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Book Review: God's Design for Man and Woman

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themelios

*An International Journal for Students of
Theological and Religious Studies*

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DESCRIPTION

Themelios is an international, evangelical, peer-reviewed theological journal that expounds and defends the historic Christian faith. Its primary audience is theological students and pastors, though scholars read it as well. *Themelios* began in 1975 and was operated by RTSE/UCCF in the UK, and it became a digital journal operated by The Gospel Coalition in 2008. The editorial team draws participants from across the globe as editors, essayists, and reviewers. *Themelios* is published three times a year online at The Gospel Coalition website in PDF and HTML, and may be purchased in digital format with Logos Bible Software and in print with Wipf and Stock. *Themelios* is copyrighted by The Gospel Coalition. Readers are free to use it and circulate it in digital form without further permission, but they must acknowledge the source and may not change the content..

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REVIEWS

The book review editors generally select individuals for book reviews, but potential reviewers may contact them about reviewing specific books. As part of arranging book reviews, the book review editors will supply book review guidelines to reviewers.

EDITORIAL

Some Reflections on Pastoral Leadership

— D. A. Carson —

D. A. Carson is research professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, and general editor of Themelios.

Some Christian traditions—for example, Roman Catholics, Anglicans—hold that there are three biblically mandated offices in the church: bishop (overseer), pastor/priest/elder, and deacon. In the “high” church tradition, it is the unbroken line of duly consecrated bishops that actually *defines* the true church. The ground of this view is often found in the famous dictum of Ignatius toward the beginning of the second century: Where the bishop is, there is the church. Most recognize today that a more faithful rendering might be: Where the bishop shall appear, there let the multitude [of the people] also be (*Smyrn.* 8:2)—which sounds a tad less definitional.¹ In any case, the argument that the New Testament documents recognize only two church offices, viz. the bishop/elder/pastor, and the deacon, is by far the more common view among “low” churches, and, as everyone in the field knows, was nowhere better defended than by the Anglican J. B. Lightfoot in his commentary on Philippians.

Although the question—two offices or three—continues to be discussed from time to time, it rarely occupies center-stage in contemporary ecclesiastical discussion. The primary NT passages that tie together bishop, elder, and pastor are Titus 1:5–9, which unambiguously connects elder and bishop, and 1 Peter 5:1–4, which links all three descriptors (clear in the Greek text, not in all our translations). Because *διάκονος* (“deacon”) is commonly used to describe how all Christians must serve, a handful of scholars do not see “deacon” as a second office. But the context of passages such as 1 Timothy 3:8–10 suggests that the word “deacon” is not a *terminus technicus*, but can in the right context refer to a church-recognized office, even if in other passages it serves as a generic term for Christians.

My interest at the moment is not whether there is one office (as Benjamin J. Merkle maintains)² or two, but in the office which in the NT is covered by all three terms: bishop/overseer, elder/priest, and pastor. To simplify the discussion a little, I shall choose overseer over bishop because the latter has become, in English, a technical term that refers to an ecclesiastical officer with jurisdiction that reaches over more than one local church (at least in White-American circles; this is less commonly the case in African-American circles). I shall choose elder over priest, because, despite the persistent efforts of some of my “low” Anglican friends to remind me that the word “priest” comes from the Greek *πρεσβύτερος* via the Latin *presbyter*, in modern usage, at least in most circles, “priest” translates *ιερέυς*,

¹ Alternatively, Ehrman translates *Smyrn.* 8:2, “Let the congregation be wherever the bishop is; just as wherever Jesus Christ is, there also is the universal church” (LCL).

² Benjamin J. Merkle, *The Elder and Overseer: One Office in the Early Church*, StBL 57 (New York: Peter Lang, 2003).

and conjures up images of mediation that belong, under the new covenant, exclusively to Jesus Christ, or, paradoxically, to all believers, but not to restricted office holders.

So we are focusing on the person rightly designated overseer/elder/pastor—and the order in which I mention the three terms is not significant. Moreover, the three terms do not denote separable spheres of responsibility; rather, they overlap considerably. “Pastor,” of course, simply means shepherd, and derives from the agricultural world of biblical times in which shepherds led, fed, healed, protected, and disciplined their flocks. “Elder” springs from village and synagogue life, and carries an overtone of seniority, or at least maturity, that qualifies a person, ideally, for respect and for leadership responsibilities. “Overseer” conjures up administrative and ruling functions—functions that are not entirely absent from the other two labels.

Contemporary books and essays have tended to focus on four things about the pastor/elder/overseer. (a) The biblical lists of qualifications for elders (e.g., 1 Tim 3:1–7) are mostly made up of virtues and attributes that are elsewhere demanded of all Christians. The one exception is that he be able to teach. Others than pastors teach in the NT, but it is a requirement of all pastors/elders/overseers that they be able to teach, whether to large groups, in small groups, or one-on-one. A lot of discussion revolves around the preaching and teaching responsibilities of this office. (b) Recent years have witnessed a plethora of books and articles dealing with the plurality of elders. The shape of that discussion in Presbyterian circles is a bit different from what it is in, say, Baptist circles, but the discussion continues. (c) An extraordinary amount of energy has been devoted to ongoing debates about whether women may be pastors/elders/overseers—and if not, why not. (d) A number of helpful books and articles have been written of the “how to” variety: how to find and train elders, the importance of seeking out potential elders (e.g., 2 Tim 2:2), and the like.

Almost no attention, however, has been paid to the particular overtones cast up by the word “overseer.” Of course, something of oversight is taking place if one is actively attempting to find and train new elders, or if one is leading the other elders and the congregation itself in a difficult instance of church discipline, or if one is laying out a long-term preaching/teaching program. But it is worth pausing to reflect on why, when the chief ecclesiastical office is mentioned, “overseer” is one of the three terms used to describe it.

I know a pastor who, both in his teaching and pastoral care, is a good and godly man, and more skilled than most at those tasks. He became pastor of a small church, and under his ministry it grew to almost 600 people. Then, gradually, it began to decline. There were no splits, but people drifted away. When it shrank to about 250, he decided he should resign and move on. And if I had to put my finger on one big factor, perhaps the biggest, that contributed to this decline, it was that the man, though an able preacher, was a poor leader—i.e., he almost entirely ignored his episcopal responsibilities.

Another way to look at this is to consider the overlapping ministries of Ezra and Nehemiah. Nehemiah was clearly a gifted leader and administrator, but when it came time for the Bible conference, Ezra was the man who was called in—and he was a gifted leader and teacher, training the Levites in the massive work of teaching the people of God the Word of God. Both men were leaders; both appealed to the Word of God (Ezra to teach it and to arrange for others to teach it, Nehemiah to call the covenant people of God back to it, and to live out its precepts), but it was Nehemiah who was (if I may use anachronistic terms) more overseer than preacher.

Some make a sharp distinction between teaching elder and ruling elder, based not least on 1 Timothy 5:17. As far as I can see, however, an elder is an elder/pastor/overseer, never less, and every

elder/pastor/overseer must be able to teach (1 Tim 3:2). In other words, it is difficult to warrant an absolute division of labor. But if all one means by the difference between a teaching elder and a ruling elder is a division of emphasis, one simultaneously does justice to 1 Timothy 5:17, and reflects the fact that one of the distinct labels for this office is *overseer*.

A substantial part of the ruling/oversight function is discharged through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God. This is where a great deal of the best leadership is exercised: “What does Scripture say?” *means* “What does God say?” (cf. Gal 3:8). Therefore those whose peculiar responsibility it is to teach the Scriptures are helping the church hear what God says. In substantial measure, this is how the Head of the church exercises his leadership of the church.

But oversight of the church is more than simply teaching and preaching. Occasionally one observes a church where the senior pastor does most of the preaching to the entire congregation, while the “executive pastor” (overseer??) becomes responsible for everything else, including leading the other pastors, maintaining accountability, casting a vision for the next stage of growth and outreach, running the internship program, and much more. Nominally this frees the senior minister up for study, prayer, and preaching—what Acts 6:4 calls “prayer and the ministry of the word.” In reality, this fails to grasp that a comprehensive vision of the ministry of the Word demands *oversight*—not necessarily of the distribution of food to the needy, for which the seven (deacons?) were appointed, but of the entire direction and priorities of the church. Failure to see this as part of the responsibility of all pastors/elders/overseers (even though some may contribute more administrative gifts than others, while others will do more teaching/preaching) will result either in a church that is drifting, or in a church where the executive pastor actually steals the church away from the senior pastor (intentionally or otherwise).

To put this another way: As important and central as is the ministry of the Word of God, the thoughtful pastor/elder/overseer will devote time and energy to casting a vision, figuring out the steps for getting there, building the teams and structures needed for discharging ministry and training others, building others up, thinking through the various ways in which the gospel can be taught at multiple levels to multiple groups within the church, how to extend faithful evangelism and church planting, how to engage the surrounding world as faithful believers, and much more. Just because a person is an able preacher does not necessarily make him an able pastor/elder/overseer. Indeed, if he shows no propensity for godly oversight, then no matter how good a teacher he may be, he is not qualified to be a pastor/teacher/overseer. It is not for nothing that Scripture applies all three labels to the one office.

OFF THE RECORD

Can *Antigone* Work in a Secularist Society?

— Michael J. Ovey —

Mike Ovey is principal of Oak Hill College in London and consulting editor of Themelios.

No doubt about it, the British Broadcasting Corporation is plain quirky. Excellent sports coverage, but the most depressing soap opera ever. Then it covers itself with glory by broadcasting Sophocles's great tragedy *Antigone*, but has it introduced by someone (a sort of current affairs journalist) who misses Sophocles's point by a couple of parsecs. But then I reflect that for a secularist institution like the BBC the true nature of the *Antigone* tragedy simply does not exist. You have to make the play say something different. Let me explain.

Sophocles's play from the Athens of the 5th century BC is set in mythical Thebes. Before the play starts the king, Oedipus, has left power after discovering he has killed his father and married his mother. He has had several children by her and after his fall, two of his sons have fought each other for the rule of Thebes. One had allied with foreign powers in order to seize the throne. Both sons have died fighting each other and a new king, their uncle Creon now reigns. At the start of the play Creon has decreed that no one is to bury the body of the son of Oedipus who invaded his own homeland. For his crime against his country he is to lie unburied, a horrific breach of the law that says relatives owe a duty to bury their kinsfolk. The young woman Antigone, daughter of Oedipus, decides to defy Creon's law and bury her brother in obedience to the laws of the gods. This means her own death, and Creon's own son Haemon, her betrothed, kills himself in grief. Creon's wife, Eurydice kills herself at this turn of events, leaving the grieving, lonely, isolated figure of Creon lamenting 'Now I believe it is by the laws of heaven that man must live.' The Chorus concludes the play saying that the law we learn when we are old, as we see 'the stricken heart of pride brought down', is the wisdom to hold the gods in awe, which Creon in his arrogance has not. This is certainly tragedy—but for both Antigone and Creon. In fact, you could argue the real tragedy is finally Creon's.

Now, the BBC voiceover makes this a play about the individual versus the state; individual liberty as against state oppression. In other words, it makes this a contest purely at the human level between human nodes of authority, individual rights and collective responsibility. This airbrushes out the true nature of the tragedy.

Sophocles is not opposing two human claims, individual versus collective. He is seeing how the laws of the gods and the laws of human beings can intersect and conflict, and in particular the tragic act of *hubris* or arrogance by which a human *knowingly* makes a claim that contradicts the laws of the gods, albeit with the best of motives. In this, Sophocles is reflecting the great Sophist debate of 5th century

BC Greece as the Sophists contrasted the claims or laws of Nature (*phusis*) against the claims or laws of human convention (*nomos*). We humans set the laws of *nomos* but we cannot make or alter the laws of *phusis*.

Now the difficulty of the BBC's presentation is that it makes the play *Antigone* a tragedy about the conflict between two types of *nomos*, two *human-originated* claims, one collective, the other individual. It is not a conflict between *nomos* and *phusis*, between the laws we humans set and the laws above us of the gods that we do not set. It is, for the BBC, not a divine-human conflict, but only a human-human conflict. This airbrushes out several things.

First, it airbrushes out quite how right the young woman Antigone is. She is not right because she is a courageous individual (although she certainly is that). She is right because she has elected to obey the laws of the gods. In terms of character, Sophocles portrays her as difficult, angular and stubborn, but as right. Her rightness is not her rugged individualism and her defiance. Her rightness is her *obedience*. You would never guess that from the BBC's commentary.

Second, it airbrushes the true wrongness of Creon. If we think of things purely at the human level, Creon has an excellent case. Oedipus's son has betrayed his country. Levied war against it for his own selfish power-interests. Why then should he be interred in the earth of the homeland he betrayed? He does not deserve it, and this serves as an excellent deterrent against future coup leaders. But in fact, Creon has lifted his hand against the gods by daring to make a human decree (*nomos*) which he knows conflicts with the laws of the gods (*phusis*). At that point he is not merely a heavy-handed ruler, he is a human arrogantly setting himself against the gods—he has forgotten what he is. He is guilty of *hubris*, setting himself against heaven, not just guilty of oppressing other humans.

Third, as it airbrushes out the *hubris* of Creon, it airbrushes out the extent to which this is Creon's tragedy as much as Antigone's. Creon is brought down by his *hubris*: he is judged by the gods for it. We are not just being told by Sophocles that some human power claims are hubristic, Sophocles is also warning us that this does not work, and not because Creon will be overthrown by popular acclaim. He is brought low by the gods. Sophocles tells us that we disdain *phusis*, the laws of heaven, at our peril.

Why does this matter? After all, it is not very surprising that a secularist institution cannot see this as a divine-human conflict rather than a human-human conflict. And the BBC message of 'beware of oppressive state claims' is well worth hearing.

It matters because it reveals what a secularist society cannot see, where its blind spots are. A secularist society simply cannot have the framework to comprehend truly Antigone's actions as actions of obedience to God rather than of rugged individualism. Antigone is emphatically not anti-social, but she does want Thebes to be a society based not on Creon's laws, nor indeed her human laws, but on divine laws. She does, however, appear to Creon (and to the BBC) as though she simply puts the individual before the collective. So too with us. As Christian Antigones we will look like selfish individualists to a secular society that has no vocabulary for obedience to God. If we do defy the state over various matters (such as public preaching of the uniqueness of Christ), we will, unfortunately, not look like heroes.

There again a secular society cannot see Creon's actions for what they are. In a secularist culture *hubris* is simply impossible because there is no heaven against which to rail and in practice no God whom we displace by our power-claims. To state the obvious, the *hubris* of Genesis 3 is impossible in this secularist setting. There is no framework within which to express it or understand it. In this sense sin as *hubris* becomes a nameless crime within a secularist society. Such a society can recognise arrogance towards other humans, but not in its primary form, which is towards God. As a nameless

crime, *hubris* will instead have a certain aura of terrible innocence. A secularist culture will literally see nothing wrong with *hubris* in its most basic sense. This in turn means that secularist analysis of what is wrong with the human condition is condemned to being superficial, always looking to the human-human level, rather than the divine-human conflict from which our human-human problems ultimately spring. This does not mean such analysis (or its treatments) will be altogether useless. But it does mean it can only look at symptoms and not causes.

This brings us to a final dreadful irony. In a secularist, individualist society we will reverse Antigone and Creon. For we will think the person who sets up their own laws in defiance of others is expressing an Antigone-spirit, that they are a free-spirited individual, whereas in fact the spirit is that of Creon, deciding what is right in their own eyes, no matter what anyone else says, including God. Sophocles meant his play to humble our Creon-like spirits with our *hubris* and to warn his audience that divine judgment brings people like Creon low. The BBC's take in our secularist individualist culture unconsciously tends to endorse just that Creon-spirit of *hubris*, but adds to it the sanctifying sense that we are heroic figures like Antigone. We will think we are righteous when we have committed a crime for which we no longer have a name. We will certainly have no fear that our *hubris* brings down judgment, for who could condemn such Antigone-like people as us? And there we have reached one of the most characteristic and spiritually troubling aspects of our secularist society: our invincible self-righteousness. No wonder we think we do not need God. And no wonder we have to re-write *Antigone*.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Adam in Evangelical Theology

— Brian J. Tabb —

Brian Tabb is assistant professor of biblical studies and associate dean at Bethlehem College & Seminary in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and managing editor of Themelios.

“Adam seems today a figment of ancient imagination. His ghost still haunts the edifice of original sin, but the Augustinian structure is falling apart, crumbling, gone with the wind.”¹

Over the past decade, evangelical theologians, biblical scholars, and scientists have hotly debated doctrines long assumed, such as the historicity of Adam and an originating sin in Genesis 2–3. This debate centers on how the findings of natural science and historical criticism impact our reading of the early chapters of Genesis and our resulting doctrinal convictions concerning creation, sin, and the inerrancy of the Scriptures. Many important books have been published on these issues in recent years, as well as several relevant articles in this journal.²

This issue of *Themelios* focuses fresh attention on Adam's place in evangelical theology. Stephen Williams, a distinguished systematic theologian and former editor of *Themelios*, reviews *Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin: Theological, Biblical, and Scientific Perspectives*,³ followed by a response by Hans Madueme, one of the book's editors who also serves as Systematic Theology and Bioethics Book Review editor for *Themelios*. Next, prominent OT scholar Richard Averbeck reviews *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2–3 and the Human Origins Debate*,⁴ with a response from author John Walton. The final two articles reflect on the book of Job, with contributions from Daniel Estes (“Communicating the Book of Job in the Twenty-First Century”) and Eric Ortlund (“Five Truths for Sufferers from the Book of Job”).

¹Hans Madueme and Michael Reeves, “Introduction: Adam Under Siege,” in *Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin: Theological, Biblical, and Scientific Perspectives*, ed. Hans Madueme and Michael Reeves (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), vii.

²See for example Fred G. Zaspel, “B. B. Warfield on Creation and Evolution,” *Them* 35.2 (2010): 198–211; Hans Madueme, “Some Reflections on Enns and The Evolution of Adam: A Review Essay,” *Them* 37.2 (2012): 275–86; Robert W. Yarbrough, “Should Evangelicals Embrace Historical Criticism? The Hays-Ansberry Proposal,” *Them* 39.1 (2014): 37–52.

³Hans Madueme and Michael Reeves, eds., *Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin: Theological, Biblical, and Scientific Perspectives* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014).

⁴John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2–3 and the Human Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015).

Nathan Finn has faithfully served for five years as the History and Historical Theology Book Review Editor for *Themelios*. He has recently accepted a new position as dean of Union University's School of Theology and Missions and thus is resigning from his editorial responsibilities with *Themelios*. We acknowledge his outstanding contribution to the journal and wish him well in his transition.

Succeeding him is Stephen Eccher, Assistant Professor of Church History and Reformation Studies at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Stephen completed his PhD in 2011 at the University of St. Andrews with the thesis, "The Bernese Disputations of 1532 and 1538: A Historical and Theological Analysis." He can be contacted at stephen.eccher@thegospelcoalition.org.

Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin: A Review Essay

— Stephen N. Williams —

Stephen Williams is professor of systematic theology at Union Theological College in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and served as general editor of Themelios from 1995–1999.

Abstract: The contributors to *Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin* rightly maintain the traditional view of the historicity of Adam and the entry of sin into the world through him. However, the account displays three weaknesses. First, the inerrant authority of Scripture is sometimes interpreted as entailing that the Ancient Near Eastern context of Genesis sheds no light on how it should be read. Second, the question of why humans are justly condemned for the sin of Adam is never answered. Third, no ground for dialogue with science is provided. It is more successful in indicating what we should affirm than in grappling with the difficulties of affirming it.

Tritely told, the story goes like this. Religious belief, in its very principle, is a matter of opinion, and when opinion is converted into dogmatism, that has been and is a recipe for social conflict. Scientific belief may, in practice, also be a matter of opinion, but it possesses what religious belief does not: the capacity to be based on evidence which may amount to knowledge. It provides a basis for social well-being. Science is the product of reason; religion is the product of faith. So much for principle. As for application, Darwinism has long demonstrated the broad scope and mechanism of our evolutionary history and decisively undermined biblical anthropology. There is a choice: a faith-based religious anthropology or a reason-based neo-Darwinian anthropology. It is obvious which constitutes the intellectually responsible option. An historical Adam, fall and original sin does not.

Hans Madueme and Michael Reeves have gathered together a team of authors resolved to combat this position, not in the spirit of those who merely do not wish to cede this particular piece of territory but with the conviction of those who regard this combat more or less as a battle for the existence of Christianity.¹ Their aim is to persuade, but the audience is strictly limited; one of the essayists, Carl Trueman, justifiably says that he assumes ‘that this volume is aimed primarily at a Protestant evangelical readership’. It is aimed at this audience because self-regarding evangelicals are now among those taking up positions once associated with non-evangelicals, specifically when they question the historicity of

¹Hans Madueme and Michael Reeves, eds., *Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin: Theological, Biblical and Scientific Perspectives* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014). Page references to this volume will usually be given in the text.

Adam and Eve. Hence, in part 1, the contributors deal with Adam and Eve in the Bible. Rather than jump from that point into original sin in Scripture, an essay on 'Adam and Modern Science' closes this part before the second part of the volume traces the doctrine of original sin in the history of theology. Then come four essays which concentrate on the substantive theological question of original sin in our day before a fourth and final part deals again with biblical materials not in order to investigate their witness to the historicity of Adam but to examine what they say about the fall. The closing essay is on 'Adam, History and Theodicy'.

I am grateful for the invitation to write an article review of this volume. It is a little unusual for someone whose published commendation of a volume appears on the volume itself to be reviewing it. On the basis of correspondence extending over two or three years, by now, Hans knows that we differ on some significant points and it is not only gracious but also a sign of transparency on his part to promote this exchange in *Themelios*. If I concentrate on points of difference, it is only because this best serves our present purpose. Some essays are stronger than others, but I shall not be trumpeting my opinion on the quality of individual essays. It is as well to place my commendatory cards on the table from the outset. On the question of the historical existence of Adam and the entry of sin into the world through him, I believe that the tradition both rightly interprets Scripture and rightly stands theologically by its teachings. Here, I find that the volume is persuasive, and I am now happy to say so. C. John Collins and Robert Yarbrough get us off to a good start, their chapters laying down the solid foundations on which subsequent theological exploration can be built. After a study of Genesis 1–5, Collins describes the way in which 'the rest of the Old Testament refers to, evokes, or presupposes the story of Adam and Eve' (p. 5). Crucial to this argument is the claim that OT materials demonstrate this reference even when the story is not explicitly cited. A sample of extra-biblical Jewish writings from the Second Temple period interprets the Genesis story similarly, so 'the whole Old Testament story presupposes the historical significance of Adam and Eve as the fountainhead of humanity and as the doorway by which sin came into God's world' (p. 5). Robert Yarbrough follows this through in relation to the NT, establishing the continuity between Pauline and OT presuppositions in relation to the role of Adam in the entry of sin into the world. Their common hermeneutic enables these two essays to provide a united front; as Yarbrough puts it, 'paucity of direct reference to Adam is no necessary indicator of his significance' (p. 41).

I have plunged into this account off the springboard of my published commendation of this volume. Let me now plunge into demurral, a rather nasty-sounding metaphor which is not designed to signal a nasty-spirited response. While Collins and Yarbrough persuasively show why we should demur from Peter Enns's conclusion that Paul is giving an account of Adam discontinuous with that of the OT, the essay which sets out most deliberately to tackle Peter Enns, namely James Hamilton's later contribution on 'Original Sin in Biblical Theology' in the third part of the volume, fails to come to effective grips with Enns's reasoning in some key areas. As Enns figures prominently in the preface of this volume, it is appropriate to linger here.

Consistently with the earlier essays, Hamilton emphasizes against Enns the distinction between telling and showing and the way in which narratives work. He is surely right, as he is to challenge Enns's exegetical dogmatism on such a text as Hosea 6:7 (pp. 201–2). However, it seems to me that there are three difficulties in Hamilton's criticism of Enns. First, it is misleading to say that Enns 'ignores the way the biblical authors are assuming and operating within the world as Moses has defined it' (p. 204). Enns does not ignore it; the fact of the matter is that, on critical grounds, he has a different view of

Pentateuchal authorship and dating from that of Hamilton, whose view he regards as demonstrably improbable in the extreme. As far as Enns is concerned, we do not know who wrote, e.g., Deuteronomy; it could have been anyone up to and including Ezra.² If we do not understand the OT as a whole in its post-exilic setting, on which there is considerable scholarly consensus, we shall not understand what it is trying to do and that includes what is going on in its opening chapters. In sum, since Moses did not define the world in which the biblical authors are operating, there is nothing to ignore. That is Enns's position.

Second, there seems to be a vast methodological gulf between Hamilton and Enns and it seems to me that Hamilton is on the wrong side of that gulf, so that his earlier hermeneutical gain is offset by hermeneutical loss. I allude to Hamilton's claim that '[t]he only access we have to what the biblical authors thought or assumed is what they wrote' (p. 189). This is deeply problematic. If the claim were that, *de facto*, we know too little about the ANE background of the OT for it to cast any light on what biblical authors thought or assumed, that would be one thing and contentious enough at that. However, the point seems to be one of methodological principle and, as such, presumably amounts to the claim that the Bible is an exception to rules of general hermeneutics. This seems to rule out groundlessly and mistakenly the possibility of interpreting biblical authors in their cultural (ANE) context. There is certainly plenty to discuss in relation to *how* ANE and canonical contexts should be related, but why should a 'high' view of biblical inspiration entail the claim that a writer's thought or assumptions is accessible *only* through what he writes? If space prevents Hamilton from giving a hermeneutical account, at least the hermeneutical disagreement with Enns ought to be couched explicitly not only in terms of the distinction between telling and showing, but also in terms of reading Genesis against its ANE background. Certainly, Enns emphasizes ANE background, observing that '[i]t is routinely understood, even by conservative interpreters, that the cultural context of Scripture informs our understanding of Scripture.'³

Have I fairly represented Hamilton's position? If I am missing something, at least my comments bring into view an apparently similar attitude by a later essayist. Noel Weeks, in his essay on 'The Fall and Genesis 3', refuses to interpret the early chapters of Genesis in conjectural terms derived from ANE Egyptian or Mesopotamian texts. He states his principle like this: 'Rather than conjectures, we have to go to the text itself to know what it means. Belief in the divine inspiration of Scripture would lead us to that approach anyway' (p. 292). This is to confuse issues of authority with issues of interpretation. Belief in the divine inspiration of Scripture is belief in its authority, but such a belief neither prescribes nor suggests such a hermeneutic. True, we should not build anything on conjecture, but that is different from apparently dividing up the hermeneutical world into what is conjectured and what is in the text. The same problem arises when Weeks proceeds to comment that he is not 'adopting the canonical approach of Brevard Childs, for that method presupposes an earlier chaotic history for the text but ignores that history because it leads into a chaos of conjecture from which no meaningful interpretation can emerge' (p. 292). Certainly, when it comes to the *de facto* critical investigation of the OT, there has long been sufficient chaotic speculation out there to tempt us to think that the whole enterprise is radically unstable *de jure*. However, the proper response is a rigorous appropriation and hermeneutical

² Peter Enns, *The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible Does and Doesn't Say About Human Origins* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2012), 15. 'In a book on evolution' it is 'important for us to see the Pentateuch as a postexilic work' (p. 26).

³Ibid., 58.

use of ANE and extra-biblical materials, not what looks like an attempt to seal off the biblical world hermeneutically, an impossibility in any case if we are going to read the original languages.

Third, returning to Hamilton, it is tendentious and emotive to say that Enns seeks the kind of synthesis between the Bible and evolution ‘where the Bible bows the knee to evolution’ in practice (p. 196). In context, this claim is connected with the first two points and it is worth adding that Enns’s treatment of universality and particularity in the relevant Genesis account is a little more nuanced than Hamilton implies.⁴ Enns certainly does highlight the evolutionary factor in his approach to the biblical text. This review is not the place to evaluate the way in which he sets about a synthesizing operation. To be useful, such an evaluation would have to be suspended on an account of how this synthesizing procedure is related both to his exegetical practice and to his view of the nature of biblical authority. I note here only that it is one hermeneutical thing to read the Bible against its ANE background, knowledge of which might directly inform our reading of the text, another hermeneutical thing to read it against the background of a scientific view, knowledge of which should not directly shape our reading. For example, in principle the ANE material may help me to interpret the biblical material by disclosing to me the world of the biblical writer; contemporary scientific views do not attain that. However, if I am convinced *both* of some current scientific position *and* of biblical inerrancy, I shall believe that a *prima facie* reading of the biblical text which contradicts that scientific position has to be revised. This, as such, is not to bow the knee; it is to seek the integration of beliefs and to allow that it is my interpretation of the Bible, not the Bible itself, that needs correction. What science can do is to help me to read the Bible on its own terms (which includes in its own context); it does not dictate the reading. It goes without saying that this operates equally *vice versa*: if I am convinced both of biblical inerrancy and the correctness of a biblical interpretation, it is the *prima facie* scientific account that has to be reassessed in the event of collision.

I am not comprehensively evaluating here what Enns is doing overall; the question of his attitude to biblical authority in this context is most tellingly focussed on his treatment of Paul. But what would Hamilton make of the accusation that to deny that Joshua really meant that the sun stood still is to bow the knee to post-Copernican heliocentricity? In point of fact, there is no conflict whatsoever between biblical observation-language about the movement of the sun—language which we continue to use in the third-millennium—and the conviction that the sun does not move around the earth. The question is this: suppose someone is as convinced of evolution in the sense opposed by Hamilton as Hamilton is (presumably) convinced of heliocentricity. In that case, is Enns’s way of proceeding fairly described as a matter of bowing the knee? Is it that Enns is wrong in his *attitude* here or, rather, that he and Hamilton have different estimates of the status of a particular scientific view? Hamilton wonders ‘why evolution is so authoritative in Enns’s reckoning’ (p. 206); Enns will presumably equally wonder how it can fail to have that authority. Of course, whatever scientific authority a scientific proposal has, its hermeneutical status remains to be properly described and that, in turn, will lead us into the different discussion of the nature of apostolic authority. However, the question of whether the evidence for the relevant kind of

⁴Note exactly what Enns says about the relation of universality to Israelite history in particular in the early chapters of Genesis, e.g., on the universal setting of Genesis 1–11 (Ibid., 65). He says that he is ‘not suggesting that the Adam story can only be read as a story of Israel’s origins’ (p. 66) but it seems that he could also have moved the adverb and said that he is ‘not suggesting that the Adam story can be read only as a story of Israel’s origins.’

evolution is as strong as the evidence for a heliocentric view of the world is surely what really lies behind the question of whether there is knee-bowing going on.⁵

Concentrating on Hamilton's essay risks giving the unfair impression that he is unrepresentative of his fellow-authors in carrying the burden of these criticisms, but that seems not to be the case, even if he is not always representative of all. To reiterate: it is only because of his engagement with Enns and only because much is made of Enns in the introduction to the whole volume that I have singled out this essay.⁶ As do the essayists in this volume, I demur both from Enns's interpretation of the relationship between Pauline and Old Testament perspectives on Adam and his theological perspective on the historicity of Adam, so I am accompanying the essayists to first base.⁷

Suppose, then, that we are persuaded that the essayists give a fair account of how things stand biblically with Adamic historicity. How, now, do things stand theologically with original sin? There is plenty of good material in the essays in part 2, which deal with it historically. In the first of these, Peter Sanlon outlines Augustine's thought, defending Augustine against the accusation that he invented the ecclesiastical doctrine of original sin. However, when Sanlon turns to a brief account of the Pelagian objection, trouble begins to brew which will later bubble up pretty fiercely with pressure on the theological defence of original sin in part 3. Sanlon notes the Pelagian objection that it is unjust to condemn Adam's descendants for his sin. Judging by the silence of the essay, Augustine had no response this. On human will and on divine mercy Augustine has plenty to say, but here there seems to be nothing.

Will Lutheranism step into the breach and fill the void? There is no essay on medieval thought in this volume, so Lutheranism is next in line and we have a characteristically informed account of original sin in the Lutheran tradition by Robert Kolb. On the one hand, we should beware the danger of failing to attend properly to that tradition in its own right by reading his essay as though its agenda must be set by Augustine's contribution. On the other, Lutheranism entered into mainstream Augustinian inheritance on the matter at hand and we are entitled to wonder whether the question of the justice of the condemnation of Adam's progeny will rear its head and, if so, whether it will be addressed. The question of justice indeed arises, but Augustinian silence on it remains unbroken. In Kolb's essay, we learn again of the human will and of divine mercy, but again not of how our condemnation for the sin of Adam can be regarded as just. Of course, this is accounted for in part by the sixteenth century context of Lutheran theology. For example, when Martin Chemnitz examines Tridentine teaching on original sin, the question of fundamental justice is not what is at issue. Yet, when Melanchthon tells us that it is the theological responsibility of the church to unfold and explain its brief doctrinal statements, we might expect something more; but Melanchthon does not offer it in the form which should interest a reader of this volume and where Melanchthon does not go, Chemnitz is unlikely to go.⁸ When, then, Kolb describes in laudatory tones Luther's achievement and his grasp of paradox, the Augustinian problematic remains stonily untouched and unmoved in the scenic background. Perhaps the tacit assumption is that if we

⁵ Enns explicitly draws this familiar comparison in the 'Introduction' to *The Evolution of Adam*, xvi. He is simultaneously aware that 'evolution uniquely strikes at central issues of the Christian faith', p. xiv.

⁶ Enns's work is also the subject of frequent allusion in Collins's essay, but the index to the volume does not give a complete list of the footnote references to Enns.

⁷ Full justice to Enns's volume will not be done without a study of his *Inspiration and Incarnation: Evangelicals and the Problem of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005).

⁸ At least this is so in the context of Chemnitz's *Loci Theologici*, trans. J. A. O. Preus, vol. 1 (St. Louis: Concordia, 1989). For Melanchthon's comment, reproduced in Chemnitz's work, see p. 272.

acknowledge paradox in our talk of original sin and human responsibility, paradox must play its part in our understanding of divine justice. Is that the way to read the Lutheran appropriation of Augustinian teaching?

However we answer that question, in any list of unlikely accusations against Calvin, the accusation of refusing to grasp the nettle and of being silent when speech is owed should come pretty high up. Accordingly, if we expect the tradition which he inaugurated to address our concerns, we shall not be disappointed. Donald Macleod guides us helpfully through it. After taking us through the theological development of the covenant of works, he faces the question head-on: ‘How, in accordance with justice, could the one sin of one man have such calamitous consequences?’ (p. 137). Once the question is introduced, it dominates. Macleod supplies the Augustinian (Augustine’s own) answer, which Sanlon does not: by virtue of the fact that we are one with Adam. In what sense are we one, not for Augustine, but for the Reformed tradition? The answer is: by federal unity. Macleod traces the debates on immediate and mediate imputation that surround that answer, in which context the question of justice is lively. Federal union secures the justice of our condemnation.

What is both interesting and significant is that, at the end of his essay, Macleod observes that, in the Reformed tradition, we are still left with the question (among others): exactly ‘[w]hy, for example, should the sin of Adam involve all his offspring in guilt?’ (p. 146). Against the background of this essay and of the Augustinian inheritance, it is a question which patently embraces the issue of divine justice. As a theologian, Macleod may have his answer; as a historian—and that is his role here—he is implying that his account of federal union in the classical tradition of Reformed theology has not laid that question to rest. It may be worth adding one footnote to this account. Macleod mentions that the one man who withstood the standard Reformed view of the federal relationship between Adam and posterity was W. G. T. Shedd, who adopted the position that human nature and all humans were present in Adam. My supplementary observation is that it is precisely the issue of justice which apparently drove Shedd to make his proposal. Shedd believed that the imputation to his posterity of the sin of a vicarious representative violates the order of justice.⁹ We may and, I believe, should reject the theological substance of Shedd’s position, but how should we respond to its guiding purpose?

Perhaps the Wesleyan tradition will tell us. Again, preoccupation with the question of justice should not be allowed to prevent that tradition from speaking on its own terms and, in a fine essay, Thomas H. McCall permits it to do just that. Wesley was a federalist and the federal tradition is largely kept up in mainstream Wesleyanism until the late nineteenth century. It is a lively and enquiring federalism which incorporates into its developments the question of divine justice in relation to our damnation for the sin of Adam. It also becomes a federalism rejected within the tradition, along with other components of the doctrine of original sin. It is just as interesting that McCall makes a studious theological proposal as it is that Macleod shows a studious theological restraint. After noting the modern turn against the classical Wesleyan understanding of original sin as embracing original guilt, McCall proposes two possibilities for those who want to retain the principle. The first is a fresh working of the notion of mediate imputation. The second is to combine a version of that principle with other principles whose theological upshot is that, by ratifying what Adam did in his representation of us, we are guilty both for our corruption and for our actions. These suggestions are briefly set out at the conclusion of the essay. When, then, we have read Carl Trueman’s essay on ‘Original Sin and Modern Theology’, which concludes this part of the volume, we might conclude that the Christian tradition had left modern theology with

⁹*Dogmatic Theology*, 3rd ed. (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2003), IV. 5.

significantly unanswered questions on the doctrine of original sin. Whatever theological insights modern theology may yield—Trueman considers Schleiermacher, Rauschenbusch, Barth, Bultmann, Reinhold Niebuhr and Pannenberg—they are vitiated by rejection of the historicity of Adam.¹⁰ However, as far as our reading of Madueme and Reeves's volume is concerned, we are bound to ask to what extent modern theological thinking on this question is the product of the failure of orthodoxy to establish the theological credibility of its tenets. Trueman refers to 'the typical modern concern for the idea of one person being considered guilty because of the failure of another' (p. 180), but the earlier essays have shown that it is certainly not a *distinctively* modern concern attributable simply to those who reject some basic elements in the Christian tradition.

Accordingly, when the co-authors of this volume arrive on the scene in its third part, they have given themselves a pretty demanding theological job to do. Their contributions are sandwiched between those of James Hamilton and Daniel Doriani (the latter on 'Original Sin in Pastoral Theology'). In a joint essay, Madueme and Reeves tackle 'Original Sin in Systematic Theology' and, in an independent essay, Hans Madueme tackles 'Original Sin and Modern Science.' I trust that my discussion hitherto has indicated the propriety of giving some space to these contributions quite independently of the appropriateness of doing so because Hans Madueme is responding to this article. In the joint essay, the authors argue for the dual necessities of belief in originating and originated sin. If we do not believe in the former, we cannot avoid the conclusion that evil is a part of creation, and this is drastic. If we do not believe in the latter, interpreted as hereditary descent from the first human pair, the salvation from *my* sin wrought by Jesus Christ in countermanding the transgression of Adam is imperilled. Ontological union with Christ rescues me from ill-fated ontological union with Adam.

The force of Madueme and Reeves's first point (on originating sin) is hard to avoid; the Achilles' heel of the position which denies an historical fall is the theological implications for our view of evil in creation. In this context, we should also welcome the authors' rescue of Irenaeus from those interpretations which make him an ally of that denial, although it is a pity that the historical account in Part 2 begins with Augustine and not with Irenaeus. The second contention—on originated sin—is more troublesome. There are two difficulties here. One is the claim that, without monogenesis, God's imputation of Adam's sin to Adam's race 'seems unfair and arbitrary since it is not grounded in an antecedent natural reality' (p. 217). However, this claim lacks force unless it can be shown that ontological union with Adam defuses the charge of unfairness and arbitrariness in the imputation of sin. Madueme and Reeves produce no argument to that effect. The second is the claim that I cannot know for sure that Christ has assumed '*my* "human" nature' (p. 216) unless I am monogenetically related to Adam and that '[d]enying that we inherit Adam's original sin [understood in the sense of hereditary union] meant denying that sin has any real depth in us' (p. 218). However, it is one thing to argue the exegetical case for the authors' claim about an ontological link, quite another to argue its theological necessity in this fashion. I confess that I am reminded of the argument that if you deny the historicity of Adam, then belief in the historicity of Jesus Christ is unsafe. As though belief in the historicity of Jesus depended on belief in the historicity of Adam! Rather similarly, I know for sure that Christ has assumed

¹⁰ Within the space of one essay, Trueman was bound to be brutally succinct and selective. Even so, his succinct one page on Pannenberg, e.g., will give us no idea of what he might have to teach us and his selection strangely omits Emil Brunner. Compare, for example, Henri Blocher's engagement with Pannenberg (and with Brunner, for that matter) throughout his important *Original Sin: Illuminating the Riddle*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 5 (Leicester: Apollos, 1997).

my human nature and died for my sin; I know the unfathomable depth of my sin and dire corruption of my nature through the gospel or, if you like, through the New Testament witness. I know it unshakeably while I may puzzle over how to understand it theologically, how to interpret Romans 5, or how to regard the relative claims of monogenism and polygenism.¹¹

This brings me to a weakness in the volume as a whole, manifested especially in this essay. In rejecting interpretations of Genesis judged compatible with polygenism, those interpretations which accept the contemporaneity with Adam of ‘humanlike contemporaries,’ Madueme and Reeves aver that this looks like a ‘blatant contradiction to the biblical teaching’ and that ‘[o]ne looks in vain for any indication in Genesis 2–3 that there were any humans, or humanlike beings, other than Adam and Eve’ (p. 216f.). What is puzzling here is the total silence not only in this essay but in the whole volume of a key passage in this discussion: Genesis 4:14–17. The index to the volume indicates hundreds of biblical texts cited in this work, but Genesis 4:14–16 never turns up at all and Genesis 4:17 turns up only once in connection with 4:17–22, without hint of its significance for this debate (see p. 10). This, of course, is where we learn that Cain, after expressing the fear that his expulsion from the land which he was working will make him a wanderer liable to be murdered, settles down in Nod and gets married. It looks as though the text places him in a populated world. Of course, it cannot clearly be doing so, because of what has preceded it in Genesis 2 and 3. Then how should the chapters be related? The possibilities are many. They are ignored in this volume. Madueme and Reeves also ignore the fact that they are committed to the goodness of original incest as the means of propagation according to God’s design, whether between siblings or between Adam and his daughters, Eve and her sons and so forth onto the possibility of uncles and aunts until the whole thing is (should we not say, mercifully?) avoided. Had the authors said that they were willing to accept this; had they explained why the affirmation that Cain’s wife must have been his sister does not really strain the text; had they added that neither is it strained by the supposition that those feared by Cain as he wandered away must have been his own kin and that he was either initially alone in Nod with his wife or had been joined by other unmentioned kin—had they said all this, the reader could have weighed the words and agreed or disagreed. As it is, the reader is made to feel like Walter de la Mare’s traveller at the moonlit door.¹²

Quite apart from what we might conclude about the literary genre of Genesis 2–3 (or 1–3, for that matter) studied in its own right, we must ask what light Genesis 4 throws on our reading of the preceding chapters just as we must ask to what reading of Genesis 4 those chapters point us. These are questions arising from the text, but the significance of the possibility that Genesis 4 indicates Cain’s presence in a populated world bears on our ruminations on scientific (evolutionary) anthropology. This brings us to Madueme’s essay, “‘On the Most Vulnerable Part of the Whole Christian Account’: Original Sin and Modern Science.’ Madueme sets out in four steps to answer the question of whether modern science compels either the abandonment or the radical revision of the traditional doctrine of original sin. First, he briefly describes the relevant post-Darwinian science-religion conflict; then, he looks at

¹¹ In much the same way as Madueme and Reeves do not show how their theological understanding of original sin is necessarily required in order to maintain belief in it, so the logic of Doriani’s account of ‘Original Sin in Pastoral Theology’ often requires only a conviction that sin is deep, not a belief about original sin. See, e.g., pp. 259–60.

¹² See his unfading poem ‘The Listeners.’ We might, of course, add consideration of Genesis 6:1–4 to that of Genesis 4. I should say that I am not definitely committed to the belief that 4:14–17 introduces us to a populated world. Quite apart from the difficulty of interpreting dogmatically compressed narratives, Cain might have been thinking of a period of hundreds of years during which he could be hunted down from a distance.

theological attempts to resolve it; third, he offers a methodological proposal ‘for how to begin resolving these problems in dialogue with Scripture and tradition’ (p. 227); finally, some concrete suggestions are made. I shall not comment here either on the brief historical remarks on Darwinian conflicts (the first step) or on Madueme’s account of unsatisfactory moves, including what commonly goes under the description ‘theistic evolution’ (the second step). The ‘jackpot’ question, says the author (p. 238), is the methodological one tackled in his third step. To the jackpot, then, we shall go.

