

BOOK REVIEWS

Piotr Bienkowski and Alan Millard, ed., *Dictionary of the Ancient Near East*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000.

There is no end to the production of books – including reference works, though the latter are hardly what the sage originally had in mind (Eccl 12:12b). But of all books, certainly reference works are the ones ideally designed to alleviate the “weariness of the flesh” that much study brings – and that goal is one that the sage would undoubtedly have endorsed. Unfortunately, the recent proliferation of scholarly reference works in Biblical and cognate studies has not always met that goal. On the one hand, such a judgment makes Qoheleth’s point all the more poignant, but, happily, such an assessment does not hold true for the work under review. Here, in a very manageable 342 pages, is a one volume, affordable (under fifty dollars) reference work that admirably covers what takes most other reference works multiple volumes to do.

Consider, for a moment, some of the competition that has appeared in the last ten years. There is the six-volume, six-million word *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (ed. D. N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992). Impressive, to be sure, but so large as to be unwieldy and even, at times, unhelpful. Obviously, its main concern is with Biblical coverage though a good many of its six million words extend beyond the canon proper. Then there is the four-volume *New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (ed. E. Stern; New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992). Extremely helpful with regard to specific sites in Israel/Palestine but, given the focus, minimal on non-archaeological aspects of religion, culture, and literature, not to mention locales outside the Holy Land proper. Enter *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East* (4 vols., ed. J. M. Sasson; New York: Scribners’, 1995). At almost 3,000 pages it is a treasure-trove of information, but is organized according to essays on thematic themes so as to preclude quick-and-speedy access on any one particular subject. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East* (5 vols., ed. E. M. Meyers; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) is much better on that score, and most of the articles are of manageable length with appropriate bibliography, but it, too, focuses primarily on archaeological sites (and, notably, methods) so that other aspects, while receiving coverage, do not quite get their due. And what of Egypt? *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* (3 vols., ed. D. B. Redford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) fills that gap but with both the strengths and weaknesses of its five-volume sister work. A more manageable dictionary than these –

and one more tightly focused on the Bible – that also appeared in this time frame is the *Dictionary of Demons and Deities in the Bible* (ed. K. van der Toorn et al., Leiden: Brill, 1995; rev. ed. 1999). While quite helpful insofar as it goes, the title is illustrative: the entries take their origin from, or find rootage in, for the most part, their appearance (whether real or emended!) in the canon of Scripture.

Coming at the end of this ten-year period, flying quite low under the radar (perhaps the publisher didn't publicize well) is the *Dictionary of the Ancient Near East*. In size, and consequently depth, it cannot hope to compete with its many-volumed companions, but in quality it is worthy to be included in their august company. The *Dictionary* is well laid out, organized as is expected of a dictionary, facilitating quick and easy access of the subject under review. It is also thorough: the geographical demarcation of "ancient Near East" includes Mesopotamia, Iran, Anatolia, the Caucasus, the Levant, and Arabia; the chronological range extends from the earliest periods (Lower Palaeolithic; ca. 1.5 million years) to 539 BC (see p. ix). Archaeological sites are covered, but also major deities, historical figures, and pieces of literature. Unexpected in a dictionary of this size are the many biographical entries (e.g., on Albright or Rawlinson or Petrie) and those on broader thematic entries (tools and weapons, transport and travel, etc.); these are the kinds of entries previously found only in extensive works such as *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East* or *Civilizations of the Near East*. There are also a vast number of well-chosen photographs throughout the work; rare indeed is the set of facing pages that lacks at least one. Additionally, there are several helpful maps; a nice chronological chart; and king lists for Babylonia, Assyria, Elam, Hatti, Mitanni, Ugarit, Urartu, Damascus, Israel, and Judah.

As if this were not impressive enough, two additional aspects make this volume even more surprising – and useful. Each – nb: *each!* – entry is accompanied by a bibliography. These range from one to seven or eight (with three to four a probable average) bibliographical items per entry. Furthermore, as is to be expected and desired, these entries are not exclusively to English works but rather include the main contributions regardless of the original language of publication. This aspect is certainly a rarity and a plus in a work of this size. The other aspect that is to be celebrated is the inclusion of a rather thorough index to the whole work. Finally!

