible, First Testament). Chapman does so not from the intention to “christianize” the text or “depreciate other traditions and titles,” but rather to “report honestly my own social location” (xiii). In his opinion, “To gain a better understanding of religious literature, we are in need of study and dialogue among *particular* traditions of interpretation, not a ‘neutrality’ which actually *disrespects* difference and finally, simply does not exist” (xiv). It is rare, and refreshing, to find critical biblical scholarship with such an openly confessional voice.

TAD BLACKETER

Adjunct Professor

Lincoln Christian University

Suzanne RICHARD, ed. *New Horizons in the Story of the Early Bronze III and Early Bronze IV of the Levant*. University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2020. 480 pp. \$124.95.

This volume represents a compendium of papers presented in sessions organized by the editor at the 2014 and 2015 meetings of the American Schools of Oriental Research. The sessions brought together Early Bronze Age scholars working in the northern and southern Levant to reconsider interpretations of the EB III and EB IV periods, considering the new higher chronology for the Early Bronze Age that has emerged from radiometric ¹⁴C data and Bayesian statistical modeling. Creating a 200/250-year shift in dates for the southern Levant, the higher chronology raises the EB III to 2900-2550/2500 BCE and the EB IV to 2500-1950/1920 BCE (ix).

Described by the editor as a “sea change,” the higher chronology leads to new synchronisms between the northern and southern Levant and with Egypt. For example, in the new scheme EB IV in the southern Levant realigns with the late Old Kingdom dynasties in Egypt and the First Intermediate Period, and EB III corresponds with the early Old Kingdom dynasties and the later Dynastic Period. The new chronology also better synchronizes the northern and southern Levant, with the rural EB IV in the south corresponding to the urban EB IV in the north (x-xi). In addition, the lengthening of the EB IV period in the south to more than 500 years increases its significance and demands the reevaluation of a period that traditionally has been viewed as a “dark age” following the flowering of urbanism in EB II-III.

This volume contains twenty-three chapters divided into two sections, Part 1 with presentations on the northern Levant and Part 2 on the southern Levant. To illustrate the range of papers, Part 1 includes topics such as “Northern Levant in Early Bronze Age III-IV: Economic Wealth and the International Landscape of ‘Secondary Urbanization’” (Stefania Mazzoni), “Ebla Destruction at the End of

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Early Bronze Age IVB” (Paolo Matthiae), and “Connections between the Northern and Southern Levant during the Early Bronze III” (Agnese Vacca and Marta D’Andrea). Part 2 contains papers with topics such as “Perspectives on Egypt in the Southern Levant in Light of High Early Bronze Age Chronology” (Karin Sowada), “Tell es-Sultan/Jericho in the Early Bronze III” (Lorenzo Nigro), “Radiocarbon and the Question of Urbanism During the Early Bronze Age III-IV Transition” (Aaron Gidding and Thomas E. Levy), “Black Wheelmade Ware and Its Social Meaning” (Shlomit Bechar), and “Considerations for a Refinement of the Archaeological Periodization of the Southern Levantine Early Bronze Age IV” (Marta D’Andrea). In the final paper, “A Case for ‘Rural Complexity’ in the Permanent Sedentary Sites of Early Bronze IV,” Suzanne Richard amasses a wealth of data that demonstrate, in contrast to the still pervasive pastoral-nomadic model for EB IV in the southern Levant, that a high level of complexity characterized a rural society that exhibited continuity with the preceding urban traditions of the EB III period.

As in similar collections, the quality of papers is mixed. Nevertheless, they represent current research and understandings from a range of perspectives—with some disagreement. For example, Pierre de Mirochedji and Lorenzo Nigro disagree somewhat on the degree of centralized power in EB III in the southern Levant, Nigro maintaining (contra Mirochedji) that Jericho was a “palatial society” that demonstrates southern Levantine urbanism. Differing perspectives on the extent and nature of urbanism during the Early Bronze Age and how best to describe the more rural society that characterizes the last half of the millennium not surprisingly surface throughout these pages. Nigro also raises questions about the validity of the New Chronology, which, however, has been adopted by the other contributors to the volume.

With the advent of the higher chronology, this volume is a significant contribution to Early Bronze Age studies. Necessitated by the new chronology, this reevaluation of the Early Bronze Age comes at a critical time. The “sea change” created by the addition of a couple of centuries in the chronology of the southern Levant undermines traditional interpretations of the period, raising fundamental questions about the nature of society through the end of the third millennium BCE. While the papers in this volume are perhaps the beginning of the conversation, the breadth and depth of the material in this collection recommend a robust, rewarding, and welcome future for Early Bronze Age studies in the northern and southern Levant.

JESSE LONG

Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Archaeology
Lubbock Christian University

John A. COOK and Robert D. HOLMSTEDT. *Intermediate Biblical Hebrew: An Illustrated Grammar.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020. 208 pp. \$35.00.

The current volume seeks to provide a lively approach to learning intermediate Hebrew through twenty-four short lessons and inviting color illustrations that read

like a graphic novel. Co-authors John A. Cook, professor of Old Testament and director of Hebrew Language Instruction at Ashbury Theological Seminary, and Robert D. Holmstedt, professor of Near and Middle Eastern civilizations at the University of Toronto, also produced *Beginning Biblical Hebrew: A Grammar and Illustrated Reader* (Baker, 2013).

This intermediate grammar carries forward their effort to give students a more immersive language experience than traditional resources offer. Designed for use in a university or seminary classroom, the workbook-style grammar encourages instructors to use it to engage students in reading aloud the biblical passages in class, memorizing and acting out portions of Scripture, and rewriting sections by changing aspect, mood, number and gender. To build reading comprehension, the grammar suggests students consider syntax and semantics from the intuitive perspective of asking the text: Who? What? What else? Where? When? and Why? Biblical references use the Hebrew book names and numbering system.

Most of the twenty-four lessons run three to five pages to accommodate the typical semester, estimating two lessons per week with review and assessment. Each begins with a section of Hebrew Scripture from the story of Elijah in 1-2 Kings, illustrated in comic-book format by artist Philip Williams. Each lesson builds vocabulary, provides insight into particular grammatical issues, and discusses how these features function in the text. Students are prompted to use what they are learning in brief assignments at the end of each of the lessons' sections.

For example, lesson 17 covers 1 Kgs 21:17-29. Six panels on the comics page recount the story of Yahweh's judgment on Ahab through Elijah in the murdered Naboth's vineyard, Ahab's repentance, and Yahweh's gracious response. The panels reproduce the MT, including the *Ketib* and *Qere*. The first section, "Words to Learn," has students translate nineteen new vocabulary words (those appearing in the HB less than 200 times) and provide roots for the six verbs not appearing in the *gal* stem. The next, "Going Deeper with Grammar," explores such topics as the passive participle, asking students to discuss its function in the text, and verb use in prophetic speech, asking students to explain which forms the text uses and how. Its "Reading Insights" section considers the rhetorical function of the coarse expression used for males in 21:21 (בִּשְׂתֵּם בִּקֵּר, *mashtin beqir*, "the one who urinates against a wall"), including that it may suggest being caught unaware. Interestingly, the section does not mention the five other instances of the idiom's use in the HB, which may support this idea (1 Sam 25:22, 34; 1 Kgs 14:10; 16:11; 2 Kgs 9:8). Lesson 17 closes by having students read the passage from the Aleppo Codex, selections of which are included in the appendices, along with weak verb paradigms, a discussion of Masoretic accents, and glossaries of linguistic terms and Hebrew words.

The grammar is engaging and insightful as it seeks to build in students a theoretical and practical knowledge of biblical Hebrew. One drawback for some may be its use of non-traditional grammatical terms, such as "past narrative" for "waw-consecutive imperfect" and "adverbial infinitive" for "infinitive absolute." It

provides a short equivalencies list of the most common terms in the introduction and cross-references terms elsewhere, though this can prove unwieldy in practice. Also, its classroom-oriented approach may make its lessons more difficult to navigate for students in online courses or independent studies.

CHERYL L. EATON

Adjunct Professor, Exegetical Theology
Lincoln Christian Seminary

John A. COOK and Robert D. HOLMSTEDT. *Beginning Biblical Hebrew: A Grammar and Illustrated Reader*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013; and John A. COOK and Robert D. HOLMSTEDT. *Intermediate Biblical Hebrew: An Illustrated Grammar*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020. [set price] \$60.00.

While this review deals primarily with the more recently published intermediate book, it is necessary to summarize rather fully the authors' first book, since in it they introduce the methods and assumptions that govern the second volume as well.

Beginning Biblical Hebrew

[For a brief and helpful video by the authors discussing their grammars and their approach to teaching and learning Hebrew, go to the following site: lessons and Format – Cook and Holmstedt – “Beginning Biblical Hebrew.” – YouTube, accessed 12-17-2021. This will help you to better understand the books.]

In their preface, the authors identify seven “distinctives” for their textbook, which helps in understanding their intermediate grammar as well. These distinctives are:

1. the use of recent ideas about pedagogy
2. the giving of less grammatical information in a beginning grammar
3. organizing the lessons in such a way that phonology, morphology, and syntax are presented together with maximum repetition
4. exercises based on biblical texts,
5. recognition of diversity within the Hebrew of the Bible, while (at the same time) drawing “. . . from a small, uniform corpus of prose literature . . .” from Genesis
6. attempting to be as jargon-free as possible, and
7. a non-confessional orientation

While these are worthy goals, how well or consistently the authors achieve their goals is open to debate. For example, in chapter 6, they discuss “copular clauses,” even though they also refer to the verbs that introduce such clauses as “linking.” Why not simply refer to such clauses as “linked clauses,” if the desire is to avoid jargon?