The third step is executed in three moves. The first—strictly a ‘commitment’ rather than a ‘move’ (p. 241)—is an affirmation of biblical inerrancy. The second is an affirmation of ‘pneumatic certainty’, the testimony of the Spirit to the truth of Scripture. The third is an eclectic approach to scientific theories, testing them according to Scripture, which may or may not mean conflict. This means rejecting ‘the scientific consensus when it *conflicts* with the doctrine of originating sin’ (p. 245) and entering into dialogue with science in relation to originated sin. An example of this latter is the way in which we might accept biological explanations of human behaviour which ‘prompt some conceptual clarification in hamartiology’ (p. 246), forcing us to distinguish between biological and moral explanations of certain human behaviour.

What are we to make of this proposal? Well, if (a) commitment to biblical inerrancy is warranted and (b) we can be pneumatically certain that the Bible is the Word of God, then (c) an eclectic approach to scientific theories seems to follow. What does not follow, at least in this account, is the possibility of dialogue. What Madueme calls ‘genuine dialogue with science’ (p. 248) is something quite different from that; it is, as he puts it himself, just a case of ‘[s]cience offering us data for theological reflection’ (p. 247). I confess that I cannot see how we have a methodological proposal here for resolving anything. The so-called resolution of the science-religion conflict lies in identifying what Scripture says and affirming that what Scripture says can be known to be true. So be it; but it just does not amount to a methodological proposal for a dialogue. As it stands, it is just a statement of faith.

So is there no dialogue in the volume? Its subtitle is: *Theological, Biblical and Scientific Perspectives* on (the title) *Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin*. Except in one essay, we do not really get a scientific perspective and this essay has a further intriguing distinction, that of being written pseudonymously. It also ‘aims to bring the traditional doctrines of Adam and the fall into conversation with the scientific data by outlining the expectations we harbor for the human fossil record based on the biblical witness and comparing these expectations with current data and theories of paleoanthropology’ (p. 54). *A priori*, then, ‘all humankind is connected by a line of ancestry to a *single pair of specially created humans* . . . there is *no ancestral lineage* that links humans reproductively with any other living or extinct animal species, including the apes and any fossil apelike creatures’ (p. 55, emphasis original). Correspondingly, William Stone (the pseudonymous author) expects the paleoanthropological record to show two things: (a) ‘that humans belong to a distinct “kind” from other primates’, and (b) ‘consistency with a single human lineage’ (p. 55). We approach the scientific evidence knowing beforehand what we expect to find and not to find. And what do we find? We find that Adam is probably to be located at the root of the *homo erectus* to *homo sapiens* lineage almost 2 million years ago and that his progeny divided into different species. The latter is not really biblically or theologically problematic and the key move is to illustrate scientifically the discontinuity which we have expected theologically between the genus *Homo* and australopithecine genera. Of course (says Stone) this leaves problems unsolved. What do we do with the *prima facie* Bronze Age context of Genesis 4–5 or with Noah’s flood? We do not know; but we can expect to get there some time.

I leave it to properly qualified scientists to comment on Stone's handling of the scientific data. Although there are occasional allusions to genetics, it is fossils rather than genetics that interest William Stone; consequently, we have no essay in the volume which tackles crucial questions in scientific biology. I shall cut to the chase by omitting also any discussion of the scientific reasoning involved in the essay and ask the question: what shall we make of Stone's method of approach and its effect on the possibilities of conversation between Scripture and science? Certainly, if 'x' is known to be the case or if there are strong grounds for believing 'x', it is not only in order to bring that knowledge or belief into our evaluation of any claims and theories—it is necessary. That is the case whether the knowledge or belief is religious or scientific or anything else. Methodologically, there is no objection in principle to a person bringing his or her religious beliefs to bear on scientific investigation; to say otherwise is to affirm that the outcomes of scientific investigation are, in principle, more certain than those of religious reasoning and that such an affirmation might take the form of a methodological commitment every bit as *a priori* as that of Stone. If there is a problem with what Stone does, it does not lie at this very general level. Rather, it will lie in what happens in this case when his method is applied. Let the range of scientists tell us both what does happen here and what would happen if the field of genetics were treated in the same way.¹³

We know, of course, what the overall evaluation of Stone's conclusions will be in mainstream science (at least in general; I do not myself know what will be made of every detail in the argument). Here, we are in the neighbourhood of an issue which Madueme also faces in his essay: just how secure do scientific 'findings' have to be in order to overthrow theological conclusions? Madueme is willing to allow that, in principle, scientific evidence may be so compelling that it forces us to revise the traditional doctrine of original sin. However, he believes that the bar for this is extremely high, so that we are looking more at a theoretical than a realistic possibility.

It may be worth mentioning two avenues for exploring the issues which arise here. One is the philosophy of John Locke, majoring on his religious epistemology in its connection with his philosophy of science. Locke's influence on modern thought has been huge; he was, as Sir Leslie Stephen (Virginia Woolf's father) put it, 'the intellectual ruler of the eighteenth century'.¹⁴ His religious epistemology has been undervalued, although it is open to more than one serious criticism, including its early-modern interpretation of rationality. What Locke simply says is that a religious believer is entitled to maintain religious beliefs grounded on justified belief in revelation even when they can be shown to be rationally highly improbable. Revelation trumps contrary rational probability. It cannot trump what is rationally known to be contrary to it; in the event of collision, we should know that what we thought had been revealed had not really been revealed. Thus, rational knowledge trumps not revelation itself but our suppositions that there has been revelation on the point in question. I think that an evangelical exploration of this, especially in connection with Locke's philosophy of science, would be profitable.¹⁵

¹³ It is worth adding that Stone's biblical-theological principles require less in the way of scientific evidence than he supposes. Those principles do not require, as he supposes, that the paleoanthropological record 'show that humans belong to a distinct "kind" from other primates'—only that it does not contradict the claim about the distinction of humankind (p. 55).

¹⁴ *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 1 (London: Smith, 1876), 86.

¹⁵ See Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), IV.14–20.

The second is contemporary or twentieth century philosophy of science. Some of us will demur both from the exegesis of Genesis in this volume which rules out ‘theistic evolution’ and from the authors’ refusal to accept the scientific evidence for the integration of humankind into evolutionary history.¹⁶ Yet, all of us need to attend to issues in the philosophy of science, particularly as they have taken shape since the work of Karl Popper.¹⁷ Both Madueme and Stone aspire to dialogue; in that case, surely what is needed is an incursion into the relationship of (what we might broadly term) philosophy of religion and philosophy of science.¹⁸

Stone’s enterprise is driven by a conviction which is not his alone, though it is impossible to say whether it is shared by all the other authors—a conviction that the doctrine of original sin is either drastically redefined or lost if humans are located along an evolutionary line extending back to pre-human or non-human ancestors. This is not necessarily so. When Scripture talks about ‘man’ or humankind, it is tempting to assume that it means what anthropologists mean when they use that language. However, anthropologists do not demarcate species by identifying a point at which the first humans became addressed by God, called by God, answerable to God. *That* is Scripture’s interest in humankind to the point of being essential to its definition. There will be a neurological correlation to this summons, but, unless we accept some form of mind-brain identity theory, the spiritual summons is hidden, as is the apostasy of the fall. What is definitive of humanity by biblical standards is scientifically invisible, just as God and salvation are invisible, and an evolutionary pre-history does not in the least affect this. Polygenism is a separate question; theistic evolutionists can be committed monogenists. I think that Madueme is right to point out the dangers in this area of accommodation to the latest scientific picture, dangers which are grave indeed if even someone of Henri Blocher’s stature has to make retractions. Madueme is also right to note the possibility of adhering to the historicity of Adam

¹⁶ This need not be evidence which supports a neo-Darwinian synthesis; meta-Darwinism is another player in the game. See T. B. Fowler and D. Kuebler, *The Evolution Controversy: A Survey of Competing Theories* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007). David Stove’s *Darwinian Fairytales* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1995) is compelling reading in this connection. Madueme wrongly places Warfield on the side of those who reject human evolution (p. 229). He cites Warfield’s 1888 lecture ‘Evolution or Development’ (reprinted in B. B. Warfield, *Evolution, Science and Scripture: Selected Writings*, ed. Mark Noll and David Livingstone [Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000]), which the editors say represents Warfield at ‘his most skeptical about evolutionary theory’ (p. 114). Further, Madueme fails to refer to the different line taken in Warfield’s review of James Orr’s *God’s Image in Man*. See ‘Added Note: Revisiting B. B. Warfield on Creation and Evolution’ at the end of this article.

¹⁷ Bryan Magee’s ‘Conversation with Karl Popper’ in Magee, *Modern British Philosophy* (St Albans: Paladin, 1973), 85–107 is a most useful way in, as is his *Popper* (Glasgow: Fontana, 1973). Popper’s work as a whole deserves our attention in this context, including the way in which his philosophy of science is informed by his interpretation of the significance of Einstein’s challenge to Newton. Pannenberg comes to terms with Popper in his argument that the ‘real task’ of theology ‘is to examine the validity of the thesis of faith as a hypothesis’, *Theology and the Philosophy of Science* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1976), 296. Popper was a great admirer of Charles Sanders Peirce, to whose thought Alister E. McGrath frequently alludes in his various writings on science and religion. See, e.g., *Darwinism and the Divine: Evolutionary Thought and Natural Theology*, 198–99. As I mentioned Stove’s work on *Darwinian Fairytales*, so mention should be made of his critical *Popper and After: Four Modern Irrationalists* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1982) but note should be taken of the self-imposed limits of Stove’s criticism of Popper and others in this work. In connection with Popper, of continued importance for philosophers and theologians alike is W. W. Bartley’s essay on *The Retreat to Commitment* (Chicago: Open Court, 1999).

¹⁸ Madueme refers to Alvin Plantinga (p. 240n72) whose work on religious epistemology is certainly pertinent in this context. For dialogue, see Alister McGrath’s *The Foundations of Dialogue in Science and Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998).

without commitment to the chronological matter of where, on the evolutionary time-line, Adam appears (p. 237–38).

Mention of Blocher takes us into the last part of the volume. In his essay on ‘The Fall and Genesis 3’, Noel Weeks thinks that it is a struggle for Blocher to combine reference to an historical Adam with symbolic trees in Eden and that Blocher ‘seems reduced to saying that he is certain something happened but that translating from the symbolic to the actual is beyond us’ (p. 299n37).¹⁹ As a matter of fact, there is neither struggle nor reduction here. History symbolically rendered is scarcely alien to Scripture. Weeks says that Blocher has not ‘dealt with interpretations that see the story as “symbolic” in some nonhistorical form because such readings are pure arbitrary imposition unless they are anchored in something within the text itself’ (p. 305). Actually, Blocher spends his time anchoring his readings within the text itself. If Weeks insists that Blocher and others go outside the text in order to interpret trees as symbolic, then we are not only taken back to our earlier remarks about hermeneutics and ANE context, but Weeks has to tell us why he is not being arbitrary in taking the trees non-symbolically. What Collins says about other scholars in his opening essay applies to Weeks: he is ‘conflating historicity with a literalistic scheme of interpretation, without argument’ (p. 9n17).

However, Thomas Schreiner’s essay on Romans 5:12–19 does expose the difficulties with Blocher’s reconstruction of the doctrine of original sin and those of us who are willing to entertain the proposition that Henri Blocher’s theological ability is unexcelled on the contemporary scene will conclude that, if the doctrine of original sin remains a riddle after he has examined it, riddle it will remain for some time to come. Schreiner’s exegetical argument results in a modification of Murray’s advocacy of the imputation of Adam’s sin and he opposes Blocher’s challenge to the traditional federalist interpretation of Romans 5.²⁰ Whatever we make either of Schreiner’s interpretation of his interlocutors or of the relative exegetical merits of the positions concerned—and Schreiner conducts his arguments well—he is surely correct to protest that Blocher’s interpretation does not fulfill its aim of relieving the problem of divine justice in condemning his progeny for Adam’s sin. The final chapter of Blocher’s *Original Sin* is focussed on presenting a theological interpretation of original sin which has (prominently) amongst its goals the aim of turning aside this allegation of divine injustice. Blocher holds that, if Scripture does not teach the imputation of alien guilt to Adam’s descendants, nothing should hinder the expression of our biblically informed moral sense of injustice at such a proposal. Indeed, Blocher grants that infants are guilty and deprived of fellowship with God and is aware that this is open to the charge of injustice, if it is Adam that brought them into this condition. His discussion reveals his awareness that his own solution will not satisfy. Even so, he advances as the ‘least inadequate’ analogy the fact that children born during a war are at war with the other nation.²¹ His underlying supposition is that the human race has an organic spiritual solidarity and Adam was placed at its head. Blocher is not convincing. In the situation of war, we do not regard children as guilty for the fact that their leaders have brought the nation into war; we do not condemn them, even if they cannot but be implicated in action undertaken against their nation. Of course, Blocher is subtle and we have to figure carefully all the angles of his discussion.

¹⁹ Weeks refers to Henri Blocher, *In the Beginning: The Opening Chapters of Genesis*, trans. David G. Preston (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1984).

²⁰ I am happy to confess my admiration for John Murray’s work as well as that of Henri Blocher, but the convolutions of Murray’s formulations seem to me to obscure the reasoning in *The Epistle To The Romans: The English Text With Introduction, Exposition and Notes*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), 189n22.

²¹ *Original Sin*, 129.

Nonetheless, it is hard to gainsay the fairness of Schreiner's observation: 'It is difficult to see how anyone who struggles with God's justice in the matter of Adamic headship will find Blocher's solution much of an improvement over the theory of an imputed guilt' (p. 277). Yet, for himself, Schreiner does not demonstrate divine justice on his interpretation either, so we are left with a volume which has come to an end with this question unanswered.²²

In conclusion, I go back to first base and to commendation. Adam was an historical figure through whom sin entered the world. Yet, I do not see that we have got beyond first base and that the authors have found a way of defending this conviction beyond saying: 'The Bible says.' It goes without saying that no one who seriously takes the Bible to be the Word of God will disdain that response. However, when more is attempted, more is expected. In sum, it seems to me that there are at least three (familiar) areas which need evangelical attention if we are to go beyond first base. We need (a) an in-depth engagement with different ways of understanding the literary genre of the early chapters of Genesis; (b) a renewed attempt to explain, if it is possible, the justice of condemning his progeny for the sin of Adam;²³ and (c) a philosophy of science which explores carefully the work and legacy of Karl Popper. Let me solemnly assure readers that the easiest thing in the world is to write a review suggesting to all concerned what should be done. Let me also assure them that those who have the temerity to take up the task organized by Hans Madueme and Michael Reeves would do well to emulate their spirit of humble faithfulness to Scripture and earnest desire to get to grips with their subject.

Added Note: Revisiting B. B. Warfield on Creation and Evolution

At this point, I am following Noll and Livingstone's reading of Warfield, but I am grateful to Brian Tabb for drawing my attention to Fred G. Zaspel's criticism of it in "B. B. Warfield on Creation and Evolution."²⁴ Zaspel argues that their description of Warfield as an evolutionist at best goes far beyond the evidence, at worst ignores some of the evidence and at all events must be rejected. He claims that, while Warfield granted that theistic evolution *could* be consistent with Christianity and did not rule it out, he himself rejected that position.²⁵

The disagreement invites careful scrutiny of Warfield's work and what follows is not a detailed adjudication but a general judgement with an eye to my observations on Hans Madueme's reading. Zaspel's challenge surely fails. Four reasons of unequal weight can be given for this.

First, what Zaspel means by 'theistic evolution' is not altogether clear. He says that '[e]ven the theistic evolutionist cannot explain ultimate origins in terms of evolution. . .';²⁶ but I have never heard of

²² In fairness to Schreiner, it is not his brief. In his closing essay on 'Adam, History, and Theodicy,' William Edgar apparently does not try to make headway on this one either.

²³ We should consider approaching this by exploring the proposition that we all would have done what Adam did. This would involve both setting out the logic of putting our post-lapsarian individual selves in the place of another human being and observing the distinction between saying that, contingently, any one of us would have done the same and saying that sin was inevitable for humanity.

²⁴ Fred G. Zaspel, 'B. B. Warfield on Creation and Evolution,' *Them* 35.2 (2010): 198–211

²⁵ For a brief response, see David N. Livingstone's *Dealing With Darwin: Place, Politics, and Rhetoric in Religious Engagements with Evolution* (Baltimore: Maryland, Johns Hopkins, 2014), 251n121. See Livingstone's discussion of Warfield on pp. 185–93.

²⁶ Zaspel, 'B. B. Warfield on Creation and Evolution,' 201.

a theistic evolutionist who even tried to do so and, were the attempt to be made, I should not know what ‘theistic evolutionism’ meant. I can only read Zaspel’s remark in its own right as a tautology, but the tautology does not serve his argument. However, perhaps this is a minor point. Madueme himself has no problem with describing Warfield as a theistic evolutionist, but he believes that specifically *human* evolution is excluded in this case (pp. 228–29).²⁷

Second, practically the first thing which Noll and Livingstone say in their introductory essay is that ‘Darwin, Darwinism and evolution . . . were distinct’ for Warfield,²⁸ but Zaspel collapses the last two. Thus he moves from quoting Warfield on the improbability of ‘any form of evolution *which rests ultimately on the Darwinian idea*’ (my italics) to the denigration of evolution in general.²⁹ Unfortunately, it is impossible to investigate all the aspects of Zaspel’s case here, because, at a certain juncture, he gives the wrong reference for a citation from Livingstone’s work.³⁰

Third, Zaspel’s case turns largely, though not entirely, on the need to attend closely to Warfield’s precise and careful formulations. This is a welcome insistence and Warfield’s writings on evolution are an impressive model of careful theological reflection and expression. However, Zaspel’s principled approach rebounds on him in practice for he delivers a major component of his thesis only at the cost of doing precisely what he accuses Noll and Livingstone of doing, which is to be inattentive to Warfield’s actual wording. Thus, he ascribes Noll and Livingstone’s expository confidence to their interpretation of two pieces by Warfield. The first is his review of Orr’s *God’s Image in Man*. According to Zaspel, in this review Warfield ‘*evidently*’ (my italics) sees the biblical account of death as an obstacle to evolution.³¹ Actually, Warfield does not imply, still less say, any such thing. What he says is that ‘[p]erhaps’ (my italics) Orr overstates the matter when he says that “‘there is not a word in Scripture to suggest that animals . . . came under the law of death for man’s sin.’”³² Warfield’s response to Orr is: ‘The problem of the reign of death in that creation which was cursed for man’s sake and which is to be with man delivered from the bondage of corruption, presses on some with a somewhat greater weight than seems here to be recognized.’³³ As a matter of fact, Zaspel has earlier represented both Orr and Warfield in excessively vague terms to the point of misrepresentation. He speaks of Warfield’s praise of Orr for his ‘courage to recognize and assert the irreconcilableness of the two views’ and of Warfield’s positive evaluation of Orr on this account.³⁴ Zaspel does not tell us what the two views in question were but he does say that consideration of what Warfield says, ‘by itself, at least, would have led Livingstone and Noll to a very different conclusion.’³⁵ However, what Orr was contrasting here was a Christian worldview and nineteenth-century evolutionary philosophy exemplified, e.g., by Ernst Haeckel. It is on this

²⁷ ‘Theistic evolution’ is actually better called ‘evolutionary creationism’, but the latter will seem a contradiction in terms in a climate where creationists may regard theistic evolution as a contradiction in terms.

²⁸ Noll and Livingstone, ‘Introduction: B. B. Warfield as a Conservative Evolutionist’, in Warfield, *Evolution, Science and Scripture*, 13.

²⁹ Zaspel, ‘B. B. Warfield on Creation and Evolution’, 203.

³⁰ The words which he quotes are not found at the point of reference (*ibid.*, 207n38).

³¹ *Ibid.*, 209.

³² Warfield, *Evolution, Science and Scripture*, 235–36.

³³ *Ibid.*, 236.

³⁴ Zaspel, ‘B. B. Warfield on Creation and Evolution’, 208.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

that Warfield is commenting positively and both the Noll/Livingstone account and their conclusion are entirely harmonious with it.³⁶

Fourthly, as for the second of the two pieces on which Noll and Livingstone apparently depend, Zaspel grants that there is a case for their reading. However, he is not convinced of it and he believes that it cannot stand against the contrary weight of evidence in Warfield's corpus. The piece in question is Warfield's celebrated essay on 'Calvin's Doctrine of the Creation.' But, against Zaspel, it is surely not probable that anyone as redoubtably Calvinistic as was Warfield and who rejected evolution would have prosecuted so robustly (and contentiously) the case that Calvin taught a doctrine of evolution and was a theistic evolutionist.³⁷

This is not necessarily to dispose of everything which Zaspel says: e.g., the weight which he places on Warfield's 1888 lecture essay on 'Evolution and Development' compels anyone who wishes to adjudicate this disagreement in detail to give meticulous attention not only to what the word 'evolution' comprehends in Warfield's writings but also to the hermeneutical principles with which we approach Warfield's texts. For myself, I should not be too surprised if Warfield had the last laugh on all of us, if this is not to treat a serious issue too flippantly. Perhaps in his later writings (the focus of the debate) he did not show his hand at all, neither overtly rejecting human evolution nor overtly declaring it, not giving away even his leanings one way or the other. Until the laughter echoes loud and clear or until another case is put forward for Zaspel's conclusion, there is no need to demur from Noll and Livingstone's conclusion.

³⁶ Warfield, *Evolution, Science and Scripture*, 231. See James Orr, *God's Image in Man and Its Defacement in the Light of Modern Denials* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1906), ch. 1.

³⁷ Only an excerpt of Warfield's article on 'Calvin's Doctrine of the Creation' is included in *Evolution, Science and Scripture*, 293–314.

Another Riddle without a Resolution? A Reply to Stephen Williams

— Hans Madueme —

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Abstract: Stephen Williams raises a number of concerns with the book, *Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin*. The authors, he concludes, fail to grasp the nettle of difficulties facing the Augustinian hamartiology. While some of his objections hit the mark, others are less convincing. Original guilt, in particular, is a resilient doctrine. Rooted in Scripture and of a piece with Christ's atonement and imputed righteousness, this doctrine resists its detractors. Thus, rumors of the demise of original sin as a viable doctrine have been greatly exaggerated.

In the red dragon of Wales, we see a symbol of the strength and mettle of the Welsh soul. It is the emblem of their national flag (*Y Ddraig Goch*). Legend of old has it that King Arthur himself, that great warrior of Britain, used the red dragon as his trusted battle standard. Be that as it may, the spirit of the dragon lives on in Stephen Williams who has delivered a penetrating review of the book that I co-edited with Michael Reeves. In my rejoinder, I have limited my remarks to the three key concerns that Williams registers. I hope the exchange—precisely the kind of dialogue our book was aimed at generating—will bring clarity to some areas of contention swirling around the doctrines of the fall and original sin.

So let us begin with biblical authority and the theological significance of the Old Testament ANE background. Williams is troubled by methodological moves in chapters by Hamilton (ch. 9) and by Weeks (ch. 14). The issue seems to be this. Both Hamilton and Weeks claim that our only epistemic access to the thought and assumptions of the biblical authors is the canonical witness itself. Williams judges this a flawed stance that confuses the issue of biblical authority with hermeneutics. As he sees it, we cannot avoid interpreting the biblical authors in their own cultural (ANE) context. To quote Williams: “the proper response is a rigorous appropriation and hermeneutical use of ANE and extra-biblical materials, not what looks like an attempt to seal off the biblical world hermeneutically, an impossibility in any case if we are going to read the original languages” (pp. 205–6).¹ Perhaps he means that Hamilton and Weeks should have couched their points more cautiously, less polemically; a fair criticism, if somewhat subjective.

¹Page references to the review essay by Stephen Williams are given in the text.

But it's more than that. Williams disagrees with their *methodological* assumptions. There may be a misunderstanding here. It seems to me that Hamilton and Weeks want to clarify the epistemological significance of the biblical canon *as canon*. If we conceive of Scripture dogmatically, as God's Word written, then it follows that the inspired, divine discourse just is the canonical data. Williams, of course, is correct that extra-biblical data—e.g., linguistic, social, and cultural insights—are essential to interpret the canonical text. And yet, this point needs to be handled with care. Extra-biblical insights, the world *behind* the text, help us determine the meaning of the biblical words; but if we seek to hear what God is saying in Scripture, what counts is the meaning of the biblical text in the context of the rest of Scripture, the world of *the text* (the Reformers' analogy of faith; Scripture interprets Scripture). Here's the rub—what do we do when our best historical conjectures are in tension with, or even contradict, the biblical witness? I take Hamilton and Weeks to be saying that the intra-textual, canonical reading is decisive, every time there is a conflict.² Given that these men are professional biblical scholars, it seems unlikely that they are denying the need to interpret the OT in cultural context. They are merely insisting, controversially perhaps, that what we hear God saying in the text, interpreted in its immediate context, and in the canonical context—that should always trump contrary historical conjectures. That is a legitimate hermeneutical extension of the Scripture principle.

Williams is already cringing and I'm barely out of the gates. He worries that, on those terms, "the Bible [becomes] an exception to rules of general hermeneutics" (p. 205). But why let your heart be troubled, O Williams? The rules of general hermeneutics imply at least two handicaps that cannot be true for the Bible, precisely because of its property of divine inspiration. First, those rules typically operate within methodologically naturalist limits. Common books are not generally read as if they have been composed, supernaturally, infallibly, by a Divine Author. That's just as well; even Pulitzer authors are only human. But, of course, that would be a disastrous reading strategy with the Bible (the minimalism of the Copenhagen School in OT studies is an extreme example, but it makes the point). Second, even our best extra-biblical conjectures are always hampered by the noetic effects of sin and the intrinsic limitations of the extant evidence. None of these facts obviate the need for the hard work of *interpreting* the biblical text, and perhaps that is Williams's sole point. Even so, once the church is convinced of what God's Word says, taken as a canonical whole, she is obligated to use it as a rule that can decide conflicts with other readings (including any extra-textual ANE conjectures that can be pitted against it). In sum, ANE conjectures in biblical exegesis work best ministerially, not magisterially.³

Williams's second major concern is twofold, relating to how I handled original sin in the chapter co-authored with Michael Reeves. He thinks we overreached theologically and complains that we gave no justification for the concept of original guilt. I'll take each in turn. In our chapter—"Threads in a Seamless Garment"—we argued that our connection with Adam secures the very possibility of salvation, for then we know that Christ assumed *our* Adamic nature and not some other nature. Our sin problem runs deep; "though sin is certainly something people do, it is more fundamentally a disorder that inescapably

² Noel Weeks is also signaling his rejection of the historical determinism widely assumed in modern OT scholarship. Such determinism, he argues, insists that "the biblical authors must conform to the approaches found in other texts of the time because they are all trapped in the same historical and cultural period. . . . The premise says that they must be significantly similar because they both belong to the ancient world" ("The Ambiguity of Biblical 'Background,'" *WTJ* 72 [2010]: 226). Weeks denies the premise, on empirical grounds, and has elaborated the case in previous writings.

³ For a sure-footed elaboration of related themes, see Alvin Plantinga, "Two (or More) Kinds of Scripture Scholarship," in his *Warranted Christian Belief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 374–421.

conditions all our doing—and thereby reminds us that our hope properly rests in God’s doing rather than our own.”⁴ That is well said, and we would add that our Adamic link is the metaphysical backdrop. But Williams disagrees. He thinks we lack a viable rationale for that brand of “theological necessity” (p. 209). He prefers a much more agnostic stance: “I know for sure that Christ has assumed my human nature and died for my sin; I know the unfathomable depth of my sin and dire corruption of my nature through the gospel or, if you like, through the New Testament witness. I know it unshakeably while I may puzzle over how to understand it theologically, how to interpret Romans 5, or how to regard the relative claims of monogenism and polygenism” (pp. 209–10).

I admire this theological agnosticism. Williams shows dogmatic restraint. A good theologian should not be ashamed to concede mystery on any number of theological realities—that kind of reticence can be the mark of wisdom (cf. Prov 18:13, 20:25). And yet, it all depends, doesn’t it? In this case, his view amounts to a deep conviction that we are *sinner*s coupled with agnosticism on *why* that is the case—a minimalist hamartiology. Such a move is common in the wider debate. For instance, George Murphy writes this: “The crucial distinction here is between the idea of an ‘original sin’ which took place at the beginning of human history and that of a ‘sin of origin’ which affects all human beings from their beginnings and from which they cannot free themselves. The need for a savior is dependent upon the latter belief but not upon the former.”⁵ Such a move is common because it affords less tension with the scientific story. Is that why Williams has adopted this posture? I wonder about that, but I can’t say (I’m agnostic!). I *can* say this: our chapter on original sin sketches out the dogmatic reality undergirding our experience of grace and our existential knowledge of sin. If the exegetical case is sound, then our argument for theological necessity more or less follows. So while I typically laud Williams’s dogmatic minimalism, it may have let him down here.

Consider the distinction between the *ordo essendi* (the order of being) and the *ordo cognoscendi* (the order of knowing). As recipients of God’s saving grace in Christ, we know that we are sinners. This is the *ordo cognoscendi*, and I take Williams to be emphasizing this point. No disagreement from me. But Reeves and I were seeking to address the *ordo essendi*, viz., our solidarity with Adam as the more basic, fundamental reality, which alone makes sense of, gives meaning to, the experience we have of being sinners. I’m thus skeptical that Williams’s agnosticism is a stable position in our present intellectual context. Mainstream scientific narratives give us a very different account of these matters; in less capable hands, Williams’s agnosticism simply translates, in practice, to assimilating the scientific hamartiology.

Am I missing the camel, straining at gnats? Williams writes, “I confess that I am reminded of the argument that if you deny the historicity of Adam, then belief in the historicity of Jesus Christ is unsafe. As though belief in the historicity of Jesus depended on belief in the historicity of Adam!” (p. 209). He’s right: “*belief in the historicity of Jesus*” does not depend on “*belief in the historicity of Adam*.” One can affirm that Jesus was historical and deny the same for Adam. Williams, I suggested, has emphasized the *ordo cognoscendi*. But that ignores a crucial metaphysical sense in which—given what the Bible says

⁴Ian McFarland, “The Fall and Sin,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, ed. John Webster, Kathryn Tanner, Iain Torrance (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 157.

⁵George Murphy, “Roads to Paradise and Perdition: Christ, Evolution, and Original Sin,” *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 58 (2006): 111.

about Adam⁶—the historicity of Jesus *does* depend on the historicity of Adam. These two individuals are part of the same human family, bound together by the same ontological and genealogical networks. To take away Adam's historicity, and everything it entails, threatens the integrity of the biblical story.

Consider this analogy. Suppose my dad is my hero, my very reason for existence. Let us also say that I'm ethnocentric; for me, to be is to be *Nigerian*. But I've always lived in the UK, never set foot on African soil. The only way that I know I'm Nigerian is because my dad told me and he has an old Nigerian passport (plus, I look Nigerian). He has also told me many times that he had a grandfather who lived in a tiny village in Nigeria, a chief, a prince of princes; my dad would be nothing without my grandfather and what he did for his family. Now someone starts claiming that my grandfather never existed, that he was not even Nigerian and certainly no prince. Sure, on one level, my love for my dad and my relationship with him does not depend on whether my grandfather ever existed, or whether he was Nigerian. On another level, however, it certainly makes all the difference. If it was all lies, my whole conception of reality, my identity, would begin to unravel. And so it is: For most of church history, we thought we were children of Adam, only to find out that we are orphaned moderns fashioning new ontological identities in a post-Darwinian world.

The problem is not that Williams denies a historical Adam—he doesn't—it's his dogmatic minimalism that I am questioning. He is agnostic on whether the biblical account of sin speaks meaningfully, or clearly, to implicit questions raised by the scientific story (e.g., monogenism vs. polygenism); I worry that such agnosticism, in this case, can indirectly, unwittingly, feed into "neo-Gnostic" tendencies widespread in modern doctrines of Scripture. In their reticence, they judge Scripture reliable on matters of "spiritual" or "religious" significance, but helpless, even destitute, on the rest of material reality. Natural science confidently deciphers the historical and physical aspects of creation, so that the Bible is rendered less and less articulate about the actual world we live in. I find that modern theologians like what the Bible says religiously but get skittish about its witness to the material world.

There is still the problem of original guilt, and that brings us to Williams's second complaint, framed as an unresolved riddle running through our book. Why does God hold us guilty for the sin of Adam when none of us were there? How could this be just? Williams is right that none of the contributors develop an answer to this question (he takes particular aim at the Reeves/Madueme chapter). I confess: Guilty as charged. He gives the impression that the Augustinian doctrine cannot justify *why* the idea of original guilt is just—or, at least, our book fails to make the case. And he is in good company; others have argued that Augustine's formulation cannot explain the justice of original guilt. Oliver Crisp, to pick one example, has made the same argument in a recent essay on original sin.⁷

There seems to be an implicit argument that carries Williams's essay along. It goes like this. The Augustinian tradition, in its premodern and Reformation incarnations, has never been able to answer the objection against original guilt. There is no plausible reason for God to consider all of Adam's descendants guilty of that one trespass. This dilemma was not "invented" by the Enlightenment or by Darwin or by modern scientists. Hardly. It's the dirty secret of the premodern tradition. The received doctrine of original sin is thus vulnerable at just this point; part of the reason modern theologians are

⁶E.g., see C. John Collins, *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist? Who They Were and Why You Should Care* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 23–92.

⁷Oliver D. Crisp, "On Original Sin," *IJST* 17 (2015): 252–66, but he has leveled this objection on several occasions in previous publications. The same critique was made earlier by Richard Swinburne, *Responsibility and Atonement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), esp. 137–47.

attracted to evolutionary hamartiologies, and part of the reason modern biblical scholars are seeking fresh exegetical approaches to Romans 5, Genesis 3, etc., can be traced back to this weakness within the tradition, a weakness begging for a more compelling account. It's unclear whether Williams sees this development as salutary. But it is clear that he wants a proper accounting of original guilt. To that we now turn, with fear and trembling.⁸

Given the limitations of this forum, I can only offer a few quick remarks. I take our federal (or covenantal) union with Adam to be a brute theological fact, revealed in holy writ.⁹ As with the Trinity and the Incarnation, I doubt we shall ever fully grasp the way of it, certainly not before the Eschaton. God has appointed Adam and Christ as the federal heads of humanity. Adam's fate was to be the fate of his descendants. God has revealed it, we can only confess it—the mystery that explains everything else. “[W]ithout this most incomprehensible of all mysteries,” Pascal understood, “we are incomprehensible to ourselves. Within this gnarled chasm lie the twists and turns of our condition. So, humanity is more inconceivable without this mystery than this mystery is conceivable to humanity.”¹⁰

If that be true, then the alleged problem of original guilt cannot be separated from the blessing of Christ's atonement. If original guilt is unjust, then by the force of biblical logic we must say that the imputation of Christ's righteousness is also unjust (Rom 5:12–21). We can either accept—or reject—both.¹¹ If Adam cannot be the federal head for our guilt, then Christ cannot be the federal head for our righteousness. Or so it seems to me. Adam and Christ stand or fall together as federal heads. Interestingly, Williams's concerns with imputed guilt carry over to inherited corruption. If it is unjust for us to be counted guilty because of our union with Adam, then it is surely unjust for us to be born morally corrupt because of our union with Adam—for we had no say in having a moral disposition traceable to what Adam did eons before we were conceived.

In light of Williams's agnostic stance, it's possible that he rejects inherited corruption as unscriptural. In fact, he floats a different scenario: “the proposition that we all would have done what Adam did. This would involve both setting out the logic of putting our post-lapsarian individual selves in the place of another human being and observing the distinction between saying that, contingently, any one of us would have done the same and saying that sin was inevitable for humanity” (p. 215n23). Alas, I doubt that proposal will get us very far. The idea, roughly, is that God omnisciently knows what every human being would do, counterfactually, had they been in Adam's place. Based on that “middle knowledge,” God knows that each of us would have acted as Adam did; as a result, God can then *justly* impute Adam's disobedience to all of humanity. The problem with this idea is that, on Williams's view, humanity was created originally sinless. There was the possibility of sin without the disposition to sin. On that premise, how could he possibly say that *no single human being* (barring Jesus) could have been in Adam's place and acted otherwise? Williams can only arrive at the conclusion—that all would have sinned as Adam did—by stipulating that each of us, from the beginning, was in a postlapsarian state, disposed to sin. But that's no solution at all. It leaves us in a position analogous to God justly creating humanity in

⁸ I'm indebted to my colleagues John Wingard and Bill Davis for sharpening my thinking in this area.

⁹ It is of some comfort to know that Herman Bavinck is on my side. See his *Reformed Dogmatics*, ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 3:105–6.

¹⁰ Blaise Pascal, *Pensées and Other Writings*, trans. Honor Levi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 43.

¹¹ Some bite the bullet here, rejecting both original guilt and the Anselmian/penal account of atonement. E.g., see Swinburne, *Responsibility and Atonement*.

a sinful state based on his middle knowledge that each of us would have sinned.¹² In my view, the cure is worse than the disease.

Furthermore, Williams's starting assumptions merit scrutiny. He is operating with a notion of divine justice that is clear, from which he then intuitively recognizes the injustice of the divine imputation of guilt. Is he putting the epistemic cart before the horse? Our intuitions about fairness and justice have a *history*, and in this instance his specific intuitions are of rather recent provenance.¹³ To be sure, everyone has an intuitive sense of justice independent of Scripture, but there are good reasons—bound up with a Christian doctrine of sin—to doubt their reliability. Williams presumably agrees that God's revelation about justice in Scripture should control what we think constitutes divine justice. The traditional doctrine of original guilt, I would argue, is grounded in Scripture. The nature of divine justice is not so transparent that we can confidently set aside traditional doctrines; to the contrary, doctrines that are counterintuitive to moderns such as original corruption, substitutionary atonement, hell, and yes, original guilt—such doctrines should define and mold how we conceive divine justice. Now perhaps Williams will contest that Scripture supports original guilt, but my core epistemological point still stands.

Williams's third (and final) concern is with the bad advertising. The book's subtitle promises dialogue with science but fails to deliver. The contributors fail to wrestle adequately enough with the difficulties of their position given the scientific challenges arrayed against them. That was the weakest part of the book, I agree. In that regard, Williams's frustration is valid: "What is puzzling [in the Reeves and Madueme chapter] is the total silence not only in this essay but in the whole volume of a key passage in this discussion: Genesis 4:14–17" (p. 210). Indeed, the editors *should* have included a detailed analysis of that passage somewhere in the book. As Williams indicates, the text raises implicit questions relevant to the broader conversation. Most famously—or infamously—Isaac La Peyrère was the first person of note to suggest there were men and women living before Adam and Eve. Part of La Peyrère's argument turned on ambiguities that he perceived in Gen 4:14–17.¹⁴ I'm not persuaded by this line of argument, partly because of explicit statements in the text (e.g., Gen 2:18), but that's beside the point. Our book missed an opportunity to address these questions directly.¹⁵

¹²I am following Julius Müller, *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, trans. William Urwick, 5th ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1868), 2:338. Müller's two volumes—excepting his pre-temporal, Origen-like constructive proposal—are a work of hamartiology than which none greater can be conceived. Schleiermacher defends a scenario similar to the one Williams has offered. See Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, ed. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1928), 303–4.

¹³E.g., see Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 1–11, 326–48.

¹⁴His two-volume work was originally published in Latin. For the English translation of the second volume, see Isaac La Peyrère, *Men before Adam, or, a Discourse upon the Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth Verses of the Fifth Chapter of the Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Romans: By Which Are Prov'd That the First Men Were Created before Adam* (London: n. p., 1656). Cf. Richard H. Popkin, *Isaac La Peyrère (1596–1676): His Life, Work and Influence* (New York: Brill, 1987); and more recently, David N. Livingstone's *The Preadamite Theory and the Marriage of Science and Religion* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1992) and *Adam's Ancestors: Race, Religion, and the Politics of Human Origins* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 26–51.

¹⁵For recent interpreters who have mined this text for clues to modern scientific questions, see Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC 1 (London: Tyndale Press, 1967), 26–31; Richard Middleton, "Reading Genesis 3 Attentive to Human Evolution: Beyond Concordism and Non-Overlapping Magisteria"—a lecture delivered on 27 March, 2015, at the "Re-Imaging the Intersection of Evolution and the Fall" conference,

The main chapter addressing scientific questions is by William Stone (a pseudonym). Again, Williams is right that this chapter (and the entire book) lacks any discussion of genetics, arguably the greatest challenge to a historical Adam and Eve.¹⁶ While the inference is tempting, the omission is no sign the editors were asleep at the wheel (I'd have blamed Reeves anyway). There were prudential reasons; we could not find anyone with the scientific and philosophical expertise to tackle that question well. We also feared that a detailed discussion would immediately become out of date. And even if that danger faces *any* discussion in science and theology, we felt it acutely in this case. Whether that was the right decision or not, the omission admittedly left the book vulnerable.

Back to Stone's chapter. Williams is not guilty of this, but other reviewers were confused about the genre of that essay. It may help readers to know that Stone believes the earth—and, by implication, Adam!—is less than 10,000 years old. But in his line of work, that position is anathema. His essay was a deliberate methodological exercise in minimalist apologetics, i.e., “*for the sake of argument* let us assume all or most of the mainstream perspectives on paleoanthropology; do they cancel out the possibility for a historical Adam and Eve?” The conclusion that Adam roamed the earth 1.8 million years ago is *not* Stone's own view. He was trying to demonstrate that paleoanthropology does not necessarily undermine Adam's historicity. The merit of this essay's strategy is worth debating, surely, but a proper assessment needs to get straight what Stone was actually trying to do.

We come now to Williams's critique of my own chapter. His main complaint is that I have given a “statement of faith” and not, as I signaled, a methodological proposal for a dialogue. That's a fair point. Of necessity, my account was compressed and prevented me from laying out the argument in detail.¹⁷ That said, one of my aims was to resist a particular monopolistic conception of “dialogue” between science and theology. In practice, the call to dialogue typically means we take the scientific view at face value, more or less, and prevent dogmatic concerns from delimiting the rules of the encounter. I'm not sure what Williams thinks about this view of dialogue (though I was heartened to see that he appears to reject methodological naturalism, a sacred cow in the academic context, cf. p. 212). Given that view of dialogue, theology is reshaped according to the whims and fancies of the scientific project. Hence my reservations. In my essay, I explored a different way of conceiving dialogue, one that takes science seriously but critically.¹⁸ Williams's helpful comments on philosophy of science suggest he is amenable to probing such possibilities. While I am less sure about Locke's value in this context, Williams's broader

arising from a research group sponsored by the Colossian Forum. Cf. R. J. Berry, *God's Book of Works: The Nature and Theology of Nature* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 228–29; Denis Alexander, *Creation or Evolution: Do We Have to Choose?* (Oxford: Monarch, 2008), 198.

¹⁶ For further details, see Francisco Ayala et al., “Molecular Genetics of Speciation and Human Origins,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of the Sciences* 91 (1994): 6787–94; David Wilcox, “Finding Adam: The Genetics of Human Origins,” in *Perspectives on an Evolving Creation*, ed. Keith B. Miller (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 234–53; Dennis Venema, “Genesis and the Genome: Genomics Evidence for Human-Ape Common Ancestry and Ancestral Hominid Population Sizes,” *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 62 (2010): 166–78.

¹⁷ I'm working on a monograph that fleshes out these themes in detail: *The Evolution of Sin? Sin, Theistic Evolution, and the Biological Question—A Theological Account* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, forthcoming).

¹⁸ To take a scientific perspective “seriously,” in my judgment, is not necessarily to endorse its methods or conclusions. I'm calling for epistemic *caution*—keep your theological wits about you—not *rejection* of science. Good science is a gift from God, a measure of his common grace. Antiscientific rhetoric among laity and church leaders is typically uninformed and misguided. As others have argued, many evangelicals need a much greater appreciation and understanding of what good science *is*, and what good scientists *do*.

suggestions are valid (I'm happy to report that the philosophical contribution plays a central role in my forthcoming work).