There are, of course, deficiencies in this, as any, such book. It would have made good sense to take the dictionary down to 332 BC, rather than end at 539; what with the plethora of good Persian Period scholarship (and scholars) available, such a decision would not have been too onerous. It is also striking how few contributors contributed to this dictionary. Most of the entries were authored by one of the editors, Bienkowski or Millard. Outside of these two leaders in the field, only eleven other scholars (all of whom are recognized authorities) are listed as contributors. I am somewhat ambivalent about this situation. It is clear that the small contributor pool coupled with the large number of editor-authored articles has led to a remarkable tightness and uniformity to the work. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that there are experts on various topics that might have been heard here but are not. The editors were forced to make a decision in this regard and, if they chose poorly, it is nevertheless certain that the final product does not suffer overmuch despite it.

Another deficiency is the lack of Egypt in this dictionary. This is to be expected given the title and, admittedly, Egypt does make its presence felt (how can it not?) at various points and entries throughout the dictionary. So, this lack is not so much the book's, with its focus on the "Ancient Near East" proper (and so defined), nor is it the editors', who worked within that definition. Perhaps it ought to be laid elsewhere. It is my own hope that the publisher will see fit to produce a comparable Dictionary of Ancient Egypt, not only to compliment and balance the present volume, but also to serve a correlate function, especially given the plethora of silliness on things Egyptian that is published for mass consumption these days. Until then, the present dictionary will be near my elbow – *near-er*, in fact, than its more expensive and expansive companions. Any student of the Bible – particularly the Old Testament – would benefit from doing the same.

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James Limburg, *Psalms. Westminster Bible Companion*; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000.

Within the no-small-cottage-industry of biblical commentaries and commentary series, the Westminster Bible Companion has carved out a niche for itself. It is user-friendly, accessible, and oriented explicitly toward the laity, especially lay people who find themselves in teaching capacities in the church (see p. xi). At the same time, it is written by top-notch scholars in the field. The series is based on and includes the text of the NRSV. This sometimes adds to the size of the commentary in question (the Psalms volume is by far the largest yet published); unfortunately, more often than not, inclusion of the text cuts into the amount of space the commentator has to write on a particular passage. Thankfully, given the non-technical level of the series and the skill of the writers that have been selected by the series editors (Patrick D. Miller and David L. Bartlett) for the task, the overall quality has not been noticeably diminished. Moreover, on the other side of the coin, there is a good bit to be said for the convenience of having the biblical text and the commentary together in one volume.

James Limburg's commentary on the Psalms fits within this series perfectly. Limburg – recently retired as Professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary in Saint Paul, Minnesota – is well-known for his scholarship and for his giftedness at making that scholarship meaningful and contemporary. These admirable traits come together nicely in this volume and it is the latter that receives the main emphasis.

Limburg begins with a brief introduction to the Psalms, which he helpfully designates "The People's Book." Here he provides a brief orientation to the Psalms as comprising lament and praise (though he argues that the basic theme is praise; pp. xiv, xvii) and points out that the Psalter has functioned in the past, and continues to function today, as hymnbook, prayer book, and instruction book. Limburg's knowledge of recent Psalms scholarship is most apparent in the brief section of the introduction entitled "Going by the

Book" (pp. xvi-xvii). Here he distills the recent trend among Psalms scholars to read the Psalter as a whole – that is, paying attention to how psalms affect one another in their literary context (e.g., Pss 1-2, 146-150, and so forth). Limburg closes the introduction with a very brief discussion of the poetry of the psalms. This section is almost too brief; it can only scratch the surface of the poetic devices that a reader needs to know in order to best interpret and appreciate the Psalms. Given the space limitations, Limburg has time only to highlight synonymous and antithetic parallelism, repetition, and alphabetic acrostics. Still, to his credit, he does point interested readers to further literature, including an important essay of his own in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*.