Most of the grammatical chapters are very brief, running from one-three pages. They generally introduce one to three related topics. Thus, for example, the article *he* and the interrogative *he* are introduced in 8 (38).

The authors often use groups of three or in twosomes for some of the exercises that they suggest. They incorporate vocalization of the Hebrew for such things as understanding copular (or verbless) sentences (35, for example).

One element of the grammar which I found initially disorienting is the authors' use of Hebrew for some technical, grammatical terms. For example, the authors use the Hebrew word שֹׁרֵשׁ, rather than the word "root" (36). After I got used to what they were doing, I saw the logic in their approach. It would have been helpful to have a Hebrew-English and/or an English-Hebrew glossary of these technical, grammatical terms. However, quite likely, space limitations precluded such an appendix. In any case, their intermediate grammar *does* have a glossary of grammatical terms.

Intermediate Biblical Hebrew: An Illustrated Grammar

This intermediate grammar is a companion to *Beginning Biblical Hebrew* and shares the approach of the first book. The strengths of the authors' approach become more apparent in the intermediate book. The cartoons with biblical texts will appeal to those students who are more visual learners.

Indeed, one of the great strengths of these works is their tendency to involve more senses in the teacher and learner. In addition to cartoons (visual), the authors encourage vocalization of texts (speaking and hearing). This is helpful for learners with different styles. Also, the more different senses involved in learning, the better.

So, the bottom line for me is this: While the authors did not, in my opinion, quite accomplish what they set out to do, their novel approach has a great deal to recommend it. Those who are dissatisfied with older grammars (such as Weingreen) that rely on Latin-based terminology will value the attempt to update grammatical terms with more accessible language. Furthermore, less grammar in an introductory grammar might be an approach whose time is long overdue.

DARYL DOCTERMAN

Adjunct for Biblical Studies

Southeastern University

Benjamin J. NOONAN. *Advances in the Study of Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic: New Insights for Reading the Old Testament.* New York: HarperCollins, 2020. 336 pp. \$38.99.

This volume is an ambitious attempt to introduce students, pastors, and scholars to critical issues in Biblical Hebrew and Biblical Aramaic linguistic scholarship. The volume is well-written and wide-ranging, providing an accessible survey of developments in the study of these languages.

After an introduction that explains the book's scope, why it is needed, and what topics it covers, in chapter one Noonan provides the necessary linguistic background for readers to understand the rest of the book. Chapter two then traces the history of Biblical Hebrew and Biblical Aramaic linguistic scholarship to help readers better appreciate current issues and their origins. Chapter three looks at the study of words and the making and use of dictionaries. The next two chapters examine the verbal stems and verbal tense, aspect, and mood respectively. Discourse analysis is covered in chapter six and word order in chapter seven. In chapters eight and nine, Noonan deals with linguistic variation in the Hebrew Bible: register,

dialect, style-shifting, and code-switching in the former and language change over time in the latter. The last chapter explores the teaching and learning of Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic.

This volume makes many valuable contributions. In chapter one, Noonan masterfully clarifies many concepts in linguistics, explaining key tenets of comparative philology, structuralism, generative grammar, functionalism, and cognitive linguistics with unmatched brevity and clarity. Chapter three provides a very effective evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of existing approaches to word study and dictionaries, with suggestions for improvement. Chapter six on discourse analysis fruitfully explores three foundation concepts of discourse analysis: coherence and cohesion, discourse units and relations, and information structure. Chapter eight highlights the relevance of sociolinguistic study of the Hebrew Bible in terms of register, dialect, style-shifting, and code-switching.

In terms of weaknesses, the chapter on the teaching and learning of Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic seems to depart from the more typical balanced evaluation of earlier chapters. For example, Noonan seems too quick to dismiss potential contributions from technology. He also appears to recommend communicative approaches without first analyzing the relative strengths and weaknesses of different approaches. More generally, starting with the chapter on verbal stems, Noonan often organizes significant parts of his discussion according to proponents of disparate ideas. This format seems to work well when only a few major proponents are covered, and it is easy to process how these ideas relate to one another. However, sometimes too many scholars with relatively more subtle diverse ideas are surveyed together. For some readers, these sections may serve as concise and clear summaries of the views of different scholars with which they are already familiar. However, this form of presentation may seem somewhat disjointed for other readers. As it stands, readers often spend many pages learning about different, often conflicting, ideas from various scholars without sufficient orientation about how these ideas relate to one another. Perhaps a more idea-focused organization and some form of preview evaluation might be beneficial in these sections.

Noonan's overarching goal in putting together this volume is to aid readers to gain a meaningful understanding of key issues in Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic scholarship and why they matter. In the opinion of this reviewer, he succeeds admirably. This volume serves as an ideal initiation for intermediate and advanced students. It can even help fill in knowledge gaps for scholars of the Hebrew Bible. It is an outstanding resource and an enjoyable read at the same time.

RANDALL K. J. TAN
Vice President, Innovation
Clear Bible, Inc.

L.S. BAKER, Jr., Kenneth BERGLAND, Felipe A. MASOTTI, and A. Rahel WELLS, eds. *Exploring the Composition of the Pentateuch*. BBR Supp.: 27. University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2020. 314 pp. \$89.95.

The last two decades have seen numerous developments in the study of the Pentateuch. The classic Documentary Hypothesis has largely been jettisoned, and as noted in the current volume, the field has been opened up to “new eyes and new approaches” to understanding the formation of the Pentateuch (vii). This volume includes an introduction and thirteen studies by scholars doing ground-breaking research on the Pentateuch in areas of literary and structural analysis, archaeology, ancient Near Eastern comparative studies, ritual studies, narrative, rhetorical, and form critical studies. These papers were first presented at a conference on the Pentateuch in 2016 at Seventh Day Adventist Seminary and were edited by L.S. Baker Jr., Kenneth Bergland, Felipe A. Masotti, and A. Rahel Wells into the current volume.

The opening introduction by Roy Gane offers a concise overview of Pentateuchal studies. Gane highlights the differences in academic cultures in North America, Europe, and Israel, where different premises and methods result in divergent results in understanding the Pentateuch (3). Chapter 1 by Joshua Berman offers a “critical intellectual history” of Pentateuchal studies, considering how various approaches have regarded the following key questions: What is the goal of the historical-critical study of the Hebrew Bible? What is the probative value of evidence internal within the text itself relative to evidence from external sources? What is the role of intuition in the work of the scholar? What is the role of methodological control? (8-9). Berman’s overview shows how the intellectual context of scholars influences their understanding of the goals, use of evidence, and standards of discernment, intuition, and methodologies in research, resulting in divergent results. Berman argues for the importance of ancient Near Eastern studies to provide external methodological control for our understanding of scribal practices that produced the Pentateuch (16-17, 25). Richard Averbeck offers a detailed study of the slavery laws from Exod 21:2-11; Lev 25:39-43; Deut 15:12-18. Contrary to prevailing critical views of these laws that see them as contradictory, Averbeck argues for a “generous” approach to these laws as complementary and supplementing one another by giving specifications for different contexts (47-48). A chapter by L.S. Baker Jr. and A. Rahel Wells shows from the history of Egyptian language and literature in comparison with Exodus 14 and 15 that it was common in Egyptian sources to combine prose and poetry texts describing the same events side-by-side, as seen also in Exodus 14 and 15. The Egyptian texts, carved into monuments, evince multiple stages of language in the same compositional stage, thus suggesting that the prose and poetry accounts of Exodus 14 and 15 are not necessarily from different compositional stages (64-65). The article by Richard S. Hess on cuneiform in the 2nd millennium BC shows that writing was widespread at this time, thus undermining the standard critical theory that the Patriarchal narratives were originally oral stories and historically dubious. The article by Jirí

Moskala and Felipe A. Masotti looks at Hittite Treaty Prologues in comparison to Deuteronomy, arguing that the 2nd-millennium Hittite treaties offer closer parallels to Deuteronomy than later Assyrian treaties. Kenneth Bergland's study looks at the place of memorization in the transmission of the Torah as a model for understanding the fluid yet stable reuse of material within the laws of the Torah (96). Michael Lefebvre's study of the dates in the Pentateuch shows how the entire Pentateuch is structured around liturgical dates, reflecting a "coherent liturgical interest" in the composition of the Pentateuch (130). Daniel I. Block looks at the conceptual and stylistic imprint of Deuteronomy in the patriarchal narratives, showing the pervasive similarities in language, theology, and style between the patriarchal narratives and Deuteronomy as evidence for the coherence of the Pentateuchal sources by a single author (155). Duane A. Garrett's overview of the theme of prophecy in the Pentateuch argues against a standard documentary approach to the Pentateuch, according to which the different sources were "antiprophetic" in their agenda. The study by Richard Davidson, Tiago Arrais, and Christian Vogel analyzes the literary structure of the book of Exodus, making a case for the unity of the entire book by a single author, based on literary structures such as block parallelism and symmetrical parallelism which span the book in order to express the theological intentions of the book (194). The chapter by Roy Gane looks at the intentions of the priestly literature, showing that there is evidence for Aaronic cultic control (1 Samuel) and the coinciding functioning of the Levites; this evidence suggests that the authorship of the Priestly literature was not composed to legitimate priestly power and monopoly. Benjamin Kilchör's overview of Deuteronomy summarizes his earlier volume *Mosetora und Jahwetora*, to show how throughout Deuteronomy, the Priestly laws of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers are conflated and extended to apply to new situations. John S. Bergsma's study of Ezekiel and Samaritan traditions for understanding the composition of the Pentateuch, showing how Ezekiel blends material from the Holiness Code and Deuteronomy, and hence these texts must be pre-exilic, and due to the absence of emphasis on Zion theology in the Pentateuch, it comes from the time prior to the establishment of Zion Theology.