On the matter of B. B. Warfield, Williams challenges my claim that, while Warfield was a theistic evolutionist, he rejected *human* evolution. In the 1888 lecture that I cited, Warfield *does* reject human evolution; but Williams is right to point out my failure to reference Warfield's review of Orr—one that I am very familiar with—in which he allows for the possibility of human evolution.¹⁹ I stand corrected. One should not forget, however, that in that same Orr review Warfield insisted that God would have placed a human soul in Adam, supernaturally; in Warfield's mind the soul distinguishes Adam from the animal kingdom (needless to say, that is not what scientists today mean by human evolution). Warfield's arguments in favor of human evolution did not imply human evolution *tout court*. It should be clear from what I have said here, and in the book, that I agree with Williams's critique of Fred Zaspel's interpretation.²⁰ Based on the textual evidence, Warfield was a nuanced, conservative theistic evolutionist; he accepted the possibility of human evolution but insisted that Adam received his soul by God's direct, supernatural intervention.²¹

As I bring this rejoinder to a close, I take pride in getting Williams to first base. He agrees with us on the necessity of a historical fall; in the current theological climate, that's no small thing. I'll take what I can get. Above all, I am grateful that he has given me this opportunity to clarify my own thinking on these central hamartiological questions; it has been a pleasure engaging his incisive review. I have no doubt he remains unsatisfied, but I trust our dialogue (!) will continue, despite the riddle that lies between us. Which reminds me of another riddle, actually an old joke, whose punch line I can't recall—a Nigerian, a Welshman, and a Scientist walk into a bar. . . .

¹⁹ B. B. Warfield, review of James Orr, *God's Image in Man*, *Princeton Theological Review* 4 (1906): 555–58.

²⁰ Fred Zaspel, "B. B. Warfield on Creation and Evolution," *Them* 35.2 (2010): 198–211.

²¹ The definitive work is now Bradley J. Gundlach, *Process and Providence: The Evolution Question at Princeton, 1845–1929* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013). On Warfield, Old Princeton, and the human evolution question, see *ibid.*, 232–42.

The Lost World of Adam and Eve: A Review Essay

— Richard E. Averbeck —

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Abstract: In his new book, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve*, John Walton tries to show that there is no necessary contradiction or tension between the discoveries of modern science when they are rightly understood and what the Bible actually teaches about cosmic and human origins. The reviewer agrees on this point and many others through the book. The major area of disagreement is that, in order to make his argument, Walton proposes there is no material creation in Gen 1–2; that is, creation has to do with establishing functions alone. This is not sustainable from the text. Both material creation and the functions of those things created are essential components of these creation accounts.

No matter what you say (or write) about the early chapters of Genesis, you are in a lot of trouble with a lot of people. This is a hot topic for many and, unfortunately, discussions about it often generate more heat than light. Like the author of the book, this reviewer believes in the reliability and authority of the Bible as God’s inspired Word to us. John Walton and I have previously interacted on this subject in public and in private. Our disagreements are substantial but, to my knowledge, our friendship and collegial relationship is not impaired by this engagement. One of our many mutual concerns is that Christians learn to discuss such issues in an honest, irenic, and mutually respectful manner. We need to continue to pursue truth together as fellow believers even when we do not see eye to eye on certain points in our understanding of what our inerrant Bible actually teaches.

With that as the point of departure, the goal in this review article is to carefully summarize and interact with the twenty-one propositions that make up the substance of Dr. Walton’s new book *The Lost World of Adam and Eve*.¹ Over the years, he has written extensively on reading the early chapters of Genesis in their ancient Near Eastern (ANE) context. The book under review serves as a companion to his earlier *The Lost World of Genesis 1*.² In *The Lost World of Adam and Eve* he first reviews some of

¹ John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2–3 and the Human Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015).

² John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009). See also John H. Walton, and D. Brent Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013).

the arguments from that earlier book and then moves into a step by step presentation of how he reads Genesis 2:4–3:24.

His main concern is to show that there is no necessary contradiction or tension between the discoveries of modern science when they are rightly understood and what the Bible actually teaches about cosmic and human origins, especially the latter. The *perception* of such tension often arises out of traditional and parochial readings of the Bible that are mistaken, or over-reaching theoretical scientific conclusions. According to Walton, there is a credible way of reading these chapters that relieves these perceived tensions and allows both biblical scholars and scientists to proceed with their work unhindered by such needless controversy (pp. 11–14 and 198–210).

Propositions 1–3: Genesis is an ancient document; in the ancient world and the Old Testament, creating focuses on establishing order by assigning roles and functions; Genesis 1 is an account of functional origins, not material origins.

Here the focus is on reading Genesis 1 in the context of ANE creation accounts, a concern with which I am in full agreement and a practice that we both engage in regularly. Walton has published some very helpful materials in this arena, and I have benefited from his work. There is a major problem, however. He argues that the ANE people were not really that interested in material origins but in the proper arrangement of materials into a well-ordered cosmos. It is not that scholars have not noticed the emphasis on role and function in Genesis 1 previously, but Walton puts special emphasis on it, and rightly so. After all, why make something that does not work? Where he goes beyond the limits of the text and speaks in contradiction to explicit statements in it, however, is when he argues that neither the ANE creation texts nor Genesis 1 are concerned about material origins. I will return to this discussion below, after the review of his propositions.

Propositions 4–6: In Genesis 1, God orders the cosmos as sacred space; when God establishes functional order, it is “good”; *’ādām* is used in Genesis 1–5 in a variety of ways.

Walton’s discussion about the occurrences of “Adam” is especially good. He also makes a helpful point when he identifies rest as “the objective of creation” (p. 46), although I think part of the point is also that the work was all done and everything was very good, so he just “stopped” (Gen 1:31–2:3; Hebrew שָׁבַת basically means “to stop, cease”; cf. Exod 20:8–11). In any case, the well-ordered cosmos is like the temples of gods in the ANE. They are sacred space and so is the cosmos. Deities were thought to take up residence in well-built temples and rest there as the place from which they took charge of their whole territory. God did the same. We agree on this point.

My main concern is that he continues to argue that the ancients would have seen this as a matter of roles and functions, but not material creation. As is well-known, rulers were quite occupied with the material construction of temples in the ANE and in the Bible. They expended a great deal of time as well as material and labor resources on building such structures, and we have a large number of texts that attest to this. Yes, the proper ordering of things was essential, but their proper construction was a necessary part of that ordering and very much a part of the textual descriptions of them.

Propositions 7–10: The second creation account (Gen 2:4–24) can be viewed as a sequel rather than as a recapitulation of day six in the first account (Gen 1:1–2:3);

“Forming from dust” and “building from rib” are archetypal claims and not claims of material origins; forming of humans in ancient Near Eastern accounts is archetypal, so it would not be unusual for Israelites to think in those terms; the New Testament is more interested in Adam and Eve as archetypes than as biological progenitors.

In these chapters Walton argues the same basic point for the Genesis 2 account that he has for Genesis 1: there is no material creation of man and woman here. Instead, the focus is on the archetypal nature of humanity’s role and function in the world. He reads ANE stories of human origins the same way and suggests that, in light of this background, the ancient Israelites would have not expected a story of material human origins anyway. Again, in my reading, this understanding of both the Bible and the ANE texts does not deal adequately with what the texts actually say and how the ancients would have heard and understood them.

Walton also takes the Genesis 2 account as a sequel to Genesis 1, rather than an expansion of the sixth day of Genesis 1. The first account is about creating order in the larger cosmos, whereas the second is about creating order on the earth. I myself take the days in Genesis to be literary not literal (see more on this below), and am quite open to his reading Genesis 2:4–24 as sequential rather than as a recapitulation of day 6. In any case, the forming of the birds in 2:19 suggests that this account reaches back beyond day 6 in chapter one, since the birds were created on day 5. The NIV and ESV pluperfect rendering of the verb in 2:19 as “the LORD God *had* formed” is not cogent. In my view, it is a way to go around what the text is saying and how it says it, rather than reading it as it stands.³

He then moves to the New Testament, where he sees the same focus on archetypal relationships between Adam (and Eve) and Jesus, especially in regard to sin, death, and redemption. According to Walton, the New Testament pays very little attention to our material origins except on a general level in Jesus’s genealogy (Luke 3:38) and in 1 Corinthians 15:45–49 where Paul makes the point that we are of the dust of the earth (Gen 2:7; 3:19; cf. Ps 103:14; etc.) and bear the image of the first man Adam (Gen 5:3).

Propositions 11–13: Though some of the biblical interest in Adam and Eve is archetypal, they are real people who existed in a real past; Adam is assigned as priest in sacred space, with Eve to help; the garden is an ancient Near Eastern motif for sacred space, and the trees are related to God as the source of life and wisdom.

In these chapters Walton comes back around to Adam and Eve again in a different way, now with the intention of showing they were actual historical individuals. He bases this on the genealogical lists and the story of the fall into sin. He does not believe, however, that this settles the matter of “Adam being the first human being, the only human being or the ancestor of all humans today” (p. 101). Eventually he comes around to the conclusion that they were created along with all the rest of humanity in Genesis 1:26–28, but they were not the first human beings created. Instead, they were “the first *significant* humans . . . by their election” (pp. 114–15; emphasis his). They were elected to be God’s priests in the sacred space known as the Garden of Eden (see the earlier remarks on sacred space above). That was the archetypal role for which they were created.

³See the earlier remarks on this in Richard E. Averbeck, “A Literary Day, Inter-Textual, and Contextual Reading of Genesis 1–2,” in *Reading Genesis 1–2: An Evangelical Conversation*, ed. J. Daryl Charles (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2013), 94–95.

The general idea here is a good one. Yes, as noted above, the whole cosmos is sacred space, and the whole earth too, but especially the Garden. Other scholars have made this point as well. And I would agree that the ANE material supports it. However, there is a problem with the treatment of Genesis 2:15 in this context: “The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it” (NIV). Walton and others have argued that the verb “to work it” here means rather to do “priestly service” in it as a sacred place of God’s residence, like the Israelite priests did in the tabernacle and then later the temple (see, e.g., Num 3:7–8). The problem is that earlier in Genesis 2:5b we read, “the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground” (lit. “there was no אָדָם to work the ground”). The point in v. 15, therefore, would seem to be that, since there was now a man, God assigned him to his appropriate task in the Garden as referred to in v. 5. In fact, I would argue that doing this very thing is a sacred task in and of itself. From the beginning, working the ground and caring for it so that it stays in proper productive working order has been a sacred matter.

Propositions 14–17: The serpent would have been viewed as a chaos creature from the non-ordered realm, promoting disorder; Adam and Eve chose to make themselves the center of order and source of wisdom, thereby admitting disorder into the cosmos; we currently live in a world with non-order, order and disorder; all people are subject to sin and death because of the disorder in the world, not because of genetics.

In the interpretation of the serpent and fall in Genesis 3, Walton has come to believe that the serpent is more than just a snake. It is a chaos creature that shows up elsewhere in the Bible and in the ANE as Leviathan, that twisted serpent with multiple heads, etc. (pp. 133–34; cf., e.g., Ps 74:12–14; Isa 27:1).⁴ The ancient Israelites themselves would have recognized this immediately. Here in Genesis 3 we have the engagement of the cosmic battle of the ages. Walton distinguishes between non-order, order, and disorder, so that the serpent’s actions are not really inherently evil (p. 136). Instead of that, the serpent is part of the non-ordered world, his interference in the ordering of the world in Genesis 3 brought disorder through the sin of the man and woman in the Garden. Moreover, their sin was essentially a matter of deciding that “they themselves desired to be the source and the center of wisdom and order” rather than leaving that to God (p. 150). It is the disorder of the world that causes all creation to groan, including us (Romans 8:18–25).

One of the main reasons he places so much weight on these distinctions (non-order, order, and disorder) is to lay a foundation for arguing that there was death before the fall (pp. 159–60). Death and suffering are part of the non-ordered world, not contradictory to the notion that creation was “very good” in Genesis 1:31. The ordering of the world was supposed to continue on through Genesis 2 and beyond. But the interruption in Genesis 3 brought rampant disorder, so the order never developed fully as it will in the new heaven and earth (Rev 21–22). In the meantime, “the *order* that was being formed in the midst of non-order” was the “good” referred to in Genesis 1. The non-order “was *not* good, though it was not evil either.” Disorder is what is sinful and evil (p. 160). So death before the fall was just part of the non-order, not evil.

⁴See Richard E. Averbeck, “Ancient Near Eastern Mythography as it relates to Historiography in the Hebrew Bible: Genesis 3 and the Cosmic Battle,” in *The Future of Biblical Archaeology: Reassessing Methodologies and Assumptions*, ed. James K. Hoffmeier and Alan R. Millard (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 328–56; and idem, “The Three ‘Daughters’ of Baal and Transformations of Chaokampf in the Early Chapters of Genesis,” in *Creation and Chaos: A Reconsideration of Hermann Gunkel’s Chaokampf Hypothesis*, ed. JoAnn Scurlock and Richard Beal (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 237–56.

Walton has made a valiant attempt here to bring “order” to the discussion about order, disorder, and sin in Genesis 3. In fact, I would agree that the text does not teach that there was no death before the fall. The end of Genesis 1 highlights the fact that the plants of the latter part of day 3 were to be food for the animals and humanity, but it never says there were no carnivorous animals. In fact, the wonders of God’s creation in Psalm 104 include a portrayal of the prey of predatory animals as “their food from God”—part of God’s generous provision for them in his created order (vv. 20–21).

However, I am not convinced that the actions of the serpent in Genesis 3 can be put into the category of non-order rather than disorder, even if it belongs to the non-ordered world as Walton has it. When it speaks contrary to God and leads the man and woman into sin it is part of the disorder and an enemy of God. God’s curse upon the serpent in Genesis 3:14–15 reflects that it is under condemnation and will come to a bad end as a punishment for this act. It is held responsible for it, along with the man and the woman. It is part of the “evil,” and in a sense the progenitor of it, a point that is made in extensions from this passage through the rest of the Bible (see, e.g., Rev 12, which is essentially a midrash on Gen 3 and all that flows from it in biblical theology from Israel to Mary and Jesus and beyond).⁵

Propositions 18–19: Jesus is the keystone of God’s plan to resolve disorder and perfect order; Paul’s use of Adam is more interested in the effect of sin on the cosmos than in the effect of sin on humanity and has nothing to say about human origins.

As noted above, Walton sees both Adam and Jesus as historical and archetypal, and both also have priestly roles. The first Adam initiated the disorder by his failure in his priestly role in Genesis 3, but Jesus as the second Adam resolves the disorder through his priestly work on the cross. In his “Excursus on Paul’s Use of Adam” (pp. 170–80), N. T. Wright rightly points out that the effects of Jesus’s work are the key to resolving disorder for the whole divine project of ordering creation. It is not just about our personal sin and our salvation therefrom, but the sin of Adam and the resolution of the groaning of all creation. According to Wright, “The great climax of Romans 1–8 is the renewal of all creation, in Romans 8:17–26, where Jesus as Messiah, with a reference to Psalm 2, is given as his inheritance the uttermost parts of the world.” The problem Romans answers is “not simply that we are sinful and need saving but that our sinfulness has meant that God’s project for the whole creation (that it should be run by obedient humans) was aborted, put on hold” (p. 173).

On the one hand, I see his point about the whole creation plan, the importance of the Abrahamic covenant in getting back to it, and Jesus as the key to it all. I agree with all this wholeheartedly. On the other hand, I have been accustomed to seeing the climax of Romans 1–8 in what I have referred to as the “hymn to adoption” (cf. 8:15) at the very end of chapter in Romans 8:31–39. It has seemed to me that the well-known passage in vv. 28–30 serves as the bridge from the groaning in vv. 18–27 to the hymn that overwhelms us with the love of God in his adoption of us by the grace of Christ in spite of our sinful corruption (cf. Rom 7:24–8:17). This, in turn, brings us back to the work of God through Israel in Romans 9–11. I cannot deal with the latter passage here, but Wright himself later takes pains to emphasize Israel’s failure in the whole work of God’s plan to re-order creation (pp. 176–78). He points out that it looks like the whole work is aborted in the Babylonian exile and the post-exilic period, much

⁵In my view, the discussions of Revelation 12 generally do not pay sufficient attention to Genesis 3. Consider, e.g., the pain of the woman in childbirth (Gen 3:16 with Rev 12:2), the battle between the seed of the woman and the serpent (Gen 3:15 with Rev 12:3–9), and the “rest of her seed” (Rev 12:17), etc. See the now the foundations for this discussion in Averbeck, “The Three ‘Daughters’ of Baal and Transformations of Chaoskampf in the Early Chapters of Genesis,” 247–56.

like in the fall in Genesis 3. But as Wright also notes, both the fall in Genesis 3 and the exile of Israel are resolved in Jesus the Messiah. He writes: “now the whole world is God’s holy land, with Jesus and his people as the light of the world” (p. 177).

Returning now to Romans 8, it seems to me there is a great deal of emphasis here on what Wright seems to want to de-emphasize—the basic gospel of salvation by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. I write this with a sense of fear and trembling, since I view N. T. Wright as one of the preeminent NT scholars of our day and have learned a great deal from him about the NT and the Bible as a whole (as I have from John Walton regarding the OT and the ANE). Moreover, I am an OT scholar myself, so I am fully aware that I am out of my league here with such a knowledgeable NT scholar. Furthermore, I cannot imagine that, at the end of the day, Wright would dispute the importance of this gospel even though he seems to want to downplay it in this short piece, perhaps because of the larger topic at hand in this particular book.

Still, I need to explain further why the real climax of Romans 1–8 is 8:31–39, and why this matter is so important for the larger discussion at hand. I cannot deal with all the details here, but, as I see it, Paul’s emphasis on our struggle with sin in Romans 1–8 reaches its peak in the tangled up knot described in Romans 7:14–24. Right after that he makes a sudden turn to God’s work in Jesus Christ as the answer to the whole problem, since “there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (8:1). I have often likened this to the Greek legend of the cutting of the Gordian knot. Briefly, as the legend goes, in the days of Alexander the Great there was a town in the hinterlands called Gordius after the name of its king. In that place there was an oracle associated with a cart that was bound to a yoke with a knot that no one could untie (there were no rope ends to work with, etc.). It was called the Gordian knot. The oracle was that whoever could untie it would become the ruler of all Asia. When Alexander came to Gordius he took out his sword and just cut right through the knot with one fell swoop. Thus, he became the conqueror and ruler of all Asia, and we have the expression “cutting the Gordian knot,” referring to one drastic action that accomplishes everything.

The point in Romans 7:25–8:4 is that this is exactly what Jesus did for us in one fell swoop through his death, burial, and resurrection. He cut right through the sin that knots us up. He does not try to untie it, and neither should we. There is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, so even though we still struggle with sin we can just get on with walking by the power of the Spirit who is the “Spirit of adoption” (or alternatively, who works the ‘spirit of adoption’) within us (8:15). The following verse says, “The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children” (v. 16). The general purpose of testifying is to convince someone of something, and the goal of the Spirit of God within us is to convince us ever more deeply in our human spirit that we are the adopted children of God (cf. 1 Cor 2:10–13).

The hymn of adoption at the end of the chapter is what the Spirit is convincing us of in our spirit.⁶ This is what the Spirit/spirit of adoption sings within us: there is absolutely nothing from anywhere or on any level that can separate us from the love of God. The more deeply we are convinced of this in our human spirit by the Holy Spirit who is within us, the more there is nothing left to do but go love God and people. Nothing else makes sense anymore. From here we can go into the world as the salt and light we are called to be. We can now participate in and contribute to God’s mission of reordering of the world through Christ, which is what Wright is calling for. But this can never happen without the core

⁶ See the very helpful detailed remarks on Rom 8:31–39 in C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, ICC (New York: T&T Clark, 1975), 1:434–44 and James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, WBC 38 (Dallas: Word, 1988), 496–513.

reordering of our lives through the Spirit of adoption. That is why this point is so important in the larger discussion we are engaging in as we review Walton's book.

In regard to the question of the historical Adam and Eve, Wright agrees that they must be a historical pair. He proposes that perhaps

God chose one pair from the rest of early hominids for a special, strange, demanding vocation. This pair (call them Adam and Eve if you like) were to be representatives of the whole human race, the ones in whom God's purposes to make the whole world a place of delight and joy and order, eventually colonizing the whole creation, were to be taken forward. (pp. 177–78)

This brings us to Walton's final two propositions.

Propositions 20–21: It is not essential that all people descended from Adam and Eve; humans could be viewed as distinct creatures and a special creation of God even if there was a material continuity.

In these two chapters Walton turns his attention to the scientific issues. He emphasizes once again that Genesis 2 refers to "the nature of all people, not the unique material origins of Adam and Eve" (p. 181). But he also makes it clear that, in his view, just because Genesis 1 and 2 do not deal with material creation does not make modern scientific theories correct either. They stand or fall on their own merits. Neither Walton nor I are scientists. But I hasten to add that we are both very interested in hearing what the scientists have to say about issues of origins, and I believe John Walton has done a good job here of summarizing the major issues that have been raised. He begins with the human genome project, which has led to the scientific conclusion that our genetic diversity requires a source population of some 5 to 10 thousand people. There have been attempts to find a way around this conclusion with a combination of selective scientific findings and reinterpretations of the Bible, but in his view these seem overly complicated and rather feeble.

As we would expect, his method at this point is to argue that passages which may seem to indicate that Adam was the first human being to exist and that we all descend from him do not really need to be read that way at all (e.g., Acts 17:26; Gen 3:20). Perhaps the least convincing is his treatment of the genealogies that run from Adam through history (e.g., Gen 5:1; 1 Chron 1:1) and even to Jesus (Luke 3:38; pp. 188–89). He uses the concept of God accommodating to their way of thinking and their level of knowledge, not that Adam was really the first man from which we all descend. The point would be that Adam was just "the first significant person in their realm of knowledge," and "[h]is federal headship would easily serve as an appropriate basis for the genealogy to go back to him" (p. 188).

I see three problems with this approach. First, we even use the language of accommodation today, but that does not mean we believe such language in a literal way. For example, we say things about "the sun rise/rising." Similarly, when they refer to thinking with the "heart," this simply means that thinking happens within us. Second, one of Walton's criteria for revealed truth rather than accommodation is when the text builds theology on the concept. It seems to me that Genesis 5:1–3, for example, is in fact doing theology with the notion that Adam is the male progenitor of the race. It ties the image of God discussion directly to him and develops it to the point that "he (Adam) had a son in his own likeness" named Seth (v. 3; note the same language here as in 5:1 and back to 1:26).

Third, and most importantly, although I can see how the archetypal nature of the narrative in Genesis 2–3 could lead us to material continuity from hominids to the first two *Homo Sapiens*, Adam

and Eve, I cannot accept the ongoing argument in this book that Genesis 1–2 nowhere deal with the material creation. In my view, the text simply does not support it. In fact, it is quite clear that God is telling us that he was directly involved in the creation of humanity. The text does so twice from two different perspectives (Genesis 1:26–28 and 2:7, 22). Admittedly, I am not a scientist and, in fact, I feel amateurish in even engaging with such topics. But let me try.

Scientists talk about our material genetic continuity from earlier hominids. Some “evolutionary creationists” would allow for divine intervention along the way in the process while others would not. The latter sometimes argue that if God has to step in, that implies that he did not set up the evolutionary process well from the beginning. This, of course, is not a sound argument, since God has always intended to stay engaged with both his creative and redemptive work, and he still is so engaged (see, e.g., the many Days of the Lord in the OT and the great one still to come). He did not just wind it up and let it go on its own. One of my colleagues calls this kind of approach “deistic evolution” rather than “theistic evolution.” It is the kind of supposed “theistic evolution” that has a lot of evolution in it but virtually no theism.

If we accept the scientific conclusion that there is genetic material continuity from earlier hominids, which I think we can, we would not expect the Bible to speak of it because it would not have been understandable to the ancient Israelites anyway. It would have been “non-sequitur,” so to speak. It seems to me there are two options from here. One is that Genesis 1:26–28 refers to the creation of humanity as a whole so that “they” (plural) can rule over all the animals (vv. 26 and 28). We could read this as a reference to all hominids, Adam and Eve being one selected pair of them to serve as the image of God (something like what Walton suggests). Another option may be to read it as a shift from earlier hominids to *Homo Sapiens*, beginning with Adam and Eve as recounted in Genesis 2. Could this fit with the science? I simply do not know. Remember, I am admittedly an amateur in this regard! But the latter is what I would prefer because the text suggests that God was directly involved in making something new here. This does not mean, however, that there was no material foundation from which he was working. In fact, the text has God calling forth both the plants and the animals from the ground (Genesis 1:11–12, 24–25), as well as the Lord God making the man from the ground (Genesis 2:7). The consistent material foundation suggests continuity on all levels.

Image and Likeness

As I see it, even our creation in the image and likeness of God is material and physical in nature. There has been no end of discussion of this matter over the centuries, and we must come back to it here. This is essentially where Walton ends his discussion (proposition 21). Genesis 1:26–28 reads:

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make humankind *in our image* (צֶלְמֵנוּ) *as our likeness* (דְּמוּתֵנוּ), that they may rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, all the (wild animals of the) earth, and all the crawling animals that crawl on the earth.”

²⁷ So God created humankind *in his own image*,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

²⁸ And God blessed them and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the living creatures that creep on the ground.” (own translation)

The term “image” (צֶלֶם) is regularly used in the Bible for some kind of physical statue, and “likeness” (דְּמוּת) for the notion of similarity, in this case the similarity between the statue and that which it represents. Unfortunately, the tendency in much of the debate has been to reject the physical nature of the terminology in favor of some kind of metaphysical interpretation of the image and likeness, especially since God is spirit, not a material being.

Back in 1979 archaeologists discovered a statue of a king at a place called Tell Fekherye in northern Syria dating to the 9th century BC. On the skirt of the statue is a bilingual (Aramaic and Akkadian) inscription.⁷ We can compare especially the inscription in Aramaic, where “image” and “likeness” (the same words as in Gen 1:26–27) are used interchangeably for the statue of the king on which it is written.

(1) The *image* (*dmwt*) of Hadad-yith'i which he has set up before Hadad of Sikan . . . (12) The *statue* (*šlm*) of Hadad-yith'i, king of Guzan and of Sikan and of Azran, for exalting and continuing his throne . . . (15–16) this *image* (*dmwt*) he made better than before. In the presence of Hadad who dwells in Sikan, the lord of Habur, he has set up his *statue* (*šlmh*).

The statue functioned to represent the king before his god in the place where the statue was set up. The implications are obvious when we apply this to Genesis 1:26–28 (see also 5:1–3). True, we are not just an inanimate statue. We are not just a dead rock! The Bible is using figurative language here. Like the statue of a king, we are the “statue” of a king too—the divine king. And we have been set up in the midst of God’s creation to represent him and his interests.

It is not that we look like God physically, but that we are physical beings who stand within the material creation as God’s stewards. We stand before God to serve as his authoritative representatives on this earth “in his image as his likeness.” We have been put in charge and made responsible for how things go here. This is stated clearly in the passage (v. 26): “Let us make humankind in our image as our likeness, *that they may rule* over the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky” (see also v. 28). Our understanding of our image and likeness needs to be seen in direct connection with our role and function, which is to rule over all the earth on God’s behalf (i.e., as God’s “image”) in a way that is somehow similar to the way God rules over everything (i.e., we do it as God’s “likeness”). God is relational, so we were created to be that way too. God is loving, so we are created to be that way too. God is responsible, so we are created with that as well. And so on.

Material Creation in Genesis 1

As I have noted repeatedly above, Walton’s main concern in this book is to argue that Genesis 2 has nothing to do with material creation. At one point he puts it this way: “The core proposal of this book is that the forming accounts of Adam and Eve should be understood archetypally rather than as accounts of how those two individuals were uniquely formed” (p. 74). He begins arguing this with regard to Genesis 1 (propositions 1–5), so we should start there too, and then come back to chapter 2.

⁷ See the bibliography and the treatment of this discovery with a translation of the whole inscription by Alan Millard, “Hadad-yith'i,” *COS* 2:153–54.

It is certainly true that Genesis 1 is as much about how the world works and how we fit into it as it is about the material creation of it. Nevertheless, material creation is an explicit part of the story. For example, day 4 begins with God’s proclamation (vv. 14–15) that the lights in the sky are there to serve as indicators of “signs, seasons, days, and years” and “to shed light on the earth.” But the passage then continues, “So God made (וַיַּעַשׂ), from the verb עָשָׂה) the two great lights . . . and God placed (וַיִּתֵּן), from the verb נָתַן) them in the expanse of the heavens . . . and God saw (וַיַּרְא), from רָאָה) that it was good” (vv. 16–18). These verb forms are the main way to write past tense narrative in Hebrew. This would be the most obvious way to describe making and placing physical objects that one can see.

One would be hard pressed to find a better way to say it in biblical Hebrew, and examples of this kind of language are multiplied throughout the chapter. Walton casts about for various renderings of עָשָׂה in the NIV and lands on “prepared,” suggesting that this means something other than “made.” Unfortunately, this is an instance of what one of my professors once referred to as “suitcase theology”—if it doesn’t fit, kick it in! There is a reason the NIV and no other translation that I know of gives “prepared” as a translation here. And even if we use that rendering, “prepared” often means the same as “make” in English (e.g., one can “prepare” or “make” a meal, which is a material activity).

Similarly, in the second part of day 6 (vv. 26–28) God proclaimed, “Let us make humankind in our image (צַלְמֵנוּ) as our likeness (דְּמוּתֵנוּ), that they may rule over the fish of the sea. . . .’ So God created humankind . . . male and female he created them. And God blessed them and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply . . . and subdue and rule over the fish of the sea.’” As discussed above, the term “image” is a regular word in Hebrew for a physical image of some kind, for example, a statue of a deity (2 Kgs 11:18; Amos 5:26, etc.), and “likeness” emphasizes the similarity of the image to that which it represents (see, e.g., Isa 40:18 with the following verses about idols).

Driving a wedge between material creation as over against giving order to the cosmos by assigning functions or roles is a false dichotomy that cannot bear the weight of the text. And this does not stand up under scrutiny in ANE creation accounts either. For example, at one point Walton cites the opening lines of the well-known Babylonian creation account *Enuma Elish* to argue that the pre-creation state is devoid of divine agency (p. 29). But he does not include the parts that refer to the lack of material things as well:

When the heavens above did not exist,
 And earth beneath had not come into being—
 There was Apsu, the first in order, their begetter,
 And the demiurge Tiamat, who gave birth to them all;
 They mingled their waters together
 Before meadow-land had coalesced and reed-bed was to be found—
 When not one of the gods had been formed
 Or had come into being, when no destinies had been decreed,
 The gods were created (Akkadian *banû* “to build”; cf. Hebrew *bānâ* “build” in Gen 2:22
 and the discussion below) in them.⁸

Examples could easily be multiplied. The point is that material creation was of great concern in the ANE as well as in ancient Israel.

⁸W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Creation Myths* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 50–51.

Man and Woman in Genesis 2

Similarly, according to Genesis 2:7, “the LORD God formed (יצר) the man (הָאָדָם) out of dust (עָפָר) from the ground (הָאֲדָמָה) and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being” (v. 7). Here the material out of which the Lord made the first man is referred to as “dust” and later, after the fall, it is said that he will return to the ground from which he was made, “for you are dust, and unto dust you shall return” (Gen 3:19; cf. Gen 18:27; Ps 103:14, etc.). Archetypally, Walton wants to reduce this to immortality and not deal with the fact that the literary images talk about material creation even if the way it is depicted is archetypal (proposition 8). He argues that forming (יצר) does not need to refer to making something materially, and that dust (עָפָר) would not be the material used to do such a thing anyway. It would be clay (חֹמֶר), not dust.

The fact of the matter is that עָפָר may refer to a clay-like mixture such as that used to plaster the walls of a house as in Leviticus 14:41, 45, where the same term (עָפָר) is also used. In Leviticus 14:42 the NIV even translates עָפָר as “clay” because it refers to the plaster as it is smeared on the walls of a house, “Then they are to take other stones to replace these and take new clay (עָפָר) and plaster the house.” There are also places where עָפָר (“dust”) and חֹמֶר (“clay”) are used in poetic parallelism for the constitution of people: “Remember that you molded me like *clay*. Will you now turn me to *dust* again?” (Job 10:9; cf. also Job 4:19; 27:16; 30:19).

Later in the chapter the Lord “built” (בָּנָה) the woman from the “rib” or “side” (צִלְעַת) of the man. It is likely that the verb changes here because the material is different, being the kind of material one builds with (v. 22) rather than molds or forms (v. 7). This suggests that “rib” is probably the better translation here since the same term is used for the “beams,” for example, that held up the roof when Solomon built his palace (1 Kgs 7:3). A “beam” or “rib” is something you “build” with. You do not mold or form it. So the LORD God himself shaped and built the first two humans, male and female, respectively. Here in Genesis 2 the Lord gets his hands dirty, so to speak, and he loves it!

I have mentioned above that, although it is clear to me that there is material creation indicated here, an archetypal reading makes good sense too, and they are not mutually exclusive. Many rightly read Genesis 3:1–13 as an archetypal account of the fall into sin: it is not just what happened, but what continues to happen.⁹ We keep on replaying the dynamics of the fall in our own lives (cf. Rom 7:9–11 and Jas 1:13–18). The question then becomes, how do we read Genesis 2 with that same archetypal mindset? In my view, the point that the text is making with intentional and theological force is that God was directly involved in creating us as humans. As noted above, both creation stories emphasize this. This does not mean that we need to take the story about forming the man from dust and the woman from man’s rib (or side) literally, but it does mean that God made the first man and woman. The material could have consisted of previously existing hominids shaped into two *Homo Sapiens*, male and female, made to serve as God’s image and likeness in this world.

⁹See my own treatment of this in Richard E. Averbeck, “Creation and Corruption, Redemption and Wisdom: A Biblical Theology Foundation for Counseling Psychology,” *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 25.2 (2006): 111–26.

Conclusion: Reading the Genesis 1–4 Creation Accounts

There is a good deal more that I could interact with in John Walton’s very interesting and stimulating book, both positively and negatively. Yes, we have major points of contention between us, but we also agree on a good many things. I must admit, for example, that sometimes I find his ANE comparative method to be somewhat out of control in terms of method. He seems to think Genesis 1–2 reflect the same essential features of the cosmos and its creation as can be found elsewhere in the ANE. Sometimes one scholar’s comparison is another one’s contrast. But instead of belaboring such points I think it best to set forth here at the end of this review a brief summary of my own understanding of how we should read Genesis 1–4.¹⁰

As I see it, there is good reason to believe that the days in Genesis 1 are intended to be taken as literary days, not literal days.¹¹ The six/seven pattern is a common literary pattern in the Bible. For example, consider Proverbs 6:16–19, which begins, “There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him” (v. 16 NIV). The ancient Israelites would have been well aware of this literary pattern, and that it was being used here as a way of shaping the story. Why shape it this way? Well, for one thing it could serve as an analogy for their practice of the weekly Sabbath in Israel (Exod 20:11). Exodus 31:17 puts it this way: the Sabbath is to be “a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he stopped (שָׁבַת) and breathed freely (וַיִּנְפַּח); NIV and ESV, “was refreshed”). The latter verb occurs two other places in the Hebrew Bible (2 Sam 16:14; Exod 23:12 [another Sabbath passage]), both of which refer to people being exhausted to the point where they need to stop and rest. For God it is an analogy; for humans it is a reality.

I agree with Walton that Genesis 1:1 serves as a title for the chapter as a whole and verse 2 refers to the original conditions into which God spoke his first creative word in v. 3. Step by step the chapter unpacks the parts that make up the whole by giving six snap shots of it (1:3–31), progressively eliminating the conditions of verse 2. He paints a literary picture of the observable universe, and teaches that God created every part of it.

The transition from Genesis 1:1–2:3 to 2:4–25 is made with the תּוֹלְדוֹת “generations” formula in Genesis 2:4a, “These are the generations (or, ‘This is the story’) of the heavens and the earth.” This formula appears eleven times (with minor variants) through the Book of Genesis as titles for the units that follow: 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2. In every case the formula picks up on something from the previous unit and links it to the genealogy or narrative account that follows, thereby binding the units together. This is why the same formula could not be used as a title for Genesis 1. Nothing comes before Genesis 1:1, so the “generations” formula could not link the first chapter to anything before it. Another kind of title, therefore, was used for Genesis 1; namely, verse 1: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

Two other important points arise from this genealogical framework within Genesis. First, the next formula after 2:4 does not come until 5:1. This tells us that we need to treat Genesis 2:4–4:26 as a unit.

¹⁰ For a more complete discussion see Averbeck, “A Literary Day, Inter-Textual, and Contextual Reading of Genesis 1 and 2,” 7–34.

¹¹ This approach is similar to C. John Collins, *Genesis 1–4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2006), and see also his contribution, “Reading Genesis 1–2 with the Grain: Analogical Days,” in *Reading Genesis 1–2: An Evangelical Conversation*, ed. J. Daryl Charles (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2013), ch. 3.

One should not just treat Genesis 1–2, or 1–3, or 2–3 without Genesis 4. We will return to the special significance of this presently. Second, the importance of the genealogies is often underestimated. The reality is that without people being born there would be no biblical history or storyline, and no theology to go along with it. The genealogical line begins with first Adam in Genesis 5:1 (see also 1 Chron 1:1), and runs all the way through the second Adam, Jesus the Christ (see Adam in his genealogy in Luke 3:38). It also runs on up to all of us alive today and into the future, whatever that holds.

The shift from Genesis 1:1–2:3 to 2:4–4:26 involves something of a shift to a different literary genre. The account of creation is told in quite a different way. Most importantly, Genesis 2 has historical markers that are unlike anything found in Genesis 1. The most obvious example is the four rivers in Genesis 2:10–14, a factor upon which Walton also remarks. We are not sure about the geographical location of the first two, but the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers definitely connect us to the real historical world of ancient Israel (v. 14). And the ancient Israelites would have known that. Assyria is specifically mentioned in relation to the Tigris River. And there is no further description of the Euphrates, since everyone knew where that was anyway. This land was located to the east from where the Israelites were at the time, in Mesopotamia where at least two of these rivers were located. As the genealogical introduction suggests, on some level, here we have entered into true human history in time and space.

As remarked above, this whole argument raises new questions these days, some of them based on the work of the Human Genome Project that has rightly captured our attention. We should not fear or reject truth, whether it is stated in the Bible or made available through new scientific discoveries. It is also true, however, that science sometimes reaches beyond its actual data to theories about the data that may or may not be true. I am convinced that, if the whole truth were told about how God created the universe, none of us would understand it. We are all out of our depth here whether we know it or not and whether we like it or not. Science is in process and we can be sure that changes will keep coming, at least on some points. The same is true with how we read the Bible, although in a different sense. The Bible is inerrant (unlike science), but our interpretations of it are not. For example, is it possible that there were more people around at the time of Adam and Eve than just these two (see above)? All history writing is selective, and God may have chosen to tell us only about this pair because of their significance to the history of humanity.

The shift from the Genesis 1 to the Genesis 2 account of creation also introduces at least one more important shift that has historical and theological significance to both ancient and modern readers. In Genesis 2 the divine name changes from “God” (אֱלֹהִים) to “LORD God” (יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים) starting in 2:4b, “When the LORD God made earth and heavens.” The covenant LORD (יְהוָה) of Israel (cf. Exodus 3:14–15; 6:2–5; etc.) was the same God (אֱלֹהִים) who had created the entire universe. If we know Jesus, we too are in covenant with this same one and only LORD God.

Genesis 3 continues the story that begins in Genesis 2:4. In plain terms: Genesis 3 is where conflict first appears in the Bible, v. 1 is the first appearance of a serpent in the Bible, and this serpent issues a direct and carefully crafted sinister challenge to the Lord’s rule by attacking his image and likeness—people. Thus, the serpent’s actions are an attack upon the Lord himself. The Lord responds with curses upon the serpent (Gen 3:14–15; and the ground, v. 17) that involve, among other things, the woman’s seed crushing, striking at, or bruising the “head” of the serpent’s seed in Genesis 3:15.

There is a battle engaged here, and you and I stand right in the middle of it. In fact, we are the “territory” under dispute. And an attack upon us is by its very nature an attack upon the Lord himself. We were the crowning act of God’s creative activity. We are also the focal point of his redemptive

activity, although Walton and Wright have rightly emphasized the larger story of creation as a whole and the Kingdom of God. Thus, for the time being, we stand in the middle of this great big vicious cosmic fray. We had better put on some armor (Eph 6). This concept and its imagery appears in various forms through the remainder of the Old Testament and on into the New, even in the temptation of Jesus, for example (Matt 4:1–11). The serpent got the first Adam, but he could not get the second. Revelation 12 transforms it back into an actual battle again with battlefield imagery. Here again is the battle of the ages, from its beginning in Gen 3 to its end in Rev 12–20, and all through history.

More could and should be said about the first man and woman and the corruption of God's created order in Genesis 3–4 and following, but we cannot develop that here. As explained above, the Genesis 2 account extends all the way through the end of chapter 4. It is important to note that there has only been one real answer ever given to the catastrophe of Genesis 3 and 4. It is offered in the last line of the Genesis 2–4 account and runs through scripture from there: "At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD" (Genesis 4:26b NIV; see also, e.g., Gen 12:8; Ps 116:2, 4, 13, 17; Joel 2:32a; Acts 2:21; Rom 10:13, and many other passages). There is no other answer. There never has been, and there never will be.

Response to Richard Averbeck

— John H. Walton —

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I respect Dick Averbeck as a scholar and value him as a friend, so I am grateful for his careful critique of my book, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve*, and welcome the opportunity to respond. As is evident in his review, there is much on which we agree, but, as is fitting for this sort of venue, I will focus my attention on the main points on which the two of us disagree. I will not do that by interacting with his own view of Genesis 1–4 (though I would take issue with numerous points therein), but by discussing the points that he raises against my interpretation.

It would be easy for either of us to get down and dirty in the details of Hebrew lexical analysis, and, indeed, it is at times on such points that the differences between us hinge. I will mention just a couple of these since he raised objections.

1. *Genesis 2:15*. Averbeck contends that the verb עבד translated “to work it” should be understood as working the ground in agrarian activities because that is what it means in Gen 2:5. But as he well knows, the same verb is used frequently throughout the Pentateuch for the service of priests in sacred space. We determine which meaning the verb has by the direct object. In Gen 2:5 the direct object is the ground, while in 2:15 it is the garden. The question of whether the garden is being referenced as land to be tilled or sacred space to be cared for is resolved by the companion verb שמר, translated “to take care of it” which is much more suitable to sacred space (Num 3:8 uses both verbs for priestly work). We do agree that Adam is being given a sacred task.

2. *Understanding of עשה*. In the discussion about whether God’s acts are focused on material or functional origins, the nature of the verbs inevitably comes under examination. In discussion of day four, Averbeck contends that “This [עשה, נתן] would be the most obvious way to describe making and placing physical objects that one can see.” He refers to my discussion of עשה being translated as “prepared” as a case of special pleading. He misses the point that I am trying to make there. I have no reason to choose “prepared” over any other translation. My point is that עשה can refer to any step in the causation process—including non-material ones. Consequently, one cannot deduce what level of causation God is engaged in. God makes Adam and he makes all of us.

3. *Understanding of צלע*. Averbeck’s choice of 1 Kings 7:3 to equate “beams” to “rib” strikes me as a case of special pleading in that there are many other examples that use צלע as “side” and Genesis 2 fits better into that category since Adam speaks of both bone and flesh (2:23).

We could also discuss at great length the way that people thought in the ancient world, and though we are generally in broad agreement, one of the key issues on which we differ concerns metaphor. He seems prepared to claim that the rising and setting sun and thinking with the heart are just metaphors because they are metaphors to us. Our metaphors, however, are the vestige of what was once a different way to think about the world. There is no basis for believing that the ancients did *not* think the sun was moving or that they did *not* believe that cognitive processes actually took place in the heart.

I offer one other brief point with regard to ancient Near Eastern thought concerning temple building in the ancient world. It is true that the material construction of temples was extremely important and the detail of that construction is shown to be of great interest in the temple building texts. Nevertheless, I would contend that the ancients give attention to the material construction to indicate that the details of the temple were communicated by the gods, were suitable for the gods, and could therefore function as they were intended. It is the function of the temple that interests them. Of course, there must be a temple before it can function.

Most important, however, in the disagreements that Averbeck and I have, are the larger conceptual issues that we see differently, and I would like to focus most attention on three of those.