In the course of the introduction, Limburg draws attention to the way the Psalms emerge out of real life and real life experiences (e.g., happiness and tears) and how, given this, they continue to have real impact "in the midst of life" (p. xvi). He writes: "The psalms originated in the midst of life and continue to appear in the midst of life. The commentary herein will provide examples, and the reader can add his or her own!" (ibid.). This is well said and is no false advertising. Limburg proceeds to explicate each of the Psalms (combining some, e.g., Pss 9-10, 42-43, since these were probably originally singular compositions) and does so with unique, fresh, and contemporary perspectives. His approach is captured already within the titles he gives to each of the Psalms. Consider the following, somewhat random, sample:

- The Way to Go (Psalm 1)
- A Text of Terror (Psalm 6)
- Asking the Hard Questions (Psalm 13)
- "And Not So Hot On Why!" (Psalm 22)
- The Power of a Preposition (Psalm 23)
- Here Comes the Bride (Psalm 45)
- Probably Not for Opening Devotions (Psalm 58)
- Rock Music (Psalm 61)
- The Night of Broken Glass (Psalm 74)
- On the Road Again (Psalm 121)
- Can We Take Our Religion Along? (Psalm 137)
- From King David to Duke Ellington (Psalm 150)

This is just a beginning and the list does not begin to do justice to the creativity that Limburg shows in his explication of the Psalms. Rare indeed is the scholar who is as adept at weaving life and life stories with Scripture as the popular, "Family" (read: Christian!) bookstore bestseller. Thankfully, Limburg combines solid scholarship with insight and a wisdom that may well find its way to even the most unscholarly of such bookstores. Let's hope so! And, if so, the reader, and the people she or he teaches, will be clearly and obviously better off for it. So, here's to hoping that Limburg's *Psalms* goes a long way in helping the Psalms continue to find their way as hymns, prayers, and instructions in the midst of the life of the people of God.

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Bass, Dorothy C. and Volf, Miroslav, editors. *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2002.

"But what does that have to do with *real* life?" sighs the perennial Systematic Theology student to Yale Divinity Professor and co-editor of *Practicing Theology*, Miroslav Volf. When confronted with this harangue, Volf confides, "I am often tempted to snap back, 'If you would just abandon your vulgar notions of "real" life and muster some intellectual curiosity you could spare us your question!' Usually, I overcome the temptation and give a little speech instead" (245). *Practicing Theology* is a collection of thirteen theologians' "speeches" in essay form to this perpetually posited question.

In her introduction, co-editor Dorothy Bass surveys each contributor's unity, diversity, and input and defines Christian practices as "patterns of cooperative human activity in and through which life together takes shape over time in response to and in light of God as known in Jesus Christ." Bass adds, "Focusing on practices invites theological reflection on the ordinary, concrete activities of actual people" (3). *Practicing Theology* is "an invitation to perceive both the theological quality of everyday practices and the practical importance of theology and doctrine for Christian living" (9). The book is divided into four subdivisions:

- 1) Practicing Theology, Embracing A Way of Life
- 2) Practicing Theology, Engaging in Ministry
- 3) Practicing Theology, Becoming Theologians
- 4) Practicing Theology, Serving A Way of Life

The chapters are as follows: 1) A Theological Understanding of Christian Practices by Dorothy Bass and Craig Dykstra; 2) Attending to the Gaps between Beliefs and Practices by Amy Plantinga Pauw; 3) Graced Practices: Excellence and Freedom in the Christian Life by Serene Jones; 4) Deepening Practices: Perspectives from Ascetical and Mystical Theology by Sarah Coakley; 5) Is There a Doctor in the House? Reflections on the Practice of Healing in African American Churches by Tammy R. Williams; 6) A Community's Practice of Hospitality: The Interdependence of Practices and Communities by Christine D. Pohl; 7) Liturgy, Ministry, and the Stranger: The Practice of Encountering the Other in Two Christian Communities by Gilbert I. Bond; 8) Little Moves Against Destructiveness: Theology and the Practice of Discernment by Nancy E. Bedford; 9) Beliefs, Practices, and the Ends of Theological Education by L. Gregory Jones; 10) Hospitality and Truth: The Disclosure of Practices in Worship and Doctrine by Reinhard Hutter; 11) Theological Reflection and Christian Practices by Kathryn Tanner; 12) Theology for a Way of Life by Miroslav Volf. Volf's final chapter acts as a bracketing essay in partnership with Bass's introduction.