The collection of essays offers a broad overview of key questions in the current debate on the formation of the Pentateuch. Several of the articles offer groundbreaking new approaches to old problems and are notable contributions as the discussion continues and new perspectives are developed further. At times, the breadth of the study comes at the cost of depth, as there are several chapters in which a more detailed analysis of the texts of the Pentateuch would be needed to substantiate the case being made. For example, with the chapter on the book of Exodus by Richard Davidson, Tiago Arrais, and Christian Vogel, the authors make a case for the unity of authorship for the entire book of Exodus based on large literary structures, but they do not deal with the details of classic cases where source critical theories have been proposed based on the internal evidence of the text. Likewise, the argument for the influence of Hittite treaty prologues on the book of

Deuteronomy by Jirí Moskala and Felipe A. Masotti could take a more nuanced approach that allows for a complex development of the book of Deuteronomy that may have been influenced at later stages by Assyrian materials. Many of the articles are summaries of more extensive work done by the authors elsewhere, and as such, they provide an important springboard into further research in these areas for anyone interested in the current state of Pentateuchal studies.

PAAVO TUCKER

Adjunct Professor

Lipscomb University, Hazelip School of Theology

John GOLDINGAY. *Genesis. BCOT: Pentateuch.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020. 808 pp. \$59.99.

This volume launches the new Baker commentary series on the Pentateuch. Goldingay brings a wealth of theological insights into the Genesis text, mined from a lifetime of academic research, teaching, and writing. This critical commentary offers a fresh translation of the Hebrew text, carefully outlining for the reader his translation method and sources. The overarching goal of this commentary is that it will be a valuable resource for modern ecclesial communities. The hope for this series is to provide a beneficial tool for the church to continue to connect to the “fountainhead” of the Pentateuch, from which important theological themes derive (e.g., nature of God, creation, humanity, holiness).

Goldingay remains true to his approach, noting his preference for the OT to be called the “First Testament,” reminding his audience that the First Testament is not outdated but an enduring resource for Christians. This commentary is organized around the four main signposts of the *tóledót* (genealogies) as follows: (1) Part One: The lines of descent of the heavens and the earth, through Noah (1:1–11:26), (2) Part Two: The lines of descent of Terah through Abraham and Sarah (11:27–25:11), (3) Part Three: The lines of descent of Isaac and Rebekah, through Jacob (25:12–35:29), and (4) Part Four: The lines of descent of Jacob, through Joseph (36:1–50:26) (3). In this schema, Goldingay focuses on four fundamental truths about God around these four parts. In part one, God is disciplinary. Part two reveals a God who is “promissory, though also demanding” (4). Part three reveals a God who is accommodating and persistent, representative in the phrase that God, “In being involved with Isaac and Rebekah, he continues to work via their faith and stupidity and those of their son” (4). Part four reveals God as proactive and interactive. Goldingay provides helpful and colorful examples to illustrate these sweeping statements about God’s activity throughout this commentary.

This technical commentary pulls together for its audience important lexical and translation details, literary analysis, theological implications, key features, and themes in Genesis with an eye towards its reception history. One illustration of the reception of a significant story is in “Abraham and His Son, Part Two.” Goldingay helpfully connects this difficult story of Isaac, the *Aqedah* (“the binding”) (Genesis

22:1-19), to the theological and philosophical work of Calvin, Kant, Kierkegaard, along with the story's more recent reception through retelling in modern contexts of war (Wilfred Owen and Leonard Cohen). One of the strengths of this commentary is in Goldingay's ability to pastorally guide the reader through Genesis while creating space for complex theological conversation about God (hiddenness and presence).

While Goldingay offers important insights, there are at times—as commentaries tend to do—previous interpretations that could benefit from re-engagement with new insights from recent scholarship. For example, with the character of Tamar in Genesis 38, Goldingay takes the traditional approach. He writes that Judah may have been “ready for some further comfort after his wife’s death,” but “this recourse . . . was not premeditated” (588). I find these statements taking the traditional interpretive route, and Goldingay misses an opportunity to offer critical insights from others that bring out the ambiguity of Tamar’s dress and Judah’s agency and misperception (Sara Koenig, Tammi J. Schneider). He begins to engage in these areas but does not fully develop them. There is always the issue of space in a work such as this and I acknowledge that one cannot include everything, nevertheless, Goldingay misses some key opportunities to expand the conversation.

This Genesis commentary is a welcome and vital contribution. This volume is an engaging resource for scholars, pastors, and students eager to approach the literary and theological complexities of Genesis from a fresh perspective.

JENNIFER M. MATHENY
Assistant Professor of Old Testament
Nazarene Theological Seminary

David Toshio TSUMURA. *The Second Book of Samuel*. NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019. 400 pp. \$48.00.

This volume comes twelve years after the publication of the author’s commentary on 1 Samuel in the same series. It contains a relatively brief introduction (41 pages including bibliography), which makes sense given the much longer introduction (99 pages) in his commentary on 1 Samuel. In his commentary on the text, Tsumura gives general overviews of the larger sections, his own translations, and commentary on individual verses or groups of verses. He focuses on a synchronic reading of the Masoretic text and applies discourse analysis to the narratives. The volume concludes with indices of subjects, modern authors, Scripture and other ancient sources, and foreign words. With respect to introductory matters, Tsumura dates the final form of 1-2 Samuel to the ninth century BCE. He identifies the genre of 1-2 Samuel as epic with annalistic elements.

In the author’s preface, Tsumura says that the series editor who invited him to write “expected and encouraged me to deal with the difficult Hebrew text philologically,” and they “agreed to let the stories themselves give theological teachings and devotional insights” (xi). His primary goal then is to establish a reliable text

from which one can then do literary and theological work, though he does little of this work himself in the commentary. In the introduction he spends just over one page on the themes and theology of 2 Samuel, and there are few theological reflections within the commentary. With respect to application, there are only occasional, brief comments.

A strength of the commentary is Tsumura's careful attention to the details of the Hebrew text. The commentary could serve well as a translator's handbook for 2 Samuel. Another strength is the attempt to resolve the difficulties within the text. Tsumura offers a close examination of major and minor text critical issues, often offering fresh solutions that do not require correcting the MT. Where there are perceived contradictions within 1-2 Samuel, he seeks solutions on a synchronic level. While not all of his solutions on these matters are convincing, he at least provides a check on an impulse to too quickly jump to emendations or diachronic solutions. He also offers helpful insights into historical and cultural backgrounds of 2 Samuel.

With respect to weakness, it is hard to fault the author for his sparse attention to theology and literary features and to suggestions for hearing the text today, since he stated such was not his primary purpose. Still, Tsumura does not wrestle with some of the serious questions raised by the text that often trouble readers. For example, was Bathsheba raped? Tsumura identifies David's sins with Bathsheba as coveting and adultery. In one place he suggests Bathsheba may have consented (178), but later he refers to it as "her forced consent" (198). He also does not struggle with ethical issues that 2 Samuel raises about God. For example, he says Absalom raped David's concubines but does not explore the implications of this as part of God's judgment on David (see 190, 248).

Scholars and, perhaps, readers who have a good grasp of Hebrew will find the commentary helpful. But I suspect Tsumura's strong emphasis on the original language, text critical issues, and his frequent use of transliteration and of linguistic and grammatical terminology will frustrate non-specialist readers who are simply looking for a guide to the meaning, theology, and relevance of 2 Samuel.

PHILLIP G. CAMP
Professor of Bible
Lipscomb University

Alexander W. BREITKOPF. *Job: From Lament to Penitence.* HBM: 92. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2020. 184 pp. \$75.00.

This publication of Breilkopf's dissertation at McMaster Divinity College presents a form critical analysis of the features of lament and penitence in Job, building upon recent study of these forms including the work of Breilkopf's *Doktorvater* Mark Boda. Less obvious from the title is Breilkopf's emphasis on contextualizing a perceived shift in form from lament to penitence in Job within the perspective of eco-anthropology, a contribution reflecting increasing attention to the role of



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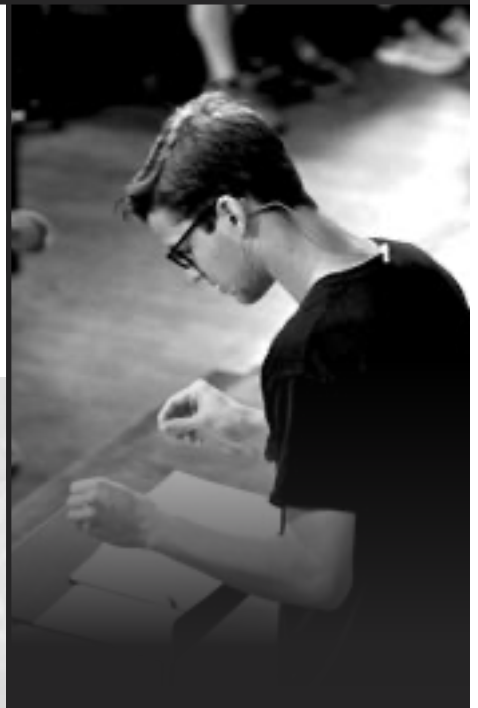
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natural imagery in Job. This latter emphasis gives substantial interest and value to the volume beyond the primary form critical argument, which itself seems forced at times and is underwhelming in its conclusion.