1. *Functional, Not Material.* One of the most frequent questions I am asked is the one Averbeck poses—why can't Genesis 1 be both material and functional? That is more an issue with my book on Genesis 1¹ than on this book (though that issue was briefly revisited in this book), so I am not going to address it here.² Instead I will point readers to my more extensive response in two blogs that I recently posted, one concerning hurdles to thinking that Genesis 1 is functional, not material, and the other on reasons why Genesis 1 should be seen as functional not material.³

2. *God's Involvement in Making Humanity.* Averbeck contends that God does not “step in” to some evolutionary process, but is engaged throughout. I am in full agreement that whatever took place, God is indeed active and engaged. On this point we share the same view. Our differences emerge when he states: “In my view, the point that the text is making with intentional and theological force is that God was directly involved in creating us as humans.” This suggests that there could be things that God is not directly involved in. In contrast, I would contend that even when we can give a complete scientific explanation of something by identifying natural causes and natural laws, that God is still every bit involved and active. The categories of “natural” and “supernatural” that we have today are not a reflection of how people thought in the ancient world. For a detailed treatment of this see my recent post at the BioLogos Forum.⁴ God is no less active just because scientific explanations can be given. The distinction Averbeck makes shows his acceptance of Enlightenment categories that did not characterize the ancient world.

3. *Comparative Methodology.* Averbeck is worried that I have the view that sometimes “God simply goes along with ANE cosmogony and cosmology.” What we are dealing with here is the hermeneutic of accommodation, which is really not itself in question. All scholars recognize that there are many occasions in which God simply adopts in his communication the way that people commonly think in the ancient world. Yes, God talks as if there is a solid sky and there isn't one. But our doctrines of inerrancy

¹John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009).

²See John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2–3 and the Human Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 35–45.

³“Material or Function in Genesis 1? John Walton Responds (Part 1),” *The BioLogos Forum: Science and Faith in Dialogue*, 3 April 2015, <http://biologos.org/blog/material-or-function-in-genesis-1-john-walton-responds-part-1>; “Material or Function in Genesis 1? John Walton Responds (Part 2),” *The BioLogos Forum: Science and Faith in Dialogue*, 10 April 2015, <http://biologos.org/blog/material-or-function-in-genesis-1-john-walton-responds-part-2>.

⁴“‘Natural’ and ‘Supernatural’ are Modern Categories, Not Biblical Ones,” *The BioLogos Forum: Science and Faith in Dialogue*, 28 April 2015, <http://biologos.org/blog/natural-and-supernatural-are-modern-terms-not-biblical-ones>.

always qualify that the text is inerrant in “all that it affirms.” God is revealing himself, not a cosmic geography for the ages. Anyone who has read my work in detail knows that I am not the least inclined to see the Israelites borrowing from ANE texts. Instead, I think that it is extremely important for us to realize that the Bible is written for us, but not to us. We therefore need to understand the cognitive environment of the ANE so that, at the very least, we can identify areas where our own modern thinking is intruding on the biblical author’s communication. The challenge is great, but the need in discussions like this one is urgent.

Communicating the Book of Job in the Twenty-First Century

— Daniel J. Estes —

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Abstract: In churches, seminaries, and in the scholarly literature, the book of Job is only rarely preached or taught in detail. This wisdom text has always been a difficult book to interpret, and to complicate matters it is increasingly counter to the assumptions and values of the contemporary culture. This article proposes six strategies for the effective communication of Job in the twenty-first century.

Although Job is one of the longer books in the Bible, in most churches today it is rarely taught or preached in a comprehensive way. To be sure, some familiar details of the experience of its protagonist have come over into common knowledge. For example, even people who have scant comprehension of the content of the Bible are aware of Job's words that the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away (Job 1:21). They may well recall the proverb of Eliphaz that humans are born for trouble as sparks fly upward (Job 5:7). Handel's brilliant aria in *Messiah* drawn from Job 19:25 has prompted the widespread presumption that Job's endurance was rooted in his anticipation of Christ as his redeemer. And the allusion in James 5:11 to the patience of Job is often the monocular lens through which the whole book is perceived, even though that approach fails to consider fully Job's agonized speeches throughout the poetic section that dominates the text that bears his name.

Nevertheless, in thirty years of surveying college students I have discovered that very few of them have ever heard in their churches a series of lessons or sermons on the book of Job. Their reported experience, which likely represents the general case, could be attributed to a number of possible factors. For the pastor committed to expository preaching, the challenge of working through such a long text is indeed daunting, and this could also explain why series on other lengthy books such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Deuteronomy are as rarely found. If the prevailing emphasis of the preacher is on evangelism or discipleship or mission, these subjects do not emerge as easily from Job as they do from other scriptural texts. If the homiletical text is drawn from the Revised Common Lectionary, only rarely does Job make an appearance.¹ For sermons that endeavor to move facily from a biblical text to three

¹John C. Holbert, *Preaching Job*, Preaching Classic Texts (St. Louis: Chalice, 1999), 149 observes: "The collectors of the Revised Common Lectionary have a neat solution for the would-be preacher of the book of Job. In four successive Sundays in year B—during "ordinary time" of course—the preacher is given the opportunity to tackle Job. She is to use the prologue (chaps. 1–2) on Sunday 1, one speech of Job's from chapter 23 on Sunday 2,

easy applications for the week ahead, Job's complexity stubbornly resists such simplification. For these and other reasons, those who preach the Bible too often fail to communicate the book of Job with any frequency or detail.²

To complicate the problem, it may not be too much of a stretch to allege that only rarely do we find a seminary graduate who has worked through the text of Job. Few programs at the master's level require more than a few class days in Job, and even elective courses devoted to the book are infrequent. More commonly, Job is grouped together with the other Old Testament wisdom or poetical books in a semester-long survey course. Perhaps there is a correlation here between the Job that is infrequently taught in the seminaries and the Job that is rarely preached in the churches. Could it be that we are sending into ministry the blind to lead the blind?

Added to this, a search for scholarly publications relevant to the preaching and teaching of Job yields an equal paucity of results. In my investigation of Old Testament Abstracts and ATLASerials, I have been able to identify only a handful of articles³ and one brief book⁴ that address the issue, and even these sources touch only obliquely upon the subject of how to communicate the book of Job effectively in the contemporary context. It is encouraging, however, to see that three recent books on Job have considered aspects of this topic.⁵

a bit of God's first speech on Sunday 3 (chap. 38), and Job's final response and his restoration by God on Sunday 4. To reduce Job to this sort of Reader's Digest version is sure to distort its meaning and to tame its anger effectively enough to make its impact minimal and those summer Sundays appropriately innocuous. Best stick with the gospel reading, I suppose."

² Greg W. Parsons, "Guidelines for Understanding and Proclaiming the Book of Job," *BSac* 151 (1994): 393 notes, "Job has often been presented as a model for modern-day believers to 'be patient' in the midst of trials. However, few expositors delve into the complex dialogue between Job and his friends. Preachers tend to skip over Job's cursing of the day of his birth (chap. 3), the intricate and often argumentative interaction between Job and his friends (chaps. 4–27), and other hard-to-understand passages. Sermons or lessons have mainly focused on Job's idealized faith and patience epitomized in the famous verse, 19:25. Yet this image of Job is a distortion of the overall story presented in the Book of Job."

³ M. Vernon Davis, "Preaching from Job," *SwJT* 14 (1971): 65–76; Clyde T. Francisco, "A Teaching Outline of the Book of Job," *RevExp* 68 (1971): 511–20; John Holbert, "The Book of Job and the Task of Preaching," *Journal for Preachers* 13 (1990): 13–22; Joan Penzenstadler, "Teaching the Book of Job with a View to Human Wholeness," *RelEd* 89 (1994): 223–31; Parsons, "Guidelines for Understanding and Proclaiming the Book of Job," 393–413; C. F. Melchert, "The Book of Job: Education Through and by Diversity," *RelEd* 92 (1997) 9–23; and Samuel E. Balentine, "Preaching Job's God," *Journal for Preachers* 36 (2013): 22–27. In James L. Crenshaw, *Reading Job: A Literary and Theological Commentary*, Reading the Old Testament (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2011) the author concludes with a brief, two-page postscript entitled "Why Read Job Today?" in which he offers the tentative statement that Job speaks to the tragedies and dilemmas of life today.

⁴ Holbert, *Preaching Job*.

⁵ David R. Jackson, *Crying Out for Vindication: The Gospel according to Job*, The Gospel according to the Old Testament (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2007), 3–11; Christopher Ash, *Job: The Wisdom of the Cross*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 17–23; and especially Lindsay Wilson, *Job*, The Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), whose insightful section on Job and Theology (pp. 291–382) explores how the book is situated within biblical theology, systematic theology, moral theology, and practical theology. These recent treatments of the book of Job raise the broader question of the extent to which Job as an Old Testament text can be read appropriately through a Christological lens. Elsewhere in this issue of *Themelios*, I address this question as it pertains to the Song of Songs in my review of two newly-released commentaries on that book. In brief, I maintain that the exegetical meaning of the biblical text is properly

In this paper, I want to ask and answer one key question: How can communicators of the book of Job more effectively speak to people in the twenty-first century? To do that, I will discuss first why Job has always been a difficult book to communicate. Then, I will consider several factors that make Job especially difficult to communicate in the twenty-first century. That will lead into an investigation of how scholars, teachers, and preachers can respond to both the long-term and the contemporary challenges of communicating the book of Job. In conclusion, I will address why Job needs to be communicated effectively today; in particular, I will note what is lost if we do not and what is gained if we do.

1. Why Has Job Always Been a Difficult Book to Communicate?

For many reasons, Job is difficult to read, to teach, and to preach, so it is not surprising that it so rarely is. Throughout the history of its interpretation, within both the Jewish and Christian worlds, the book of Job has been construed in a variety of ways that have failed to account adequately for its complex content. Clines observes that Job has most often been viewed according to the ideals of the reader, so that succeeding generations of interpreters have found in the book the ideal patient human who fatalistically accepts suffering as God's will, or the champion of reason over dogma, or the heroic victim in the face of the cruelty and absurdity of the world.⁶ He concludes that these interpretations of Job are in fact misreadings that introduce into the text the values of the readers' hermeneutical horizons rather than accurately exegeting the textual meaning of the book.

For good reasons, beginning students of Hebrew do not often find their way into the book of Job, or at any rate not far beyond its prose framework. The Hebrew text of this book is among the most difficult of any in the Old Testament. Even the premier scholars of Job wrestle mightily with its frequent rare words, grammatical conundrums, debatable variants, and structural complexities. Working in this book is not for the novice or the faint of heart!

To complicate the interpretive challenge, the book of Job embodies a complicated literary form that defies easy definition of its genre. The frame of the book is narrative written in prose, but enclosed within that frame are thirty-nine chapters of poetry that must be duly considered. Francisco warns:

One of the greatest errors one can make about the book of Job is to think that when you have found out what happened to Job you have understood the book. You can discover the story simply by reading the prose in chapters 1, 2, and 42. The great poem comes between these prose accounts, which give the setting for it. One does not read Hamlet intelligently if all he does is ask what happened to the principal character. This is important, but more important is what Shakespeare himself is saying as he arranges the scenes and develops the conversation.⁷

connected with its theological significance, but the two must not be conflated. There is always the danger that the reader will suppose that what he or she sees in the text is its intended meaning, when in reality what is seen could be better explained by the theological or ideological lens through which the reader is viewing the Scripture.

⁶David J. A. Clines, "Why is There a Book of Job, and What Does it Do to You if You Read It?" in *The Book of Job*, ed. W. A. M. Beuken, BETL 114 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1994), 15.

⁷Francisco, "A Teaching Outline of the Book of Job," *RevExp* 68 (1971): 511.

The poetry of the book of Job is intricate,⁸ with the speakers sometimes responding to the others, but more often indulging in rhetorical excesses that obscure rather than clarify their points.⁹ The diverse characters articulate a variety of positions, so the readers must be careful to discern what the book as a whole is endorsing, or they may wrongly conclude that it teaches what it does not.

In addition, even an initial perusal of Job indicates that the book frequently alludes to other biblical texts, but many of these intertextual links are startling. For example, Job 7:17–18 transposes the privileged status of humans in Psalm 8 into a minor key, and in Job 10:8–11 God’s fashioning of the human embryo is not at all the comfort it is to the psalmist in Psalm 139. Mettinger has demonstrated that the imagery in Job 16 and 19 draws from conventional language in the lament psalms, only “the poet depicts Job as standing in the place of the enemy whom God annihilates, that is, in the position conventionally assigned to evildoers under divine judgment.”¹⁰

Wisdom literature as a whole, and Job as a specific case, has often been omitted or diminished in treatments of Old Testament Theology and Biblical Theology.¹¹ Taken by itself, the narrative frame of Job could be read as congruent with the retribution theology that is prominent in Proverbs. However, the poetic dialogues feature Job’s vehement rejection of his friends’ attempts to condemn him as they reason from the effects of Job’s calamity back to what they presumed was the theologically necessary cause, that is, his personal sin. Yahweh’s siding with Job against the claims of the friends in 42:7–8 evidences that the book as a whole argues that retribution, though accurate in general terms, does not explain all that occurs in the world under divine control. This qualification of retribution is extant already within the book of Proverbs, which states several times that there is mystery in Yahweh’s ordering of his world, but this relatively minor motif in Proverbs becomes the prominent point in Job.

A final factor that has long made Job a difficult book is that it tends to leave many readers unconvinced or morally outraged. For many, the ending seems too contrived, as though Job lived happily ever after, even though observation would suggest that life after tragedy is not always or even often like that. In fact, severe traumas typically leave lifelong wounds and scars. Even more troubling, the book raises profound ethical questions: How could a loving and just God allow Job to be treated so badly? What about Job’s children and servants and animals—don’t they count for something? Are humans just pawns in a cynical cosmic debate between God and the adversary? As Katharine Dell asks in her recent essay, “Does God behave unethically in the book of Job?”¹²

In 1984 a sculpture formed from 83 sheets of aluminum was dedicated on the Charles River Esplanade in Boston. From a distance the visage of Arthur Fiedler, the longtime conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra, is readily discernible, but the closer one approaches the sculpture the more complicated his representation appears. Throughout the history of its interpretation the book of Job has been like

⁸J. P. Fokkelman, *Reading Biblical Poetry: An Introductory Guide* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 177–88 provides an insightful entrée into the poetry of Job.

⁹William P. Brown, “Introducing Job: A Journey of Transformation,” *Int* 53 (1999): 228.

¹⁰Trygve N. D. Mettinger, “Intertextuality: Allusion and Vertical Context Systems in Some Job Passages,” in *Of Prophets’ Visions and the Wisdom of Sages*, ed. Heather A. McKay and David J. A. Clines; JSOTSup 162 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 274.

¹¹Cf. Gary V. Smith, “Is There a Place for Job’s Wisdom in Old Testament Theology?,” *TJ* 13 (1992): 3–20.

¹²Katherine J. Dell, “Does God Behave Unethically in the Book of Job?” in *Ethical and Unethical in the Old Testament: God and Humans in Dialogue*, ed. Katharine J. Dell, LHB/OTS 528 (New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 170–86.

that. This book that may seem so simple upon casual reading becomes ever more challenging the longer and the closer one scrutinizes it.

2. Why is Job Especially Difficult to Communicate in the Twenty-First Century?

The twenty-first century is a profoundly different context from that envisioned by the original author of Job, and people today bring to the book the questions, assumptions, and values that characterize our contemporary culture. Although commentaries most often do effective work in explaining the ancient world of Job, they do not always do as well in communicating to the present time with its distinctive concerns. In fact, the scholarly literature rarely addresses how the book of Job speaks to the world in which we live today. Consequently, as hard as it has always been to interpret Job, in the twenty-first century there are additional challenges that must be overcome when one teaches or preaches this book.

In their recent commentaries, Clines and Seow have compiled extensive bibliographies of the reception history of Job, including its influence upon literature, art, music, dance, and film.¹³ The prevalent artifacts within Jewish and Christian liturgy have tended to regard Job as a great hero of faith as they have concentrated on his portrayal in the narrative frame. Increasingly in the late twentieth century, however, the Job of the dialogues is featured, and as Balentine has noted, “the Job who lives on in the fiction, poetry, and drama of everyday life speaks with far less restraint and models a quite different sort of heroism.”¹⁴ In particular, the depictions of Job in the Pulitzer Prize winning play *J. B.* by Archibald MacLeish (1958) and in Harold Kushner’s bestselling book, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* (1978) have influenced how the general populace is prone to conceive of Job, even without having personally read the book.¹⁵ MacLeish portrays Job’s three comforters as representing history, science and religion, all of which Job rejects as inadequate. Instead, Job finds comfort in the love of his wife, and the two of them resolve to build a new life together on that basis, apart from religious faith.¹⁶ In the final lines of the play, J. B.’s wife says memorably:

Blow on the coal of the heart.
The candles in churches are out.
The lights have gone out in the sky.
Blow on the candle of the heart
And we’ll see by and by. . . .

Kushner builds from MacLeish’s position to contend that all of the characters in the book of Job want to believe three ideas: that God is all-powerful, God is good, and that Job is good, and they could hold to all three so long as Job enjoyed prosperity. However, after Job’s profound adversity only two of these positions could be affirmed simultaneously, and the third must be denied. The friends chose to deny that Job is good, and Job denied that God was fair, but Kushner maintains that the solution comes

¹³ David J. A. Clines, *Job 38–42*, WBC 18B (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011), 1377–1464; C. L. Seow, *Job 1–21: Interpretation and Commentary*, Illuminations (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 153–66, 232–42.

¹⁴ Samuel Balentine, *Job*, SHBC 10 (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2006), 23.

¹⁵ Archibald MacLeish, *J. B.: A Play in Verse* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958); Harold S. Kushner, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* (New York: Aron, 1981).

¹⁶ MacLeish details his view of the book of Job in his sermon, “God Has Need of Man,” in Nahum N. Glatzer, *The Dimensions of Job: A Study and Selected Readings* (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 278–86.

in recognizing that though God is great, he is not totally in control of the world. The readers of Job, then, must forgive God for choosing not to create a perfect world, and they must resolve to make the right things happen by their own intentional actions. In the generation since the publication of *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, its position has seeped into much popular thought, and in large part it has become the default view in the twenty-first century.

Another challenge in the contemporary context is that with the advent of continuous news coverage and the Internet people today are more aware than ever before of the adversities, calamities, and injustices in life throughout the world. The combination of economic uncertainty, political tension, international terrorism, criminal activity, and medical threats causes us to feel as though much of the world is sitting at the ash heap with Job trying to make sense of it all. Tollerton has written insightfully about reading Job for a post-Holocaust world,¹⁷ and since that time recurrent waves of atrocities in Cambodia, Rwanda, and Bosnia, cataclysmic destruction by Hurricane Katrina, nuclear disasters at Chernobyl and Fukushima, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and at the Boston Marathon, and the recent barbarism of Boko Haram and ISIS have brought suffering full force into the collective consciousness. Every person to whom we teach or preach this book will know at least one Job, and many of them *are* Job. For them, abstract theology and theoretical platitudes will not suffice, because they like Job are asking the hard questions, desperate to find satisfying remedies for the aches in their hearts. Their deep pain will not be relieved by the homiletical equivalent of taking two aspirins, with the empty assurance that they will feel better in the morning.

In many ways, the contemporary *Zeitgeist* finds the book of Job perplexing and even offensive. For those who accept the prevalent narcissism of the age, assuming that “it is all about me,” Job counters instead that life is all about God and his order for the world. People today place great faith in science and technology, confident that there must be answers to their questions if only humans would search hard enough. Job, by contrast, challenges the reader to accept that the Lord has knowledge that surpasses what humans can know, so that we must accept mystery and place our faith in the God who knows far more than he has revealed. Thus, Job calls upon humans to relinquish their pride and to bow humbly before the Lord, an act of surrender that most people today want to avoid at all costs.

3. How Can Scholars, Teachers, and Preachers Respond to These Challenges?

Given the numerous difficulties that have longed plagued the interpretation of the book of Job, as well as the additional contemporary factors that have arisen, how can scholars, teachers, and preachers effectively communicate this biblical text in the twenty-first century? I would like to present six general strategies as guides to follow.

First, it is vital to grasp the content of the whole book of Job, and not to reduce Job to a brief synopsis. Gustafson rightly says, “Any reduction of the issues to a two- or three-sentence conundrum captioned ‘the problem of theodicy’ will bleed the vitality out of the poetic, dialogic, and dramatic passions that pervade much of the book.”¹⁸ Too often a Cliff’s Notes version of the book is presented, which distorts both the character Job and the overall message of the biblical text. As Paul Harvey used

¹⁷David C. Tollerton, “Reading Job as Theological Disruption for a Post-Holocaust World,” *JTI* 3 (2009): 197–212.

¹⁸James M. Gustafson, “A Response to the Book of Job,” in *The Voice From the Whirlwind: Interpreting the Book of Job*, ed. Leo G. Perdue and W. Clark Gilpin (Nashville: Abingdon, 1992), 172–73.

to say, we need to hear the rest of the story, so that our theology is informed by it all, even the messy parts. In practical terms, this means that the communicator must work through the entire book before starting to preach or teach it. This enables one to develop the necessary interpretive framework for understanding the specific passages within the book.

Second, because the book of Job is so difficult, it is vital to make judicious use of exegetical commentaries that examine its text in detail. The standard seminary requirement of a year or two of Hebrew may be adequate for exegeting simple narrative passages, but it is not sufficient for the massive interpretive challenges of Job's poetry. As one of my mentors told me as I completed my doctoral program, the ideal way to come to terms with the full content of a book of the Bible is to write an exegetical commentary, because that process compels one to work through the entire text, rather than just parts of it. No doubt, that is an unrealistic expectation for the typical preacher or teacher, but there are some excellent resources both in commentaries and in journal articles on the book of Job, and these must be examined assiduously, lest the communicator perpetuate misreadings of the text by failing to comprehend its complexities.

Third, because Job is primarily poetry, the communicator must do more than just talk about the story line. The power of poetry comes in its ability to recreate an experience in the reader, rather than merely reporting the experience, as does prose. As Schreiber observes, "The poet's business in writing his poem is not to tell us that this 'moment of imaginative experience' has happened to him, but to make it happen to us as well."¹⁹ Therefore, the preacher and teacher must discover ways in which the poetry of Job can penetrate the hearts and touch the emotions of the hearer. One way to do this is to prepare for a series or unit on Job by inviting the congregation or class to read through the book in advance and to state the questions that it raises in their minds. By this means, the communicator will be able better to guide them in studying and reflecting on the book, thus prompting honest and candid dialogue.²⁰ Another idea is to employ a dramatic rendering of the book, either acted out or in the form of reader's theater. In the nineteenth century, James Stevens wrote a dramatization of the book of Job which is available online as a free download. His portrayal uses the KJV text, it has some questionable interpretive assumptions, and it takes nearly two hours to stage, so it might be better to employ someone with a literary or theatrical bent to compose a script more suitable for the occasion. If this were to cover the entire book in a condensed form within an hour, those who observe it would be better able to step imaginatively into Job's situation and feel what he experienced.

Fourth, it is vital to transport the audience back to the biblical text, explaining its setting, cultural references, and place in Old Testament theology. However, it is equally important to book them on a return flight to the twenty-first century to consider how the book of Job applies to life today. In other words, in the enthusiasm for acquainting the audience with what Job meant there and then, the communicator must also enable them to understand what Job means for the here and now. We do not have the luxury of communicating Job as abstract, academic theology alone; there must also be a pastoral dimension in our preaching and teaching. It would be regrettable if the homiletical or pedagogical journey were to leave the hearers "a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away" and not enable them get back home to where they live and work and play. The numerous literary and artistic artifacts cited by Clines and Seow in their compilations can serve as points of connection between Job and the contemporary scene. The effective communicator will endeavor to link the abstract theology of Job

¹⁹ Sybil Mary Schreiber, *An Introduction to Literary Criticism* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1965), 25.

²⁰ Davis, "Preaching from Job," 66.

with concrete analogues in the present time. Literature, art, and current events can be useful tools for highlighting how the ancient book of Job speaks with relevance today.

Fifth, the thorny theological problems posed by Job must be addressed directly rather than being swept under the rug as though they do not exist. MacLeish, Kushner, and others have indeed surfaced important and difficult questions, and the widespread acceptance of their views indicates that they have given words to what many people think and believe. To pretend that these questions are irrelevant, or to suggest that to ask them is in itself sinful, is to yield the field without a fight. Rather, the preacher or teacher must raise and then respond to the queries that trouble people today: Why do bad things happen to good people in God's world? Is God really both good and great? How can God's people endure pain and minister to others in pain? How do humans live faithfully within the limitations of their knowledge? And, as many have asked since the horrors of the Holocaust, Where was God at Auschwitz? These are the kinds of questions that recur frequently in the lament psalms and especially in the imprecatory psalms, when God's people expressed with excruciating candor their raw emotions and anguished accusations, so there is ample biblical precedent for God's people to ask and discuss what most troubles them. Parsons notes well: "The temptation is . . . to ignore the many hard questions Job raised in facing the mystery of his innocent suffering. Yet the candid record that Job began to question God strikes a chord familiar to humankind. To ignore Job's question 'why?' and his search for God's answer is to ignore basic issues of life everyone must face."²¹

Finally, we must call people today to trust the Lord humbly and courageously even when they feel that life sucks, and God is silent. The literary and theological climax of the book occurs when Job comes to his realization in 42:5–6: What I now know is that I do not know, but that the Lord does know, and that is sufficient for me. Job, then, is a cautionary tale warning against rigid dogmatism, such as that articulated by the friends and even by Job himself, which refuses to accept mystery. Job and the friends all in their individual ways attempted to double-down on retribution theology, but functioning as the master teacher Yahweh in his series of rhetorical questions in chapters 38–41 brought Job into a deeper appreciation of divine omniscience. Within the book, Job never figured out what had happened to him, and there is no record that Yahweh ever disclosed it to him. Nevertheless, Job came to the place that he was content to accept that God's ways are higher than human ways, and God's thoughts are higher than human thoughts (Isa 55:9). Ultimately, the book of Job leads to the kind of courageous faith that continues to trust God "though the earth should change and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea" (Ps 46:2[3]).

4. Why Job Needs to Be Communicated Effectively Today

This article has assessed the long-term and the additional contemporary challenges in preaching and teaching the book of Job, and several homiletical and pedagogical strategies have been suggested to address them. One further question remains to be asked: Why does Job need to be communicated effectively in the twenty-first century? This will be answered both negatively and positively.

First must be considered what is lost if Job is not communicated clearly and well. In his book entitled *Disappointment with God*, Philip Yancey reflects on a conversation with a friend: "As I brooded over our conversation, . . . I kept returning to three large questions about God that seemed to lurk just behind the thicket of his feelings. The longer I pondered them, the more I realized that these questions

²¹ Parsons, "Guidelines for Understanding and Proclaiming the Book of Job," 394.

are lodged somewhere inside all of us. Yet few people ask them aloud, for they seem at best impolite, at worst heretical.”²² Yancey goes on to say that the three questions no one asks aloud are “Is God unfair?” “Is God silent?” and “Is God hidden?” Educational theorist Elliot Eisner speaks of the null curriculum, those subjects that either intentionally or unintentionally are not taught. Eisner contends that “what schools do not teach may be as important as what they do teach . . . because ignorance is not simply a neutral void; it has important effects on the kinds of options one is able to consider, the alternatives one can examine, and the perspectives from which one can view a situation or problem.”²³ Relegating the book of Job to the null curriculum by neglecting to teach and preach it systematically, the church in effect is conceding that this biblical text is not relevant to life today. This regrettably leaves men and women in the twenty-first century without God’s answers to their unspoken but nagging questions, and as a result they have inadequate theological resources to face the inexorable contemporary challenges to their faith. Furthermore, it misses the opportunity to help people to know God more fully.

As Job 28, the literary integrative center for the book,²⁴ demonstrates, humans by their ingenuity and intelligence are not able to discover wisdom, but only the omniscient God knows the way to the wisdom that evades human discovery. When Yahweh spoke to Job in chapters 38–41, challenging him to answer seventy unanswerable questions, Job came to the realization of his own limitations before the omniscient Lord. Because humans are limited in their knowledge and understanding, they like Job must learn to trust the Lord for what they do not and cannot comprehend. Brown notes well, “By provoking issues and questions as forcefully as it does, Job leads the reader to self-discovery and, thereby, to knowledge of God of a different sort.”²⁵

It is also vital to consider what is gained when Job is communicated effectively. Our congregations and classrooms are full of people in pain, and the book of Job resonates with their emotions and gives words to their feelings and fears. By preaching and teaching through this book we identify with and enter into the real struggles that people have. Job’s anguished laments, his bitter frustrations, and his daring questions are all points at which contemporary men and women can say, “Amen.” Sad to say, these modern-day Jobs too often have heard only the same kinds of platitudes, accusations, and irrelevancies that prompted Job to dismiss his friends as plasterers of lies and worthless physicians. By contrast Holbert exhorts, “When we preach, Job must be with us, his painful life must speak to ours, for in him speak the voices of millions of our brothers and sisters in this world. We must become Joban preachers, open to the painful truth of our own lives and the lives of others.”²⁶

In the book of Job, theology crashed into experience, and in that collision faith was forged. What Job learned in the biblical text can also become true in the contemporary context. The Jobs who hear our sermons and lectures and who read our papers and books face a barrage that threatens to obliterate their beliefs. However, by guiding them along the course trod by Job, we as scholars, preachers, and teachers can direct them toward the enlarged and deepened faith in God that became his. For they will learn, as Job did before them, and as God’s people throughout history have learned, that the path from

²² Philip Yancey, *Disappointment with God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 29–30.

²³ Elliot W. Eisner, *The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1985), 97.

²⁴ Cf. Daniel J. Estes, “Job 28 in its Literary Context,” *JESOT* 2.2 (2013): 151–64.

²⁵ Brown, “Introducing Job: A Journey of Transformation,” *Int* 53 (1999): 229.

²⁶ Holbert, *Preaching Job*, 162.

untested belief about God to genuine commitment to God passes through painful experience. This is the message of the book of Job that we must communicate effectively in the twenty-first century.

PASTORAL PENSÉES

Five Truths for Sufferers from the Book of Job

— Eric Ortlund —

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Abstract: The book of Job is an obvious place to turn when a Christian suffers, but it is not easy to discern what God means to teach his people through this difficult book. This article interprets Job’s teaching on suffering from five broad perspectives: (1) God’s purpose in allowing suffering; (2) how Job “diversifies” our interpretations of suffering; (3) what God requires of us when we suffer; (4) what promises God makes about the end of suffering; and (5) how Job-like suffering grants us a new vision of God.

How does the book of Job help disciples of Jesus Christ remain faithful to God as they suffer—or walk alongside others who suffer—in ways that are extreme and inexplicable? Job is an obvious place to turn to when one is overwhelmed with pain, but it is easy for a casual reader to leave the book more mystified than encouraged. Job is an easy candidate for the Old Testament’s most difficult book. In addition to the textual and philological problems (which a good translation will negotiate for the reader), it is often difficult to understand what the participants in the debate are saying, and why. God’s answer to Job is also difficult to understand: why would 34 verses be given describing what is apparently a crocodile (41:1–34)? How is that supposed to help Job, and us as readers?

This essay certainly will not resolve or even address many of the problems of the book. For all its challenges, however, I believe the book of Job speaks directly to faithful sufferers in ways that, if not simple, are clear and encouraging. In my opinion, the book of Job is a greatly underused resource for endurance in discipleship in the midst of deep pain. I would like to explore five ways the book addresses suffering in the following pages.

It is important to clarify at the outset, however, that the book of Job is not universally relevant and is not intended to be. Human suffering is varied: sometimes the causes of pain are obvious, and sometimes God’s purpose in allowing it clear. But Job found himself in a kind of agony that was beyond all proportion, and one which he was at a loss to explain. For instance, he spends most of ch. 10 testing and rejecting different hypotheses as to why God might have allowed the tragedy of chs. 1–2: “Let me know why you contend against me!” (10:2). Job suffered in a peculiarly excruciating and confusing way,

and his story addresses that kind of experience. But to say this is not to limit the relevance of the book, for Job-like suffering is extremely common. I would wager that everyone reading this piece either has experienced the peculiar kind of extreme, inexplicable suffering portrayed in the book of Job or knows someone who has.

Let us consider five main ways in which the book of Job addresses and interprets suffering, defines God's role in it, and reveals what God expects of us as we suffer. As we do, the God who inspired this text will help us, like Job, to bless his name whether he gives or takes (1:21) and gain a new vision of the Lord (42:5).

1. Loving God “for Nothing”

I believe a key to interpreting the book of Job is found early in the first chapter in the Accuser's¹ question, “Does Job fear God for no reason?” (1:9). Clearly the expected answer is negative: the Accuser is implying that Job is not faithful and obedient to God for God's sake, but only because of secondary blessings which accrue in the relationship. Take those away, the Accuser says, and Job will openly curse God (v. 11).² A curse does not, of course, refer to obscene speech in the OT but is the act of abominating someone or something, regarding it as utterly ugly, worthless, and execrable. The accusation is that a relationship with God—with *God*—is impossible, because Job loves the gifts more than the Giver. Once the gifts are taken away, the game of “bribery and payoffs” will stop,³ and Job will curse God by cutting off his relationship with God, by demeaning God as unworthy of love or trust.

This is the issue at stake in the book of Job: will human beings continue in a relationship with God in which all they gain from the relationship is God? Or are we just too selfish? Is our piety just for show? Will we ever treat God as anything more than a business partner or a means to an end? The opening chapters of Job show God putting his beloved servant in a position in which he loses every other reason to stay in a relationship with God except God himself. It starts to cost Job dearly to hold on to his relationship with God. As Thomas Merton writes, “if we love God for something less than himself, we cherish a desire that can fail us. We run the risk of hating Him if we do not get what we hope for.”⁴

This is an issue of deep relevance for God's people under the new covenant. This is the case because, while the outward form of the secondary blessings is not the same for us—faithful Christians are not

¹I refer to “the Accuser” above because it better captures the nuance of הַשָּׂטָן for an ancient Israelite audience than “Satan.” The noun with the definite article refers to a role, not a proper name. Within the context of the entire canon of Scripture, I do identify this figure with Satan in the NT (cf. Rev 12:9); but since ancient Israelites would not have been able to draw these connections, I prefer the more general term “the Accuser” when discussing the book of Job. See further discussion and other references in Norman Habel, *The Book of Job*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985), 89, and C. L. Seow, *Job 1–21*, Illuminations (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 272–74.

²The Hebrew actually reads בָּרַךְ, “bless,” here and throughout the chapter (1:5, 10–11, 21; 2:5, 9). The usual theory is that the scribes “euphemized” the text to avoid having anyone say “curse God,” but this phrase occurs elsewhere in the OT (Exod 22:27, Isa 8:21). While it may be an example of “antiphrasm” (a word being used in the opposite sense of its normal meaning [C. L. Seow, *Job 1–21*, 271]), Tod Linafelt notes that each verse can be translated as “bless” (“The Undecidability of בָּרַךְ in the Prologue to Job and Beyond,” *BibInt* 4 [1996]: 154–72). The issue is somewhat academic, since the point is the same either way.

³Michael Fox aptly paraphrases the accusation that YHWH and Job are only “colluding in a game of bribery and payoffs” (“Job the Pious,” *ZAW* 117 [2005]: 360).

⁴Thomas Merton, *No Man Is An Island*, reprint ed. (San Diego: Harvest, 1985), 18.

promised wealth, cattle, and many slaves (1:2–3)—we all enjoy benefits in our relationship with God through Jesus Christ which are secondary to the ultimate blessing of the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and communion with God. Speaking personally, I never could have married the woman I did and started a family if it had not been for God's grace at work in my life for many years before I met her. As I read Job 1–2, I must ask myself: if my family were suddenly killed in a car accident, would I praise God any less as I grieved and mourned that very real loss? For that is the meaning of Job's worship in 1:20–21: without suppressing his pain, he considers God no less worthy of worship when he takes than when he gives. In other words, Job's relationship with God is entirely on terms of grace: since everything he enjoyed was a gift from on high rather than reward for good behavior, God is not to be faulted when it is taken away. On the other hand, if God allows a Christian to suffer some great and painful loss, and if the Christian's response is, "How dare you, Lord? You've betrayed me!" then that Christian's motives for faithfulness are (shall we say) less noble than Job's.

We are only at the first chapter of a long and complicated book, and the Accuser's question is only four words in Hebrew (הַחֲזֵם יְרָא אֱיֹב אֱלֹהִים, 1:9). But already we are deep into the complexities of the book of Job. Part of what the prologue of Job teaches is that sometimes God temporarily interrupts his normal policy of giving earthly blessings to his saints (remember Job's restoration in 42:10–17) and puts us in a position where we have every earthly reason to give up on God. Sometimes God will appear to act like an enemy (13:24), like someone who has betrayed us. Furthermore, there is a sense in which God must allow these temporary and tragic interruptions in his goodness if he is to prove the reality of our relationship with him. This is the case because a relationship with God for God's sake is the only kind of relationship that will save us. The true character of our faith—whether we have faith at all—is exposed in this kind of crucible.

This is probably why God does not simply rebuke the Accuser in 1:12, as he does in Zech 3:2. YHWH allows a terrifying test to confirm and solidify and demonstrate that a relationship with himself, for his own sake, is actually possible. Although he was not discussing the book of Job, C. S. Lewis expressed this issue well as he journeyed through the collapse of his faith:

If my house has collapsed at one blow, that is because it was a house of cards. The faith which "took things into account" was not faith but imagination. . . . It has been an imaginary faith playing with innocuous counters labelled "Illness," "Pain," "Death," and "Loneliness." I thought I trusted the rope until it mattered to me whether it would bear me. Now that it matters, I find it didn't.

Bridge-players tell me that there must be some money on the game, "or else people won't take it seriously." Apparently it's like that. . . . [Y]ou will never discover how serious it was until the stakes are raised horribly high; until you find that you are playing not for counters or for sixpences but for every penny you have in the world. Nothing less will shake a man—or at any rate a man like me—out of his merely verbal thinking and his merely notional beliefs. He has to be knocked silly before he comes to his senses. Only torture will bring out the truth. Only under torture does he discover it himself.⁵

When God allows extreme and inexplicable suffering, when he appears to treat those who love him as if he hates them, the book of Job teaches that God is delivering us from our trivialization of God as a means to our ends and giving us opportunity, in the midst of unhidden and public grief (1:20), to

⁵C. S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed*, reprint ed. (New York: Bantam, 1976), 42–43.

worship God as God, for his own sake, regardless of any secondary blessing we might gain or lose. Such worship is painful, costly, and deeply honoring to God as the Lord and not a pet deity. Without these tragic experiences, even the best among us will slowly and unconsciously drift away from Job's costly and beautiful worship in the first chapter of this book. In suffering, God is saving us, delivering us into a relationship with himself where he is actually God and Lord.

2. *Three Kinds of Suffering*

My sense is that current North American evangelical culture basically has two explanations for suffering: sin on our part or God's work of growing us as Christians. Both are, of course, thoroughly biblical. With regard to the former, David writes that his wounds "stink and fester" because of his own foolishness (Ps 38:5). Similarly, David's great psalm of repentance expresses the wish that the bones God has broken would rejoice (Ps 51:8). David is in pain, but it is no mystery why—and clearly the best response in such pain is repentance.

The second explanation of suffering mentioned above is clearly taught in the NT. James urges us counter-intuitively to regard trials as joy, because God is working perseverance in us—which ends in the very precious state of a Christian mature and complete, lacking nothing (1:2–4; cf. Rom 5:3–5). When God allows pain in order to grow us as Christians, the appropriate response is to "make every effort" (2 Pet 1:5) to supplement to our faith whatever virtue or blessing God intends to give through this painful means. John Owen wisely asks in this regard whether we have received "any eminent mercy, protection, deliverance, which thou didst not improve in due manner . . . or hast thou been exercised with any affliction without laboring for the appointed end of it?"⁶

Neither of these valid explanations is, however, relevant to Job. The book is at pains to show us that it is not because of any fault in Job's life that his affliction comes—quite the contrary, it is just his exemplary piety which attracts such unfortunate attention (1:8). YHWH's praise of his servant is quite remarkable, for the phrase "none like him in all the earth" is most often used for God (Ps 86:8) and only one other time refers to a human being in the OT (1 Sam 10:24).⁷ This is high praise indeed!

Similarly, we cannot explain Job's suffering in terms of some immaturity or inadequacy in his faith. YHWH is not trying to grow his servant spiritually, because Job already shows all the signs of a mature saint. It is true, of course, that there is some uncertainty and perhaps excessive carefulness at the beginning of Job's story in 1:4–5 (Job may be referencing this when he speaks of that fear which now comes upon him in 3:25). And Job does end the book by confessing his new and far more profound knowledge of God (42:5). But in terms of his moral character and the practice of his faith, Job is blameless (1:1). Not even the Accuser can find fault with him. Job shows all the virtues that Proverbs describes. In fact, after reading ch. 31, it is hard to imagine what more Job could have done to love God and neighbor in costly and beautiful ways. Nowhere in the book is it suggested that God allows the tragedy of chs. 1–2 to give Job some virtue or moral quality that he is lacking.

⁶John Owen, "Of the Mortification of Sin in Believers," in *The Works of John Owen*, ed. William Goold, reprint ed. (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1995), 6:48.

⁷D. J. A. Clines. *Job 1–20*, WBC 17 (Dallas: Word, 1989), 24. One of the ironies of the book is that although the friends, in their maniacal determination to condemn Job, insist that God "puts no trust in his servants" (4:18, cf. 25:4–6), chs. 1–2 show YHWH doing exactly that as he entrusts his reputation to Job, who is specified as YHWH's servant (1:8).

There is a second and more subtle reason why Job's suffering cannot be explained in terms of spiritual growth. It is significant that the terms of the test in 1:9–12 exclude any secondary blessing whatsoever outside of God himself. Although the blessings listed are familial and financial, if Job received some spiritual blessing or virtue from his ordeal, it would be possible for the Accuser to repeat his accusation, this time with reference to a different part of Job's life. I think there is a sense in which Job cannot benefit in any way from his ordeal except with regard to a deeper experience of and intimacy with God. And it is on just this note that Job's final speech ends (42:5–6), instead of some kind of progress in holiness.

It appears that we need a third category of suffering. Sometimes God allows pain and loss that have nothing to do with sin in our lives and are not meant to teach us anything. Rather, our loss and bewilderment become an avenue by which God gives himself to us more than he ever could have before, when we were at ease (29:6). When God puts us into a position where we must hold onto our relationship with God for God's sake only—in which we stand to gain nothing but God—we start to receive him more fully than we ever had before. Job's amazed cry, "Now my eyes see you," becomes our own (we will return to this at the end of this essay).

Attention to this aspect of the book of Job deepens and nuances how we interpret suffering and prevents us from well-intentioned torture of our friends who suffer, either by implicitly blaming them for their pain or by reducing their tragedy to moral lessons. The word "torture" may seem extreme, but that is how Job experienced the "help" of his "friends" (19:22). After all, anyone who has (for instance) suffered the loss of a child and then been blamed for it, or been told God is trying to teach them something, knows how bitter that kind of "help" is (cf. 6:5–7). When walking with a friend through traumatic suffering, it may be appropriate to find a time to ask if there is some sin which God is bringing to the surface, or some growth edge which this pain is exposing. But if one's friend cannot find any unconfessed sin or area in which spiritual growth is needed, the friend may be undergoing a Job-like experience.

3. God's Requirement for us in Job-like Suffering

When God allows tremendous and seemingly inexplicable pain, what does he expect from us? If we can find no explanation of our pain in relation to our sins or God's good desire to grow us into maturity, what does God want us to do?

The answer in the book of Job is surprisingly simple. The Accuser predicted that Job would curse God when he lost everything (1:11)—that Job would give up on God, cut off his relationship with him and demean God as unworthy of any love or worship. In fact, Job did the opposite and blessed God when God seemed to be cursing him (1:21).⁸ So far as I can tell, YHWH had no other requirement for his servant throughout the book. Although YHWH will confront some of the foolish things Job has said in the dialogues (38:3), God never rebukes Job for any sin.

