

BOOK REVIEWS

Bateman, Herbert W. IV, Darrel L. Bock, and Gordon H. Johnston. *Jesus the Messiah: Tracing the Promises, Expectations, and Coming of Israel's King*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2012. 527 pp. Hardcover, \$33.00.

Jesus the Messiah is coauthored by Herbert W. Bateman IV, Professor of New Testament Studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; Darrell L. Bock, Senior Research Professor of New Testament studies at Dallas Theological Seminary and President of the Evangelical Theological Society; and Gordon H. Johnston, Professor of Old Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary. The main goal of the book is to demonstrate, based on written evidence, that Jesus is the Messiah (17). While the authors consider various literary approaches to this topic—Jesus as a social reformer, a religious reformer, a messianic prophet, a messianic restorer, the son of David, the Son of God (18-19)—they do not, however, constrain themselves to these propositions. Instead, their task is to trace the messianic promises from the Hebrew Scriptures and from Second Temple literature before considering the fulfillment of these promises in the NT narratives of Jesus. They demonstrate that the biblical portrait of the Messiah is gradually and progressively presented in both Testaments (21). Therefore, the book's main argument is "God does not disclose everything at once, especially at the start" (22-25). Each inspired text is part of a larger puzzle from which the entire portrait of Jesus as the Messiah emerges when all the pieces are put together.

The authors come to this messianic puzzle through a threefold approach that provides the basic outline of the book: (1) a contextual-canonical approach, that is, how the "First" Testament presents the promises of the Messiah in the context of progressive revelation; (2) a messianic reading of the text, that is, how the Jewish people understood the messianic passages until the time of Jesus; and (3) a Christological understanding, that is, how Jesus and the early church understood the messianic texts by affirming some elements and rejecting others, thereby presenting a coherent portrait of Jesus the Messiah who was promised in the "First" Testament (26-35). According to Bateman, "the burden of this book is the demonstration of this threefold reading strategy as fundamental for making sense of Jesus' and the early church's messianic claim" (26-27).

Jesus the Messiah is currently the most comprehensive work done on this subject. The broad scope of research and the depth of its investigation examines not only evidence found in the Hebrew Bible, but also the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, DSS, and ancient historians such as Josephus.

This work is well written and provides enjoyable reading for the experienced biblical scholar. However, inexperienced readers might find the outline and its internal connections confusing. While each chapter ends with

a partial conclusion, there is not a final conclusion that pulls together the threefold approach. The book would be greatly strengthened by bringing these three sections together to form a complete portrait of Jesus as the Messiah. Despite this, the book is still the most important work from an evangelical perspective on this issue to date. The authors have accomplished their goal of uncovering the historical Jesus.

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Beale, G. K. *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012. ix + 192 pp. Paper, \$17.99.

G. K. Beale, Professor of New Testament and Biblical Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is the coeditor of the bestselling *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (2007), which is the “how to” tool for helping students and pastors perform their own exegesis. He is also the author of numerous books, including *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (2011) and *The Book of Revelation*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (1999).

The NT’s use of the OT has been a passion of Beale’s since 1985 when he began to notice a lack of existing material on how “to interpret OT citations and allusions in the NT” (ix). The methodology developed in the *Handbook* is the result of years of research and of teaching NT courses. The *Handbook* expands on his previous commentary. Since readers may not take the time to read his entire *Commentary*, the *Handbook* serves as a more accessible tool and a quick resource for understanding his methodology.

Beale begins chapter 1 by addressing the frequently asked question of “whether the NT interprets the Old in line with the OT meaning” (1). He then examines the history of interpretation and outlines the major debates among scholars regarding the use of the OT in the NT. He also addresses several objections from NT scholars who have rejected the notion that the NT interprets the OT with the same hermeneutical methods used by the OT authors. After giving each objection thoughtful consideration, he points to a possible solution in the typological-hermeneutical approach and provides a survey of the debates surrounding this approach. Beale defines the term “typology” as “the study of analogical correspondences among revealed truths about persons, events, institutions, and other things within the historical framework of God’s special revelation, which, from a retrospective view, are of a prophetic nature and are escalated in their meaning” (14). This hermeneutical approach becomes the standard for the following chapters.