In Breitung's analysis, "the book of Job provides a coherent narrative arc in which the main character moves from lament to penitence, and . . . this move is due to the shift in the book's creation language and eco-anthropology" (13). Breitung emulates the "relational form-critical approach" of Martin Buss to examine how the forms of lament and penitence function within the literary context of Job (16). The prologue of Job hints at penitential language, but Job 3 shifts to the register of lament (36-48). The speeches of Job's companions counsel him toward penitential action (57, 118-122), while Job's speeches in the wisdom dialogue primarily evoke lament (81-101), especially his final speech (113-115). This approach is helpful in naming some of the differences between Job and his companions in the dialogue, but its limitations show as Breitung approaches the end of the book. Since Job's first response to the divine speech in chapter 40 fits neither category as defined, Breitung does surprisingly little to place its rhetoric of wonder and humility in the context of the book's trajectory between lament and penitence (132-133). This leaves the much-heralded shift to penitence to hang only on the much-debated final words of Job to Yahweh in 42:6, which can be understood in various ways (see below).

As for eco-anthropological outlook and references, Job begins with allusions to anthropocentric assumptions about the natural world (52). Eliphaz's speeches employ ecological metaphors of failed agriculture, a failed predatory animal (lion), and the violent east wind, for moral exhortation (61-65). Bildad uses several (primarily negative) ecological images for human nature, such as a violent wind, withering flora, the fragility of a spider's web, hunting/trapping, and the loathsomeness of maggots and worms (70-75). Zophar draws analogies between the wicked and venomous snakes (80). Job's speeches likewise draw images from nature to describe his experience, including the changeability of seasonal watercourses (101), a hunted lion (102), tree regeneration (103), and others. His final speech concludes with an invocation of the land and its produce as witness to Job's innocence (116).

Breitung brings attention to these form-critical and eco-anthropological elements together in making sense of the final exchanges between Yahweh and Job. A key insight, not new to Breitung but effectively demonstrated within his overall argument, is that many of the references to nature and non-human life in Yahweh's speeches directly recall natural imagery used by the human characters in the preceding speeches, in several cases making an apparent counterpoint to the human arguments with related imagery (125-132, 163). This clarifies the relevance of much of the content of the first divine speech and shapes the interpretation of the second as well, placing the descriptions of Behemoth and Leviathan within the divine description of creation that corrects the androcentric eco-anthropological ideas of the human characters (137). This approach has significant potential for

making sense of the enigmatic divine speeches within the context of the preceding discourse in Job.

Arriving at Job's final ambiguous words in 42:6, Breitung argues that the declaration reflects Job's ultimate repentance and retraction of his prior statements, responding primarily to Yahweh's correction of Job's flawed eco-anthropology and resulting destructive impulses (138-145). Such an emphasis requires an explanation of Yahweh's apparent vindication of Job in the prose epilogue that follows, which Breitung accomplishes only murkily in discussion of what is and is not vindicated from the human speeches in 42:7-8 (146-150). As the volume concludes, Breitung's discussion of what resolution the final chapter provides fixates initially too much on the position that it represents a regression to the simplistic theology of the prologue, then on a shift in eco-anthropology as the only theological implication of Job, and ultimately comes short of fully expounding the subtleties of Job's character being both transformed and vindicated through his raw lament, fierce complaint, and wondrous encounter with Yahweh. The form-critical argument concludes in an understated manner, arguably because the attempted demonstration of lament and penitential forms as meaningful for understanding Job has been only modestly successful at best. The emphasis on an eco-anthropological theological purpose in the book of Job dominates the conclusion, reflecting the author's stronger interest and, arguably, most meaningful insight in the volume (152-160). This is the main reason to read this book.

Breitung's stimulating argument will be of interest to scholars and serious students of the book of Job, especially for its attention to natural imagery and the place of eco-anthropological assumptions within the theological discourse contained within and provoked by the book of Job. It leaves the reader wanting more connection of its primary argument to classically understood issues of theodicy, human suffering, and faithful response to crisis found in Job, but is nonetheless imminently worthy of careful reading within the study of this endlessly fascinating text.

ADAM L. BEAN

Visiting Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies

Emmanuel Christian Seminary at Milligan

Jerome F. D. CREACH. *Discovering Psalms: Content, Interpretation, Reception.* Discovering Biblical Texts series. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 217 pp. \$22.00.

Creach identifies the nature and purpose of the volume to be (a) "to orient you to the structure, content and theology of the Psalms" and (b) to "invite you to ponder what place this marvelous part of Scripture might play in your own life of prayer, worship and devotion." The Psalms are identified as for anyone who "wants a window into the bright lights and dark corners of the human soul," and "is open to the beautiful expression of a larger vision of reality." Portions of the volume are for the general reader; other portions more scholarly.

Part One contains discussions of basic features of the Psalms, and essays on current trends in the study of the Psalms. Here also are ways to read the Psalms, and ways that Christians pray the Psalms. Part One discusses the Psalms as poetry, leaning heavily on the treatment of biblical poetry by Robert Lowth. Lowth on the poetry of the Bible is not to be disparaged, but more recent treatments of the subject are also of merit. Part One also deals with authorship of the Psalms, with support for the traditional position that significant numbers of them were the work of David. From Psalm 72 onward, Creach holds to Levitical authorship of most of the Psalms. Also, in Part One is treatment of Psalm types, dealing with the Psalms and form criticism, and the Wellhausen “Documentary Hypothesis.”

Part Two encourages the reader to find meaning of the Psalms by considering the Psalms as a whole. Part Two also addresses the place of the Psalms in our humanity.

Part Three is more appealing to the novice student of the Psalms: Psalms as prayers, Psalms as reflective of various attitudes to God, Psalms, and worship, and their relationship to Jesus Christ. Here also, Creach addresses the Psalms and the God of vengeance in their beginning and today. He seeks to bridge historical and cultural gaps between the world of the Psalms and our own world, treating problematic passages such as 93:1 and 104:2. He would have us to resonate with Calvin, seeing the Psalms as “an anatomy of all parts of the soul,” and he finds exploration of that anatomy for this present age, with references to the Psalms in the music of U2, R.E.M., Megadeath and The Notorious B.I.G.

Yes, the Psalms speak of God as creator of marvelous works and victor over the forces of this world. Yes, the Psalms hold admonition for empty ritual and sacrifice. And, yes, the Psalms anticipate the life and ministry of Jesus in the Davidic kingdom. Yes, Creach reminds us, the Psalms uniquely encompass the heights and depths of human emotion. Yet, they also comprise the core of Christian liturgy.

The volume intends to introduce the Psalms to those who are discovering them for the first time, make them more accessible to those who have already read and interpreted them, and show various ways Christians and Jews have read the Psalms as Scripture. The book’s paragraphs possess unity and clarity. The focal point of each paragraph is clear and issues clearly from its predecessor. But the volume lacks unity and focus. Its overarching sections are random, with issues in reading the Psalms, reading them together, and praying the Psalms.

The volume is somewhere between a general introduction and a theological commentary, though it has features of both. It contains a summary of the content and structure of the Psalms. It explores some primary issues of interpretation: the Psalms as poetry, its genres and its social settings. It invites the reader to ponder the theological character of the Psalms and the way Christians have drawn from them for prayer and worship. What, then is the natural audience for this book? It is too populist for a seminary class. It is too esoteric for a church study group. It may

suffice as an undergraduate text or a resource for the beginning student on the Psalms.

JOHN C. WAKEFIELD
Professor Emeritus
Milligan University

M. Daniel CARROLL R. *The Book of Amos*. NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 520 pp. \$39.00.

This commentary is a very useful resource, one I highly recommend. I used it in the spring of 2021 in an exegesis class on Amos at Emmanuel Seminary, and I and my students gained much from Carroll’s analysis.

It is easy to see that this commentary is the result of many years of research and contemplation as indicated by the copious footnotes throughout. Carroll does not shy away from critical scholarship. He tackles the difficult questions regarding late redaction of the text of Amos and historical questions about Amos the man. In the tradition of Andersen and Freedman (Anchor Bible Series) and Shalom Paul (Hermeneia Series), Carroll thinks that most of the text of Amos comes from a historical, 8th-century Amos. Yet he is also convinced that the superscription at the beginning of the book and the autobiographical story in chapter 7 (Amos’s interchange with Amaziah the priest) constitute later additions. I was a little surprised that Carroll did not also include the ending of Amos (9:11-15) among the list of later additions.

Since the days of Wellhausen, many have been convinced that references to the restoration of “David’s fallen tent” and “possessing the remnant of Edom” (9:11-12) simply do not sound like the rest of the book and fit nicely into a much later environment. Indeed, these verses have the look of “roses and lavender rather than blood and iron” as Wellhausen so clearly suggested. Following the tradition of Steve McKenzie, Carroll doubts suggestions of Deuteronomistic redaction in Amos, noting that the prophet Amos appears nowhere in the Deuteronomistic History (Judges–2 Kings). Carroll’s commentary is a helpful counterpoint to Göran Eidevall’s recent work on Amos in the Anchor Bible series (AB: 24G. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017). Contrary to Eidevall’s skepticism that moderns can glean anything about the 8th century from the text of Amos, Carroll cites my good friend Chris Rollston’s work on literacy in ancient Israel to argue that an 8th-century person could have been equipped to compose such a work.