When we find ourselves in Job-like suffering, what God wants from us is not complicated: we are to hold on to our relationship with him and not give up on him. Like Job, we may say some very foolish things about God in our pain. Like Job, these careless words will cause us intense pain when

⁸It takes us a little outside the purview of this essay, but within an OT framework, Job's sufferings in chs. 1–2 are similar enough to the curses of Deut 28 or various proverbs (e.g., 10:27–31) that they would have looked like divine judgment for sin. Similarly, Job's boils in 2:7 are the same affliction promised to disobedience in Deut 28:27, 35. This is why Job—incorrectly but understandably—speaks of the anger of God against him (16:9).

God restores us, as they did for Job (42:6). But God's response to this foolish speech is extraordinarily gentle—although he does tell Job to prepare himself for the encounter (38:3), his initial question implies only that Job did not really know what he was talking about (v. 2). This is an extremely gracious way to respond to someone who has said just about everything negative one can say without cursing God.

In fact, in light of the “dark” things (38:2) Job has said about God, it is surprising that Job does not curse God. If it really is true that God destroys both blameless and wicked and laughs at the calamity of the innocent (9:22–24, a passage which summarizes Job's case against God), why would anyone continue in their relationship with such a person? Wouldn't one cut off their relationship with that kind of deity just on principle? But in the midst of his protest, Job finds within himself a contradictory drive to hold on to God, and a hope that he will somehow be reconciled to him (13:13–23, 19:25–27). D. A. Carson puts this well when he writes that even Job's “demand that God present himself before Job and give an answer is the cry of a believer seeking to find out what on earth God is doing. Even while sitting in the ash pit, Job trusts God enough to express extraordinary confidence in him, and for no ulterior motive.”⁹

So also saints in the new covenant, when they find themselves in deep pain that seems to have no point, will find themselves saying with Job, “Though he slay me, yet I will trust him” (13:15). Like Job, we endure (Jas 5:11), “not in serenity and tranquility, but in the energy to persist in faith . . . in the midst of contrary experiences.”¹⁰ And like Job, they too will be vindicated for it (42:7–10). This is God's expectation for us when we suffer in a Job-like way: not to give up on God, and to wait for him to restore us, whether in this life or the life of the world to come.¹¹

4. God's Present Delight in Creation and His Final Defeat of all Evil

Job is an exhausting book, not the least because the dialogue between Job and his opponents (chs. 3–37) seem designed to frustrate the reader in both its length and lack of resolution. We are supposed to conclude that the human participants in this drama have absolutely no answer to Job's problem, no matter how long they talk about it. By way of contrast, Job seems entirely resolved and reconciled to the God he has criticized throughout the book by the end of YHWH's speeches (42:1–6).¹² Despite this, however, the reader may not share Job's sense of relief and resolution. How is it that dozens of questions

⁹D. A. Carson, *How Long, Oh Lord? Reflections on Suffering and Evil*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 124.

¹⁰Bruce Waltke with Charles Yu, *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Thematic, and Canonical Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 936.

¹¹In Phil 1:19, the echo of Job 13:16 suggests that Paul seems to be talking about perseverance in faith in the midst of suffering, not only his release from prison (see further Moisés Silva, “Philippians,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007], 836, as well as the now-classic discussion of Richard Hays in *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* [New Haven: Yale University, 1989], 21–24).

¹²The passage, and especially v. 6, is difficult and can be taken different ways. See the various possibilities listed in Thomas Krüger, “Did Job Repent?,” *Das Buch Hiob und seine Interpretationen: Beiträge zum Hiob-Symposium auf dem Monte Verità vom 14.–19. August 2005*, ed. Thomas Krüger, et. al., ATANT 88 (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2007), 217–29. I understand Job's use of אָנַח to be meaningfully ambiguous: Job both repents of his criticisms of God and is comforted about his frailty and weakness (“dust and ashes,” as in Gen 18:27). In other words, Job is reconciled to the fact that, as dust and ashes, he can suffer so greatly, and repents of criticizing God for allowing it.

about different parts of creation and the animals in it (38:4–39:30) and long descriptions of what appear to be a hippopotamus (40:15–24) and a crocodile (41:1–34) elicit such awed worship in Job?

One common answer is that these speeches express the limitless power and wisdom of God.¹³ Although this is not totally wrong, it does not quite explain Job's change from protest to praise, because Job never denied that YHWH was powerful or (in a certain sense) wise. In 9:4 and 12:13, Job attributes to God just these two qualities—but in context, this attribution only deepens Job's terror of God (see 9:5–18 and 12:14–25). This may sound strange, since wisdom is usually associated with moral uprightness in the OT (Prov 1:2–3). Job is using the word “wisdom” in chs. 9 and 12 to mean “effective ability” (a connotation it has elsewhere, such as Eccl 2:9). Since Job is deeply suspicious of YHWH's righteousness at this stage of his story, the moral and ethical dimensions of the term do not seem to be in play.)

But if YHWH does not simply or only affirm his power and wisdom in his two speeches, how do they effect such a great change in Job? We can only examine these complicated chapters cursorily, but it is significant how they directly answer different aspects of Job's protest in ways that explain Job's about-face from criticism to worship. In 38:4–7, for instance, YHWH describes the founding of the earth in a way that counters Job's conviction that God destroys the good order of creation by shaking the earth out of its foundations (9:6) and that the earth is under the control of the worst sort of people (9:24). Job has, understandably but wrongly, pulled into himself in his pain, viewing everything through the lens of his tragedy. In his eyes, the world is a sinister, chaotic mess. God expands Job's vision to show him beings higher than himself unable to restrain their praise (38:7) as God establishes the very place Job has “darkened.” Similarly, 38:12–15 shows the moral edge to creation. The poetry is complex, but the description of the rising sun chasing the wicked away (v. 13) and breaking their arm (a symbol for strength, v. 15) implies that there is a moral edge to the architecture of creation. The order of creation resists evil—a very different perspective from Job's in his protest. The description of the sea in 38:8–11 is especially striking in that it activates one of the most powerful biblical symbols for chaos and evil (cf. Ps 18:5–6, Hab 3:15, Rev 21:1).¹⁴ Most often in OT poetry, YHWH wages war against the chaotic watery powers (e.g., Job 7:12, 26:11–13). Here, he treats the sea like an infant as he diapers it (v. 9), even though it is still resisting him! That is the meaning of the reference in v. 11 to the “proud waves” of the sea—even though it does not submit to him, YHWH still cares for this part of his creation as he restricts and contains it. YHWH is communicating to his scarred servant that he does allow some chaotic and sinister elements in his creation (such as the predators of 39:26–30), but only within strict limits (vv. 8, 10)—and he is far gentler and kinder even with chaos than Job has imagined. Creation is a good place in which God delights, not an amoral jungle ruled by an arbitrary tyrant, as Job had imagined.

YHWH's second speech in chs. 40–41 deepens his engagement with Job's protest. The animals described here are animals, but they stand for something more, similar to the serpent of Genesis 3:1 or the unclean animals inhabiting the waste places of divine judgment in Isaiah 13:20–22 and 34:14–15. Leviathan is a symbol for supernatural chaos elsewhere in the OT (as in Job 3:8, Isa 27:1; recall

¹³ See, for instance, Daniel Estes, *Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 114, and Derek Kidner, *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1985), 71. The issues involved in interpreting these speeches are very intricate, of course, and various interpretations have been offered. For more options and fuller bibliography, see Leo Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt: Metaphorical Theology in the Book of Job*, JSOTSup 29 (Sheffield: Almond, 1991), 197–98.

¹⁴ “Sea,” *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, ed. Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman III (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 765–66.

the fleeing serpent of Job 26:13). Furthermore, although the evidence is sparser, there are references in ANE literature to a chaos monster similar in description to Behemoth.¹⁵ Failure to recognize the supernatural symbolism of these animals short-circuits the rhetorical strategy of these chapters. If YHWH is describing his prowess only over two animals which one might visit in a zoo, the speech becomes irrelevant to Job, not to mention a little pathetic. What is a man mourning dead children supposed to say to a deity who boasts of capturing a hippo?¹⁶

But if Behemoth and Leviathan symbolize supernatural chaos which resists God, then the resolution to Job's protest clicks into place: YHWH is allowing that there is a great evil at loose in his creation, but he promises one day to defeat it (40:19, 41:8). In fact, YHWH "raises the stakes" in this chapter by giving Job a close-up picture of an evil which Job is aware of (Job refers to Leviathan in 3:8) but cannot fully comprehend. It is as if YHWH directs Job's gaze to a massive, writhing monster which Job cannot even touch, much less engage with in combat. Only Behemoth's maker can bring a sword near to kill it (40:19), and only YHWH can and will engage in battle with Leviathan (41:8).

Tone is difficult to detect in a written work, but a feeling of joy seems to pervade these chapters. YHWH's description of his world and his manner of ruling it in chs. 38–41 is anything but apologetic or defensive. Without being idealistic or unrealistic, YHWH goes so far as to praise his opponent (41:12–34). The person who most clearly sees everything which is wrong with creation is the person most enthusiastic about it. There is a kind of staggering joy driving the description of Leviathan. Perhaps that is the monster's ultimate defeat, that our Savior is not only unintimidated by his opponent, but positively cheerful as he looks forward to the day when he pierces the fleeing serpent (26:13). What would it be to view creation with that kind of irrepressible, divine joy, before the redemption of all things?

These are complex chapters, but they are deeply encouraging to us as we suffer and wait before the redemption of all things, when God scours all evil out of his creation and makes it new. God's present manner of ruling over creation is to allow evil some limited agency—for a time. The promise of the coming battle (41:8) helps us persevere when he allows evil some limited agency over us (for a time), and deepens our yearning for that day when we see him engage in glorious battle with a power we cannot now even fully comprehend.

In his new commentary on Job, Christopher Ash expresses this wonderfully when he writes,

[The] assurance that he [God] can do all things and that no purpose of his can be thwarted is the comfort I need in suffering and the encouragement I crave when terrified by evil. He does not merely permit evil but commands it, controls it, and uses it for his good purposes. . . . [The] God who knows how to use supernatural evil to serve his purposes

¹⁵ The goddess Anat describes a "divine calf" that she has defeated right after a reference to the seven-headed dragon in the Baal Epic (*KTU* 1.3 III 34–43). Similarly, Gilgamesh and Enkidu fight the "Bull of Heaven" in the sixth tablet of the Gilgamesh Epic. Othmar Keel also documents how ancient Egyptians portrayed the chaotic Seth as both a hippopotamus and a crocodile in his contests with Horus (*Jahwes Entgegnung an Ijob*, FRLANT 121 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978], 127–31).

¹⁶ It should also be noted that ancient Egyptians could and did capture both hippopotami and crocodiles—so if Yahweh is here talking only of natural creatures, his rhetorical questions lose all force. See John Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament*, University Of Cambridge Oriental Publications 35 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 65, 77, who references Herodotus 2.70. But, as above, this is a very cursory stab at a cluster of more complex issues. A more involved argument for a supernatural interpretation of Leviathan is given in Eric Ortlund, "The Identity of Leviathan and the Meaning of the Book of Job," *TJ* 34 (2013): 17–30.

of ultimate good can and will use the darkest invasion of my life for his definite and invincible plans for my good in Christ.¹⁷

5. “Now My Eyes See You:” A New Vision of God

Job ends the book by worshipfully confessing that he has gained a whole new vision of God (42:5), a vision so great that all his previous knowledge of God is like unreliable second-hand information by comparison. Since Job is already exemplary in piety (1:8), this is quite a statement! What new insight does Job get at the end of the book? Job already knew about Leviathan (3:8), and none of YHWH’s questions in chs. 38–39 are especially difficult—even when they have to do with things Job does not understand, the questions themselves are not difficult to answer.¹⁸ So Job does not appear to have received new information about God.

Job wholeheartedly submits to God’s particular way of ruling over creation before the redemption of all things. He is entirely reconciled to a world in which children sometimes die, and the best kind of lives are sometimes the most miserable. As he withdraws his complaint of injustice (cf. 40:7), he sees YHWH as God and Lord in a whole new way. By analogy, if a human friend allowed the death of one of my children or the destruction of my property, and did not apologize or explain himself to me, I would “curse” that former friend in that I would not continue in my relationship with him—and I would be justified in so doing. But God allows just such a tragedy to happen to Job, and he does not apologize or explain himself. Job remains forever ignorant of the true cause of his suffering (1:6–12; 2:1–6). So when Job worships this God, it proves how different his relationship with God is from every other relationship he has. It proves how much Job values God over any other relationship. Job sees YHWH in a whole new way as *the Lord*.

The same is true for modern readers of the book. When we suffer without knowing why and persist in our relationship with God without any explanation or apology from him, we too will have God stand before us as the Lord in a whole new way, as God in a way totally different from any other relationship we have.

6. Conclusion

The book of Job is not relevant in every circumstance, but Job-like experiences are all too common. This book teaches us that this kind of suffering is not a sign of God’s anger, or even a way to improve our moral quality as Christians. It is an avenue through which God reveals himself to us more profoundly than he ever could have in our safety and comfort. Job-like suffering becomes a context to love, honor and remain faithful to God for God’s sake, irrespective of any secondary blessings he might give, as we accept his present administration of ruling over a still-dangerous creation. The book of Job narrates how these times of suffering are temporary (42:10–12) and terminate in a new vision of God as God. In so

¹⁷ Christopher Ash, *Job: The Wisdom of the Cross*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 424.

¹⁸ Michael Fox superbly shows how God’s questions in chs. 38–39 are not sarcastic or demeaning, nor meant to humiliate Job with his inferior knowledge. They are rather intended to draw Job’s eyes back to God, for however varied the question, the answer is the same: “Only you, Lord, can understand and control that” (“God’s Answer and Job’s Response,” *Bib* 94 [2013]: 1–23)

doing, this difficult and challenging book speaks in clear and strengthening ways to Christians suffering and trying to remain faithful in their agony.¹⁹

Finally, the ways in which the book of Job portrays and interprets suffering in God's economy anticipate and pre-figure the Lord Jesus. If Job was blameless and upright in his relationship with God (1:1), Jesus was even more so. If Job innocently suffered the wrath of God in order to further God's purposes, defeat the schemes of the Accuser, and prove the all-surpassing worth of knowing God, Jesus did even more so. If Job shows us imperfect but genuine trust in God in inexplicable suffering, Jesus shows us the same theme perfectly in his prayer in garden. And if Job ends with a vision of a universe cleansed of all evil, we see in Jesus how God actually brings Job's hope about. As Ash writes, "It is not until the New Testament that we learn what it cost God to win this victory over the Leviathan."²⁰ In sum, the book of Job shows us, in outline form, a greater Job, who suffered even more deeply than that OT saint, in whom God's purposes were furthered even more deeply, who holds our hand as he leads us, in some measure, through his own pain.

¹⁹ Readers interested in reflecting on these themes further are directed to Robert Yarbrough, "Christ and the Crocodiles: Suffering and the Goodness of God in Contemporary Perspective," in *Suffering and the Goodness of God*, ed. Christopher Morgan and Robert Peterson, *Theology in Community* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 23–45. Although written from a broader perspective on suffering, Yarbrough's reflections intersect with this study of the book of Job in a number of ways.

²⁰ *Job*, 422. Ash is one of the very few modern commentators who persistently pursues the Christological dimension of the book of Job. I recommend his work highly to any reader interested in exploring that subject further, even if I had some lingering questions about his approach. For instance, I suspect Ash is the first reader of Job to find a hint of Christ in the strange ostrich of 39:13–18 (*Job*, 398). More substantially, Ash connects Job's innocent suffering under God's wrath with Christ's suffering under the same (as I do above), and also notes the NT theme of the believer's participation in Christ's suffering (e.g., Mark 10:38–39). From there, it is no great leap to find in Job's laments in chs. 3–31 a description of the suffering which Christians will sometimes undergo (*Job*, 187, 206, 436). Although the point is well taken, I wonder if this reading gives sufficient account to the way in which Job misinterprets his experience: although Job does not know it, God is not accusing him (10:14) or directly breaking him "breach upon breach" (16:14). But this is not to detract from my admiration for Ash's accomplishment in this area.

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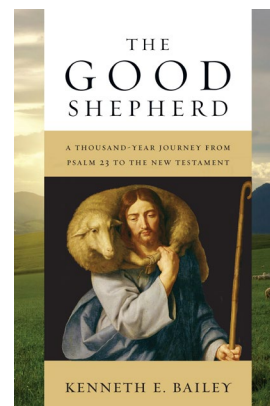
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— OLD TESTAMENT —

Kenneth E. Bailey. *The Good Shepherd: A Thousand-Year Journey from Psalm 23 to the New Testament*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014. 288 pp. £15.84/\$24.00.

The author, a specialist in New Testament cultural backgrounds, is especially known for his monographs on the cultural setting of the Gospels, all of them published with InterVarsity Press (Downers Grove, IL): *The Cross and the Prodigal: The Fifteenth Chapter of Luke, Seen Through the Eyes of Middle Eastern Peasants* (1973), *Poet and Peasant: A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke* (1976), *Through Peasant Eyes: More Lucan Parables, Their Culture and Style* (1980). Bailey's publications also include *Jacob and the Prodigal: How Jesus Retold Israel's Story* (2003) and *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels* (2008). The last study opened a new area of inquiry which led to another volume: *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes: Cultural Studies in 1 Corinthians* (2011).



In his most recent book, Bailey investigates the heritage of Psalm 23, tracing the literary theme of the good shepherd in three OT texts (Jer 23:1–8; Ezek 34; Zech 10:2–12), and its appropriation in five NT texts (Luke 15:1–10; Mark 6:7–52; Matt 18:10–14; John 10:1–18; 1 Pet 5:1–4). The literary theme of shepherding is actually composed of ten subthemes: the good shepherd, the lost sheep, the opponents of the shepherd, the good host(ess), the incarnation of the shepherd in drawing near to sheep/people, the high personal cost of shepherding, repentance, bad sheep, a celebration (often a festal meal), and the ending of the story which seals the shepherd-sheep relationship. Most of the texts selected contain at least seven subthemes, while only Mark 6 contains all ten of them. Each chapter of the book focuses on one of the biblical texts and assumes the following structure: Introduction (including Bailey's own translation), Rhetoric (including an outline of the literary structure), Commentary (explaining the literary structure, socio-cultural context, and intertextuality), and Theological Cluster (summarizing the text's main theological ideas).

Bailey's greatest strength is the investigation of the original Middle Eastern context of each passage. Besides his own experience and knowledge, Bailey employs some noteworthy tools: commentaries on Psalm 23 written by Middle Eastern authors (M. P. Krikorian, Faddoul Moghabghab, George M. Lamsa, Stephen A. Haboush, Abraham Mitri Rahbany, Nerses the Graceful of Lambron) as well as Western missionaries to the Middle East (William Thompson and Eric F. F. Bishop), four Arabic NT commentaries (Ibn al-Tayyib [d. 1043], D. Ibn al-Salibi [d. 1164], Ibrahim Sa'id [1970], Matta al-Miskin [1999]), and twenty Arabic translations of the Bible (translated into English by the author).

Bailey notes that the theme of God's shepherding has undergone a process of transformation across the centuries. Whereas David used the metaphor to describe his own condition and relationship to God, subsequent biblical authors replaced the individual in the metaphor with the community of God's people. Trouble and rebellion arise not only from the lost sheep, as in the original metaphor, but also

from the hired human shepherds (Jer 23) and the sheep who never strayed from the flock (Ezek 34). Zechariah 10:2–12 also elaborates the political interpretation of Psalm 23 by depicting sheep as soldiers.

Turning to the NT, the parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15:4–7) recasts the sinner (represented as a sheep) in an active position, being able to turn back from wandering by one's own choice. By contrast, the passage in Mark 6:7–52 weaves the literary motifs of Psalm 23 through the context surrounding Jesus's feeding of the five thousand; in this context of John the Baptist's death and the political disorientation that ensues, Jesus plays a multifaceted shepherd's role for Israel. Matthew 18 adds to the Markan account a focus on the "little ones" as the object of the shepherd's particular interest. From a different perspective, John 10 makes the most of the close relationship between sheep and shepherd and envisages the shepherd as sacrificially protecting his sheep. The book's last chapter tackles 1 Peter 5:1–4, where the apostle applies the great qualities of Jesus the Great Shepherd to the elders, the shepherds entrusted with the church of Christ.

Several improvements could have sharpened the argument of the book. First, Bailey's preference for new terms which replace some classical terminology may confuse the reader, such as "ring composition" for chiasmus and "cameos" for chiasmus components. Second and following Bailey's own criteria for selecting the texts, it is surprising that he has left aside important texts such as 2 Samuel 7:8–16, Psalm 80, Zechariah 11:4–17, and Acts 20:18–35. Moreover, including the parable of the lost coin (Luke 15:8–10) as a shepherding text only to balance the main male actor of the lost sheep parable with a female actor seems unjustified, since the cluster of themes common to the other texts cannot be found here (pp. 145–152). Third, Bailey does not engage his texts critically. He avoids discussions on the selected texts in terms of their origin and date, as well as on alternative sources for the shepherd image, both in the Bible and the ancient Near East.

Psalm 23 and its theme of the Good Shepherd have long captivated the minds of Christian authors. In this book Bailey demonstrates that there is a close connection between the theme of God as Shepherd as depicted in Psalm 23 and other texts in the Bible. Bailey's approach is accessible, avoiding technical and overly specialized language. The fact that Bailey draws attention to the Arabic heritage of Christian literature on this topic is most welcome. The volume will prove to be stimulating devotional reading and a useful tool for preaching.

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S. Min Chun. *Ethics and Biblical Narrative: A Literary and Discourse-Analytical Approach to the Story of Josiah*. Oxford Theology and Religion Monograph Series. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. xii + 274 pp. £75.00/\$125.00.

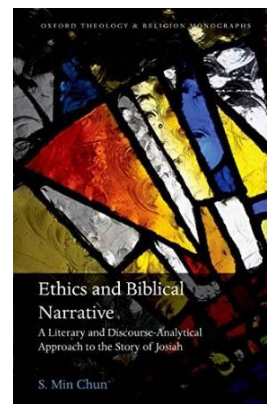
S. Min Chun teaches at the Vancouver Institute for Evangelical Worldview in Langley, Canada. This monograph is a revision of his Oxford DPhil thesis, in which Chun attempts to redress the lack of interest in OT narrative as a source of ethics. The book contains an introduction followed by three main parts and a conclusion. An appendix (outlining verbal constructions in 2 Kgs 22:1–23:30), a bibliography, and indexes for Scripture, subject, and author references complete the book.

Part One focuses on OT narrative and ethics. The first chapter outlines the object and task of OT ethics. For Chun, prescribing general rules for application is both impossible and undesirable (p. 26). Instead, he views ethics as about character formation (pp. 25–26) and practical wisdom (pp. 54–55). The next two chapters summarise previous work on OT narrative and ethics, with a particular focus on the work of Cyril Rodd, Bruce Birch, Waldemar Janzen, Gordon Wenham, Robin Parry, and John Barton (who draws upon Martha Nussbaum’s Aristotelian ethics).

Part Two contains a definition of the discourse-analytical method along with Chun’s evaluation. As Chun sees it, the main benefit of this approach is that it is more objective, being verifiable and hence more scientific. The discourse analysis employed in this book follows Cynthia Miller’s definition (“the use of language in contexts larger than a sentence or single utterance”) because it integrates both formalist and functionalist definitions of discourse (C. Miller, “Linguistics,” in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books*, ed. B. T. Arnold and H. G. M. Williamson [Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic], 657–69; quoted on p. 101). Chun’s discussion of discourse analysis especially highlights its benefits in relation to plot, characterisation and evaluation (pp. 114–135).

Part Three contains applications of Chun’s method. In one chapter, two short narrative examples are given to demonstrate his approach: Jeroboam (1 Kgs 12:21–25) and Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:13–16). The next chapter contains the longer example of Josiah (2 Kgs 22:1–23:30; pp. 172–225), the bulk of which contains a detailed scene-by-scene discussion of the literary and discourse-linguistic observations of this biblical text. Noteworthy are two interpretations I found unconvincing: (1) Huldah addresses two different people in her prophecy—“the man” and “the king” (2 Kgs 22:15–20; pp. 203–208); and (2) Josiah’s slaughter of the priests is to be evaluated negatively (2 Kgs 23:16–20; pp. 216–217). In regards to the latter event, Chun downplays its importance as fulfilment of prophecy (1 Kgs 13:2), and along with it the possibility of deriving any ethic concerning the reliability of God’s word.

For Chun, “contingencies” are the main theme of the Josiah narrative. He relates contingency closely with chance and with unexpected events (p. 56). These contingencies include the discovery of the book of the law, Huldah’s “unexpected prophecy,” and the death of Josiah. These contingencies are in turn related to “crises”: the discovery of the book led to Josiah realising that his kingdom was in crisis, Huldah’s prophecy intensified the crisis, but Josiah’s reforms could not save Judah, as becomes apparent in Josiah’s own death. Chun then concludes with the ethical observations to be drawn from the narrative: (1) contingency is part of life; (2) obedience doesn’t always guarantee blessing; and (3) “obedience still belongs” to those “who live with contingency of life” (pp. 223–25).



For readers interested in ethics of the OT, there are at least two benefits of reading this book. First, the thorough discussion of discourse analysis and the review of previous scholarship on OT narrative and ethics is helpful. Second, monographs that stimulate reading and re-reading OT narrative for ethical instruction are welcome.

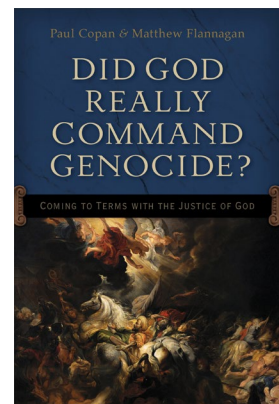
Nonetheless, readers will also want to keep this proviso in mind—Chun is firmly against deriving dominant themes and ethical principles for application from narrative. This aversion leads to a weak theological reading of the Josiah narrative, despite a strong theological overtone in the narrative itself. This is because he wants to emphasise the “practical wisdom” that a reader can gain by exercising their moral imagination through experiencing the world of the narrative (pp. 1, 54–55, *et passim*), and because he considers rules as unable to “cover all the unexpected” (p. 56). Chun does mention in passing that “freedom belongs to YHWH, who governs history” (p. 225), but he does not discuss the implications of this statement for ethics.

This omission leads me to wonder: Why can't one have general rules and principles interacting with particular narratives to develop “practical wisdom” in a reader? After all, the OT wisdom literature tells us that wisdom begins with “the fear of the LORD” (e.g., Prov 9:10). And to respond to God with reverent awe, to relate rightly to God, requires an understanding of God. That is to say, theology is integral to wisdom and ethics. In the Josiah narrative, it is clear that despite the king's singular acts of religious reform, God's will was that Judah would still be destroyed because of the sins of Manasseh (2 Kgs 23:26–27). Thus, Chun underplays the unique circumstances of Josiah's historical situation. There was nothing that even zealous Josiah could do to reverse God's sovereign will. Moreover, the fulfilment of prophecy in Josiah's actions means that God's word can be trusted. Chun is correct to note the contingency in the Josiah narrative and also in our lives—if viewed from our perspective. But from God's perspective, things don't happen by chance, and all events are under his control. It is this theology that we derive from the narrative which helps us to rest securely and to press on by faith in God and obedience to his word.

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Paul Copan and Matthew Flannagan. *Did God Really Command Genocide? Coming to Terms with the Justice of God*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2014. 351 pp. £9.99/\$16.99.

With the full, undeniable emergence of radical, militant Islam in the past decade, responses to the *jihad* of the movement have proliferated, especially within evangelical scholarship. The reason for this interest in the evangelical community is the apparent similarities between so-called “Holy War” (or “Yahweh War”) in the Bible and its expression in the Quran and ancillary Islamic literature and traditions, notably the *Hadith*. This matter of the similarities and differences between these two traditions is essential to the program of the present book. In addition to a full chapter devoted specifically to the matter (pp. 276–87), Paul Copan and Matthew Flannagan carefully build a case for the uniqueness of Old Testament “Holy War” and thus prepare the way for outlining the contrasts between the biblical and Quranic presentations of the issues.



The technical nominal term for the concept in the Old Testament is **תָּרַם**, “ban, what is banned” (*HALOT* 1:354). The associated verb is **תָּרַם**, always in the causative Hiphil **תָּרַם** (or passive **תָּרַם**), “put under the ban, dedicate something (to Yahweh).” The corresponding Arabic lexeme *jihad* comes closest conceptually to the Hebrew; however, not only semiotically but semantically there is a wide range of difference between the two. For example, whereas *jihad* speaks of both inner spiritual struggle toward the ideals of Quranic life and practice, as well as offensive warfare against all unbelievers (i.e., non-Muslims), **תָּרַם** refers only to the militant, pro-active commands of Yahweh to single out his irredeemable, implacable enemies for annihilation. Moreover, **תָּרַם** was limited to only one historical era, that of the conquest of Canaan under Joshua as instructed by Yahweh through Moses. *Jihad*, it is argued, is not time-bound but must remain as a hallmark of Muslim identity until the whole world is either converted to the faith or destroyed because of failure to comply and become part of the *Umma*, or universal caliphate.

For the modern Christian, not only is the practice of violent *jihad* abhorrent on its face, but it runs counter to every code of ethics and morality expected of civilized society. That said, what about OT **תָּרַם**? How can that be justified in accord with these same standards? This is the conundrum addressed in this book and the central theme to which the authors have offered response (pp. 10, 37–38, 204–206, 237–240, 267–269). Paul Copan, Professor of Philosophy and Ethics at Palm Beach Atlantic University in Florida, has engaged this issue in a number of publications, including *Is God a Moral Monster? Making Sense of the Old Testament God* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011) and *Holy War in the Bible: Christian Morality and an Old Testament Problem* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013). Matthew Flannagan is an independent scholar in Auckland, NZ. Much of his research on the subject at hand can be found in a number of essays and periodical publications. Their collaboration here has resulted in a breathtaking and comprehensive analysis of the profound moral and theological implications of viewing God as not merely passive in the face of annihilistic atrocities, such as the indiscriminate slaughter of innocent women and children, but as the ultimate inspiration for devising, commanding, and successfully implementing what appears unconscionable and morally reprehensible from a human perspective.

The twenty-three chapters of the book are divided into four categories: (1) Genocidal Texts and the Problem of Scriptural Authority; (2) Occasional Commands, Hyperbolic Texts, and Genocidal Massacres; (3) Is It Always Wrong to Kill Innocent People?; and (4) Religion and Violence. After mounting a solid defense of the Bible’s dependability (though one overly dependent on discourse analysis), the authors disappointingly undercut their own arguments for biblical inerrancy in a number of ways.

First, they propose that it is possible that “what God says by way of appropriating the biblical text as his Word is not the same as what the human author of the text says” (p. 51). This seems to drive a wedge between the utterances of God and those of the human instruments whom he inspired, and it strongly suggests that the biblical writings originated with the prophets and were either approved or disapproved by God. It follows that humans may have instigated policies such as genocide over the objections of God or in contradiction to how he really felt.

Second, to soften the impact of God apparently commanding genocide, the authors propose that what is meant is not slaughter but expulsion from the land (pp. 76–81). But a careful and sensitive reading of the conquest narratives cannot legitimize this way of “rescuing” God from the plain reading of the text.

Third, just as troubling is the “hyperbolic interpretation of Joshua” (pp. 84–90). By this is meant primarily that “all” does not mean “all” when it comes to the removal of the Canaanites. The argument that annihilation could not be meant literally because Canaanites still remained alive is vacuous, since the fact the command was given to kill “all” need not mean that Joshua and the Israelites complied fully with the command, but in fact disobeyed the command as was their policy more often than not. Referring to the book of Joshua as “hagiographic and highly hyperbolic” (p. 107) raises the dilemma of how such propaganda is believable, much less authoritative.

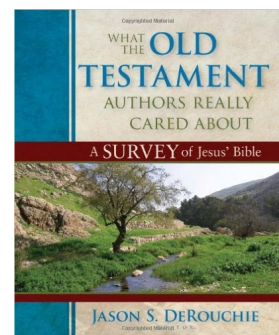
The work is rounded off by an excellent elaboration of the “Euthyphro dilemma” that wrestles with the question of whether God commands a matter because it is good or it is good because he has commanded it (pp. 171–84). The view embraced here is the latter, a correct conclusion in our view. Other important questions are handled with great care and convincing solutions. These include: (1) Can one claim that God commanded the death of innocents?; (2) What if someone today claimed that God commanded the slaughter of the innocent?; (3) Does religion cause violence?; and (4) Are Yahweh wars in the Old Testament the same as Islamic jihad? The answer to (4), and with many comparisons and differences, is No! (pp. 276–85). As for question (1), the authors argue (unsuccessfully in our opinion) that innocents were not slaughtered because they left the land and only the wicked men of war were thus subject to destruction (pp. 220–24). Question (2) is well-addressed by the point that the closing of the biblical canon precludes the kind of divine revelation that could be certifiably authentic enough to warrant a modern justification for slaughter of the innocent (pp. 237–40). The response to (3) is that no case can be made historically to show that this is the case and that, in fact, religion has been an ameliorating factor that has prevented these very atrocities (pp. 274–75).

For a compelling and informative treatment of biblical ethics in view of the conquest and other “questionable” undertakings, go no further than this. Even with its drawbacks, Copan and Flannagan’s contribution is easily the most important work on the subject currently available.

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Jason S. DeRouchie, ed. *What the Old Testament Authors Really Cared About: A Survey of Jesus’ Bible*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2013. 496 pp. £30.99/\$45.99.

The genre of Old Testament primer suffers from an identity crisis of sorts. On one side are “introduction” textbooks that seek to orient beginning students to the canon, history, and culture of the OT. On the other side are “survey” textbooks whose titles suggest a summary glance at the books of the OT themselves. In practice, however, features of both types (sometimes respectively labeled “general introduction” and “special introduction”) usually come together as a hybrid. Most self-styled “introductions” not only provide background information but also present each of the OT books (e.g., T. Longman III and R. B. Dillard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006)). Much the same can be said of “surveys” which set the message of each OT book in broader contexts such as ancient Near Eastern studies, evangelical interaction with critical scholarship, and Christian theological interpretation (e.g., A. E. Hill and J. H. Walton, *A Survey of the*



Old Testament, 3rd ed. [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009]). For teachers, there exists a real need for a primer that touches upon everything in light of how many institutions can only allocate a single course to the OT. Yet the comprehensiveness demanded of a one-term primer means that such a textbook will be lengthy, usually 500 pages or more. This makes it difficult to design an OT survey course with many assignments beyond reading, especially since the rising tide of biblical illiteracy makes reading the OT itself a necessary requirement. Students who view the OT as a random assortment of facts need to grasp its unity so as not to be overwhelmed by the diversity of its individual books.

What the Old Testament Authors Really Cared About, edited by Jason DeRouchie and containing the work of sixteen other contributors, is well-positioned to meet these needs. Being more focused than the usual OT survey or introduction, this book “attempts to *present the essence of what is revealed in the Old Testament*, with a conscious eye toward the fulfillment found in Jesus as clarified in the New Testament” (p. 13, italics original). This theological thrust is reinforced by the unique feature of presenting the OT books in the Jewish canonical order reflected in *Baba Batra* 14b (e.g., 1–2 Samuel as a single book, Jeremiah and Ezekiel before Isaiah). The move away from the familiar Protestant sequence leads to an exploration of the Jewish canon’s threefold depiction of God as Savior (Torah), Sovereign (Prophets) and Satisfier (Writings). Each book of the Jewish canon and its anticipation of various NT themes is the subject of its own chapter. Also, throughout the book are numerous mnemonic devices, informative sidebars, lists of key verses/themes, and color photographs that round out an attractively designed package.

A sampling of individual chapters on books from the Law, Prophets, and Writings can serve to illustrate the many strengths and minor weaknesses of emphasizing the theological unity of the Bible that Jesus knew. In the chapter on Genesis, for example, Stephen Dempster gives little space to debates over creation or Mosaic authorship in favor of showing “the purpose of creation in relation to its one, loving, transcendent creator” (p. 63). Following a brief treatment of the Fall is a longer, devotionally inspiring section on the gospel promise of universal restoration through one of Eve’s descendants.

Similarly, the sixteen pages of Gary Smith’s chapter on Isaiah are a thematic exploration of the dangers of pride and apostasy, the call to trust God, the suffering Servant’s payment of sins for many, and the biblical author’s longing for God’s glorious kingdom (pp. 280–92). Historical background about the Assyrian era is provided only when relevant to the aforementioned themes and their significance for the Christian today. No mention is made, however, of the historical-critical consensus that much of Isaiah was written or edited long after the Assyrian crises of the eighth century BC.

For the Writings, the third part of the Jewish canon that has tended to defy attempts at uncovering its sequence, the textbook presentation of these books under the rubric of “The Old Covenant Enjoyed” (pp. 319–23) is helpful for characterizing some books but less descriptive of others. The investigation of Chronicles as the last book of the Hebrew Bible traces many important links to the NT (e.g., Davidic dynasty, Temple theology), while it seems a stretch to characterize Lamentations as “hope for those remaining confident in God’s reign and faithfulness to his own” (p. 323) when its searing poetry of doubt and anger outnumbers references to faith and trust. This chapter on Lamentations also reflects a broader uneasiness in the book with conceding that a good deal of the OT is anonymous, an irony given the book’s title, *What the Old Testament Authors Really Cared About*. Readers find on the very same page, for instance, statements about “the [anonymous] author of Lamentations” (e.g., p. 405; cf. pp. 400, 402) alongside summaries of Lamentations 3 and 5, respectively, as “Jeremiah’s Pain” and “Jeremiah’s Plea” (Figure 21.1, p. 405). The editor and contributors are certainly aware of the difficulty of identifying

the authors of some OT books (pp. 14–15), but the textbook’s status as a companion volume to Kenneth Berding and Matt Williams’s *What the New Testament Authors Really Cared About* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2008) may obscure the reality that authorship and canonization for OT books can be less straightforward than for the NT.

These small issues notwithstanding, Jason DeRouchie and his team of contributors have provided an outstanding OT survey textbook, which models warm faith and thoughtful attention to the larger theological themes running from the OT into the NT. Teachers and students alike can rejoice at this gift, which follows in the footsteps of Jesus by interpreting the Jewish scriptures as “everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms” (Luke 24:44).

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Iain M. Duguid. *The Song of Songs: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries 19. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015. 160 pp. £11.88/\$18.00.

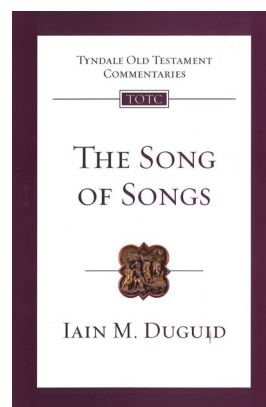
James M. Hamilton, Jr. *Song of Songs: A Biblical-Theological, Allegorical, Christological Interpretation*. Focus on the Bible. Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2015. 160 pp. £8.99/\$14.99.

The release of a new commentary on the Song of Songs is a rare pleasure, but to have two treatments of the Song arrive concurrently is indeed welcome. Both of these volumes address a broad audience, but they take somewhat different approaches to the meaning of the biblical text. Examining the Song through the binocular lenses of Duguid and Hamilton brings into focus the formidable challenges in interpreting the Song.

Iain Duguid, who recently transitioned from Grove City College to Westminster Theological Seminary, has penned the revised volume for the Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries series, which replaces the 1984 volume by G. Lloyd Carr. Duguid provides an excellent introduction, with brief treatments of the title, authorship, date, canonicity, structure, and unity of the Song, and more extended discussions of the interpretational approaches and message of the book. His original translation of the Song is followed for each lyric by his commentary, comprised of one or two paragraphs of context, verse-by-verse exegetical comments, and one to three paragraphs of meaning, including first its literal message and then its broader theological connections.

Duguid concludes that it is not likely that Solomon authored the Song, and it may well have been written after the exile (pp. 25–26). He views the Song as having a lyrical rather than chronological unity, with a logical flow leading into marriage and then the full consummation of the relationship within the bond of marriage (pp. 53–54).

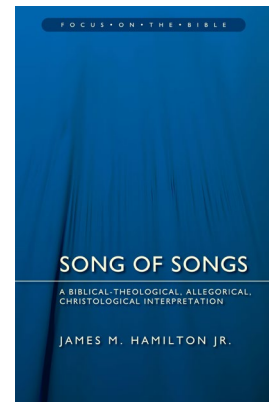
After discussing the major interpretational approaches to the Song, Duguid settles on two broad categories. These are the natural approach, in which the primary significance of the text is human relationships, and the spiritual approach, which combines allegory and typology that find significance in the relationship between God and his people (p. 28). He cautions that both of these approaches can be



distorted to misread the text in ways that are not grounded in its exegesis, but rather in the perspective of the interpreter. He contends that the Song is best read as wisdom literature depicting two idealized humans in a relationship that is committed, but necessarily imperfect, because they live in a fallen world (p. 36). The Song, then, points outside of itself in a parabolic way to the need for the perfect relationship that God has provided in Christ. This theological sense lies beyond the text of the Song rather than being derived from within the Song.

Duguid finds several key themes in the Song. He sees it as an idealization of mutual human love as God designed it. In contrast to hedonism, “sex is good and pure within marriage, and is the appropriate object of longing and desire before marriage” (p. 40). In portraying the passionate delight of the couple, “the Song celebrates heterosexual monogamous marriage as the ideal, and shows us the tenderness, excitement and intimacy that rightly belong to that relationship” (p. 47). Human love, however, is not enough, but is an analogy of the relationship between God and his people. The Song points to Christ and the gospel not by bypassing the literal meaning, but by drawing upon the biblical metanarrative that enriches the meaning of the text (p. 51).

James Hamilton is Professor of Biblical Theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Preaching Pastor at Kenwood Baptist Church of Louisville, Kentucky. His introductory chapter discusses the Song of Songs in biblical theology, and then he treats each of the eight chapters of the Song in turn. In the preface Hamilton indicates that the book grew out of nine sermons he preached in 2012, and his content reflects that origin. In each chapter he briefly touches on the need met, the main point, and the context of the text, and then he provides a homiletical discussion of the passage, only rarely citing or interacting with commentaries, before finishing with a conclusion and questions for discussion.



In his introduction, Hamilton states that his understanding of the Song builds upon John Sailhamer’s position (“The Messiah and the Hebrew Bible,” *JETS* 44 [2001]: 5–23) that the whole of the OT was written to provoke and sustain a messianic hope (p. 11). He argues that the author is King Solomon, and that “Solomon *intended* his audience to see not only human love in the Song but also a typified Messiah and an allegorical correspondence with the relationship between God and His people” (p. 32, Hamilton’s emphasis). Although he does not fully develop his rationale in this commentary, he points the reader to an earlier article (“The Messianic Music of the Song of Songs: A Non-Allegorical Interpretation,” *WTJ* 68 [2006]: 331–45). In that essay, Hamilton contends that in Luke 24:27, 44–45 the NT interprets the whole of the OT messianically (p. 334), so when the Song is read in its canonical context it proves to be an exposition of the messianic motif (p. 332). This, then, is not additional allegorical understanding, but it is the historical meaning intended by the author, Solomon (p. 339). In asserting his position, Hamilton acknowledges that he has found no one else who argues that the Song was intended as a messianic document (p. 331).

These two commentaries arrived as I was beginning my lectures on the Song of Songs in my course on OT Wisdom Literature. Reading them together and in conjunction with my own research on the Song has clarified in my mind several salient questions that must be asked and considered carefully.

First, how does the poetic genre of the Song affect how it is read and interpreted? Duguid views poetry as condensed, evocative language that is “designed to leave the reader pondering its implications” (p. 24), while Hamilton claims that as poetry the Song is written with multiple layers of interpretation

(pp. 18, 29). Alternatively, it can also be argued that the distinguishing quality of poetry is its endeavor to recreate the experience of the author in the reader, rather than merely reporting the experience, as does prose.

Second, to what extent is the Song related to wisdom, and how does that affect how Solomon is construed? Duguid explicitly describes the Song as wisdom literature (pp. 34–37, with specific textual links to Prov 5:18–20), whereas Hamilton presents Solomon as a royal figure, which fits better his emphasis on messianic expectations, rather than as the exemplar of wisdom, as Solomon is portrayed in Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and 1 Kings.