In "A Theological Understanding of Christian Practices" Dykstra and Bass demonstrate that entering into new life in baptism should beget a new way of living. Particular people in particular places who encounter one another in the framework of God's grace are called to sing their lives in praise to God in an extraordinarily Christian manner. Such joyful noise includes honoring the human body as fearfully and wonderfully made, gracious-

ly offering hospitality to strangers, looking to the ways of our households, saying yes and no, keeping the Sabbath holy, exercising discernment of the spirit, giving truthful testimony to experience, shaping communities into Kingdom microcosms, scandalously cultivating forgiveness, participating as God's agents in the healing of the world, and "dying well" (3) with the confidence that God's love is stronger than death. Dykstra and Bass coordinated an earlier effort elucidating each of these in *Practicing Our Faith* (Jossey-Bass, 1997). *Practicing Theology* is a partial follow-up. The two collections are complementary but each may stand alone.

Both Pauw's essay in the first section of *Practicing Theology* and Hutter's in the third grapple with Christian inconsistency between belief and practice. They proclaim the good news that despite our inadequacies, Christians remain "unrelentingly loved by a God who continually forgives us, calls us to life anew, and promises us life abundant, now and in the time of things to come" (57). In light of such love, Serene Jones challenges us to pursue truthful excellence in Christian reflection and action as we are made capable by God's grace. Sarah Coakley mines the rich reservoir of male and female saints in church history vis-à-vis varying forms of mystical and ascetical practice as they relate to such a theology.

Tammy Williams critiques approaches to healing in the African American Church and thoughtfully cultivates a semi-synthesized proposal based in "There is a Doctor in the House and Jesus is His Name" (119). The Great Physician is the supreme example for Christian healers, not only for His "prowess as a healer but also his empathy for the sick" (120). Williams reminds the church to care for those who may not experience healing in this life as well as rejoicing with those who are graced with it.

Christine Pohl relates an example of a community's practice of hospitality to the poor in Atlanta, Georgia. Subsequently, Gilbert Bond asks, "What is the relationship between a community's worship and the manner in which the community engages the outsider?" (138). Nancy Bedford's outstanding essay on discernment considers "little moves against destructiveness" (158) as examples for resisting the principalities and powers through communal faith, hope, and love.

L. Gregory Jones asserts a new model for theological education from the "relay race" (185) where the local church passes the pastor's educational baton to the academy, who later throws the pastor back to the local church; to a vibrant collaboration between the church and academy drawing "pastors, church members, seminary professors, and everyone else involved into the doxological praise of God" (188).

Hutter examines heaven's hospitality fictionalized in C.S. Lewis's classic, *The Great Divorce* and Kathryn Tanner investigates the triple interplay between Christian practice, understanding and cultural milieu; offering critique in light of a God who "both saves the world and at the same time created it good" (233). Volf articulates the grounding of Christian practices and beliefs within each other and shows that the whole Christian way of life is "supported and shaped by something outside that way of life – by what God has done, is doing, and will do" (254).

With excellent academic word crafting, *Practicing Theology* scrutinizes the seams tying Christian life and doctrine and discovers the weave seams strongest where the two inextricably and traceably entwine. *Practicing Theology* is not abstract theoretical postulating. It gives cogent, concrete examples of church doing, being, and thinking from New Haven,

Connecticut to Buenos Aires, Brazil; from feeding the homeless to inviting them to join in the life of the worshipping community.

Practicing Theology remains largely limited to the western hemisphere however, especially in its treatment of contemporary theologies and practices. There is a brief excursion to Great Britain (Hutter on Lewis) and Volf treats us to his parents' Christian hosting of a stranger in Novi Sad, Yugoslavia; but going further east into Asian Christianity is neglected. Practices of healing in the African American church are thoughtfully inspected by Williams, but little is mentioned of continental Africa other than a few paragraphs in Jones concerning Nelson Mandela, Peter Storey, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Because of this, *Practicing Theology* in encouraging readers "to be articulate about the significance of distinctive voices within the larger tradition" (5) misses a significant reserve of practice and reflection by "every tribe and tongue" previewed in Scripture who sing their lives in praise to God. Nevertheless, within the contexts considered, there is impressive exploration of what it means to live in serious theological reflection and reflect theologically in serious Christian living.