Carroll also provides detailed analysis of the geo-political and sociological backdrop of the 8th-century world, discussing Neo-Assyrian maneuvering and the relevance of the Samaria Ostraca. Although I found myself agreeing with much of his commentary, there are a few places I questioned Carroll’s conclusions. In Amos 5:25 we find a rather jarring question from the prophet: “did you bring sacrifices and offerings during 40 years in the wilderness?” Carroll surveys the field of scholarly discussion of this verse ranging from Wellhausen and Wolff, who suggest

this verse indicates that sacrifice was not a fundamental component of Yahweh worship, to D. Stuart and J. Niehaus who claim this verse simply notes that Israel lacked the resources to sacrifice in the wilderness. Carroll claims that Amos is noting that Israel did, in fact, make offerings in the wilderness but they did it with a concomitant commitment to ethics (unlike 8th-century Israel). My own opinion is closer to Wellhausen and Wolff whose position makes better sense of the rhetorical thrust of Amos's words, but I was surprised that Carroll did not discuss Jer 7:22 within this tradition.

There are just a few turns like this in his commentary that have the look of what I call “evangelical special pleading” to deal with texts that seem out of sync with other parts of the Bible. Yet in the main I found a number of interesting observations Carroll makes in this commentary that I had not noticed before. For example, Amaziah the priest makes no mention of Yahweh in his state-sponsored rebuke of Amos in chapter 7. This is consistent with the depiction of priest as political hack that Amos is at pains to unmask. Other insightful gems are scattered throughout, making this commentary well worth the effort to work through the 520 pages. All Hebrew words are transliterated, and I think a layperson could fruitfully use this commentary, even though a knowledge of Hebrew would certainly allow for a deeper understanding of some of the points Carroll raises.

JASON BEMBRY

Professor of Old Testament
Emmanuel Christian Seminary

Dana M. HARRIS. *An Introduction to Biblical Greek Grammar: Elementary Syntax and Linguistics.* New York: HarperCollins, 2020. 565 pp. \$59.99.

Harris has taught first-year Greek for over three decades, the last twenty-three years being at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School or TEDS (xxvii), where she has supervised numerous “Greek fellows (usually PhD students) who teach first-year Greek classes at TEDS using the online materials that she herself has created to supplement teaching from someone else’s textbook (xxix). Encouraged by the compliments of many students, Harris finally decided to take the next step and write her own print grammar.

Like many other first-year grammars, Harris’s grammar begins with the verb, where Mounce insists on beginning with the noun. And where Mounce presents the entire “Noun System” (Part II) first—all three declensions, including adjectives—before turning to the verb (Parts III–V), Harris breaks up the order of her presentation, switching back and forth between the various verbal conjugations and noun declensions.

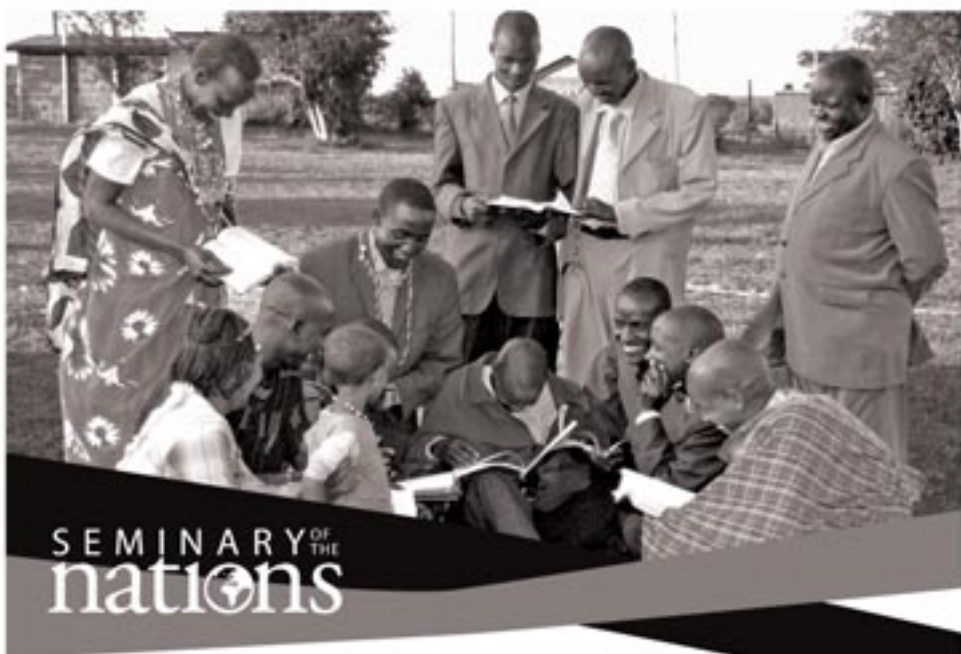
Harris divides her grammar into twenty-eight lessons. or “chapters.” Each chapter has twenty-five vocabulary words that must be memorized along with key paradigms that also must be memorized. Four chapters entitled “Etceteras” (chs. 8, 14, 20, and 28) have no vocabulary but contain extra information that expands

grammatical concepts introduced earlier. Boxed sections labeled “Going Deeper” and “For the Curious” provide additional details, and eighteen appendices summarize important information. Harris intends her grammar to be covered in two semesters with her four “integration” sections corresponding to mid-term and final exams.

While Harris recognizes the value of learning the Greek accents (37), she omits any treatment of the accents in the main section of her grammar and instead relegates them to an appendix (473–476), where her instruction is very incomplete. Indeed, Harris herself apparently does not know the rules of accent, and so her grammar contains several Greek words with the wrong accent. All of these errors occur in her “integration” sections where she attempts to compose her own sentences in Greek. On page 153 in “line 2” (she uses the singular “line” even though the text spills over into a second line; see 157), ταῖς should be τὰς, as she correctly has it in “line 1.” The genitive and dative forms of the article in both numbers, regardless of gender, *always* have the circumflex. Nevertheless, she repeats ταῖς eight more times on 154, 158, 161, 163, 165. In line 3 (153), ζῶῃ ἐστὶν should be ζῶῆ ἐστὶν (two instances of the same error). In line 5, ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ κύριος should be ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ κύριος (the enclitic ἐστὶν gives up its accent when it follows a perispomenon in the Greek NT, an exception to the rule in Attic). In line 6, ἐν σοὶ ὅτι should be ἐν σοὶ ὄτι. All of these mistakes are repeated on 154, 158, 160, 161, 163, 164, 165.

More mistakes are found when Harris attempts once again to compose her own sentences in Greek (258), where ἐβλέπον (at the end of line 4) should be ἔβλεπον, and τουτῶν (line 5) should be τούτων. These mistakes are repeated numerous times (259, 260) (N.B.: in the third line from the bottom of this page, there is a new mistake, ἔβλεψαν—with two accents!—instead of ἔβλεψαν, 264, 267, 268, 270, 271. Fortunately, Harris leans on 1 Tim 3:16 for the accentuation of lines 7–12. There are some small typos (e.g., the Greek colon is missing from line 6 on 258; it is there on the very next page, but it is missing again later on 270; on 187, the eighth line down, ἐκεῖνος, -η, -ς should be ἐκεῖνος, -η, -ο and why call it “the far demonstrative” here but the “remote demonstrative” elsewhere?). And there are some mistakes in production (e.g., the running head for ch. 5 is missing “Chapter 5” on the rectos). But none of the errors in accentuation can be attributed to the staff at Zondervan. True, they did not catch them. But they did not create them. Yet no one caught them, not Harris and not even her experienced “Greek fellows (usually PhD students)” who have been using this material for the past five years in teaching first-year Greek classes under Harris’s direction (xxix). I find it ironic that this massive number of oversights occurred at the very institution where D. A. Carson is still one of the *emeriti professors*. At least his famous work on Greek accents gets a mention (476), even though it has otherwise been forgotten.

Harris once again attempts to compose sentences for her third “integration” section (338). As long as she sticks to merely copying the biblical text of Mark 8:27, she does okay. But as soon as she starts to alter the biblical text with her own



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wording, she falls into the same pattern of errors. In line 5, *τινες λέγουσιν* should be *τινὲς λέγουσιν*, and *καὶ τινες Ἠλίας* should be *καὶ τινὲς Ἠλίας*. At the beginning of the very next line, *τινες δὲ ὅτι* should be *τινὲς δὲ ὅτι*. And the list goes on.

And Harris’s errors are not limited to accents. There are several errors involving matters like the wrong tense and the wrong form, and sometimes these errors fall back-to-back. For example, Harris uses the aorist passive indicative *ἀπεκτάνθη* to translate the future tense “will be killed (338, line 10).” This aorist sounds absurd, especially when it is juxtaposed with the future passive indicative *ἐγεσθήσεται* in the next line. Harris attempts to justify her use of the aorist tense by appealing to the use of *ἐλάβετε* in Mark 11:24 as a “future-referring aorist (359).” But the variant readings in Mark 11:24 underscore how wrong the aorist *ἐλάβετε* sounded to many Greek ears, and I argue that a disciple’s faith that envisions God’s answer to prayer as a past certainty, even though it still lies in the future, in order to illustrate what faith really means, hardly justifies Harris’s wording (338). Her use of the aorist *ἀπεκτάνθη* is just as wrong as her use of *χειρὶν*, instead of *χερσίν*, for the dative plural of *χεῖρ* in the very next phrase. And this misspelling is no mere typo, for it is repeated eight more times (339, 344, 349, 355–356, 359). Does Harris not know *when she does not know* the correct form?