Third, is the theological sense of the Song part, or even the main part, of its intended meaning (Hamilton), or is it better viewed as a theological supplement derived from what is taught explicitly in the NT (Duguid)?

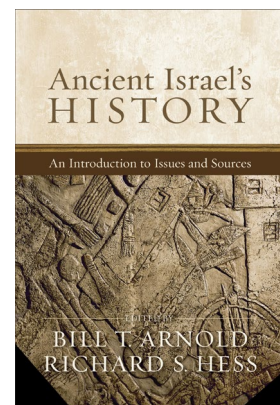
Fourth, what bearing does Luke 24:27, 44–45 have on the interpretation of the Song? In his *WTJ* article, Hamilton argues from this text that the NT interprets the *whole* [his emphasis] of the OT messianically. However, to say that all of the OT Scriptures, including the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms, speak of Christ is not precisely the same as claiming that every text within the OT is intended to be read messianically. For example, a political candidate might say truthfully that he is supported by people from every state, without meaning that every person in every state is in his camp.

These two treatments of the Song of Songs have somewhat different target audiences, with Duguid pitched to seminary students and pastors, and Hamilton intended for laypeople and discussion groups. Nevertheless, both of these commentaries will keep this important text of the Bible before the people of God, helping them to study it, to probe its meaning, and to live in its light. Through the Song's teaching, reproof, correction, and training they will become more thoroughly equipped for every good work.

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Richard S. Hess and Bill T. Arnold, eds. *Ancient Israel's History: An Introduction to Issues and Sources*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014. xv + 544 pp. £30.75/\$44.99.

This copious volume contains twelve essays spanning all of Old Testament history: the Genesis narratives (R. S. Hess), the Exodus and wilderness narratives (J. K. Hoffmeier), early Israel and its appearance in Canaan (L. G. Stone), the period of the judges (R. D. Miller II), the move to monarchy in archaeological (S. M. Ortiz) and comparative (D. Bodi) perspective, the divided kingdoms until the end of the ninth century BC (K. Greenwood), the eighth century (S. Richter), the seventh century (B. E. Kelle), the sixth century (P. van der Veen), the fifth and fourth centuries (A. Lemaire), and the Hellenistic period (D. A. deSilva). In addition, two chapters are respectively devoted to an overview of covenant (S. Greengus) and of prophecy (J. K. Mead) in the Old Testament as well as its ancient Near Eastern context, while the introduction headlines the book with a useful history of research on ancient Israel (R. S. Hess). Although the objective of the editors was only “to provide a current state of research on issues relative to the history of ancient



Israel” (p. v), they have actually succeeded in providing a comprehensive, multi-authored history of Israel which deserves to take a place alongside the most useful volumes of this genre.

Space limitations prevent a detailed assessment of each essay, but three lines of observation will give an idea of the main orientations of the book. First, on the wide spectrum of current approaches to the history of ancient Israel, spanning from maximalism to minimalism, it seems fair to situate this book as moderately and cautiously conservative, in the spirit of the Institute for Biblical Research. As the editors write in the Preface, they “assume neither a negative stance toward the biblical literature nor a naive fideism on difficult issues” (p. v). Because this book follows the OT’s own historical outline and includes chapters on the patriarchs and exodus, it will appear too conservative to scholars who regard almost the entire biblical narrative referring to the second millennium BC as fictive. Conversely, more conservative evangelicals might find that the authors sometimes distance themselves too much from the biblical text. Yet all kinds of readers will benefit from the richness of the information catalogued here.

Second, as should be expected in such a volume, there is some diversity. This is partly due to the disparity in extant historical documentation. In some periods, for example, it is possible to attempt a detailed historical reconstruction; for others, only a discussion of issues and open questions is possible. But several other factors add to the unevenness. Some chapters are masterful, detailed, and thorough treatments of all the main issues (e.g., the analyses of the appearance of Israel in Canaan and Yehud in the fifth and fourth centuries BC). The much-debated tenth century BC (especially the reigns of David and Solomon) even receives special attention as the subject of two distinct chapters. Alongside an up-to-date comparison of the tenth-century archaeological record with the biblical narratives about the united monarchy (S. Ortiz), one finds an innovative chapter on the era of Saul, David, and Solomon which adopts a comparative approach with Mari sources (D. Bodi). By contrast, the chapter devoted to the Genesis narratives is an interesting but brief survey of issues, the author being content, for instance, to refer the reader to other studies regarding the Egyptian elements in the Joseph narratives (p. 44). This narrow focus is certainly consistent with the objectives of the book, but by comparison with the breadth of other chapters is somewhat unsatisfying.

Third, the comprehensiveness of the book, in terms of accuracy in the treatment of sources and of historical information, is very good. Inevitably, though, one can find lacunae here and there. For example, L. G. Stone mentions the inscription on a column base from the time of Ramses II, published by M. Görg, as bearing a “broken name-ring which can plausibly be restored as ‘Israel” (p. 143). However, it would be more accurate to say that this identification is disputed, as in the divergent opinions of J. K. Hoffmeier (“What is the Biblical Date of the Exodus? A Response to Bryant Wood,” *JETS* 50 [2007]: 225–47) and P. van der Veen, C. Theis, and M. Görg (“Israel in Canaan [Long] Before Pharaoh Merneptah? A Fresh Look at Berlin Statue Pedestal Relief 21687,” *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 2 [2010]: 15–25). Overall, what is most lacking is an engagement with the influential hypotheses made by scholars who drastically revise the biblical presentation of the history of Israel (e.g., M. Liverani, I. Finkelstein). Their arguments are sometimes addressed in the course of the discussion, but these brief treatments do not necessarily answer all the methodological questions they are asking, notably because the present volume begins with the OT and the discussions follow the biblical chronology. Nevertheless, the amount of historical information about Israel that one finds in this book is astonishing.

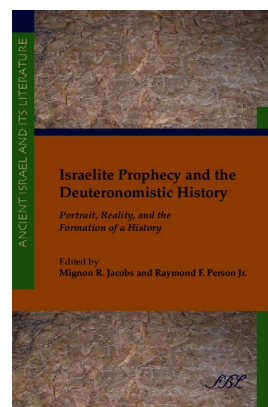
In summary, this volume is an outstanding resource. Not only have the editors fulfilled their objective to provide a snapshot of current research, they also offer us one of the best one-volume surveys

on the history of Israel, to which I will often refer my students, and which will also be extremely useful for pastors and scholars seeking to update their knowledge of this fast-changing discipline.

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Mignon R. Jacobs and Raymond F. Person Jr., eds. *Israelite Prophecy and the Deuteronomistic History: Portrait, Reality, and the Formation of a History*. Ancient Israel and Its Literature 14. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013. x + 243 pp. £20.99/\$32.95.

This book is a collection of essays taken from a 2010 SBL joint session between the Deuteronomistic History section and the Israelite Prophetic Literature section. Since the scholarly discussion on prophecy has been changing rapidly in the last few years, the contributors met to explore the phenomenon of prophecy “behind the literature and the literary portrayal of prophecy in Deuteronomy-Kings” (p. 1). The usual portrait of the Israelite prophet was primarily derived from the Latter Prophets, leaving the Former Prophets largely unexplored in comparison. Moreover, studies in ancient Near Eastern documents, especially the prophetic texts from Mari, have enriched our understanding of the prophet in the ancient Near East, thus allowing for fruitful comparison with the biblical material.



However, the contributors to this volume largely assume that the biblical material does not offer a historically accurate picture of Israelite prophecy. This assumption hinders their reconstruction of the historical Israelite prophet, for the biblical material has supposedly undergone a complex redaction and one would have to peel back the layers in order to reach the historical kernel. Issues of methodology can become paralyzing when there is no consensus on how many redactions are found in the Deuteronomistic History or even to which historical period each literary passage should be assigned. There are, however, some common observations in the book, as the editors summarize: “[T]ogether these essays strongly suggest that the ancient Israelite prophets were not isolated charismatic individuals, but intermediaries who functioned within larger cultic settings” (p. 6). Due to lack of space we are only commenting on a few essays that are representative of the whole.

Rannfrid Thelle points out that the Former Prophets offer much more highly individualized characterizations of prophets than the Latter Prophets, but it is not clear what is typical of prophets and what is specific to the individual. In looking for typical prophetic patterns in these books, Thelle discovers that one of the more significant prophetic functions is that of the religious expert in divine consultation, especially regarding warfare. Although there has traditionally been an emphasis on distinguishing between divine inquiry and prophetic proclamation, Thelle thinks both should be considered as reflections of a larger phenomenon of divination. She thinks that Deuteronomy’s polemic against certain divinatory methods is undertaken not because they are ineffective, but because “there was a need to emphasize the finality of the law as the codification of divine revelation” (p. 29). Thelle observes an intensification of this in Chronicles and concludes that the need to control divination grew as prophecy began to become a written phenomenon (p. 30).

Marvin Sweeney, after questioning the frequently offered suggestion of a priestly redaction on the Former Prophets designed to turn the prophet into a priest, proceeds to show the priestly elements in the depiction of prophetic figures from the north, Elijah and Elisha. Sweeney spots such elements in incidents such as the prophetic contest on Mt. Carmel which includes the administration of sacrifice (1 Kgs 17), Elijah's experience at Horeb reminiscent of an encounter with Yahweh in the Holy of Holies (1 Kgs 19), his ascent to heaven portrayed in terms analogous to a whole burnt offering (2 Kgs 2), and Elisha's connections with music (2 Kgs 3), itself a feature of temple worship (e.g., 1 Chr 15:16–24). Although some of these incidents are unique and may not circumscribe the prophetic office in the north, they could cumulatively sustain Sweeney's conclusion that Elijah and Elisha may have functioned in some priestly capacity in northern Israel.

Diana Edelman, through an extensive exploration of the portrayal of prophets in each of the books of the Deuteronomistic History, concludes that among various cultic specialists who had access to the divine will, the Deuteronomistic History has narrowed down all types of prophets to the ecstatic visionary as the person who would convey Yahweh's will to the king. She proposes that the reason the Deuteronomistic History makes the נָבִיא ("prophet") the chosen legitimate means of conveying the divine will was that the נָבִיא functioned as the spontaneous mouthpiece of YHWH. This spontaneity secures the divine initiative in the communication and safeguards against the manipulation of YHWH.

Martti Nissinen's essay offers a comprehensive examination of the Deuteronomistic History in the light of ancient Near Eastern sources from Mari and Assyria and concludes that "the biblical narrators were familiar with the phenomenon as an ancient tradition, probably also as a contemporary practice" (p. 128). Despite the many similarities noted, the biblical portrayal of prophets diverges from ancient Near Eastern models in various aspects, such as in the performance of miracles and the exercise of control over the forces of nature. Both these elements are seen in Elijah's and Elisha's stories, for example (p. 125).

Lastly, Mark Leuchter shows how some circles initially regarded Moses and Samuel as parallel figures in their priestly capacity (e.g., Ps 99:6). He begins by examining the portrayal of Samuel at Shiloh and his priestly connections to the Elides, favoring the historical genuineness of this connection (p. 157). First Samuel 3 especially highlights Samuel's priestly credentials, over and against the line of Eli, by connecting Samuel to Moses. This connection occurs not only through an emphasis on unmitigated divine encounter in the absence of a vision (p. 161), but also through emphasis on the priestly maintenance of social order, a task which the Elides had failed to do (p. 163). This Mosaic connection that served to endorse Samuel as a better priest was, according to Leuchter, what subsequently commended Samuel as a Mosaic prophet in the Deuteronomistic mold (p. 167). According to Leuchter, the Deuteronomistic History then seeks to bring Samuel into the Mosaic tradition, not as priest now but as prophet.

Other essays in the volume are written by Ehud Ben Zvi ("Prophetic Memories in the Deuteronomistic Historical and the Prophetic Collections of Books"), Thomas C. Römer ("Moses, Israel's First Prophet, and the Formation of the Deuteronomistic and Prophetic Libraries"), Mark O'Brien ("Prophetic Stories Making a Story of Prophecy") and Raymond F. Person, Jr. ("Prophets in the Deuteronomic History and the Book of Chronicles: A Reassessment").

Overall, the observations of cultic elements in the prophets of the Deuteronomistic History made by the contributors are astute. However, the reader should remember, as already noted in the introduction, that the historical reasons proposed to explain these phenomena are harder to prove. These cultic

elements can be interpreted in a variety of ways, usually according to each scholar's accepted framework of redaction.

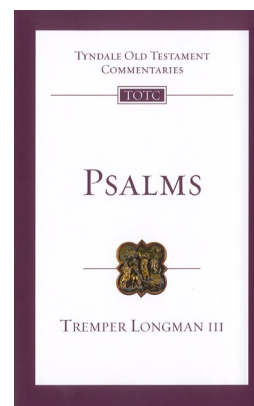
I highly recommend this book. The wealth of scholarship contained in this volume will benefit the student of Israelite prophecy and bring one up to date with the latest contributions in this area of research.

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Tremper Longman III. *Psalms: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries 15–16. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014. 479 pp. £11.88/\$18.00.

Tremper Longman's *Psalms* is a two-volume commentary (though bound as a single book) in the ongoing revision of the very successful Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (TOTC) series. This commentary replaces the classic two-volume work on Psalms written by Derek Kidner (1973). Longman, a prolific writer whose incisive scholarship has virtually spanned the scope of OT studies, particularly wisdom and poetry, provides an introduction (pp. 23–54) that deals with the basic issues, and includes a brief statement on the theology of the Psalms. For the most part, he lays out his view of the importance of the historical setting of the Psalms (p. 50)—a plus, in my view—and their adaptation for different and later worship settings without overburdening the reader with the weight of the critical issues, especially the form-critical issues, though he is certainly aware of them. For that perspective students of the Psalms will still have to consult other commentaries, like the three-volume Word Biblical Commentary (Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1–50* [Waco, TX: Word, 1983]; Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51–100* [Waco, TX: Word, 1990]; and Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101–150* [Waco, TX: Word, 2002]) or the Continental Commentaries volumes by Hans-Joachim Kraus (*Psalms 1–59* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993]; and *Psalms 60–150* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000]).

Longman treats each psalm under the rubrics of *context*, *comment*, and *meaning*. By *context* he seems to have in mind the historical and textual contexts, and includes the particular psalm's connection to neighboring psalms and larger collections in the Psalter, even while he states unequivocally that he does not believe the book of Psalms has any "overarching or systematic structure" (p. 54). Thus in the beginning, he parts company with such studies on intertextuality as that of Gerald Wilson (*The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, SBLDS 76 [Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985]), as well as the more current work of Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger (*Psalms 2: A Commentary on Psalms 51–100*, Herm [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005]; and *Psalms 3: A Commentary on Psalms 101–150*, Herm [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011]; *Psalms 1* is still available only in German). While the broader audience of the TOTC series will not see this as an inadequacy, many Psalms scholars will object to this view—I think justifiably—and insist that much evidence can be found in the book to support the intertextual studies of the Psalter. Thus more advanced students of the Psalms will need to consult Wilson's 1985 work and his volume in the NIV Application Commentary (*Psalms: Volume 1* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002]), or go beyond Wilson's work by consulting the Hossfeld-Zenger volumes. Longman further takes advantage of this



rubric to identify the literary type (i.e., genre) of the psalm and other contextual matters that bear on the interpretation of the psalm under discussion.

The *comment* rubric is the place where the author discusses the text of the psalm, highlighting the interpretive issues, including textual and theological insights, as well as difficulties that might pose problems for the general reader. The commentary follows both a sectional and verse-by-verse format. Being the astute scholar that he is, Longman has a knack for sorting out the issues for his target audience, mercifully leaving the more complex issues to other commentaries.

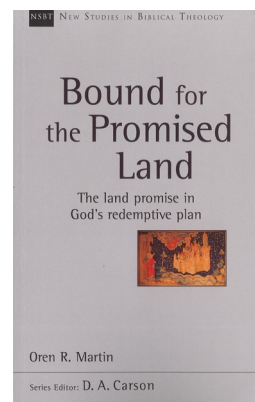
The rubric of *meaning* is where this commentary shines. There Longman's perceptive reading of the text becomes the benefactor of his clear and succinct summary of the psalm's meaning, particularly as a practical guide for how believers should conduct their lives, and an index to the messianic or new-covenant interpretation of the Psalms, both of which are special interests of this commentary. For example, to illustrate the latter interest, the author comments on Psalm 16:10–11: "Even in the Old Testament context, the idea of not seeing decay and enjoying eternal pleasures in God's presence seems to point to something beyond the grave" (p. 106).

For all the good qualities of this commentary, it will have to stand alongside Derek Kidner's commentary rather than replace it, but that is the way of commentaries, even in a revised series—some never lose their value (compare Charles Spurgeon's *The Treasury of David*, repr. ed, 3 vols. [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2011]), even as they may not be readily available. Kidner's way of turning a phrase and thus shining a light on the other side of a biblical truth can have no substitute, and his serious engagement with the text at least matches Longman's, even as we admittedly appreciate the light new discoveries and interpretations can shed on the biblical text. Many thanks are thus due to Tremper Longman and InterVarsity Press for this installment in the revision of the TOTC series. Now we have Kidner's and Longman's insightful readings of the Psalms to illumine the world's most powerful book of prayer. And that means just a little more light to show the way as we walk through life's valleys, looking to the hills where our help comes from.

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Oren R. Martin. *Bound for the Promised Land: The Land Promise in God's Redemptive Plan*. New Studies in Biblical Theology 34. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015. 208 pp. £12.99/\$25.00.

Issues related to the physical land of Israel crop up as regularly in theological discussion as they do in current affairs. The stakes in both arenas are high; the resulting rhetoric is understandably fraught. It is against the backdrop of this complex debate that Oren R. Martin presents *Bound for the Promised Land*. Yet, rather than shape his study around current questions, Martin—who is Assistant Professor of Christian Theology at Boyce College and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary—pursues instead an inductive and biblical-theological exploration of the land motif as it develops through Scripture. Martin's offering thus holds promise for readers who want to gain a clearer understanding of what



the Bible does and does not claim regarding the promised land as well as how territorial promises intersect with other Old and New Testament themes.

The book's opening chapter sets out the parameters of the study and establishes both the general approach taken as well as the assumptions held by the author. This introduction is followed by a second chapter which presents a bird's eye view of "land" as a core component of God's unfolding kingdom. The point of departure is the evident similarity between Eden and the New Jerusalem, between creation and new creation—i.e., the profound intertextual play between the opening chapters of Genesis and the conclusion of Revelation. Within this broad canonical frame, the chief contours of the intervening history are sketched in preparation for the chapters to follow.

The bulk of Martin's work expands on the sketch presented in chapter 2 by taking a more detailed look at several major blocks of Scripture in order to assess them for their particular contribution to the broader topic. Seven chapters examine in turn Genesis, Exodus and Deuteronomy, Joshua through Kings, the Major Prophets, Matthew and John, the Epistles, and finally Revelation. Based on his findings, Martin concludes that the land promised to Abraham both addresses the loss of Eden and serves as a type of the new creation that is made possible through, and inaugurated in, the person and work of Jesus (p. 161). Throughout his investigation Martin uncovers key data which are marshalled to form a number of conclusions. A final chapter posits some theological reflections stemming from the study. These reflections are particularly geared to the topic of land as understood by dispensationalism on the one hand and covenant theology on the other.

Bound for the Promised Land models a sound biblical-theological method, one that rightly acknowledges the complexity of a whole-Bible approach. Throughout, readers are also helpfully steered through a number of complex debates (e.g., the mechanics of typology) without being inundated with technical language. Two insights were of particular note (for this reviewer at least). The first relates to Martin's helpful discussion of the Abrahamic covenant (pp. 63–75). The (un)conditionality of the promises to Abraham is a well-known crux. Nevertheless, having surveyed the unconditional and conditional elements evident in Genesis, Martin offers a helpful synthesis. He suggests that obedience does not condition God's fundamental intention to bless Abraham but is nevertheless the means of fulfilment and thus has implications for the historical experience of covenant blessing (p. 71). A second point of note is the discussion of Matthew's Gospel (pp. 119–28). Here, Martin aptly demonstrates the rich intertextual connections which serve Matthew's aim of presenting Jesus as the "typological fulfilment of Israel" (p. 123) in whom the blessings linked to the land find their ultimate expression.

However, I also have some reservations about Martin's book. The first relates to data omitted from the study. While a work of this size cannot hope to cover everything, some lacunae are glaring. For example, cultic texts are virtually ignored. Hence, discussion of Exodus—unpersuasively termed the "epicentre of the Pentateuch" (p. 78)—focusses entirely on Israel's deliverance from Egypt (chs. 1–12). Yet this anthropocentric reading misses the importance of the tabernacle cult as a means of restoring creation and facilitating the return of Yahweh's glory to a terrestrial abode (cf. Exod 40:34–35). Similarly, ignoring Leviticus means no interaction with the unique statement that the land belongs to Yahweh and not Israel (25:23), the allusion-laden imagining of Canaan as a new Eden (26:3–12), the problem posed by land pollution (18:25), and other such references to land. Also neglected are the Writings which do not receive any sustained treatment; the blocks of OT texts addressed only sample the Law and the Prophets.

A further issue arises in chapter 2. Here, Martin sets out to survey the land theme through salvation-history. In order to do so, he opts to integrate “land” within a broader discussion of “kingdom,” stating that “the land promise must be situated in a kingdom-oriented biblical-theological framework.” However, the kingdom motif has been well-trodden elsewhere (e.g., G. Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom: A Christian Interpretation of the Old Testament* [Exeter: Paternoster, 1981]). Furthermore, a dominant focus on “kingdom” obscures other important themes—for instance, land as sacred space. Thus is lost the opportunity to attempt a more nuanced and multifaceted overview.

In addition, the theological reflections which conclude the book are imbalanced. While the assumptions and presuppositions of dispensational theology are explicitly discussed and critiqued (pp. 162–63), the same is not done for covenantal assumptions. Furthermore, the dispensational-covenantal nexus is a particularly North American discussion. The reflections offered, therefore, remain somewhat parochial. Moreover, no integration with other theologies of land is attempted (e.g., ecological readings, liberation theology; compare N. Habel, *The Land is Mine: Six Biblical Land Ideologies* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995].)

In sum, *Bound for the Promised Land* presents a valuable charting of the twists and turns the theme of land takes in the Bible and accordingly will repay a careful reading. Its notable lacunae, kingdom-dominated framework, and North American orientation, however, detract from the work as a whole.

G. Geoffrey Harper

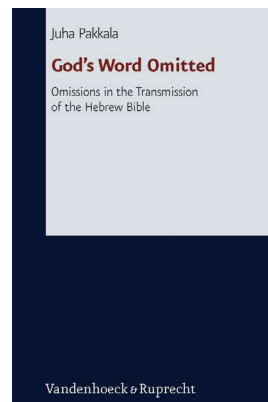
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Juha Pakkala. *God's Word Omitted: Omissions in the Transmission of the Hebrew Bible*. Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 251. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013. 478 pp. £62.99/\$85.00.

In order to appreciate and evaluate the monograph by Juha Pakkala, provocatively titled *God's Word Omitted*, the development of his methodology and the influences upon his thinking are important to note. Pakkala acknowledges mentors mainly in Munich (R. Müller, C. Levin), Helsinki (A. Aejmelaeus, J. Jokiranta, T. Kauhanen, M. Marttila, M. Nissinen, M. Pajunen and H. von Weissenberg), and Tartu (U. Nõmmik). Consequently, Pakkala is well-schooled in the *Literarkritik* method which is common among scholars in OT as a result of the Enlightenment. He seeks to combine literary criticism and textual criticism as is now in vogue, in order to respond to the older view that editors of the biblical text only expanded earlier versions of the text. Pakkala's thesis is that copyists and redactors of the biblical text omitted as well as expanded the text in the process of textual transmission.

The first of eleven chapters discusses ‘several axioms in literary- and redaction-critical investigations’ (p. 89): 1) one can distinguish compositional from redactional stages in the development of texts; 2) texts become holy and normative after being written; 3) the holiness of the text is connected directly to its changeability; 4) every scribe in the transmission had the same conception of the changeability of the



text; and 5) the development of the texts was always linear, that is, becoming more conservative. Each of these is challenged based on conclusions from analyses given later in the work.

Nine different case studies sustain the thesis. The first deals with the Samaritan Pentateuch (SP). After commenting on expansions in SP, Pakkala notes a few minor omissions that have major significance. Here a central flaw is that Pakkala does not place SP within a larger metanarrative, where in relation to the proto-MT, the Samaritan Text represents a popularised and updated text before changes related to Samaritan theology were made—whether by addition or omission. Naturally, SP does preserve significant variants in the history of Hebrew textual transmission, but the contribution to Pakkala's thesis is negligible.

Second, Pakkala devotes just fourteen pages to 'editorial processes' in the book of Jeremiah. Comparing MT and LXX, he focuses on additions to the MT in Jeremiah 25:1–14 and an omission in 32:5 (39:5 LXX). The history of the textual transmission of Jeremiah is complicated, however, and no consensus has been reached. The particular cases chosen for examination by Pakkala are disputable rather than being clear, simple, and persuasive.

Third, Pakkala discusses the development of the laws in the Pentateuch. For Pakkala, comparison between the Covenant Code (Exod 21–23) and Deuteronomy as well as the Holiness Code (Lev 17–26) with Deuteronomy raises major questions about the freedom of redactors in the origin of Deuteronomy vis-à-vis similar material in Exodus and Leviticus. Since texts in Deuteronomy are difficult to match up to parallels in Exodus and Leviticus, Pakkala views this as a case where author(s) or redactor(s) exercised extensive freedom to add or omit and reshape earlier laws. Pakkala is so tied to the *Literarkritik* approach of the nineteenth century that he fails to consider a clear alternative: the same author (i.e. Moses), expanded and reshaped the covenant himself for a new generation of Israel for its life in Canaan. By contrast to this sort of literary criticism which arises from the Enlightenment, a superior approach is to test the claims of the biblical text against contemporary documents from the ancient Near East. Kenneth Kitchen and Paul J. N. Lawrence's exhaustive analysis of over 1600 pages contains all known covenants, legal treatises, and international treaties from the ancient Near East, from 3000–100 BCE, in both original texts and translations (*Treaty, Law, and Covenant in the Ancient Near East* [Weisbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2012]). Extensive analysis of these data clearly shows that the literary form of treaties changes over the centuries just like the china we eat from changes fashions over the decades. And the book of Deuteronomy fits perfectly the treaties from the thirteenth century BCE—not those before nor those after.

Fourth, Pakkala turns to a completely different situation, the book of Jubilees. As far as Jubilees is concerned, he correctly notes that 'the basic underlying reason behind all of the new versions of the law codes and new versions of the pentateuchal texts is the need to update the older texts' (p. 156). In the case of the Pentateuch, Moses himself needed to update the covenant due to a changed context from Sinai (Exodus) to Canaan's doorstep (Deuteronomy). He rightly concludes that the author of Jubilees felt the need to update the Pentateuch due to the changed circumstances of Hellenistic Judaism in the second century BCE (p. 166). When he asserts, however, that Jubilees imitates the historical fiction of the Pentateuch, he is imposing his Enlightenment epistemology on the ancient Near Eastern past.

Fifth, a similar situation to Jubilees is that of the Temple Scroll (T). Here Pakkala believes he has found further support for his thesis that authority in texts is not just 'on or off', but that there were various levels of authority in regards to earlier texts or to the one a person may himself be writing. Again, this imposes a rationalistic view on the author of T. He does not seem to see that the author of T

is re-signifying ancient texts for his contemporary audience and circumstances. In fact, his discussion shows that for the author of T, the Torah was considered authoritative (pp. 177, 180).

Sixth, Pakkala devotes a chapter to selected problems in the history of the transmission of the Hebrew text (e.g., Exod 24:9–11; Deut 13:10; 32:8–9, 43; Josh 24:1, 25, 26; 1 Sam 1–2; 2 Sam 5:21, 24; 6:6–7; 15:9; 2 Kgs 10:23; 12:10; 18:34). Some of the issues are dealt with by topic, as in the chapter ‘Can God Be Seen?’ which examines a number of passages scattered through the Old Testament. Much of Pakkala’s treatment is problematic here, as the following examples will demonstrate. For example, even if we accept his argument for **בני אלוהים** or **בני אל** as the original reading in Deut 32:7–8, why must the text imply that YHWH is a different god from El Elyon (pp. 186–187)? Pakkala’s conclusion appears to be a non sequitur imposed on the text by modernistic thinking which does not fit the pattern of literature that we see in the ancient Near East. In Ugaritic literature, for example, the same deity is called by different names in the same text. Why discuss this problem when it does not entail an omission, but rather a variant reading? Again, in Pakkala’s discussion of ‘Can God Be Seen?’ no mention is made of the magnum opus by Carmel McCarthy on the scribal corrections known as *Tiqqune Sopherim* (*The Tiqqune Sopherim and Other Theological Corrections in the Masoretic Text of the Old Testament*, OBO 36 (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1981)). And these are corrections, not normally omissions. It is well-known, moreover, that the text of Samuel is preserved poorly in the Masoretic tradition. The fact that there could be omissions in the MT is not new to any scholar in textual criticism. Furthermore, since we have no critical edition of the Septuagint, the history of the transmission of the Greek text has not been established scientifically so that claims made about it at this point are speculative. The purpose of Pakkala’s discussions, then, is unclear, for the observation that some omissions have been made for ideological or theological reasons is hardly surprising. Also astonishing is that Pakkala never mentions the major work by Dominique Barthélemy, et. al. (*Critique Textuelle de l’ancien Testament*, 4 vols. (Fribourg: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982–2005)), the most serious treatment by six major scholars of textual criticism, especially when his discussion does not advance beyond theirs.

Seventh, Pakkala analyses Chronicles as a witness to editorial processes. The major problem in treating this text is that he does not consider sufficiently the possibility that the authors of both Kings and of Chronicles drew on identical or similar sources, but presented these events as they wished according to different narrative purposes and plot structures. Thus this case study does not prove anything about editorial practices in the handling or transmission of Scripture.

In the last two case studies, Pakkala treats the problems in 1 Esdras and Esther, respectively. Pakkala is not the first to discuss the relationship of 1 Esdras to 2 Esdras, and both of these to MT, or the relation of the A-Text to the B-Text of Esther, and the relation of these A- and B-Texts to MT. Entire monographs have been devoted to these problems. As I have attempted to demonstrate elsewhere, one of the issues in the second century BCE is whether to transmit a text according to the principle of repetition or resignification (“The Text of the Old Testament,” *JETS* 52 [2009]: 19–45). Resignification could occur in copying a Hebrew text, in translating a Hebrew text, or in transmitting a Greek translation. So although the problems of Ezra-Nehemiah or Esther in Greek dress are complicated, they do not necessarily support Pakkala’s theory of heavy editorial work on the Hebrew text in Second Temple Judaism.

Pakkala’s final chapter presents his conclusion, namely, that there is a dichotomy in the evidence (i.e. some transmission is linear and straightforward, while some transmission entails radical reshaping of the parent text). He argues that textual development occurs within paradigms and paradigm shifts and wonders whether the evolution is gradual or punctual. He does not consider that the processes of

textual transmission categorised on a continuous spectrum from repetition to resignification can deal adequately with the problems. He also sneaks comments on Daniel and Ben Sira into his conclusions when these texts were not discussed earlier.

So what is the contribution of Pakkala's work? In summary, his claims about radical editorial processes uncovered by literary criticism are unconvincing. Rather, his work inadvertently demonstrates how problematic it is to combine literary criticism and textual criticism. On my part, I have personally examined hundreds of manuscripts as a Septuagint scholar, in addition to manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible. Every manuscript I have seen has additions, omissions, transpositions, and substitutions. Many of these are unintentional, while some are intentional. To focus only on omissions would constitute a flawed methodology, since one does not get a full-orbed picture of the character of a textual witness. In addition, the cases examined by Pakkala are like comparing apples and oranges. What does the rewriting of the Pentateuch in Jubilees have in common with a textual problem in the transmission history of Samuel? Moreover, attempting to treat nine *crucis criticorum* in one monograph instead of focussing on just one of these is unhelpful in advancing the frontiers of knowledge. And finally, the idea of omissions in scribal transmission is well-known to textual critics. It seems that Pakkala made a false start at the outset of the investigation.

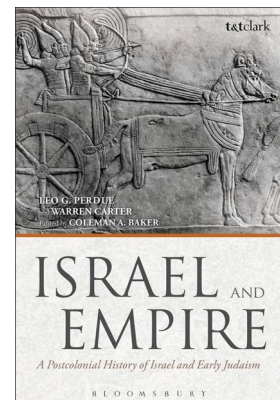
One positive aspect of this work, however, is the recognition of a dichotomy in the cases studied. The fact of omissions may not prove Pakkala's thesis that authoritative texts are changed by being shortened over time; rather, it illustrates the more demonstrable probability that texts were both repeated and resignified during the Second Temple period.

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Leo Perdue and Warren Carter. *Israel and Empire: A Postcolonial History of Israel and Early Judaism*. Edited by Coleman A. Baker. London: Bloomsbury, 2015. x + 328 pp. £24.99/\$38.00.

Postcolonial studies have become quite popular over the last few decades, reaching into a number of disciplines including biblical studies (see, for example, B. Crowell, "Postcolonial Studies and the Hebrew Bible," *CBR* 7 [2009]: 217–44; A. Runesson, *Exegesis in the Making: Postcolonialism and New Testament Studies*, BIS 103 [Leiden: Brill, 2010]). While at first glance its focus on identity, difference/otherness, and power may seem to have little to do with more traditional theological topics, a closer look will show that a postcolonial optic, if used adroitly, can further our understanding of numerous biblical themes.

The present volume is co-authored by L. Perdue and W. Carter. Perdue contributed an introductory chapter on postcolonial theory and its relation to biblical and related historiography, as well as chapters dealing with Israel and Judah under Assyria, Babylon, and Persia. Carter contributed the last two chapters on Judea and Israel under the Greek and Roman empires, respectively. Because Perdue's health worsened during the writing process, C. Baker edited Perdue's chapters, which are each noticeably shorter (35, 32, 37, and 22



pages) than Carter's (87 and 75 pages). Still, both primary authors offer insightful and detailed analyses of their subjects.

The five chapters focused on Israelite/Jewish history share a relatively consistent format, beginning with a brief historical introduction before focusing on the metanarrative of the empire in question and the varied experience of Israelites or Jews under its domination. The Assyrian metanarrative, for example, covers kingship, imperial administration and provincial rule, economics, state religion, culture, imperial use of terror, and colonization. Perdue's decision to examine the relationship between Judah/Israel and Assyria in Hosea (pp. 49–63) is rather curious, since Hosea is the only prophetic book that contains no oracles against foreign nations and gives very little attention to them as a whole. The choice of Jeremiah and Isaiah 40–55 in connection with early Jews' experience of the Babylonian empire is easier to understand, and among other things Perdue demonstrates how Isaiah (largely composed, on his view, during the exile) subverts the empire's metanarrative by designating Cyrus, not a Babylonian monarch, as Yahweh's anointed (p. 98), while Yahweh, not Nabu (Isa 46:10), possesses all wisdom (p. 104).

Perdue observes of Persia that, although the Achaemenid rulers "conceived of a unified world order under their hegemonic control . . . cultural unification was not part of this ideology" (p. 109). He identifies two dominant responses to the Persian empire's propaganda of religious tolerance and beneficent governance, one in which "living with the empire was the primary option" (e.g., Ezra, Nehemiah; pp. 123–26) and another in which Persian power will be disrupted by Yahweh's rule as manifested through various messianic figures (e.g., in Haggai; despite appearing in the section heading, Zechariah is not discussed here on pp. 126–27). Presumably due to Perdue's deteriorating health, this chapter is the shortest and most lightly documented of his contributions.

Carter's study of Jews under Greek control seeks to assess Alexander's accomplishments within the grand scheme of history. In such a metanarrative, the king as the just representative of the gods dispenses justice through his military feats and demonstrates his glory through conquest of new territory and the wealth that yields (pp. 139–42). This leads to the question of Alexander's interest in deification, which Carter argues is discernable behind many of his actions. Carter treats the Ptolemaic and Seleucid periods separately, describing the distinct metanarratives for each (pp. 162–66, 190–98) and distinct Jewish responses to each (pp. 166–72, 198–210). The analysis of Jewish responses to Ptolemaic rule focuses less on Josephus than on 1 Enoch 1–36 and Ecclesiastes, which he dates around 250 BCE, while that dealing with responses to Seleucid power focuses on 1–2 Maccabees, Daniel (dated to the Maccabean revolt), The Apocalypse of Weeks of 1 Enoch, and 1 Enoch 83–90. The Apocalypse of Weeks, for example, encourages its readers to live justly, to "uproot or cut off the roots of oppression," and (in an eschatological setting) to "exercise YHWH's righteous judgment on earth" (p. 204). Also on this page, Carter sees "the fantasy of victory" and "the vision of a different future" as means by which the author could "decolonize subjugated minds, shape a different identity, and craft a third space" between the present and an eschatological consummation.

Finally, Carter's analysis of the Roman Empire attends to its "ideological domination that utilized a set of convictions and/or a metanarrative that justified and expressed elite opposition, privilege, self-benefiting rule, and societal inequality" (p. 222, explored on pp. 227–41). To these, Rome joined material domination (via land ownership, labor practices, taxation, etc.) and status domination (class, rank, status, etc.), which are explored in turn. Carter examines the varied responses to this situation as exemplified by the Psalms of Solomon (especially Pss 1, 2, 8, and 17), four of the Qumran Pesharim that

refer to the “Kittim” (4QpNah [cf. Nah 2:12], 4QpIsa^a [cf. Isa 10:33–34], 1QpPs [cf. Ps 68:30–31], and 1QpHab [cf. Hab 1:6–11, 14–17], and 1 Enoch 37–71.

Although its analyses sometimes remain on the level of social phenomena and do not clearly connect to Scripture’s full storyline, this volume will still prove useful to those attentive to the ways in which human power is used (and more often abused) in the Bible and related literature. Whether trying to understand the prophets’ insistence on the culpability of the nations around Israel/Judah or the damning condemnation of Rome in Revelation, this volume ably exposes, particularly in the “metanarrative of empire” sections, precisely that—the epistemological and ideological matrices developed and aggressively implemented by the empires of the day (and, often, by Judah/Israel as well). In redemptive-historical perspective, these metanarratives promote these groups’ autonomy, free from any overarching commitment to the well-being of the “other” and from any clear perception of Yahweh’s unique status as creator, judge, and redeemer.

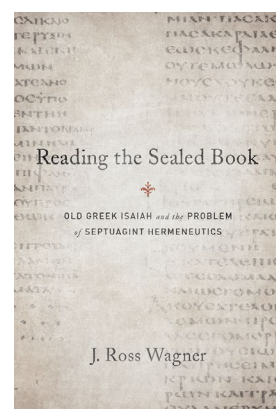
The only substantial shortcoming of the book, as evaluated within the limits of what its authors set out to accomplish, is a lack of synthesis in the five historically focused chapters. While this may be due in part to the (justified) perception of diversity in Jewish responses to empire, the consistency with which the powers that dominated Israel and early Judaism claimed divine prerogative, imposed their will by force, exploited the less powerful, and exalted rulers to quasi-divine status begs for systematization and further exploration. Hopefully readers will make such connections as they read Scripture in light of the insights this volume offers.

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J. Ross Wagner. *Reading the Sealed Book: Old Greek Isaiah and the Problem of Septuagint Hermeneutics*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013. xi + 295 pp. £41.99/\$49.95.

Ross Wagner, associate professor of New Testament at Duke Divinity School, has produced what can only be described as a *tour de force*. With a display of great scholarly skill he has tackled what some would consider an intractable problem in Septuagint studies and has demonstrated a methodology which, if carefully applied to other biblical books, could go far toward offering a solution. The problem, as the author defines it, has three aspects, all of them related to the relationship between the source text (Hebrew) and the target text (Greek). The first aspect is the degree to which the source is thought to have dictated the textual/linguistic elements of the translation. The second aspect is the degree to which the translation is dependent on the source, namely, is the translator seeking to present the source to the reader with a minimum of interpretation, or is he self-consciously interpreting the source for the reader? The third aspect of the problem is whether the translation must always be interpreted in the light of the source, or whether it is to be “interpreted solely within the target language and culture” (p. 4).

The methodology that Wagner employs is Descriptive Translation Studies as adapted and developed by Cameron Boyd-Taylor in his book *Reading Between the Lines: The Interlinear Paradigm*



for Septuagint Studies, BTS 8 (Leuven: Peeters, 2011). Wagner discusses this methodology at length (pp. 6–28), showing how it enables one to arrive at the “constitutive” character of the text (i.e., its unique and defining features). He then explains how this approach might be helpful in solving the dispute over the character of the Old Greek (OG) translation of Isaiah. That dispute centers around the proposal that one of the chief purposes of the OG translator(s) was to “actualize” Isaiah’s prophecies for his/their contemporary audience (pp. 31–34). Wagner then turns to the work of Umberto Eco with his concepts of “the model translator” and “the model reader” who share “the cultural encyclopedia” within which both work and read (pp. 37–63). To make this approach workable, the author proposes both a “narrow” and a “wide angle.” He thus proposes to analyze Isaiah chapter 1 in great detail (pp. 64–226), while keeping an eye on how his detailed discoveries appear elsewhere in the book.

It is not possible in a short review of this nature to enter into the details of the analysis. Matters such as word order, sentence structure, word usage, verb forms, cultural implications, and patterning are examined, to name a few. Suffice it to say that the work is done with impressive care and voluminous research. On most pages as much as half of the space is given over to footnotes. One example of the depth of investigation is that ten pages are given to the study of the significance of the Greek “the great day” as a translation of the Hebrew “the calling of assemblies” (Isa 1:13). In this reviewer’s judgment the narrow/wide-angle approach is successful. The detailed work is compelling as regards the character of the translation in chapter 1, and when the findings are applied elsewhere in the book, they are not forced but seem very natural.

The author’s conclusions are these: 1) while G (i.e., the translator[s]) produced a well-formed piece of Greek literature, there is still remarkable faithfulness to the form and structure of the source; 2) G worked hard to produce a text that was coherent, cohesive, and rhetorically powerful; 3) the thematic coherence of the text is enhanced through careful lexical replacements; 4) G used all the devices available in the Greek language to make the message of Isaiah even more powerful to its Hellenistic hearers (e.g., resolving difficulties, explaining ambiguities, making accusations more vivid); and 5) while there is every evidence that G had the Hellenistic “cultural encyclopedia” well in mind, there is no evidence of an attempt to specifically “actualize” the ancient prophecies for the Jewish diaspora of the Ptolemaic period. When OG Isaiah was “[h]eard and studied in the synagogues of second-century Egypt, Isaiah’s sweeping vision . . . required no ‘actualization’ to articulate the living faith and enduring hope of the translator’s community” (p. 237).

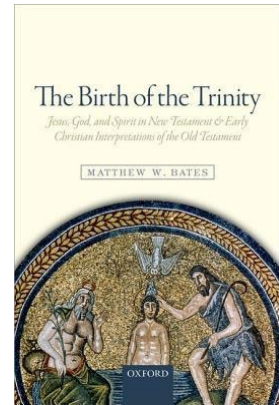
As Wagner points out, the conclusions drawn from this detailed study of Isaiah 1 will need to be tested further throughout the book. But I predict that those studies will confirm the validity of the conclusions drawn here, with only some nuancing. This is a model piece of work that will have to be referred to regularly by any one working in Septuagint studies, and indeed, in Isaiah studies.

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— NEW TESTAMENT —

Matthew W. Bates. *The Birth of the Trinity: Jesus, God, and Spirit in New Testament and Early Christian Interpretations of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. xii + 234 pp. £55.00/\$90.00.

It is not every day that one reads a book that makes a distinct contribution to our understanding of how the NT authors interpret the OT, sheds significant light on the reading practices of the NT authors by means of the early church fathers, and uses those results to make a compelling argument for the origins of the doctrine of the Trinity. But this is exactly what Bates does in *The Birth of the Trinity*. Bates states his argument clearly: “My thesis is that a specific ancient reading technique, best termed *prosopological exegesis*, that is evidenced in the New Testament and other early Christian writings was irreducibly essential to the birth of the Trinity” (p. 2). In other words, this reading practice, which conceptualizes the persons of the Trinity as dialoguing with one another, provides a window into the interior relationship of the divine life. Bates is deeply committed to retaining the language of personhood to describe the Trinity, since what emerges from his research into the prosopological reading practices of the NT authors is “a Father, Son, and Spirit who are characterized by relentless affection and concern for one another” (p. 7).