BEN DEVAN

Smith, Mark S. *Untold Stories: The Bible and Ugaritic Studies in the Twentieth Century*. Peabody, MA. Hendrickson, 2001.

Mark Smith's productivity and literary output continues to amaze. This volume (no longer his latest monograph given the recent appearance of a large volume on monotheism with Oxford University Press) performs the massive, yeoman-like task of summarizing the history of scholarship on Ugarit and Ugaritic from 1928 to 1999. The blurbs for the book on the flyleaves and the back of the dust jacket are from a veritable who's who in the field (Dennis Pardee, David Noel Freedman, Frank Moore Cross, Cyrus Gordon, Baruch Levine, Franz Rosenthal, and Baruch Halpern). The comments there are so glowing that it is hard to believe that they could be more positive even if Smith had paid the reviewers for their services. This review need not, therefore, wax on with my own positive estimation of this book – I trust that the recommendation of those on the dustcover will more than suffice (!) – especially as my evaluation is equally keen. Instead, it is useful to recap the contents of the book and offer a few reflective remarks.

After a brief introduction, Smith covers the history of Ugaritology in four stages: chapter 1 covers the beginnings from 1928, the year of initial discovery, to 1945; chapter 2 treats the period of 1945-1970 under the rubric "Synthesis and Comparisons", chapter 3 concerns "New Texts and Crises in Comparative Method: 1970 to 1985", and chapter 4 takes the discussion from 1985 to 1999 – a period wherein Smith finds "Resurgence in Tools and Method." Each chapter is copiously documented from both primary and secondary sources. The latter comprise original publications of the materials from Ugarit (archaeological and epigraphic; the Ugaritic tablets get the lion's share as is to be expected) as well as studies devoted to such. The primary sources are largely based on archival work Smith has conducted, as well as on extensive interviews and correspondence he has

pursued with many of the key figures in the field, including those of the first generation – several of whom are still alive. Yet despite this extensive research and the massive amounts of notes (which are, unfortunately, set as endnotes to each chapter, thereby complicating and frustrating their use), Smith has managed to write a compelling, lucid, and surprisingly readable account. This is a history that not only informs, but is actually a pleasure to read.

Space prohibits a full discussion and, after reading *Untold Stories*, one realizes that these stories are too rich and detailed to be distilled easily. Still, several points remain with me upon completion of the book: 1) The remarkable speed with which Ugaritic was deciphered and the archaeological and manuscript material published (the Dead Sea Scrolls publishing crisis stands as an obvious and negative counterexample). 2) The sometimes petty and small-spirited behavior of some of the giants in the field. While Smith has gone out of his way to protect the guilty, as it were, and therefore there are still many untold stories that remain untold (rightly!), there are points at which Smith could not cover over the “sins of the fathers.” One notes, in particular, the trouble that Cyrus Gordon faced from his senior colleagues when they discovered his desire to write an Ugaritic grammar (see, e.g., pp. 32-34). Not only did Gordon succeed in writing that grammar despite those set backs, his grammar has gone through three major editions, is still in print, and has proven to be a staple in research that has guided and given impetus to the field and that is only now being replaced as a standard tool. Such a judgment certainly justifies Gordon and gives him the proverbial “last laugh,” but, on a more sober level, it also shows that the great golden age of the scholarly Anakim was also troubled by the unfortunate pretentiousness and territorialism that all too often marks the guild of today. Alas for then, and alas for now! 3) Despite its thoroughness, a few institutional programs do fall through the cracks in Smith’s otherwise comprehensive survey. Princeton Theological Seminary, Emory University, and Asbury Theological Seminary are all institutions that have regularly taught Ugaritic in some of the time periods covered, but, while several of the faculty at these institutions are mentioned, the schools themselves are not – the latter, perhaps, because it does not have a doctoral program, the two former, perhaps, because they have not yet produced a “pure” Ugaritological dissertation (though other non-pure works are mentioned throughout Smith’s book). 4) Here and there in the book, Smith punctuates his summary with a seminal example of the issues and state-of-the-field. In chapter 2, for instance, the example is the myth-and-ritual school and, particularly, the idea of the Fall Enthronement Festival, famous from the work of Sigmund Mowinckel. In chapter 3, the focus is on the work of Mitchell Dahood. While helpful, the need to make these foci work as stereotypical examples sometimes complicates their presentation. I myself found it difficult to grasp Smith’s perspective on the enthronement festival. He seemed to waffle on his assessment of Mowinckel, at first critiquing it rather heavily, before coming back to a positive appreciation of the broader fall festival theory. Even then, the arguments proffered for this latter position were not entirely convincing. Similarly, Dahood’s work – while certainly controversial – was perhaps written off too quickly by means of the old anti-Dahood adage: a percentage of his work is correct, but which percentage? The emphasis was clearly on the negative aspects of Dahood’s work and its damaging impact on the field, despite Smith’s positive appreciation on pp. 160-61