Yet Harris has trouble not just in translating from English to Greek but even in translating from Greek to English. In 338, in the very first line, the accusative plural *τὰς κώμας* is later translated by Harris as if it were a singular, “the village” (358). She has taken this line from Mark 8:27, where the plural *τὰς κώμας Καισαρείας τῆς Φιλιππου* refers clearly to “the villages” (plural) surrounding Caesarea Philippi, and not to “the village [sg.] of Caesarea Philippi,” as she assumes in her English translation (358).

Such numerous errors and the general failure on the part of many eyes to spot them reflect a lack of experience in translating from English to Greek, and in the last instance it even shows up in translating from Greek to English. And this is my main complaint about Harris’s approach in teaching first-year grammar, and the similar approach followed in so many other first-year grammars. Students never get challenged to compose sentences in Greek. They are only taught to passively read Greek texts and to translate them into English. And this passive approach leads to poor language acquisition. Yet for the past half century, most schools have left traditional grammars like Machen for NT Greek or Weingreen for Classical Hebrew and have used newer textbooks that contain little or no exercises for translating from English into the biblical language. As a result, we now have scholars, teachers, and editors who are unable to spot even simple errors involving a biblical language in time to correct them before publication. We have raised a generation of scholars, teachers, and editors—to say nothing of ministers and missionaries—who cannot pick up a Greek NT and read it fluently but rather must resort to an electronic text encoded with definitions and parsing. And now this generation is teaching the next (Matt 10:24-25a)!

Fortunately, some teachers have recognized this alarming problem. Four

months before Harris's grammar appeared, John D. Schwandt published a grammar with a similar title, *An Introduction to Biblical Greek*. But the similarity between these two grammars ends with the title. Unlike Harris, Schwandt believes that composition in a foreign language can enhance one's competency in reading that language—that learning to read any foreign language is strengthened when one also attempts to write in that language. With this principle in mind, Schwandt supplies his grammar with translation exercises from English to Greek as well as from Greek to English. Those students who seriously desire to learn Greek well would do well to seek out Schwandt. Even Machen, in spite of it now being a century old, would be a better option.

DAVID H. WARREN

Research Professor in Biblical Studies
NW Florida School of Biblical Studies
Cantonment (Pensacola), Florida

Dariya RAFIYENKO and Ilija A. SERŽANT, eds. *Postclassical Greek: Contemporary Approaches to Philology and Linguistics*. TILSM: 335. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020. 347 pp. \$114.99.

The research that resulted in this collection of essays was supported by a European Research Grant for Grammatical Universals. The essays in this volume were presented at the 2016 conference that the title of this volume is named after. The editors both have expertise in corpus linguistics and have different periods and geographic areas of Greek language as their primary interest. Rafiyenko is more interested in Byzantine Greek and the Turkish region, while Seržant is more focused on Ancient and Koine Greek and the Baltic region. They both deal with language change while focusing on particular grammatical items in their research. Both of the editors have organized several conferences in relation to their research.

This volume is laid out with an overview of postclassical Greek by both editors, followed by two sections, 1) Grammatical Categories and 2) Sociolinguistic Aspects and Variation. Out of the two sections, the first is more applicable for those who work with NT Greek, although some of the essays in the second section will be relevant for speech-act theorists, the meaning of names, and the impact of local dialect on Greek language change.

The overview essay discusses the nature of postclassical Greek, including the NT period, listed as 31 BC–330 AD. It seems this is the second portion of the Hellenistic and Roman period from 323 BC–527 AD. The division at 31 BC seems to coincide with the establishment of the Roman Empire, while the latter division coincides with Constantine, the first Christian Emperor. The major areas of change between Classical and Postclassical Greek are grouped into phonetic changes, morphological pattern changes, new categories that grammaticalized, cases and prepositions, and syntax.

In section one, the first essay by Bartolo relates the usage in documentary papyri

to the merger between purpose and result clauses as the Greek modal system simplifies. The phenomenon observed generally in later Greek began earlier in distinct locales in the colloquial register of the language. This trend also is connected to observed usage in the NT in the essay. The second essay by Gianollo deals with the genitive-dative syncretism, where the NT text provides the best syntax for the reanalysis of certain constructions that later caused the collapse of the distinction between the genitive and dative cases. The third essay by Kölligan deals with later 6th-century use of periphrastic Future tenses. The fourth essay by Stolk studies three prepositions with the accusative case that often substitute the bare dative in Greek papyri. Stolk also discusses the issues around combining papyrology, paleography, and linguistics to study certain features. The fifth essay by Tronci focuses on LXX and NT Future forms. This essay explains the observed changes in terms of external factors that drive language change such as register variation and awareness of a prestige language. Tronci provides some methodological criticisms on approaches that only look into the texts themselves without considering the sociological factors that change language. The sixth essay by Joseph debates those focused on only grammaticalization as the answer for all language change, since the change resulting in the loss of the infinitive appears to be de-grammaticalizing, instead. Joseph relates his study to examples in NT Greek. The seventh essay by Lavidas and Haug deal with treebanks for diachronic analysis of Greek texts. This essay shows the usefulness of several methods when combined in a corpus linguistic study to answer certain questions.

In section two, the first essay by Benedetti discusses Theodosius' *Κανόνες*, (4th Century) where he explains the Perfect paradigm. His explanation combines morphological and functional criteria to view the three forms, active, middle and passive, as two sets of binary oppositions rather than a single tripartite opposition based on morphology alone. Benedetti sees his explanation as relevant for Perfect tense-form studies of Greek more generally. The second essay by Bruno deals with forms of the directive speech act, based on Ptolemaic papyri. The third essay by Crellin deals with names and identity in Hellenistic and Roman periods. Crellin also analyzes issues when a name is transported from one language into another. The fourth essay by Dahlgren and Leiwo deals with misspellings in Egyptian Greek. They decide that the vowel system of Coptic is more likely affecting the misspellings rather than a confusion regarding the Greek form. Once some of the Greek vowels were transported into Coptic, then certain important morphemes would become merged, thus affecting which form was written back in Greek. The fifth essay by Luis relates individual dialects to the changing Koine as Postclassical Greek develops. The volume does not contain a general introduction nor a conclusion.

As a collection of essays, this volume is useful for developing a better understanding of NT Greek, and especially how NT Greek relates to the changing scene in Koine Greek over time. This volume is useful for those developing Greek grammars, or wishing to supplement existing grammars in places. This volume is mostly for researchers, but might be used as supplemental reading in advanced

Greek courses or courses where the focus is on the impact linguistics is having on our understanding of Greek.

JAMES E. SEDLACEK

Visiting Lecturer of New Testament Greek,
Nazarene Theological College, United Kingdom

Walter D. ZORN. *The Faithfulness of Jesus the Messiah: A Gospel Emphasis.* Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2020. 316 pp. \$36.00.

One of the on-going debates in NT studies is the meaning of Paul's πίστις Χριστοῦ phraseology. Does the genitive construction mean the "faith/faithfulness of Christ" (subjective genitive) or "faith in Christ" (objective genitive), or perhaps something else? The phrase appears seven times in the non-disputed letters (Rom 3:22, 26; Gal 2:16 [2x], 20; 3:22; Phil 3:9) and once in the disputed (Eph 3:12). That scholars do not always line up neatly or consistently on the question only adds to the unpredictability of the discussion. In this volume, Zorn, long-time respected (and now retired) professor at Lincoln Christian University, argues for a subjective genitive that re-casts and re-shapes much of what Paul (and the rest of the NT authors) wrote and which should be appropriated by the church today.

Zorn should be credited for broadening the parameters beyond what has largely been a Pauline debate. Not only does Zorn devote chapters to Romans, Galatians, and collectively the remainder of the Pauline corpus, he also includes chapters on the General Epistles, the Synoptic Gospels/Acts, and the Johannine literature, including the Book of Revelation. Each chapter begins with a (not always germane) discussion of higher critical issues and then proceeds to a word study of πίστις/πιστός/πιστεύω in their various contexts, looking for ways in which a subjective interpretation might shed light on a larger linguistic matrix. At times the subjective genitive seems plausible (Rev 2:13; 14:12), other times possible (Jas 2:1), and still other times problematic (see below). Zorn helpfully enlists Jesus' own trust in God (Matt 27:43!) as narrative support, though a subjective reading is in places not contextually convincing (Mark 11:22).

While this expansion of the discussion constitutes the book's most important contribution, the heart of the debate is still Pauline. If Paul speaks of the faith/faithfulness of Christ, where else might this theme appear? A key text is Rom 1:17, where Zorn follows Douglas Campbell in rendering ὁ δίκαιος as a reference to Christ (so also Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38), who lives (via his resurrection) by his faithfulness. The enigmatic expression ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν thus logically runs "from Messiah's faithfulness unto our faithfulness" and becomes a catchphrase for all the usages of ἐκ πίστεως throughout Romans and Galatians. Faithfulness, more so than human faith or trust, is paramount: God justifies the one who lives out of the faithfulness (ἐκ πίστεως) of Jesus (Rom 3:26); the promise of inheritance is given to Jews and Gentiles who share in the faithfulness (ἐκ πίστεως) of Abraham (Rom 4:16); justified believers enjoy peace with God by virtue of the faithfulness

(ἐκ πίστεως) of Jesus (Rom 5:1). Even a non-soteriological passage like Rom 14:23 follows suit: the weak Christian is condemned if he or she does not eat out of the faithfulness (ἐκ πίστεως) of Jesus.