Bates wisely refuses to claim that his insight is the singular key that explains the birth of the Trinity, and he admits that a variety of factors, including “experiential, mediatorial, and philosophical” are needed to explain the origins of the Trinity (p. 26). But recent studies are in need of “urgent supplementation” by what he refers to as “Trinitarianism by continuity in prosopological exegesis” (p. 27). Bates makes a powerful argument for including the early church Fathers as offering insight into the reading practices of the NT authors. Bates shows how Tertullian and Justin proffer a person-centered reading strategy that claims to find traces of divine dialogue in the OT. The divinely inspired speech of the OT often functions like a script, authored by the Spirit, as the prophet places the Son and the Father in a theodramatic setting as they dialogue with one another and give a window into their “unfolding story of mutual esteem, voiced praise, collaborative strategizing, and self-sacrificial love” (p. 40).

Chapters 2–6 present the heart of Bates’s thesis as he shows how prosopological exegesis provides windows into the dialogues and events of the divine persons. These events include: conversations between the Father and preexistent Son (ch. 2), the incarnation and earthly mission of the Son (ch. 3), the Son’s death on the cross (ch. 4), the Son’s praise to God for resurrecting him from the dead (ch. 5), and the Son’s celebration of his enthronement and victory (ch. 6).

For example, Bates notes how the changes in the person speaking in Psalm 2 force the reader to reflect on who is doing the speaking. Bates argues that the Son/king is the *primary* speaker who reports the speech of the Father in Psalm 2:7: “You are my Son, today I have begotten you.” In other words, David’s (prophetic) words report the conversation that takes place between the Father and the preexistent Son. Thus, when the language of Psalm 2:7 is taken up by the Gospel authors at Jesus’s baptism and transfiguration, it may be that “prosopological meditation on Ps 2:7 might have resulted in a growing self-realization” that Jesus was the person to whom these words were reported (p. 65). As Bates says: “the Evangelists urgently press us toward the conclusion that when the earliest church remembered Jesus, above all they remembered that his self-identity was bound up with this scripturally

informed ‘You are my Son’ conviction” (p. 66). Bates suggests that while one may disagree with a Trinitarian dialogical explanation for the riddle of Psalm 2, the unmarked speakers and shifts within the dialogue are “genuine riddles that urgently plead for a satisfying solution. The earliest church offered a triune key to these interpretative locks . . . that was thoroughly grounded in a detailed reading of the Old Testament texts in question. The notion of divine *persons* in fellowship from before the dawn of time emerges to a significant degree from the matrix of prosopological readings of the Old Testament” (p. 84, emphasis original).

A few more brief examples will suffice to demonstrate his argument. The Son’s quotation of Psalm 39:7 (LXX) in Hebrews 10:5 presents the Son thanking the Father for giving the incarnational body to the Son, and the Son in turn reciprocating by granting this same body back to the Father in loving obedience. In Mark 15:34 the Son’s cry of abandonment where Jesus speaks the words of David from Psalm 22:1 show the Son’s awareness of the divine script: “And could it be that Jesus knew that the divine playwright, the Spirit who had supplied the words in advance to David (cf. Justin, *Dial.* 34.1), had authored not a tragedy but a comedy because he knew that the script of the entire psalm itself called for *a sequence of despair and trust followed by rescue and praise?*” (p. 129, emphasis original). When Jesus’s speaking the words of Psalm 22:1 is seen within this larger theodramatic setting, Bates says it can “teach us something significant about the raw, edgy, surprisingly candid intimacy of expression that is permitted between the divine persons within the Godhead . . .” (p. 134). Bates shows how the author of Hebrews employs the same script (Ps 22) to show how Jesus is rescued from death in order to give praise to his Father amidst his family (Heb 2:11–13). One of Bates’s most important contentions is that the NT authors do not draw upon the scriptural words of David because they view him as a “type” of Christ; rather, David functions like a prophet who took on the person of the coming Christ (cf. his discussions of Acts 2:22–36; Rom 15:3; 2 Cor 4:17).

In Bates’s final chapter (ch. 7) he notes the ways in which Gnostic texts also employed person-centered reading strategies but within an entirely different framework, and he provides a reasoned defense for the particular theodramatic reading strategies of the early church. Bates further argues that the validity of the early Christian practice of prosopological exegesis depends upon at least four conditions: “the reality of a divine economy,” “Divine authorship of the ancient Jewish Scripture,” “The unity and plot-arrangement of the ancient Jewish Scripture,” and “Prophetic participation in the divine economy” (pp. 191–92).

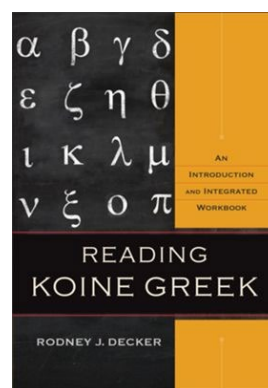
The *Birth of the Trinity* is a stunning achievement that makes a powerful argument for the origins of the doctrine of the Trinity by means of close attention to the reading practices of the early church and the NT authors. Bates’s thesis further makes a powerful argument for shifting the language from Bauckham’s Christology of Divine Identity to a Christology of Divine Persons. Bates’s work provides a helpful demonstration for the way in which the early church Fathers open up new vistas for the interpretation of the NT. While prosopological exegesis provides a window into the interior relations of the divine persons, it is almost certainly *one important factor among many*, as Bates himself affirms, that contributed to the birth of the Trinity. Given the genuine difficulty of identifying the shifts in unmarked speakers in the OT texts, I expect some will take issue here or there with *some* of Bates’s explanations. Also, it should be noted that the argument has serious explanatory power for the relationship between the Father and the Son but less so for the Spirit as a distinct speaking person, although Bates notes that the early church frequently saw the Spirit as the inspiring agent of the theodramatic script. Even so, Bates has made a remarkable contribution to the story of the divine life contained in the scriptural

dialogues—a “story that stretches across the canvas of time, reaching back before creation, enfolding the incarnation, crucifixion, and enthronement of the Son, and culminating with conversations that anticipate the future new creation” (p. 204).

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Rodney J. Decker. *Reading Koine Greek: An Introduction and Integrated Workbook*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014. xxxi + 672 pp. £34.16/\$49.99.

Rodney Decker, who passed away just prior to the book’s release, taught at Baptist Bible Seminary in Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania from 1996 until 2014, with first-year Greek being his staple. He is the author of *Temporal Deixis of the Greek Verb in the Gospel of Mark with Reference to Verbal Aspect*, Studies in Biblical Greek 10 (New York: Peter Lang, 2001) and *Koine Greek Reader: Selections from the New Testament, Septuagint, and Early Christian Writers* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007). His passion for the Greek language is clearly seen in this massive introductory Greek grammar. This 33-chapter textbook contains a wealth of knowledge and insight into biblical Greek and consequently has a number of positive and unique features.



1. It contains 465 vocabulary words. By the time students have completed the book, they will have memorized all the words that occur 44 times or more in the NT (and some words that occur less frequently as well). The vocabulary words include both glosses *and* definitions, along with their frequency in both the NT and the LXX.
2. It contains many practice exercises. After students are given a number of examples related to the emphasis of the lesson, they are asked to translate verses in the “Now You Try It” section of the text. Both the examples and the exercises contain verses from the NT, LXX, Pseudepigrapha, and the Apostolic Fathers. This allows students to have a broader sense of Koine Greek and forces them to translate texts with which they are less familiar.
3. It contains an extended passage for translation at the end of each chapter. For example, at the end of chapter 5 (“Verb Basics”), students are asked to translate John 15:1–8 (with key words in bold font and unfamiliar vocabulary given in parentheses). Although the combination of having practice exercises and reading passages resulted in a longer textbook, the benefit is that a student will not need to buy an additional workbook.
4. It contains English grammar discussions. This feature is designed to help students understand the categories that are used in describing Greek.
5. It contains intermediate Greek material. This material is clearly marked “Advanced Information for Reference” and is designed for students to use at a later time, if necessary, since a first-year grammar is usually the book students will consult (because they own it and are familiar with it).

6. It contains modern insights into the Greek verbal system. This includes the aspectual value and function of the Greek verb (following Stanley Porter's perspective on verbal aspect) and the voice system (i.e., rejection of deponency).
7. It also contains six appendices (Reference Charts, Morphology Catalog of Common Koine Verbs, Participle Chart, Vocative: The Fifth Case, Greek Numbers and Archaic Letters, and a Glossary), samples of diagramming, and a website (www.bakeracademic.com/readingkoinegreek), which includes information for both students (audio files and flash cards) and professors (instructor's manual and a quiz book).

There is some danger in critiquing a textbook without having used it in the classroom. Based on my 20 years of classroom experience of teaching Greek, however, I offer the following as possible negative features of this book:

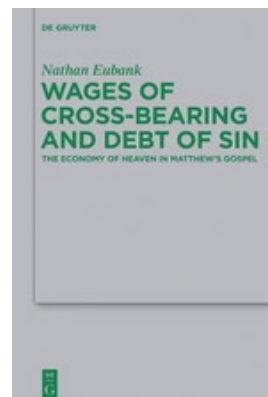
1. The size of the book. At 703 pages (including the front matter), this book will simply intimidate some students. Those seminaries or graduate schools that dedicate only one semester for elementary Greek will have great difficulty making it through this book.
2. The layout of the book. Although the book is well-designed and has an attractive visual layout, the practice exercises are interspersed throughout each chapter, making them difficult to find. (Most textbooks place them at the end of the chapter.) In addition, some may think the practice exercises are insufficient and will want to supplement them. Finally, to have 17 *consecutive* chapters related to verbs (of the 21 chapters on verbs) may be a bit too much.

This book is a welcome addition to the current repertoire of first-year NT Greek grammars. Because this book includes insights from modern linguistics and Greek research, it will especially appeal to those who are not content with textbooks that fail to address modern theories of verbal aspect theory and the use of the middle voice. Additionally, teachers who do not plan to use this book in the classroom would still benefit from this book to learn how to communicate current debated topics to first-year students. It is evident that Decker was a master teacher, and his love for the language and his insights are clearly seen in this work.

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Nathan Eubank. *Wages of Cross-Bearing and Debt of Sin: The Economy of Heaven in Matthew's Gospel*. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche 196. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013. 235 pp. £90.00/\$133.00.

Although many scholars (especially Protestants [myself included]) will find it difficult to accept all of the conclusions advanced in Nathan Eubank's book, no one can deny that he has certainly produced a well-researched, thought-provoking piece on Matthew's gospel, which attempts to challenge common assumptions about economic language and divine recompense in relation to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and its implications for his followers. As a PhD dissertation written under the supervision of Richard Hays at Duke University, his work exhibits all the qualities of excellent scholarship that one would expect. The recent session dedicated entirely to his monograph at the annual conference of the Society of Biblical Literature (2014) further confirms this fact.



Eubank begins his work by lamenting the absence of an extensive study on “Matthew’s understanding of wages and debts and the import of this language for Matthew’s narrative as a whole” (pp. 1–2), especially in light of the frequent use of economic language in Matthew’s gospel. The need for such a study becomes obvious when three deficiencies in previous works on Matthew’s financial language are recognized: these works (1) focus narrowly on the language of recompense without reference to the rest of the gospel; (2) do not situate recompense in a first-century field of discourse regarding debt and wages; and (3) import a post-Kantian (Protestant?) construal of gift and duty, which inevitably leads to a rejection of recompense for righteous acts. Against these recent tendencies, Eubank situates Matthew’s debt and wage language in its late first-century Jewish context in order to illumine the wider narrative focused on Jesus Christ’s cross-bearing and self-giving life of obedience.

Assuming the cogency of Gary Anderson’s argument in *Sin: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), that debt and wage correspond to sin and righteousness, Eubank argues that Matthew employs the same economic language idiomatically “to describe *how* Jesus saves ‘his people from their sin’ (1:21)” (p. 12, emphasis original). Exactly *how* Jesus does this has left many scholars baffled. Some promote the spatial metaphor of sin as “alienation” or “separation,” while others try to extract something akin to a systematic atonement theory from the gospel. The outcome of both, from Eubank’s perspective, tends to downplay the significance of “atonement” language within the entire narrative and treats Jesus’s saving work and divine recompense for human behavior in abstraction from one another. Paying closer attention to Matthew’s economic language, for Eubank, not only bridges the gap between Christ’s saving work and reward for righteous acts but will also result in a “narrative soteriology” which highlights the significance of the atonement in Matthew’s story (p. 13).

In Chapter 1, Eubank analyzes the economic language of heavenly treasures and debts in extra-biblical literature before the first century (Prov 10:2; 11:4; 19:17 [cf. also 14:21, 31; 28:8]; Sibylline Oracles, Tobit, Sirach, Dan 4:24 [4:27 LXX]; 2 Maccabees), in apocalyptic literature during the first and second centuries (1–2 Enoch; Testament of Abraham; 2 Baruch; 4 Ezra), in Rabbinic literature (Mishnah and Tosefta), and in the earliest Christian literature (Didache, Barnabas, James, Romans, Colossians, and 1 Timothy). After an examination of these texts, he formulates nine conclusions that form the foundation of his overall argument (pp. 50–52):

1. The widespread conception of sin as debt and of righteous deeds as earning wages or treasure generated a rich variety of economic tropes in texts dealing with divine recompense.
2. Almsgiving is the quintessential, but not the only, act that earns heavenly treasure.
3. Heavenly treasure is frequently described as being “stored up” in treasuries, though it is not always clear what sort of cosmology or ouranology this presupposes.
4. Heavenly treasure delivers from death and punishment.
5. In eschatological contexts heavenly treasure acquits one on the Day of Judgment.
6. Heavenly treasure redeems from the debt of sin.
7. Treasure in heaven was closely associated with resurrection.
8. Despite the axiomatic belief that God will “repay to each according to his deeds,” the meting out of heavenly treasure is not rigidly mechanistic.
9. Heavenly treasures are sometimes said to benefit people other than those who earned them (10:41–42).

With these conclusions in view, Eubank turns his attention in Chapter 2 to Matthew’s economic language of “debt” (Matt 5:21–26; 6:9–15; 7:1–2; 18:23–35; 23:32) and “treasure” (Matt 5:3–12, 21–48; 6:1–18, 19–24; 10:1–42; 16:13–28; 19:16–20:16; 24:45–51; 25:14–30, 31–46). He works his way carefully through each text, garnering exegetical support for four important claims in his argument. First, contrary to common opinion, Jesus does not want his disciples to forsake any thought of recompense. Second, God will only cancel the debts of those who cancel the debts of others. Third, God repays righteous deeds with heavenly treasure at the Parousia. Fourth, one’s heavenly treasures can benefit others who did not earn them. While Eubank identifies points of divergence between Matthew and his first century Jewish-Christian context regarding economic language (see p. 200), he nevertheless considers Matthew closely in line with them.

Having laid the groundwork of debt and wage language in Matthew and his late first-century Jewish-Christian context, Eubank applies his findings to the whole of Matthew’s narrative in Chapters 3–5. When John the Baptist balks at baptizing Jesus, the latter explains that it is necessary to “fill up all righteousness” (3:17, paralleling 20:28: “the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a *ransom* for many”). That is, Jesus fulfills all of God’s righteous requirements, thereby earning a wage or ransom-price, and liberating those languishing under the enormous weight of sin (i.e., debt-bondage). This is further clarified by Jesus’s predictions of his death and resurrection (16:13–28; 19:16–29; 20:17–28). Coupled to each of these predictions is the call for his followers to replicate the same cross-bearing, self-giving obedience exemplified in his impending suffering and death. In so doing, they will be repaid with eternal life. From this, Eubank deduces a particular logic to the divine economy: just as Christ gives his life as a ransom-price for those under debt-bondage, so, too, those who bear the cross of self-giving for the sake of others will receive the same threefold payment Christ received in the passion narratives: eternal life/resurrection (16:24–28; 19:29), participation in the rule of the Son of Man (19:27–28), and the ransom-price for others under captivity to sin. Divine recompense in the life of Jesus is therefore a “foretaste or down-payment of the coming settling of accounts” at the final judgment for believers (p. 209).

There is much to be commended and questioned in Eubank’s book. To begin with, he rightly places his finger on a Post-Kantian (Protestant? Lutheran?) nerve. Although he avoids mentioning Protestants explicitly for the most part, it is obvious that he has *some* in view, and rightly so. I say *some* because for

other strands of Protestantism his critique will not have as much force. Grace and divine recompense (properly understood) are not irreconcilable. Reward is a biblical means of motivating believers this side of eternity (I think it is legitimate to render μισθός “reward” in places where Eubank prefers “wage” in Matthew’s gospel; see Nicholas Piotrowski’s review of Eubank’s book in *JETS* 57 [2014]: 816–19). Our works will most certainly play a role at the final judgment, but—admittedly from my theologically-biased perspective—as proof of genuine faith in the work of Christ as the *only* basis of our salvation. Eubank’s anti-Post-Kantian critique is much appreciated. In the end, though, the overtly Roman Catholic conclusions he derives from this critique are, in my view, difficult to sustain. Of course, to be fair, it would take an entire monograph to defend that claim legitimately.

I also enjoyed the recurring emphasis throughout the book on the vertical and horizontal relationships between God, the believer, and others. But, again, I found it hard to accept the one-to-one correspondence Eubank advocates between God’s act in Christ on behalf of believers and the believer’s act on behalf of others. A distinction needs to be made between Christ’s ransom-price for those in debt-bondage and the giving of ourselves in sacrificial love to others.

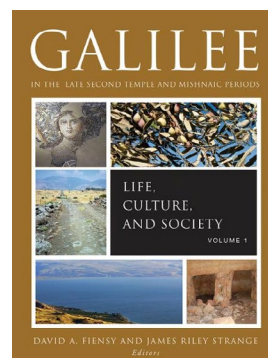
Lastly, I wonder how a robust Pauline theology of gift and union with Christ would comport with some of Eubank’s exegetical claims regarding texts in Romans, Colossians, and 1 Timothy. His forthcoming volume on *Paul, Charity, and the Poverty of Christ* should be telling. I foresee that work creating ripples (if not tidal waves!) of discussion within Pauline studies.

At any rate, his monograph is a clarion call for students and scholars to investigate his well-argued claims about Matthew’s theology of wage and debt, testing them against their own theological framework, and even determining how those claims pan out canonically. Eubank, like Gary Anderson before him, has certainly begun a lively discussion worth engaging.

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David A. Fiensy and James Riley Strange, eds. *Galilee in the Late Second Temple and Mishnaic Periods, Volume 1: Life, Culture, and Society*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014. xviii + 411 pp. £46.99/\$69.00.

Archaeology matters. Yet in the field of archaeology, studies are often contradictory. For every study making one assertion, you can find one claiming the opposite. The differences often result from technical issues, different definitions, and varying emphases. Thus, archaeology is also messy. Fortunately, this new work does not try to make everything neat and tidy. The editors specifically state in their introduction, “It has not been the editors’ goal to harmonize opinions or reduce disagreements. We present them as they exist and let the reader make decisions” (p. 6). One early example of this may be the recognition of first-century CE synagogues. Mark Chancey maintains that archaeologists have only identified them at five locations (p. 121). Yet nine pages later, Lee Levine states, “Solid archaeological evidence for the first-century synagogue is attested at eight sites in Judea” (p. 130).



Readers merely looking for solutions to all the debates, then, will not find them here. But what they will find is arguably far greater: better questions, solid bibliographies, and an exemplary display of specialists attempting to make sense of all the material data.

This collection of learned essays takes us, as the subtitle promises, directly into the heart of Galilee. In the least, this is exciting because “the amount of information uncovered and the dedicated fieldwork that has occurred in Galilee on Hellenistic and Roman sites over the last thirty years are nothing short of a revolution” (p. 358). Their stated audience for both volumes is threefold: interested laypeople, college and seminary students, and scholars who study other topics (p. xviii). The overarching theme of Volume 1 is the cultural world of Galilee. This culture becomes archaeologically excavated in Volume 2 (forthcoming).

All eighteen chapters focus on “both the evidence and the debates about the evidence that are shaping what people say about Galilee between 100 BCE and 200 CE” (p. xviii). Relying on a storm of recent findings, mostly from primary sources, the authors do an excellent job drawing the reader into this ancient world. They ask and answer questions such as, “What was it like to live in one of the villages? When you walked around, what would you see? How would your family have made a living?” (p. 177).

Some of the chapters in the book feature bold claims: “I will demonstrate that *all* of the data consistently undermine the conventional wisdom” that most non-elites were a homogenous mass of peasants (p. 313). The author, in this instance, goes on to persuasively argue that “the data give no indication that Galilean villagers were ‘peasants,’ innately averse to market exchange” (p. 339). One indication “of their lavish lifestyle is the evidence of a high proportion of meat in their diet” (p. 337). What evidence suggests this? The author details how the majority of sheep bones examined were younger than 16 months of age. This identifiable pattern of mortality is extremely unusual, she argues, and “it appears that the Hellenistic residents had either imported or raised large numbers of young sheep primarily for food” (p. 337).

Not all of the conclusions are as candid as this one. To be sure, some of the studies in this book are less compelling than others. One of the shortest chapters in the book, for instance, addresses education and literacy in Jewish Galilee (ch. 12). One underlying problem is the author’s unstated methodology. He starts with a set of conditions that must be met in order for general literacy to be a viable option. One prime example is a system of schools. Unless the author finds evidence of primary schools then he assumes that education and literacy were relatively non-existent, making illiteracy pervasive. While that might be generally true throughout history, as other works he mentions—like William V. Harris (*Ancient Literacy* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989]) and Catherine Hezser (*Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine*, TSAJ 81 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001])—have also highlighted, a system of primary schools does *not* necessarily produce mass literacy, just as the lack of it does not necessarily produce mass illiteracy. Indeed, there are historically documented examples of mass literacy in areas *without* primary school systems. See, among others, Egil Johansson’s examination on the spread of literacy in Sweden between the 17th and 19th centuries (“Literacy Campaigns in Sweden,” *Interchange* 19 [1988]: 135–62, esp. 141). Granted, this alone does not disprove the author’s overall conclusion. Nevertheless, there remain several underlying problems—such as methodology—that need addressing before anyone can frame an adequate picture of ancient education and literacy.

Moreover, though all the authors are certainly established scholars, it was still a little disconcerting to see some of them neglect almost every other voice except their own. In chapter 7, for example, only

one reference in the bibliography did not include the author himself; likewise, in chapter 9, only one reference in the bibliography was by someone other than the author herself.

As the authors and editors of this work are fully aware, archaeology is an interpretive discipline, and no one has pure eyes. Thus, all the contributions in this book are good and useful not because they equally compel, but because they all inspire. Readers will learn where archaeology can go wrong. They will be enthused by some of the recent accomplishments. And they will learn that we still have a long way to go before the intransigent complexity of defining a culture we are far removed from will yield its secrets.

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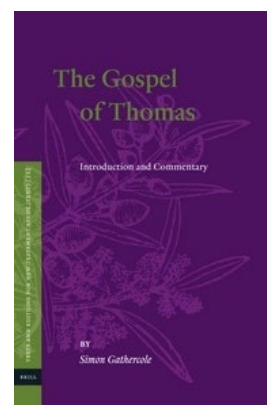
Simon J. Gathercole. *The Gospel of Thomas: Introduction and Commentary*. Texts and Editions for New Testament Study 11. Leiden: Brill, 2014. xii + 723 pp. £193.00/\$250.00.

Commentaries can be like recipes: We tend to think that the best one is whichever we encountered first. That's why, amid the ever-growing list of commentaries on the *Gospel of Thomas*, some will remain partial to the previous ones written by Ménard, Nordsieck, Plisch, Pokorný, Grosso, DeConick, *et al.* Now an attractive new commentary has arrived, and it will gain its own adherents. But the truth is that such a plenitude of commentaries can coexist happily because, at the very least, the approaches vary.

In *The Gospel of Thomas*, Simon Gathercole, Senior Lecturer in NT Studies at the University of Cambridge and one of the newest members of the Committee on Bible Translation behind the NIV Bible, differs from other commentators in his tight focus on “the meaning of the sayings of *Thomas* in its second-century historical context” (p. ix).

The volume is divided into two sections: Introduction (pp. 1–186) and Commentary (pp. 187–618). The first section sticks to the usual historical turf but divides the topics into 12 chapters. Along the way, Gathercole presents the manuscript evidence of *Thomas*, which amounts to three Greek fragments, and one Coptic codex. This amount of evidence is fortunate, especially given the fact that it is currently more than the Gospel of Mark, 1 Corinthians, and 1 and 2 Timothy during the same timeframe. When the four *Thomas* manuscripts are compared, he makes a compelling case that scholars should treat them as witnesses to the same work and not as different recensions.

Gathercole then offers the most extensive list of references to *Thomas* and the contents of *Thomas* catalogued to date. He rightly claims that the 48 textual references to *Thomas* and over two dozen possible allusions to the contents of *Thomas* in late antiquity and beyond are evidence of the work's broad footprint of influence, even if some of the references and allusions are not as clear as others. The original language of *Thomas* was almost certainly Greek, he argues, and written by an unknown author probably in Syria or Egypt sometime between 135–200 CE. He agrees with the scholarly consensus that *Thomas* is not a particularly well ordered collection or list. Yet he views the structure of *Thomas* as reasonably unified with a mixed genre. Similarly, he interprets the religious outlook of *Thomas* as



relatively coherent with an inherent adaptability, especially as evinced by its use within many different groups (Gnostics, Manichees, etc.). Thus, it is not “Gnostic” in any conventional sense of the term, nor does it seem to align well with any particular movement. One noteworthy similarity with other second century literature, however, both Christian and non-Christian, is the tendency to see Jesus as a teacher.

Before moving on to the core of his work, the commentary proper, Gathercole sets out to answer a question that has been lurking in the shadows ever since page one: Is *Thomas* useful in historical Jesus research? His short answer would be no. His more drawn-out response—especially in light of his examination of *Thomas’s* historical proximity to Jesus via cultural and chronological factors—is that “as scholarship currently stands, and with the primary sources that are available to us at present, the Gospel of *Thomas* can hardly be regarded as useful in the reconstruction of a historical picture of Jesus” (p. 184).

Against the introduction’s sweeping backdrop, Gathercole centers on the text of *Thomas*, sticking to the well-established division of 114 sayings. In detailing the advances, setbacks, collaborations, and conflicts surrounding each logion, he provides fascinating insights into their interpretation, especially in light of *Thomas’s* second-century context. For example, it is not that the author of *Thomas* necessarily made a mistake when numbering prophetic books (logion 52.1) or referring to a certain medium of exchange (logion 100). Rather, Gathercole utilizes these types of “oddities” to support his larger argument that *Thomas* provides a unique window into a second-century—not first-century—milieu. He is reasonably optimistic, then, about the possibility in most cases of interpreting the meaning of the logia, especially when viewed according to their second-century context.

Less understandable is Gathercole’s attitude toward memory studies. It would have been good for Gathercole to state his views on the limitations and/or uses of memory studies in historical Jesus research, especially given his strong emphasis that *Thomas’s* overall picture of Jesus is “historically very implausible” (p. 183).

In addition, Gathercole fails to acknowledge that syntax has contributed in some significant ways, not just in relation to the original language and transmission of *Thomas*, but also for determining where there may be substantive links in meaning. Take logion 2.1. First, it contains a rare classical Greek construction which cannot derive from an Aramaic origin that shares the same syntax: the aorist third person negated imperative. Second, only Jesus used this unusual syntactical construction in the synoptic gospels. Third, there is another construction in the same logion that only Jesus uses according to the synoptic gospels: ἕως followed by εὐρη (Luke 15:4, 8). Yet neither of these syntactical observations or potentially significant NT links was included in Gathercole’s treatment.

The same holds true for other logia, such as 62.2. It is quite possible that certain syntactical constructions did not merely escape modification through memory, oral, or performance channels. Rather, they demonstrate that the author probably consulted one or more Greek manuscripts, most likely the synoptic gospels or some compilation of them. These further considerations would strengthen Gathercole’s view of a Greek original, increase the number of substantive links in meaning to consider, connect in some helpful ways with Gathercole’s summation that all four manuscripts were privately copied, and be consistent with what other papyrological evidence of gospel traditions in the second century suggest. (See especially Scott D. Charlesworth, “The End of Orality: Transmission of Gospel Tradition in the Second and Third Centuries,” in *Between Orality and Literacy: Communication and Adaptation in Antiquity*, Volume 10, ed. Ruth Scodel, Mnemosyne Supplements 367 [Leiden: Brill, 2014]: 331–55.)

At the end of the day, writers write to be heard, and the author of *Thomas* is no different. Gathercole rightly wants to move the meaning of the text in its second century context from the outer margins of discussions of *Thomas* to the heart of the discussions about it. There is no doubt that *Thomas* is a fascinating artifact from the second century and has important implications regarding second-century debates about Jesus, the nature of Christianity, and the transmission of gospel tradition.

For the reader who is in the habit of underlining, be prepared to have a second pen on hand, as your ink will run dry by mid-volume. The sheer lucidity and precision of Gathercole's writing leads readers to see, confront, and challenge the presuppositions of their own studies regarding *Thomas* and its second-century context. This is a reliable, insightful and admirably evenhanded examination of *Thomas*. Every theological library should own this path-breaking book.

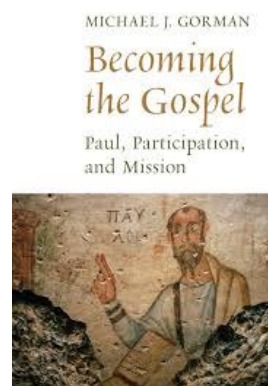
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Michael J. Gorman. *Becoming the Gospel: Paul, Participation, and Mission*. The Gospel and Our Culture Series. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015. x + 341 pp. £18.99/\$28.00.

Becoming the Gospel (BTG) completes what Michael Gorman calls his “accidental trilogy” on Paul (pp. 2, 3, 297). Following in a trajectory set by *Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001) and *Inhabiting the Cruciform God: Kenosis, Justification, and Theosis in Paul's Narrative Soteriology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), this final installment argues pointedly that Paul's agenda for the early Church consisted in embodying—not simply believing—the gospel. “Becoming the gospel,” moreover, inescapably entails partnership in the *missio Dei*. Importantly, Gorman positions BTG as a sustained reply to a recent critique lodged against *Inhabiting the Cruciform God*: does not the proposal that “cruciformity” amounts to “partaking in God's very existence” hemorrhage “being” and “act” such that the Church's participation in God's mission is rendered unintelligible?

Had Gorman the panache of Karl Barth, BTG might have been simply entitled *Nein!*, for rather than bankrupting missional impetus, Gorman argues that “participation” funds it. In his words: “Theosis—Spirit-enabled transformative participation in the life and character of God revealed in the crucified and resurrected Messiah Jesus—is the starting point of mission and is, in fact, its proper theological framework” (p. 4).

Gorman defends this thesis through appeal to exegesis, hermeneutics, and theology (p. 10), and the convergence of these disciplines in BTG offers a useful heuristic device by which to represent the principal features of his argument. Gorman addresses the latter two most directly in chapters 1–2, “Paul and the Mission of God” and “Reading Paul Missionally.” *Hermeneutically*, Gorman underscores the prominent role which “mission” plays in Paul's writings: Paul wished for his communities not merely to underwrite his endeavors, but to collaborate with him by similarly engaging in God's work of restoring the broken cosmos. Any reading that renders mission irrelevant does great injustice to Paul. *Theologically*, Gorman asserts a commitment not simply to identifying what Paul expected of his communities (historically), but further to assisting those who read the Bible as Scripture in understanding their role in the *missio Dei*.



The Word is a Word freshly present, continually spoken, and contemporarily binding. As such, “those of us who read Paul’s letters as Christian Scripture need also to participate in the advance of the gospel by becoming the gospel, in word, in deed, and—if we are faithful and it becomes necessary—in suffering” (. 61). *Exegetically*, finally, Gorman’s analysis of Paul operates within the parameters established by his hermeneutical and theological convictions, as the titles of Chapters 3–8 suggest: “Becoming the Gospel of Faith(fulness), Love and Hope: 1 Thessalonians,” “Becoming and Telling the Story of Christ: Philippians,” “Becoming the Gospel of Peace (I): Overview” (where he devotes his attention particularly to Romans), “Becoming the Gospel of Peace (II): Ephesians,” “Becoming the Justice of God: 1 & 2 Corinthians,” and “Becoming the Gospel of God’s Justice/Righteousness and Glory: Missional Theosis in Romans.” Thus, not only do Paul’s letters enjoin participation in God’s mission for the immediate communities to which he wrote, but so also do they institute a behavioral pattern determinative for the Church universal (cf. p. 297).

BTG exhibits all of the admirable qualities for which Gorman is known: careful research, lucid prose, and (unfailing) keen insights. Nevertheless, there are several points at which the project may warrant critique. *First*, though Gorman stamps 2 Cor 5:21 as the “theme text” of the book, he furnishes no thorough engagement with N. T. Wright’s proposal that Paul there speaks uniquely concerning his apostolic ministry and not about the role of the Christian community at large (“On Becoming the Righteousness of God: 2 Corinthians 5.21,” in *Pauline Theology*, ed. David M. Hay [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993], 200–8). Gorman acknowledges Wright’s thesis, briefly genuflecting to it in footnote 83 on p. 247, but he simply cites Morna Hooker’s position (cf. “On Becoming the Righteousness of God: Another Look at 2 Cor 5.21,” *NovT* 50 [2008]: 358–75) as a counter-testimony without tackling Wright himself. This omission, which replicates a similar silence in *Cruciformity* and *Inhabiting the Cruciform God*, leaves the reader to wonder about the status of the overall argument in BTG if the designated central passage cannot sustain a missional interpretation. *Second*, it appears that BTG under-attends the place of “suffering” in the Church’s mission. Though Gorman does reiterate the significance of suffering (cf. 137–38), he bypasses it at key exegetical moments (e.g., Phil 3:10–11) and occasionally describes it as a likely experience for Christians, whereas for Paul it constitutes a criterion for what it means to be “in Christ.” Additionally, Gorman speaks more of suffering as a consequence of living missionally rather than as a means by which God’s mission is furthered, as Paul intimates in 2 Corinthians. While it is true that Gorman gives more press to this theme in *Cruciformity*, the marginal space that it receives in BTG still puzzles given the book’s thesis. *Third*, Gorman’s argument would have been buttressed by providing greater attention to the Pauline canon—and particularly those letters not regularly regarded as “authentically” Paul’s. Harking back to my second critique, for instance, the function of “suffering” as a way of participating in the mission of God might have been foregrounded helpfully had he considered letters like Colossians and 2 Timothy. However, given Gorman’s concession that “the absence of chapters on other Pauline letters should not be taken as a sign that they lack a missional dimension” (p. 15), perhaps we are here left to acknowledge critical areas in which his work might be extended rather than an inherent defect in the design of the book itself.

The critiques lodged against BTG are in no way intended to challenge its overall value: the missional reading of Paul for which Gorman argues is adroitly defended. Given that BTG is the last in Gorman’s Pauline trilogy, one does leave off reading the book curious about (not to mention expectantly awaiting!)

the new turn Gorman might take in his research and writing. Michael Gorman is a gift to the Holy Community, and the more we hear from him the better.

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Bradley G. Green. *Covenant and Commandment: Works, Obedience and Faithfulness in the Christian Life*. New Studies in Biblical Theology 33. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014. 185 pp. £14.43/\$22.00.

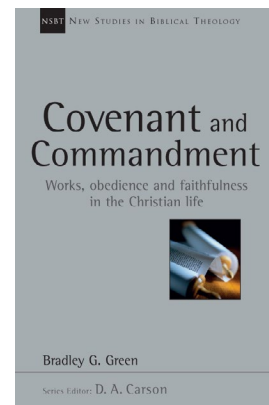
Bradley Green is Associate Professor of Christian Thought and Tradition at Union University (Jackson, Tennessee). In this book, he advances the following thesis: “in the new covenant, works are a God-elicited and *necessary* part of the life of the converted person” (p. 17, emphasis original). Christian obedience “is not a perfect obedience or perfect law-keeping, but it is *real* obedience, an obedience that (1) flows from the cross, (2) is a partial fulfillment of the promised blessings of the new covenant (e.g., from Jer 31:31–34; Ezek 36:26–27), and (3) is sovereignly and graciously elicited by the God of holy Scripture (e.g., Phil 2:12–13)” (p. 19, emphasis original).

Green argues for his thesis across seven chapters. Chapter 1 surveys NT passages that present the centrality of works, obedience, and faithfulness in the life of the Christian. Chapter 2 provides the biblical backdrop that makes sense of the data in the first chapter. Chapter 2 focuses on key OT texts, particularly Ezekiel 36:26–28 and Jeremiah 31:31–34, which speak of a future day when Spirit-induced, God-wrought obedience from the heart will characterize God’s new covenant people, and NT texts which affirm that the new covenant as presented by Jeremiah and Ezekiel is a first century reality producing this promised heart-obedience.

Chapter 3 addresses key biblical-theological issues connected with continuity and discontinuity across the canon, and argues that works, obedience and faithfulness are essential components of the believer’s life in both Testaments. Chapter 4 examines the relationship between the atonement and works, obedience, and faithfulness, and presents Christ’s cross-work as the ground of human transformation. On a similar note, ch. 5 addresses union with Christ, and argues that while faith alone unites believers to Christ, good works are the inevitable result of Christ being formed in them.

Chapter 6, the longest in the book, addresses the interlocking issues of future justification and judgment according to works. Green states his position clearly: while initial justification is by faith alone, there is a future aspect of justification in which good works will be evaluated as proof of the believer’s faith. These good works do not play a causative role in justification, but they do play a declarative role (for a good summary of Green’s position as it relates to Jas 2, see the summative paragraph on p. 113). Chapter 7, the final chapter, directly addresses certain themes broached throughout the study: (1) the nature of the covenant in Eden, and humanity’s relationship to Adam and his transgression; (2) the relationship between Christ’s obedience and Christian obedience; and (3) inaugurated eschatology.

Green writes clearly, and bases his argument solidly on Scripture. Each chapter surveys several biblical texts connected with the particular chapter’s main idea, and interacts with historical and



contemporary figures who advance similar theses. Green also charitably interacts with N. T. Wright on future justification, challenging his statements which appear to ground future justification in works (rather than viewing works as declarative of a justified status).

Green focuses on his main thesis, and doesn't get sidetracked by related discussions (such as Paul and the law, and the nature and reality of imputation). Green acknowledges his position on these (he favors the old perspective), but focuses on the debate at hand. In doing so, he helpfully addresses such relevant issues as the nature of sanctification and Christian living, the law-gospel paradigm, and Protestant-Roman Catholic debates on the nature of justification. The book's thesis even addresses (though not directly) the old lordship-salvation debate.

I agree with Green's main thesis, and enjoyed his careful attention to scripture and theology. Allow me to note only two weaknesses. First, Green doesn't make his hermeneutical position clear until ch. 7, and even then he is not explicit (I believe Green follows New Covenant Theology as opposed to Covenant Theology or Dispensationalism). While Green's thesis is compatible with all three systems, it's nice to know which position an author holds.

Second, Green is light on polemics, despite the disputed nature of his thesis and the many areas of Christian thought it addresses. Green argues for justification by faith alone specifically, and the necessity of works for salvation generally, but does not show how this answers the Roman Catholic charge that justification by faith alone produces antinomianism. Green argues that works, obedience, and faithfulness are a necessary component of the Christian life, but does not directly challenge writers who argue the opposite.

In fact, Green is the most polemical when challenging covenant theologians and their concept of the covenant of works (full disclosure: I am a covenant theologian). He suggests that such a scheme runs the risk of placing works in a realm of merit where they play little or no meaningful part in the life of the Christian (see pp. 152, 156–57). I would suggest this is a *non sequitur*, as covenant theologians have shown no aversion to affirming the necessity of works, obedience, and faithfulness in the life of the Christian. These are minor weaknesses, however, and do not detract from the strength of Green's thesis and methodology. I heartily recommend the book as a comprehensive presentation of the key biblical texts and ideas affirming the necessity of good works for believers.

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Jonathan I. Griffiths. *Hebrews and Divine Speech*. Library of New Testament Studies 507. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014. 200 pp. £65.00/\$112.00.

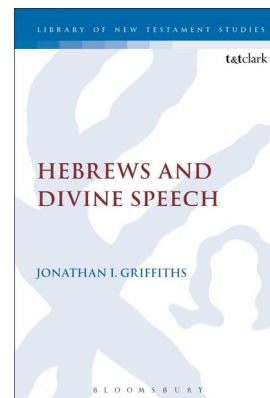
The book of Hebrews opens with a majestic declaration. The God who spoke “in many times and in many ways” in the past has now “spoken in a son.” In a revision of his 2010 Cambridge University dissertation, Jonathan Griffiths seeks to grapple with the impact and significance of this revelatory claim. In particular, Griffiths asks, what does the writer mean when he says that God speaks, and how does this theology of divine speech relate to the rest of Hebrews?

Griffiths pursues his study along several distinct lines of inquiry. His primary focus is on the theology of God’s speech in Hebrews. One feature of this discussion is whether there is a *logos* Christology at work in Hebrews, where Jesus is identified as the “word of God” incarnate (see esp. pp. 42–48). Griffiths argues that while many texts in Hebrews imply this connection (e.g., Heb 1:1–2; 4:12–13; 11:3), the writer “stops short of making an explicit affirmation of that kind” (p. 162). Rather, throughout Hebrews, “the Son’s person and work are presented as the means by which God has spoken his eschatological word” (p. 162). Griffiths concludes that while Hebrews is not dependent on Philo or too closely aligned to the thinking of John’s Gospel, Hebrews does contain a “discernible and sustained ‘word’ Christology” (p. 162).

In pursuing this theology of divine speech, Griffiths limits the scope of his investigation to the key terms λόγος and ῥῆμα (both of which are usually translated as “word”). In doing so, Griffiths seeks to allow the details of the text to shape the contours of his theological conclusions about the nature and function of God’s speech. These criteria also narrow the focus of the study to the manageable scope of the eight passages in Hebrews that feature these key terms. Framed by an orienting introduction and conclusion, the bulk of the work consists of eight chapters devoted to the following passages: Hebrews 1:1–4 on God’s speech “in” his son (ch. 2); 2:1–4 on God’s spoken salvation (ch. 3); 4:2–16 on God’s living word (ch. 4); 5:11–6:12 on the form and expected effect of God’s word (ch. 5); 6:13–7:28 on God’s spoken and effective oath (ch. 6); 11:3 on God’s word of creation (ch. 7); 12:18–29 on God’s saving and judging word from Zion (ch. 8); and 13:7, 17, and 22 on God’s word in relation to the community’s leaders (ch. 9).

In each chapter, Griffiths briefly exegetes the given unit, analyzes the use of the key words, and then considers their contribution to a theology of divine speech. Though a narrow focus on key terms can fall prey to the vagaries of word-studies, Griffiths intentionally keeps his eye on the broader discourse context and the relationship between words and concepts (see pp. 7–27). His limited scope also allows him to keep his treatments of each passage succinct and building toward his theological conclusions.

From these exegetical investigations, Griffiths observes that in Hebrews the term λόγος does not directly “identify” Jesus as the divine word, but rather the writer uses this word with “almost complete consistency to identify forms of divine speech” (p. 162). The term ῥῆμα, too, is used exclusively to denote some type of divine discourse (Heb 1:3, 6:5, 11:3, 12:19). Sharing a similar but distinctive function in the writer’s strategy, these two words complement each other with λόγος emphasizing the message communicated and ῥῆμα highlighting the experience and physical manifestation of God’s speech (see pp. 62–63, 126–30, 140–41).