and his interaction with the important treatment of Dahood's method by Dahood's student R. Althann. 5) One senses in this book, both in Smith and in the field and figures he describes, a conflict between standard ways of operating (esp. historical and philological) and newer modes of inquiry (esp. literary and hermeneutical). Note, for instance, the extended and rather unexpected foray Smith makes into *The Postmodern Bible* (pp. 221-23). Smith raises some important critiques against that work but one wonders if the kind of approach he favors is any less foolproof on the methodological and hermeneutical levels. Moreover, the criterion of "rigorous knowledge of primary sources" (p. 223) that he lifts up as an adequate adjudicator between competing methods and emphases, while insightful, is also not entirely satisfying. While I would never quibble with the importance of knowing the primary sources – indeed, in a rigorous way – I doubt that that will be the final arbiter among the vastly different readings that one finds being offered today.

Two additional issues deserve special attention insofar as they comprise distinctive contributions of Smith's book. The first is the development he traces from Ugaritology as an ancillary field subservient to biblical studies and the latter's "quest for parallels," to its flowering as an independent field, worthy of study in its own right, not tossed to and fro nor blown about by the whims of the newest biblical scholar. He writes:

Simplistic drawing of Ugaritic and biblical parallels has passed from fashion, allowing more attention to be paid to locating Ugarit within its larger societal and ecological context. In a healthy development, the field is coming to understand Ugarit on its own terms, apart from biblical studies. (p. 203)

And:

In the future, we will have to take the scenic route from Ugaritic to ancient Israel via other Levantine sites of the second and first millennia. There is no longer any direct route, a blessing in disguise. We will learn much more about Ugarit and ancient Israel by taking such a long route. Moreover, we will benefit from the current distance between biblical and Ugaritic studies, as we test some of the new methods and tools available in biblical studies and apply them to Ugaritic studies. In the end, such learning will help us abandon facile comparisons in favor of more complex ones. (p. 224)

Smith is careful to discuss many of the reasons why and how this divorce of Ugarit and the Bible, and the consequent "scenic route" between them, has developed. I can't help wondering if the situation is even more complex than he describes, however, and if the forces at work flow from both ends of the equation – from developments in biblical studies (where Smith's emphasis lies) and from those who would treat Ugaritic within a "Syrian studies" perspective (see, e.g., pp. 203, 224). My point would simply be that while benefit might flow from such a distancing, demerits are also not out of the question, and, either way, there may be just as many and just as significant ideological reasons operating in those scholars who would divorce the two, than were flowing in the earlier generations of scholars that sought to unite them. Time will tell.

The second issue has to do with how lively the field of Ugaritology continues to be. Smith is on the cutting edge of research in this area and has traced the latest developments that have applied recent scholarship in various contiguous and non-contiguous fields to the study of things Ugaritic. The results have been fascinating and the field promises to be generative and productive for years to come. It is appropriate to conclude with Smith's own well-stated last words:

In retrospect, the Ugaritic texts have fulfilled their promise for biblical studies. No older corpus from Syria or Mesopotamia, no roughly contemporary corpus such as the Mari texts, the El-Amarna letters, or the Emar texts (though these still hold considerable promise!), or even later texts such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, have made the same impact on the understanding of Israel's languages and culture. When we turn to Iron Age Israel, in particular the origins and early development of ancient Israelite culture or the origins of biblical literature and religion, it is the corpus of Ugaritic texts that has transformed the understanding of these areas. This they have done for over seventy years and, we may hope, will continue to do. (pp. 224-25)

Agreed!

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