So pervasive is Zorn’s “faithfulness” interpretation that twenty of the twenty-two occurrences of πίστις in Galatians denote “faithfulness” (1:23 and 6:10 are the possible exceptions). Even passages like Colossians 1:4 (“your faith in Christ Jesus” [τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ]), 2:5 (“your faith in Christ” [εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως ὑμῶν]) and 2:12 (“through faith in the working of God” [διὰ τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐνεργείας τοῦ θεοῦ]) speak of faithfulness, as forced as these interpretations seem. In an overwhelming number of usages Zorn argues that “faithfulness” makes better sense contextually and in light of the respective document as a whole. This notable *tendenz* elevates what many scholars regard as a secondary meaning in Paul to primary status. Why Paul should prefer πίστις to πιστός in any given context the author does not say.

Space does not permit dealing with all of Zorn’s exegesis, so I will limit myself to a few observations in which I am not alone. I am not convinced, for example, that ὁ δίκαιος in Rom 1:17 is messianic. While the phrase certainly occurs elsewhere in the NT as a Christological title, it appears nowhere else in Paul with this meaning. To start a Pauline discussion from such a non-Pauline starting point is simply a non-starter. Nor am I convinced that ἐκ πίστεως in Rom 1:17 is code for a larger thematic construct (notice the interchangeability with διὰ τῆς πίστεως at Rom 3:30). More likely ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν is simply emphatic, akin to the linguistic parallel in 2 Cor 2:16 (ἐκ θανάτου εἰς θάνατον and so correctly rendered in the NIV “by faith from first to last.” What keeps this faith from being purely anthropological is Christ as its object and grace as its origin (Eph 2:8; Phil 1:29; cf. Rom 4:16-17; 12:3), rendering the separation of Christ’s faithful work from its human reception a false dichotomy. Zorn avoids the implications of Eph 2:8 by understanding διὰ πίστεως (predictably) as Christ’s faithfulness, a rather unlikely view given the absence of any cruciform language in the text. (I would be curious to know if the author sees faith as τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ in John 6:29 as a subjective genitive.)

Linguistically, the subjective interpretation does not bode well. The close proximity of the cognate verb πιστεύω (trust/believe) in many passages (Rom 1:16-17; 3:22; 4:16-17; Gal 2:16; 3:6-7,22) supports an objective interpretation. It simply asks too much of the hearer/reader to perceive subtle linguistic nuances without any contextual clues, especially since Paul typically uses the objective genitive with verbal nouns in relation to Christ (τῆς ἐλπίδος τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [1 Thess 1:3]; τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ [Phil 3:8]). Linguists tell us that the interpretation which adds least to the meaning of a passage should be preferred, particularly relevant in a passage like Gal 2:16 where maximal redundancy is profuse. Paul’s point here is emphasis, not semantic distinction. Zorn himself has no problem appealing to emphasis in a passage like Phil 3:9 to support a twofold reference to the faithfulness of Christ even though Zorn considers such

“duplication” a mark against the objective interpretation. One simply cannot have his exegetical cake and eat it, too.

One reason for reviewing this volume was to come to terms in my own mind about the objective-subjective genitive debate. The lack of any unambiguous predication of the faithfulness (πιστός) of Jesus (perhaps at 2 Thess 3:3; 2 Tim 2:13) does not bolster my faith in the subjective interpretation, especially since Paul can speak so unambiguously of the faithfulness (πιστός) of God (1 Cor 1:9; 10:13; 2 Cor 1:18; 1 Thess 5:24; cf. Heb 10:23). But assuming for the moment that Zorn is correct, what is the upshot? How does Jesus’ faithfulness relate to our salvation in particular? Does Jesus’ faithfulness become simply an ethical example to follow? Here Zorn would do well to interact with the work of R. Michael Allen (*The Christ’s Faith*) and Brandon Crowe (*The Last Adam*; more recently, *Why Did Jesus Live a Perfect Life?*) who offer compelling rationales for the vicarious necessity of Jesus’ faithfulness. The imputation of the active and passive obedience of Jesus (though Crowe mitigates the distinction between them) brings great comfort to struggling believers, who may not be as confident as others seemingly are in their own righteousness (Luke 18:9). Some scholars seem to labor under the illusion that the subjective interpretation undermines Reformation soteriology; it does no such thing. The denial of Christ’s imputed obedience, the result of our baptismal union with Christ and hence no legal fiction, is one of the serious missteps of the New Perspective on Paul, particularly those interpreters following in the path of N.T. Wright.

The author includes an account of his conversion experience, so I will offer mine. I grew up in the same independent branch of the Stone-Campbell Movement as the author. Unlike the author, however, I never heard much about God’s justifying work on my behalf in the finished work of Christ, or perhaps I just wasn’t listening. My experience was similar to my former colleague Joe Grana, who said that when he became a Christian, he had just enough Christianity to make him miserable. I thank God for a personal second awakening some years ago that opened my mind and soul to the riches of justification by grace through trust in Christ’s faithful substitutionary representative death on the cross. That trust saves me not only from divine wrath but from the human need for approval from others, including the scholarly guild. It has saved me from a toxic Christianity and an academic ethos of self-promotion. As counter-intuitive as it seems, the answer to easy-believism is not a greater stress on faithfulness (sanctification) but on genuine heartfelt conversion (justification).

The Stone-Campbell Movement has a soteriology problem, displayed historically in a proclivity to divisive self-righteousness and presently in its neglect (or disavowal) of a cross-centered, sin-atoning gospel, at least in its intellectualist circles. To Zorn’s credit, the faithfulness of Jesus is still a faithfulness to the cross with its salvific effects, but Zorn’s tendency to blur faith and faithfulness, a recent trend in NT studies, can too easily morph into a “Jesus as example” gospel that puts the onus on human rather than divine performance. Trust has obedience in its DNA, but they are not the same. Faith is God-centered; faithfulness is human-

centered. Faith is receptive; faithfulness is responsive. Collapsing the two meanings at critical points not only commits the overload fallacy and linguistic equivocation but turns justification by faith into justification by (my) faithfulness and hence justification by my works, however Christian they may be (Eph 2:10; Tit 3:5). The Reformation debate is not over, it's just taking subtler forms. I suspect that the author's commitment to a Restorationist soteriology strongly opposed to the gift character of faith and the *sola fide* position held by much of historic and contemporary Protestantism heightens the subjective genitive's appeal. Exegetes with the same soteriological perspective will no doubt find Zorn's presentation alluring, though objective genitive advocates can certainly benefit from seeing a thoroughgoing interpretation of the subjective view at work.

In the introduction, the author confesses his shortcomings as a writer. While the volume occasionally suffers from repetitive material, stylistic inconsistencies, and organizational overlap, Zorn is effective in relaying a technical theme to a lay audience, aided by helpful explanations of terms and a glossary in the back. Since the author admittedly does not engage with arguments to the contrary, the one-sided nature of his presentation will require a counterbalance if the church is to think faithfully about this issue. Clarity about the gospel is critical for the life of the church, especially in this confused and confusing age. Readers could benefit, however, from a scripture index for a quick location of passages.

DAVID LERTIS MATSON
 Professor of Biblical Studies (Retired)
 Hope International University

Helen K BOND. *The First Biography of Jesus: Genre and Meaning in Mark's Gospel*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 317 pp. \$42.99.

In the current volume, Bond takes up the issue of what it means to consider Mark's Gospel as a *bios*. The idea of reading a Gospel as a *bios*—that is, interpreting a Gospel as being written in the manner and style of Greco-Roman “Lives”—is not itself a new enterprise. There has been a growing consensus in Gospel scholarship in recent decades that ancient biographies provide the closest parallel to the Gospels (in spite of obvious differences). Yet, as far as Bond is concerned, this shift in Gospel scholarship has not yet been fully realized nor its implications fully explored. Consequently, Bond provides a sustained reading of Mark, not only informed by possible contact points with ancient biographies, but as a *bios*, full-stop.

Bond's analysis consists of six chapters. The opening chapter (“Mark as *Bios*”) situates the reader in a discussion of the ebb and flow of *bios* as an issue of concern in Gospel studies. The second chapter (“Ancient *Bioi*”) introduces the reader to the topic of ancient biographies, paying particular attention to key features and topics of the genre, as well as some historiographical considerations. The third chapter (“Mark as Biographer”) moves the reader from a general discussion of ancient

biographies into the Gospel text itself. Here, Bond offers introductory remarks concerning the Evangelist and takes up questions of audience, structure, and tradition. In the fourth chapter (“Life of Jesus”) Bond presents an analysis of the Markan text, touching on ancient biographical topics along the way. Chapter five (“Other Characters”) shifts focus from Jesus to those in his orbit, with particular attention given to peripheral characters, Jewish and Roman leaders, the twelve disciples, and lesser-known characters. Finally, chapter six (“The Death of Jesus”) narrows the focus of the study to Jesus’ death.

Bond has offered a compelling reading of Mark as an ancient biography and highlighted important ways in which *bios* as a generic concern should guide interpretations of the Gospel. One of the book’s considerable strengths is its clarity. In a whirlwind of efficiency, the reader is transported through a discussion of Gospel scholarship, ancient views of *bioi*, and the Markan text, and offered intriguing insights along the way. Additionally, Bond’s work underscores the importance of generic consideration. Gospel scholars sometimes put the question of genre on the backburner in order to get to more “pressing concerns.” But reading Mark as a *bios* helps the reader better fine-tune important aspects of the Gospel and provides interesting queries when the Evangelist departs from typical *bios* form. For instance, what does it mean that the Evangelist pays no attention to Jesus’ physical features, otherwise a staple of Greek, Roman, and Jewish *bioi*? There are some limitations. One topic that would be worth pursuing more in-depth is the way in which otherwise encomiastic *bioi* engage in negative characterization of their respective heroes. The Markan text contains some episodes that arguably depict Jesus in an “odd” light. It would be interesting to explore whether this is a Markan tendency, a typical feature of *bioi*, or a narrative strategy that contributes to characterization.

Bond’s text is imminently readable and highly informative, and would be well-suited for an advanced undergraduate class, divinity or graduate seminar, or pastor’s home library should she be interested in delving deeper into this topic. Of course, debates will continue regarding Mark and genre, but Stone-Campbell scholars interested in this discussion would do well to work through this treatment of the subject.

JON CARMAN
Lecturer
Baylor University

M. Eugene BORING. *Hearing Paul’s Voice: Insights for Teaching and Preaching.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 240 pp. \$29.99.

This volume by the esteemed Christian Church scholar is the second volume of his informal series, joining his *Hearing John’s Voice* (Eerdmans, 2019). “The constant goal of the series is to approach within hearing distance of the Bible’s own message.” Boring expresses his thanks to several readers of various stages of this

project (“a rather large group of preachers and teachers”) who have in common “the desire to be vehicles of the *Verbum Dei* through which the church is called into being and nourished for its mission and witness in the world” (xiii-xiv). Parts of both of these studies began life as a memorial lectureship at First Christian Church of Boonville, Missouri.

As a result of those intentional beginnings, Boring writes a kind of “theology of Paul” that is based in his long, rich academic career, but is realized in the context of the church congregation. The outcome is a volume which traces Paul’s “work-in-progress” theology diachronically, albeit following historically from his earliest work, 1 Thessalonians, to Romans, to that of his heirs, the writer of Ephesians, and the “Pastor” who penned 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus (the Pastoral Epistles). Paul’s theology as “work in progress” is thus portrayed as a journey (not just a snapshot of Paul’s thought at one point in time—e.g., Dunn’s “Theology of Paul when he wrote Romans”). Canonically, Boring emphasizes the continuity between Paul’s message and that of his heirs/interpreters.

As prologue, Boring invites readers to listen to and engage Paul in terms of worldview questions (“Two travelers on the road,” who both experience good and evil, but have different views of such life experiences. One believes the road leads to God, the other doesn’t know; xv-xvi). In the epilogue, the two travelers meet a third—on the Road to Emmaus. “It turns out there is only one road. It is going someplace, and there is One who has been there and back.” This has been revealed to us by the One who once walked with us on the road, and still does. Meanwhile, there is a job to do. . . (209).

Boring introduces us to Paul’s thought through the eyes (and ears) of a hypothetical hearer of Paul’s letter (“Julia,” 8-12), asking how such a person would have heard Paul’s message. He explores the idea of “conversion” as this would have impacted many in Paul’s churches—especially those without a Jewish background. Placing Paul’s letters (and the Pauline sphere) back into their Greco-Roman context is essential to our understanding, to hearing Paul’s voice.

Boring reads 1 Thessalonians not just as an occasional letter addressing the death of loved ones before Christ returns, nor merely dealing with the practical problem of the idleness of some members. Rather, Paul provides an overview of his theological worldview, focused in the trio of “faith, love, and hope.” These topics, which appear together four times in Paul’s letters, provide an outline of the structure of Christian life as a whole, past, present, and future. “Faith” directs our attention to the past, God’s mighty acts in history, with his people. “Love” is the ground of Paul’s teaching which points the believer toward the appropriate ethic (in the present; the theological “what” of Christian faith becomes the ethical “so what” of Christian life, 43). “Hope” directs Christ-followers to their future. These are not just virtues, but they “represent the outline of God’s acts in history and the believer’s life from beginning to end” (25).

Boring’s section on Romans is the longest, and rightly so, since Romans is the “template for Pauline Theology.” This section of the volume reads the most like a

traditional theology of Paul/Romans. Boring works through the entire Letter to the Romans, handling large units. I especially appreciate his treatment of Romans 9–11, a section which in Christian Churches too often is avoided. But this we cannot do and still be fair to Romans, or to Paul, not to mention remaining true to our claim to be a “New Testament” people.

The difficulty of Romans—understanding the continuity and cogency of Paul’s argument—centers on chapters 9–11. Paul wrestles mightily with the dual awareness that Jesus is God’s Messiah, the culmination and fulfillment of God’s eternal plan, yet Israel as a people has rejected God’s Messiah (118-119). Moreover, the failure of God’s elect people is not only a result of their disobedience, but is also an act of God, who hardened their hearts (122, citing Isa 6:9-10, *inter alia*). Election and predestination are not only Paul’s problem, but if we also “own” them, it will help us better appreciate Paul’s answer to this conundrum (118).

Boring works through Paul’s complex answer with erudition and insight. “The law entered into the world of flesh, was tested, and succumbed. . . . Jesus entered into the world of flesh . . . , was tested, and was not overcome. . . .” (124, on Rom 8:3-4). Israel’s stumbling opened the way for the Gentiles, but Israel will recover and finish the race (125-126). Ultimately, Paul’s language of the revelation of God’s mystery is confessional language, affirmed by grateful insiders, not objectifying language about outsiders. This revelatory language of the community’s faith is beyond conceptual understanding and can only be apprehended in worship” (“O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!” 126-127).

Boring invokes the narrative mode of biblical theology to analyze Ephesians. Perceiving the narrative world of a letter means focusing on a particular text, not the author’s worldview *per se* (authors regularly write without referring to some of the events they may have in mind). Rather, the issue is which events occur in the narrative world of a particular text. The author does not teach a “grand narrative,” but assumes it. As such, NT letters mediate the transformative call of God and instruction in the Christian life *not* primarily by explicit affirmations or lists of “dos and don’ts” (146-147). Boring provides an outline of Ephesians of some 139 theses (147-157), sketching the letter’s contents from God’s Creation, through Covenant, sending Christ, calling the Church, and ending in the Consummation (147).

Boring concludes his study with a section on the Pastoral Epistles. “The Pastor expresses a profound Pauline personal faith in God (2 Tim 1:12), but his letters are concerned with faith in the sense of ‘faith and order’ of the churches, the church’s theology and structure.” And “the Pastor’s instructions on faith and order are in the service of the church’s mission, a call to its life and work” (176). Pauline soteriology is preserved and elaborated: the church lives between two epiphanies of Jesus Christ, the one as crucified and risen Jesus of Nazareth to which the church looks back in memory (2 Tim 2:8), the other to which the church looks forward in hope” (1 Tim 1:1; 178). The Pastor was a radical: like Luther, who for the sake of the church left the monastery, married, and raised a family, so the Pastor commends Christian existence as life within the conventional social structures of the world,

necessarily accommodating Christian commitment to it. . . (183). Again, Boring’s emphasis is on the continuity with Paul’s theology. Finally, like the Pastor, readers are charged with bridging the gap between the world of scripture and our own world (184). These letters can teach us much in this regard.

The approach of this volume is refreshing and compelling, but not above scrutiny in the details. For example, on the question of why Paul does not cite the words of Jesus (46; 53), Boring states, “For Paul, Jesus is good news for us Gentiles *not* because of anything Jesus had said or done during his lifetime, but because the event as a whole was the decisive act of *God*” (46). But can these be separated? What of *kenosis*, or the implications of the *Pistis Christou* statements? (See 86-87.) Other questions which might be raised include Boring’s take on “Who is the ‘I’ of Romans 7?” a question with almost as many answers as there are interpreters.

It is unlikely that Boring’s emphasis on the continuity of Pauline theology within the deutero-Pauline letters will satisfy everyone. Beyond those ideologically committed to direct Pauline authorship as *sine qua non*, the critical issues with Ephesians and the Pastoral Epistles continue to cry out. Regarding Jews and Gentiles, what does one do with Ephesians’ “third race” (out of Jews and Gentiles a third “new person,” 2:15 NASB), compared to Gentiles “grafted in” in Romans 11? How do we react to the church as a universalized abstraction in Ephesians, compared to Paul’s congregational focus? And consider the seemingly over-realized eschatology in the idea that we, too, have been raised with Him and seated with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (2:6; but see 160). The Pastoral Epistles famously raise their own set of knotty questions.

Such issues are treated in this volume as examples of accommodation to later times and different circumstances. Hermeneutically, we are faced with the challenge that, just as Paul’s heirs went beyond Paul in certain respects and adapted scripture and tradition to their different circumstances, so do we necessarily adapt. Preaching and teaching require it.

Of course, Boring is no stranger to these issues, having himself published a highly regarded critical introduction to the NT (WJK 2012). His emphasis in this volume remains on continuity, as is fitting for any work on the canonical heritage of Paul and his heirs/interpreters (deutero-Pauline theology rooted in Paul’s theology, see 144). As indicated in the title, this volume is aimed at pastors and teachers. I will use it with my graduate students. The discussions are deep and rich, inviting the reader to return again and again.

Boring sprinkles this volume with quotes and other insightful material, set off in sidebars. These thought-provoking and illustrative nuggets will be easily adapted by preachers and teachers for their own use. Much of this material feels personal (see 8)—some of it Boring explicitly identifies as such. It strikes me that Boring’s style of presentation is a window into his own mind and ministry. Theology is, after all, autobiographical. He seems to sum up his experience with Paul in a personal story of reading outdoors at dusk, daylight fading imperceptibly. When his wife asked why

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he was sitting in the dark, he replied, “I didn’t know it was dark until you turned on the light” (72).

THOMAS SCOTT CAULLEY
Professor of Biblical Studies
Kentucky Christian University