According to Griffiths, whenever the writer uses λόγος in a phrase, “it serves to identify the speech form that it modifies as divine speech and to draw attention to its character as such” (p. 163). A theological implication from this conclusion is that, in Hebrews, to encounter the divine word “entails an encounter with Christ” and access to “the reality of salvation” (p. 165). Conversely, this encounter can also be an occasion for judgment (see esp. the analysis of Heb 12:18–29 on pp. 131–52). Thus, Griffiths here demonstrates that the book’s theology of God’s speech relates directly to the primary purpose of the epistolary sermon, namely, to exhort the hearers to “Press on!”

After considering the theology of divine speech in Hebrews and working through the relevant uses of λόγος and ῥῆμα, Griffiths considers the relationship between *God’s* word and the *writer’s* word of exhortation. Does the writer of Hebrews consider his homily “to the Hebrews” to be included in the category of divine speech? In other words, does the writer consider his words to his hearers to be part of God’s word to his people? With the appropriate nuance, Griffiths answers in the affirmative. Because of the careful way that the writer characterizes God’s speech in Hebrews, Griffiths insists, the phrase “word of exhortation” (Heb 13:22, τοῦ λόγου τῆς παρακλήσεως) is a critical feature of his compositional strategy and loaded with theological freight. Indeed, Griffiths argues that his analysis “raises the possibility that the writer wishes to signal that his own discourse forms part of the complex of divine speech presented in Hebrews” (p. 163). From this perspective, this *word* of exhortation represents the speech of God himself (see also Griffiths’s treatment of Heb 4:13 and 5:11).

Because of its character as a divine word of exhortation, too, Hebrews embodies a sense of urgency and authority. This *divine* word is also a *contemporary* word. Through the Old Testament Scriptures, the writer insists, God still speaks to his people. For Griffiths, the writer furthers this theological connection by locating his own written sermon within the long line of divine discourse found in the biblical canon. As Griffiths articulates, “in the moment of the delivery of the Hebrews sermon, the writer is himself the exhorter, and it is to him that they are listening ‘today’” (p. 165). Arguing that the ambiguity of Heb 12:25 is intentional (i.e. who is the one speaking?), Griffiths contends that the writer “wishes to imply that as the addressees hear his sermon, they are hearing God’s voice” (p. 165). Accordingly, those who hear Hebrews spoken “today” are also forced to respond to God’s word “today” (see pp. 55–60, 79–89). In this light, the writer “clearly holds high expectations for the effectiveness of preaching the divine word” (p. 167).

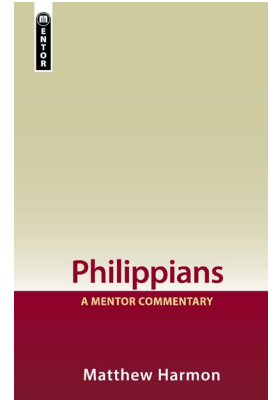
Griffiths’s argument here has substantial implications for the doctrine of revelation and Scripture. If Griffiths’s basic analysis is correct, then Hebrews represents an instance within the New Testament where a biblical author himself conceives of his writing not only as the “word of man” but as the very “word of God.” This volume, then, will be a strategic resource for those searching for signs of a canon-consciousness among the New Testament writers and also for those striving to find fresh ways of formulating a high view of Scripture.

In sum, Griffiths’s study of the theology of God’s speech in Hebrews has a clear structure, a manageable scope, and produces measured but meaningful conclusions. Further, he keeps his analysis rooted in specific passages in Hebrews but also branches out to the theological forests of Christology, soteriology, and bibliology. These features make Griffiths’s volume a fruitful contribution to Hebrews studies, New Testament theology, and theological interpretation.

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Matthew S. Harmon. *Philippians: A Mentor Commentary*. Fearn: Christian Focus, 2015. 502 pp. £22.99/\$34.99.

Matthew Harmon teaches NT at Grace College and Theological Seminary and preaches to Christ's Covenant Church in Winona Lake, Indiana. This commentary exemplifies his twofold ministry focus, in the academy and to the church. For those who labor in the academy, Harmon knowledgeably and sensibly addresses the interpretive questions and theological issues raised by Paul's epistle to the first-century congregation in Philippi, a Roman colonial city in Macedonia. For pastors and other teachers who serve the church, our author models conscience-challenging application to Jesus's twenty-first century saints as the fruit of careful exegesis and theological reflection. As a homiletical bonus (not found in all Mentor Commentaries), Harmon closes each section of exegesis with "suggestions for preaching/teaching and application."



Although the commentary's focus is the exposition of the epistle's message to its original recipients and later audiences, issues on which there has been critical debate are addressed responsibly. In view of the apparent frequency of two-way communications between Paul in chains and the church in Philippi, the provenance of the epistle—whether the apostle wrote from imprisonment in Rome, in Ephesus, or in Caesarea—has been debated. Having weighed arguments in favor of Ephesus (a short voyage across the Aegean Sea from Macedonia) and Caesarea Maritima in Palestine, Harmon concludes in favor of the historic view that Paul wrote from Rome while awaiting review of his appeal by the Emperor (pp. 35–43). This conclusion has obvious bearing on the interpretation on the life-or-death outcome that the apostle anticipates in Phil 1:19–26.

The integrity of the epistle is defended against proposals that its present form represents a hypothetical merging of two or more pieces of Pauline correspondence (pp. 43–45). The "seams" that appear to mark inexplicable shifts in tone (e.g., from 3:1 to 3:2) are plausibly explained. Moreover, the structural observation suggesting *inclusio* at 1:27–30 and 3:20–4:3 (linked by citizenship terminology and the summons to stand together) reinforces the argument that 1:27–4:3 has an overarching coherence of theme and purpose (pp. 46–47, 157–161).

Against ancient and more recent proposals that external opponents—Paul's rivals (1:15–18), the Philippians' adversaries (1:28), advocates of circumcision (3:2–3), those who "walk" as enemies of Christ's cross (3:18–19)—are a single group (perhaps Jewish Christians resistant to Paul's evangelization of Gentiles), Harmon concludes that Paul has different dangers in view, some threatening physical persecution and others spiritual deception (pp. 47–50). Touching on points in which the New Perspective on Paul takes issue with classic Protestant understandings of Pauline soteriology—whether πίστις Χριστοῦ designates Christ's faithfulness instead of the believer's trust in Christ, and whether Paul affirms forensic imputation of Christ's righteousness to subjectively unrighteous believers—Harmon defends the classic Protestant interpretation of Philippians 3:9 in its context (pp. 339–43, especially notes 129, 132).

Harmon alerts us to Paul's use of the OT, even in this letter to an overwhelmingly Gentile congregation. Philippi seems to have had only a small Jewish population and no synagogue when Paul, Silas, and Timothy arrived (Acts 16:13), so it is not surprising that this epistle lacks the explicit OT citations that saturate Paul's epistles to Galatia, Corinth, and Rome. Yet Israel's ancient Scriptures so

saturated Paul's mind that Philippians nonetheless bristles with allusions to OT passages and turns of phrase, notably but not exclusively in the Christ-hymn of 2:5–11, which extols Christ as the later, greater Adam and the suffering and glorified Servant of the Lord foreseen in Isaiah (pp. 57–66; 201–3). Allusions to Deuteronomy 32:5, Daniel 12:1–4, Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6 set Gentile Jesus-followers in Philippi apart from a “crooked and twisted generation” of ancient unbelieving Israelites (2:15) (pp. 255–59). The list of OT allusions could go on.

Although my own conclusions on Philippians' exegetical questions typically align with Harmon's, occasionally we part ways. Two examples will have to suffice. We both recognize Paul's strategy of teaching by way of example throughout this epistle: “Christ the Exemplar” preeminently (2:5–11), but also Paul's co-workers Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19–30) and Paul himself (3:1–14). I see Paul starting even earlier to use his own situation and attitude as a model for responding to suffering and to competition. This seems to be the ulterior motive behind his description of his situation in chains, awaiting a life-or-death verdict and “afflicted” (so they think) by some who see themselves as his rivals (1:12–26). Harmon does not disagree, for he writes about Paul's conclusion in 1:24, “Paul here models what he will later ask the Philippians to do—think of others more highly than oneself. . . .” (p. 149). But the sharp structural divide drawn between sections characterized as about “the progress of the gospel” (1:12–26) and about “living as kingdom citizens” (1:27–2:18) risks separating Paul's exemplary stance toward suffering and rivalry, on the one hand, from the Philippians' need to stand in suffering and (1:27–30) and to renounce rivalry (2:1–4), on the other. Gordon Fee's observation that Philippians exhibits the alternation of news about author and readers, characteristic of Hellenistic letters of friendship, invites a closer comparison of Paul's exemplary response to suffering and rivalry to the Philippians' need in those areas (*Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995], 2–14, 54–55).

In Philippians 1:19 Paul expresses confidence that he will receive “salvation/deliverance” (σωτηρία) through the Philippians' prayers and the Spirit's assistance. Is this “deliverance” his imminent release from Roman custody (so G. F. Hawthorne and R. P. Martin, *Philippians*, rev. ed., WBC 43 [Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004], 49–50), or ultimate spiritual/eschatological salvation? Harmon concludes the latter, citing Paul's use of σωτηρία and σῶζω elsewhere to refer to spiritual salvation, his preference for ῥύομαι when speaking of physical deliverance, and the probable allusion here to Job 13:16 (pp. 132–35). This is the more plausible alternative, since in what follows Paul seems still to wrestle with the alternative outcomes of life (release) or death (execution) (1:21–26; see 2:17, 24). Isn't there, though, a third alternative, a spiritual and *semi*-eschatological interpretation that understands “salvation” in light of Paul's completion of his sentence in 1:20? If his impending appearance before the Emperor is the situation in which Paul expects and hopes that he will not be ashamed but rather conduct himself in such a way that Christ is magnified, then this Christ-glorifying boldness is central to, even equivalent to, the “salvation” that Paul knows will be his. Such salvation is spiritual, not physical; but it is semi-eschatological, received in the present, not reserved for the consummation. And the prayers of the saints (requested in other prison epistles, Eph 6:19–20; Col 4:3–4) and the support of the Spirit are instrumental in Paul's salvation from shame over Christ as he stands before Caesar (Rom 1:16; 2 Tim 1:8, 16).

Harmon's commentary is a felicitous merger of careful scholarship, exegetical prudence, and pastoral sensitivity, a fine exposition of Paul's warm missive to a congregation whom the apostle tenderly called, with loving redundancy, “my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown . . . my beloved”

(4:1). Pastors, teachers, and other students of the NT and servants of Christ's church will profit from this volume.

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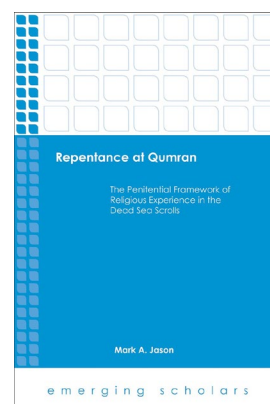
Mark A. Jason. *Repentance at Qumran: The Penitential Framework of Religious Experience in the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Emerging Scholars. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015. xii + 289 pp. £38.99/\$59.00.

Thanks to Mark A. Jason, a PhD graduate from the University of Aberdeen, a topic that has been cloaked in obscurity in Qumranic studies has been brought into the light: repentance. In fact, his remarkable book shines a floodlight on the concept of repentance in the narrative structure and implied social world of Qumran.

The goal of his research is to determine what role repentance played in forming the social and religious identity of the Qumran community. At the core of Jason's examination of repentance is his working definition of it: "Repentance is the radical turning away from anything which hinders one's whole-hearted devotion to God and the corresponding turning to God in love and obedience" (p. 8). As his investigation expands, he shows the reader how he nuances the definition based on his analysis of the evidence. Besides offering a new, expanded definition at the end of the study, he identifies several key areas distinguished the Qumran community in their views and practices of repentance from other socio-religious movements in Second Temple Judaism, such as their "*penitential separation*" from other Jews (p. 103).

As intriguing as all this will be to specialists, other readers may assume repentance at Qumran is of limited importance in the grand scheme of things. Yet nothing could be further from the truth. Simon Gathercole's strong endorsement on the back of the book does not overstate the study's broader implications, which are indeed relevant to "all study of Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity." For example, Jason's study touches on a number of wide-ranging aspects and topics connected with repentance, such as motives, predestination, and eschatology. He asks and answers questions like "How did repentance at Qumran fit in with the general religious climate of the day?" (p. 28), and "What motivates an individual or a community to repent?" (p. 45). He also addresses a wide spectrum of ways repentance was incorporated into the daily lives of this community, such as prayers, confessions, songs, liturgies, and rituals.

These are just the barest highlights of Jason's compelling study. Yet an ironic shortcoming, given the author's apparent sympathy for early Christian studies, is the lack of more NT connections, and the complete absence of NT references in the scriptures and ancient literature index. Granted, he does include or discuss several key NT passages, such as Luke 1:16, 17; 3:14; Acts 11:18; 15:1–2, 7. But what about the other potentially significant literary-rhetorical parallels between the NT and Qumranic writings regarding repentance, or John the Baptizer's likely early connection with Qumran? Thus, Jason seems to have missed a few key opportunities in his comparison with other relevant texts.



Moreover, Jason started his work with a simple, one-sentence working definition that is indented and easy to identify. By the end of the book, however, the reader is forced to do all the work. First, his new definition must be located since it is not as clearly identifiable as before, and it reads more like a list of summary statements of the preceding chapters than it does a new expanded definition still based on the original one. Second, we must compare and contrast the two places he does provide his new definition since they differ from each other in both length and content. His five-sentence definition, for instance, states that repentance consists of “a corresponding turning to God *by turning* to the community and its law” (p. 231, italics mine). His three-sentence definition, on the other hand, states that repentance consists of “a corresponding turning to God, the community, and its law” (p. 240). Third, in order to reconcile or better understand the potentially significant difference(s) here and elsewhere, the reader must go back and piece together all the changes and arguments he made concerning the original working definition. As a result, his newly proposed definition—that also contained editorial errors in both locations—lacked the additional coherence that would have clarified and improved his overall study.

Jason also seemed to speak of first-century Judaism and Jews as if they were one monolithic group. Just a few phrases from one page early on in the study—Chapter 1—ought to suffice here: “Judaism of the first century attempted to . . .,” “First-century Jews sought to . . .,” “The Jewish people understood that . . .,” “. . . was another key factor in Jewish theology” (p. 33). My general point is not that Jason is wrong on the evidence. It is that his characterization of first-century Judaism and Jews is itself a bit too unrefined for such a study.

Finally yet importantly, as far as I could tell, Jason provides no example from the dozens of Greek texts found at Qumran. Indeed, I found no mention of whether repentance was merely absent from these texts or if they were simply not included in his database for some other reason. This observation does not necessarily diminish his study in any way, but greater clarity on the scope of his investigation into the Dead Sea Scrolls—“which yielded roughly 850 scrolls from eleven caves” (p. 1)—may improve future editions.

In sum, I highly recommend this book. *Repentance at Qumran* is a double achievement, a landmark work in both Qumranic studies and Second Temple Judaism. There is no doubt that a wide-range of scholars and students will benefit from this study.

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Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary: Volume 2: 3:1–14:28*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013. xxxix + 1153 pp. £36.99/\$69.99.

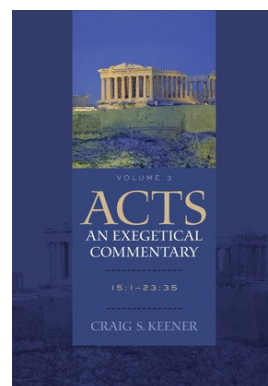
Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary: Volume 3: 15:1–23:35*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014. xxxix + 1157 pp. £39.99/\$59.99.

There has been much anticipation among Acts scholars for the subsequent volumes of Keener's commentary following the release of volume 1 in 2012. That Baker press has been able to publish volumes 2 and 3 in subsequent years is a tribute to their editorial team, especially as these volumes are generally well proofed. (As Keener notes in vol. 1, p. xv, the commentary was finished in 2007, but its publication was delayed due to changes in publishers.)

The commentary is structured on the narrative scenes of Acts with each section having numerous subsections that are broken down almost by verse. (Regarding this, the table of contents as well as the running headers are incredibly helpful for navigating the works.) Keener views Acts as a work of ancient historiography with an apologetic aspect (pp. 51–115, in vol. 1) and this perspective is defended throughout the work, particularly in the argument of Luke as an eyewitness of certain events of Paul's ministry (see the discussion of the "we" passages at 16:10, pp. 2350–74, vol. 3). This does not mean that Keener does not discuss narrative or theological features; he does, but the majority of his commentary seeks to situate the Acts narrative in its first-century social and historical settings.

Keener takes a fairly maximalist approach to historicity offering various reasons why certain events/details were included in the text. Each event is rated on a spectrum: very probable, probable (more probable than not), possible, plausible, improbable, and implausible (I did not see any example of Keener saying an event was "impossible"). One of the most common explanations for something to be included in Acts is that some memory of the event was preserved and retold within the Christian community. Thus, for example, Keener questions some of the traditional arguments for authenticity in the Acts 3 speech (see esp. p. 1079), although he does agree that the author of Acts had traditions of the early apostolic preaching. Additionally, Keener actively challenges the scepticism of some biblical scholars who doubt the veracity of certain reports in the text that cannot be verified by outside sources (e.g., Pilate's amnesty, pp. 1088–90). Keener rightly points out that many scholarly reconstructions of history are supported by singular references and that the biblical text has sometimes been treated too harshly. This, of course, is not an argument for accepting the event's historicity, but part of a larger methodological debate over how one handles and treats ancient sources and evidence.

Related to this discussion of historicity is Keener's engagement with scepticism over the existence of miracles and/or God's involvement in the world. In a number of places Keener provides modern parallels to argue that a miraculous event in the text could plausibly have happened. For example, Keener claims (p. 1044) that he has personally witnessed an elderly woman re-gain the ability to walk and that he knows people who saw someone come back to life through the prayers of believers (pp. 1712–13). Some might struggle with claims of personal experience as evidence for ancient miracles or that any such discussions have a place in modern scholarship. However, this is part of Keener's wider aim of challenging modern (especially western) scepticism and presuppositions towards supernatural



phenomena (pp. 320–82, in vol. 1; see further Keener’s *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts*, 2 vols. [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011]).

It is not possible to engage in depth with over 2,300 pages of detailed commentary in such a limited space. However, there are some notable themes that emerge in Keener’s work that warrant engagement. First, it should almost go without saying that the books are very large and can be quite heavy. This is in spite of the fact that the indices are not printed but given in CD form (regarding which, there are over 750 pages of indices: a four-page subject index; a 103-page index of modern authors; a 119-page scriptural index; a 232-page index of ancient sources; and a 297-page bibliography). Despite their size, it is worth acknowledging that the books are very reasonable in price and for this Baker deserves to be praised.

For such a substantial work it is sometimes surprising that there are items that are not thoroughly discussed. For example, though Keener regularly discusses Greek terms, there is little engagement with grammatical or text-critical issues. Similarly, Keener only sporadically discusses codex Bezae (the so-called “western text”) and does not reference the four-volume Bezae commentary by Read-Heimerdinger and Rius-Camps (which may not have been available to Keener when he was preparing the manuscript for his commentary). Likewise, there is little in the way of reception history or modern ideological approaches. Keener is well aware of these limitations (pp. 5–16, vol. 1) and, though acknowledging their validity, recognizes that it was best for him (along with the publisher and readers) that he limit himself to his areas of strengths.

In this regard, by far the greatest contribution of this commentary is its wealth of primary references. For every topic in the commentary Keener provides a litany of Greek, Latin, and Jewish sources that illuminate the passage and provide greater depth of insight. And while many would desire for even more discussion at points and some might question whether or not references to classical Athens are pertinent to discussions of first-century Jerusalem, there is no doubt that all readers will be spurred on to greater discussion and future investigations by the passages he cites. This aspect alone makes the commentary worthy of consulting for Acts scholars.

In addition to the substantial commentary, Keener provides extensive excurses (twenty in vol. 2 and eighteen in vol. 3) on related subjects (e.g., Samaritans, magic, Nabatean opposition, Greco-Roman baths, philosophical schools, etc.). Most of these entries are a few pages in length; however, some are very long and could be considered articles in their own right (e.g., slaves and slavery, pp. 1906–42). These entries are a real strength of the work as Keener provides detailed investigations on topics that not only directly impact our understanding of the Acts text, but provide a broad understanding of specific issues from an ancient perspective. As a result, they will be of use to anyone wishing to learn about these topics, regardless of their interest in the Acts text.

Overall, although it is a commentary aimed primarily at scholars, I would highly recommend these books for anyone interested in understanding the Acts text or the first century Christian context more broadly.

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John Kimbell. *The Atonement in Lukan Theology*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014. xi + 199 pp. £39.99/\$67.99.

In *The Atonement in Lukan Theology*, John Kimbell takes up a topic of perennial interest within Lukan scholarship: Did the author of the third gospel conceive of the death of Jesus as an act of atonement? For at least a century, many commentators on Luke and Acts have contended that Luke either denies, disregards, or otherwise downplays an interpretation of the cross as an atoning event. In response to this long-standing perspective, Kimbell presents an effective defense of the claim that the idea of atonement is an important facet of Luke's understanding of the death of Jesus.

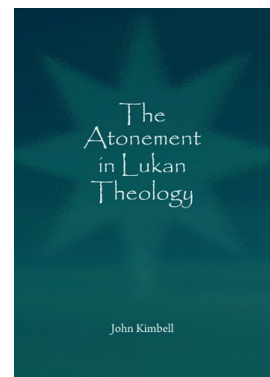
The first chapter of the book presents a brief introduction followed by a history of research on the atonement in Lukan theology. Perhaps because the literature on this topic is so voluminous, Kimbell is understandably content in this section simply to summarize the main conclusions of previous authors. Kimbell offers only occasional explanation of how interpreters have arrived at these alternative viewpoints, and he spends little time critiquing the positions of others. Nonetheless, the sweeping survey of scholarship does give the reader a sense for the extent to which interpreters have struggled to arrive at a consensus regarding the significance of the death of Jesus in Lukan theology.

Following this introductory chapter, Kimbell turns in the next chapter to the Lukan account of the last supper. An early textual variant leaves out the words of institution in Luke 22:19b–20, where Jesus interprets the bread and the wine with reference to his own body and blood. Therefore, Kimbell begins his discussion of the Lukan institution narrative by persuasively demonstrating that the words of institution are most likely original to Luke's gospel.

Having established the text of the passage, Kimbell proceeds to discuss the interpretation of the passage. The author argues that the words of Jesus draw upon the imagery of the Passover and the establishment of the covenant at Sinai in order to show that the death of Jesus will be an atoning event that will usher in the blessings of the new covenant. This section of the chapter is surprisingly brief, and one wishes that Kimbell might have developed his exposition of this passage a bit more. Instead, Kimbell moves quickly from the passage itself to a much more sustained argument for the significance of the last supper scene within Lukan theology, as subsequent passages in Luke 24 and in the book of Acts allude back to Jesus's final meal with his disciples. This is a point that has occasionally been debated, so the allocation of so much space to the issue is understandable. Still, Kimbell's treatment of the last supper in its immediate context seems a bit thin.

In chapter three, Kimbell turns to the passion narrative, arguing that Luke's account of the arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus contains a number of indications that the death of Jesus is an act of atonement that is being accomplished for the sake of others. Kimbell's exposition of the exchange of Jesus for Barabbas is particularly interesting, as is the discussion of the interaction between Jesus and the penitent criminal. Indeed, chapter three as a whole is well argued, appropriately paced, and exegetically insightful.

Chapter four takes up Luke's characterization of Jesus as the Isaianic servant. Here Kimbell wishes to demonstrate not only that Luke draws heavily upon the imagery and themes of Isaiah's servant songs in his characterization of Jesus and his mission, but also that Luke has an interest in the atoning nature



of the servant's suffering within Luke's characterization of Jesus as the Isaianic servant. While the first point is widely accepted, the second is more contentious. The matter is somewhat complex and depends upon a number of inter-related texts and issues. Consequently, this chapter of Kimbell's work moves at a very fast pace, because the author is forced to handle an overwhelming number of passages within a relatively short amount of space. Also, Kimbell never interacts with Ulrike Mittmann-Richert's *Der Sühnetod des Gottesknechts: Jesaja 53 im Lukasevangelium*, WUNT 220 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), a work with which he would certainly sympathize.

Chapter five is a catch-all chapter in Kimbell's monograph, where the author turns to a random assortment of remaining themes and passages from Luke and Acts which might demonstrate the importance of atonement within Lukan theology. Here the author discusses the themes of human culpability and divine judgment, the imagery of fire and baptism in Luke 12:49–50, the terminology of Jesus being "delivered" into the hands of men at various points in Luke's gospel, and the imagery of Jesus being "hanged on a tree" at Acts 5:30, 10:39, and 13:29. The discussion of divine judgment in particular is quite interesting, and this chapter allows the author to address a number of texts that have typically been a part of debates over the Lukan understanding of Jesus's death. The book contains a final chapter that briefly summarizes the main conclusions of the previous chapters, and there is a useful bibliography and scripture index in the back of the book.

Kimbell's work is a helpful contribution to the study of Luke's gospel. The writing is efficient and well structured, with little wasted space, and the author convincingly demonstrates that Luke has no aversion to the interpretation of the cross as a sacrificial death for the benefit of others. A particular strength of Kimbell's work lies in his sensitivity to scriptural resonances in Luke's portrayal of the death of Jesus, as Kimbell is eager to show how Luke draws upon the imagery of the OT to interpret the suffering of Jesus.

For all of these strengths, there are two areas where I believe that the book could be improved. First, Kimbell pays only passing attention to the first century milieu of Luke and Acts. Even as the author discusses the inter-related concepts of sacrifice, atonement, covenant, and forgiveness, the work exhibits very little engagement with the sources of early Judaism. Instead, Kimbell relies quite heavily upon NT parallels and OT cross-references to interpret the above concepts in Luke and Acts. Certainly NT parallels should be counted as relevant witnesses to Luke's literary and theological milieu, and the Scriptures of Israel were undeniably important in Luke's theological framework. However, there is also a wealth of relevant data from early Jewish sources that bears significantly upon the issues under consideration in this book. Luke's understanding of atonement must be contextualized within this broader first century setting.

A second limitation of Kimbell's volume is that it leaves more or less unaddressed two of the most commonly cited counter-points to his optimistic appraisal of the concept of atonement in Lukan theology. First, Kimbell does not provide an explanation for Luke's omission of the ransom saying from Mark 10:45 (cf. Matt 20:28), which is the one statement from Luke's sources that seems to speak clearly to the vicarious nature of Jesus's suffering. If the idea of atonement is central to Luke's understanding of the cross, then why does Luke choose not to preserve Jesus's statement about the Son of Man coming to give his life as a ransom for many? This has been the single most cited piece of evidence for the view that Luke lacks an atonement theology, yet Kimbell leaves this question unaddressed, except for a single footnote where he simply states that the rest of his work has proven that the omission of the ransom saying could not be due to a Lukan aversion to atonement theology (pp. 119–120n98). I suspect more

skeptical readers will be dissatisfied with this explanation. Similarly, Kimbell does not directly address the objection that the forgiveness of sins is never explicitly connected to Jesus's death in the evangelistic speeches of Acts. Again, this has been a central tenet of the overall viewpoint that Kimbell wishes to challenge. Various plausible responses to this objection have been proposed, and Kimbell's work would be strengthened by facing the main counter-points to his overall perspective more directly.

I have spent more space explaining my criticisms of Kimbell's work than praising the book's positive features, yet the proportions of this review must not be taken as a reflection of the book's merit. Kimbell's work is an enjoyable read and a valuable resource on an important topic, and interpreters of Luke's gospel will surely benefit from its contributions.

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Bruce W. Longenecker and Todd D. Still, *Thinking Through Paul: A Survey of His Life, Letters, and Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014. 408 pp. £28.99/\$44.99.

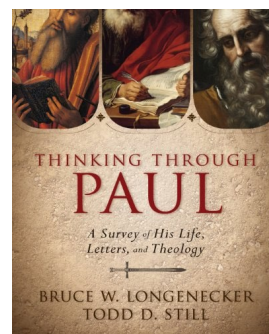
Thinking Through Paul is written for classroom use and contains many additional resources besides the book alone (a DVD overview, instructor's manual, sample exams and syllabi, etc.). The focus of this review will be the overall character of the book as well as contested areas in Pauline interpretation and issues of particular note for evangelical readers.

Part 1 (ch. 1) is a survey of Paul's life insofar as we learn of it from his letters and Acts. This chapter does a good job summarizing the textual details without getting bogged down in detailed scholarly debates about chronology. While the authors typically find Paul and Acts to be reliable, they do not operate under the assumption that these texts are without error (e.g., comments on Acts 22:3 on p. 26).

Part 2 (chs. 2–10) surveys each of Paul's 13 canonical letters. The authors' goal is to situate all of Paul's letters in their historical and social contexts and to provide the reader with a general overview of each letter. The majority of the material in these chapters is more or less a summary of the content of Paul's letters, presented in a fairly neutral fashion. The authors do not attempt to interact exhaustively with debates about special introduction (author, date, addressees, etc.).

Some conclusions the authors reach on the most heavily debated issues in Pauline studies are as follows:

- 1 Thessalonians is Paul's oldest letter (p. 62).
- We cannot know much about what Paul was referring to when he mentions eschatological events in 2 Thessalonians 2 (the "man of lawlessness," etc.) (pp. 77–78).
- Against some scholars, neither 2 Thessalonians (p. 80), nor Colossians (p. 223), is pseudonymous (p. 80). The authors do not, however, believe that the truthfulness of scripture is necessarily undermined if some Pauline letters are pseudonymous (p. 81). They are agnostic on Pauline authorship of Ephesians, inclining against it



(pp. 244, 258). Paul probably wrote 2 Timothy, but not 1 Timothy or Titus, unless he significantly changed his theology on certain points (p. 290).

- The authors are ambivalent about the debate over the North/South provenance of Galatians (p. 92).
- Paul's comments on the place of women in the church are morally mixed: even in the context of a single argument in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16 some things Paul says “are more informed by the gospel than others” (p. 126; cf. pp. 277, 290, 359). Although they claim not to be picking and choosing which bits of Paul's letters they will accept as normative for Christians today, it is hard to see how this is not indeed the case. One can attempt to deflect this criticism by claiming that Paul simply contradicts himself on moral issues (see e.g., pp. 290–91), but this does not solve the problem: what standard does a modern Christian use to determine which aspects of Paul's ethical system should be accepted today and which ones should be abandoned as mere ancient cultural prejudices?
- Canonical 2 Corinthians was originally two letters (chs. 10–13 written prior to chs. 1–9). The authors are fairly reserved in speculating how these two letters came together (pp. 146–48). Philippians is not a combination of originally separate letters (pp. 200–1).
- Junia (Rom 16:7) was a female apostle, presumably in the same sense that Paul was an apostle (p. 171n6).
- Regarding justification. In one place righteousness is defined in relational terms (e.g., p. 171 commenting on Rom 1:17: righteousness equals “right relationships of all kinds and dimensions”). However, when commenting on the phrase “the righteousness of God” (as in Rom 1:17; 3:21, 22; 10:3; etc.) the authors also argue that God's justice is “a part of what it signifies” (p. 174). Accordingly, they seem somewhat sympathetic to the intention behind the classic Protestant understanding of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer (pp. 174–75), even if they are also leery of the doctrine itself (e.g., pp. 175–76: “righteousness is not something that God simply dispenses or downloads”). They appear to accept Ernst Käsemann's definition of “the righteousness of God” as God's “saving faithfulness” (pp. 176–77). The authors incline toward reading the Greek phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ (Rom 3:22; Gal 2:16; etc.) as “faithfulness of Christ,” while also insisting that human faithfulness remains imperative as a response to Christ's faithfulness (pp. 312–15). In a related vein they propagate a mischaracterization of classic Protestant theology, namely, that it teaches that “justification by faith alone” means “justification by a faith that never produces works” (p. 314).
- The “I” of Romans 7:7–25 “is probably Paul's description of the situation of Jews who are not (yet) followers of Jesus” (p. 184).
- When Paul refers to the end-time salvation of “all Israel” (Rom 11:26) he has the entirety of ethnic Israel in mind (pp. 186–87; cf. pp. 324–26). In speaking of the ongoing status of Judaism the authors reject a dual covenant scheme (one way of salvation for Jews, one for Gentiles) as well as “replacement theology” (the church simply supplants Israel in God's saving plan).

- Regarding the question of “Paul and Empire” the authors note that although Paul can speak approvingly of certain benefits of Roman imperial administration (e.g., Rom 13:1–7), the Gospel he preached was in tension with much Roman imperial ideology and praxis (pp. 334–45).

Part 3 (chs. 11–13) is devoted to theological synthesis. The authors, employing the categories of J. C. Beker, conclude that apocalyptic deliverance in Christ is the major theme that gives coherence to Paul’s letters, while also emphasizing that Paul’s thought remains situational and contingent (pp. 299–304). The last issue discussed in the book is the nature of moral reasoning and decision-making in Paul’s letters. The authors maintain that self-giving love (patterned on that of Christ himself) is key. The actual ethical decisions one makes must flow out of this basic attitude.

Thinking Through Paul (and its accompanying materials) is a well-designed resource. It does a good job of summarizing Paul’s letters and introducing students to their historical and cultural background. It is not, however, a book that evangelicals committed to a classic Protestant view of scripture will likely want to use as a textbook without substantial qualifications regarding its understanding of pseudonymity, inerrancy, etc.

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J. Richard Middleton. *A New Heaven and a New Earth: Reclaiming Biblical Eschatology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014. 332 pp. £15.03/\$26.99

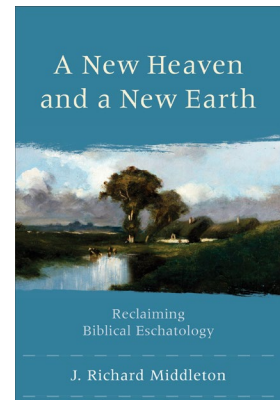
The author is Professor of Biblical Worldview and Exegesis at Northeastern Seminary. His previous publications include the work on the meaning and significance of the image of God in *The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005). In important ways, *The Liberating Image* provides the foundation for the present work under review.

The Church continues to talk about “going to heaven” as the final destiny of the righteous. “Heaven” is opaque to most of us, however; it conjures up vague ideas of clouds, angels, and immaterial, otherworldly, “spiritual” existence. How this squares with the concept of resurrection—a renewed physical body patterned after the prototype of Jesus’s own resurrection existence—is unclear. Why would we need a resurrection body, if “heaven” is going to be home?

Concerned with how muddled assumptions about the future distort life now, Middleton provides a radical alternative to “heaven.” The vision is nothing less than the hope of a cosmic renewal, of a redeemed and restored creation as the true destiny of the righteous.

The author’s stated purpose is to sketch a “coherent biblical theology (beginning in the Old Testament) that culminates in the New Testament’s explicit eschatological vision of the redemption of creation” (p. 15).

To accomplish this goal, Middleton has divided the book into twelve chapters and an appendix. In Chapter 1, “Introduction: The Problem of Otherworldly Hope,” Middleton raises the fundamental issue that he seeks to redress. He explains “what is wrong with the traditional Christian view of heaven



as final destiny” and then describes “the historical origins of this otherworldly idea in the innovative teachings of the Greek philosopher Plato” (p. 16). The Appendix, “Whatever Happened to the New Earth?” provides a sketch of “new creation” in the history of Christian thought. “The introduction and the appendix thus function as bookends for the main content of the study” (p. 16).

The body of the work consists of five parts. Part 1, “From Creation to Eschaton” (chs. 2–3), provides a “panoramic sweep of the biblical story of redemption” (p. 17). Part 2, “Holistic Salvation in the Old Testament” (chs. 4–6), argues that the OT testifies to God’s ultimate purpose to fulfill his original intentions for creation through flourishing human viceregency. Part 3, “The New Testament’s Vision of Cosmic Renewal” (chs. 7–8), argues that resurrection and cosmic renewal form the heart of the NT authors’ eschatological hope. In Part 4, “Problem Texts for Holistic Eschatology” (chs. 9–10), the author considers texts problematic for his thesis, while in Part 5, “The Ethics of the Kingdom” (chs. 11–12), he discusses its ethical implications.

Middleton is not alone in sounding the alarm and laboring to correct what he views as a dangerous misconception. The Appendix attests to a groundswell of recent interest in this topic. With the writings of such authors as N. T. Wright, G. K. Beale, and Randy Alcorn (as well as renewed interest in Ladd, Berkouwer, and Bavinck), holistic salvation has risen from the dead. The recent Gospel Coalition Conference held in April in Orlando featured “New Heaven & New Earth” as its theme, bearing further witness to this resurrection.

The book is well-written and well-organized. Several figures and tables break up the prose and provide visuals that help the reader to grasp concepts. The author’s passion for the subject infuses every page. The work is exegetically nuanced and theologically mature.

In thinking about areas that need further work, let me mention two. In Part 4, Middleton addresses texts that seem to call into question his paradigm of holistic and cosmic salvation. Many of these are passages that students have raised as I have attempted to set out a similar vision. Hoping for some help, I found the explanation of John 14:1–3 to be the least satisfactory (pp. 217, 228–29). While his proposed solution, “The Apocalyptic Pattern—Preparation in Heaven, Unveiling on Earth,” is suggestive, it does not answer all questions (see pp. 212–14). John 14:1–3 must be allowed to speak, lest we miss out on overhearing something important. I am as tempted as Middleton to run it over roughshod in my hurry to buttress my paradigm of new creation, but we must resist. John 14:1–3 refuses to be tamed so easily.

Second, in Middleton’s vision for resurrection life upon a renewed earth, he has overlooked the most significant reason for why we will dwell there (this same mistake is also made by some “heaven” proponents). Middleton stresses the cultural mandate and its fulfillment in the new creation, but this is not the ultimate goal of salvation. The ultimate goal is the glorification and enjoyment of the Triune God. At the aforementioned Gospel Coalition Conference, Dr. Scott Swain of Reformed Theological Seminary cautioned that, in our haste to correct misperceptions of heaven, we dare not lose the ultimate goal of the “Beatific Vision” (<http://resources.thegospelcoalition.org/library/your-eyes-will-behold-the-king-in-his-beauty-exploring-a-missing-element-in-earthy-evangelical-eschatology>). We have not been created to build culture to the glory of God, but to know and enjoy and see and glorify God, who also grants us the privilege to build culture to his glory.

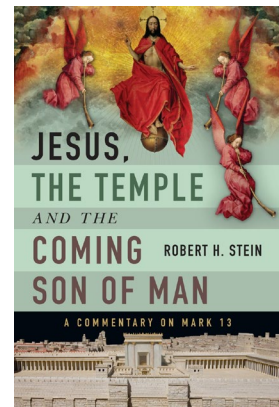
I strongly recommend this book. I agree with Donald Hagner, who, endorsing the book, wrote that “it could serve admirably as a basic textbook on biblical theology.” Yes, and so much more. If every

evangelical student from Anchorage to Addis Ababa would pick up and read, it could revolutionize global Christianity.

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Robert H. Stein, *Jesus, the Temple and the Coming Son of Man: A Commentary on Mark 13*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014. 160 pp. £11.88/\$18.00.

Robert Stein is a giant among evangelical scholars of the Gospels. Stein taught for over thirty-five years at Bethel University, Bethel Seminary, and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and has authored major commentaries on Mark and Luke and various books and articles on the Synoptic Gospels, the parables, the life of Christ, and hermeneutics. In his latest book, Stein combines his exegetical skill, clear communication, and mature theological reflection in a first-rate commentary on Mark 13, one of the NT's most difficult and debated chapters.



Jesus, the Temple and the Coming Son of Man begins with two chapters devoted to introductory matters, which are followed by five chapters of commentary; it concludes with Stein's interpretive translation of Mark 13, a thorough bibliography, and useful indices.

In chapter one ("Determining our Goal"), Stein deftly summarizes the first, second, and third "quests" for the historical Jesus, noting the key players, their presuppositions, methods, and aims. He acknowledges that Mark 13 has attracted more attention by source critics than any other similarly sized biblical passage, and he summarizes some of the main views and their drawbacks. Stein's own work "is based on a traditional, author-oriented hermeneutic and seeks to understand the meaning that the author of Mark 13 sought to convey to his first-century readers" (p. 38). Stein explains that Mark's audience was probably Greek speaking Gentile Christians who were familiar with Christian traditions and the OT.

Chapter two focuses chiefly on the genre and structure of Mark 13. Stein acknowledges various proposals for the genre of Jesus's Olivet Discourse (apocalypse, prophecy, testament, or farewell discourse) and concludes that the chapter is best understood as a historical narrative along with the rest of Mark. He then presents and interacts with six commonly proposed outlines of this chapter. Stein acknowledges that most scholars agree that the chapter addresses the temple's destruction and the Son of Man's coming, and the "basic issue involves which passages deal with the former and which deal with the latter" (p. 43). He outlines Mark 13 in five sections and devotes a chapter to each.

Chapter three addresses Jesus's prediction of the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in 13:1–4. Stein asserts that the disciples' two-fold question in v. 4 is "the key for interpreting what follows" (p. 61) and concerns the temple's destruction, predicted in v. 2.

In chapter four, Stein comments on Mark 13:5–23, which he understands as Jesus's answer to the question in v. 4 concerning the temple's coming destruction. Stein discusses eight significant proposals

for interpreting the “abomination of desolation” in v. 14 (pp. 85–93) and concludes (with Joel Marcus and Ben Witherington III) that it most likely refers to “the actions of the Zealots and their leaders, John of Gischala and Eleazor in A.D. 67–68, who were involved in numerous sacrilegious actions within the temple” (p. 92). While I found Stein’s argument persuasive, it is unfortunate that he does not discuss the possibility of multiple fulfillments of Jesus’s prediction in v. 14, first around A.D. 70 and finally at the end of history (cf. James Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark*, Pillar New Testament Commentary [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002], 395–400; Walter W. Wessel and Mark L. Strauss, “Mark,” in *Matthew & Mark*, Revised Expositor’s Bible Commentary 9 [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010], 925–27).

In chapter five, Stein argues that v. 24 introduces a new section of the Olivet Discourse that points beyond the temple’s destruction to Jesus’s second coming. He interprets vv. 24–25 as “poetic expressions of God’s actions in history” (p. 112), in light of similar imagery in the OT prophets. Stein’s exegesis is strong, but readers might want more reflection on what the cosmic language like “the stars will fall from the sky” positively signifies. Stein criticizes N. T. Wright’s influential view that “the Son of Man coming in clouds” (v. 26) refers figuratively to Yahweh becoming king, rescuing his covenant people from exile, and inaugurating a new world order when Jerusalem is sacked by Rome (*Jesus and the Victory of God* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997], 320–68). Stein reasons that while Wright resolves some problems (e.g., “in those days,” v. 4), he does not do justice to other Markan references to the Son of Man coming in glory and judgment.

In chapter six, Stein explains that the parable and two sayings in Mark 13:28–31 resume Jesus’s teaching concerning the temple’s destruction in vv. 1–23. He argues that ταῦτα (v. 29) and ταῦτα πάντα (v. 30) take up the same expressions in the disciples’ question in v. 4 and have the same referent. Thus, “this generation will not pass away” refers to the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in the lifetime of Jesus’s contemporaries. In an otherwise thorough treatment, Stein only devotes a little over one page each to the fig tree parable and Jesus’s controversial saying concerning “this generation.”

Chapter seven considers the parable of the watchman and the closing exhortation to be alert in Mark 13:32–37. Stein explains that the opening phrase “but about that day” indicates a shift in subject from the temple’s destruction back to the Son of Man’s coming, as in vv. 24–27. He reasons that Jesus’s difficult saying in v. 32 that not even the Son knows the hour “involves a very high Christology indeed. Jesus is not only distinct from humans and angels, he is superior to them and is uniquely God’s Son” (p. 131). The repeated appeal to “keep awake” indicates that Jesus’s earlier warnings against apocalyptic preoccupation and frenzy do not weaken hope but rather encourage believers to anticipate and pray for the Son of Man’s coming.

Stein concludes the commentary with an idiomatic translation of Mark 13, annotated with his explanatory comments. For example, he renders v. 4 as follows: “Tell us, when will *these things* take place, and what will be the sign preceding all *these things* [that will warn us that the destruction of the temple is about to take place]?” (p. 136).

Chapters 3–7 follow the same outline and interpretive approach presented in Stein’s *Mark*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 582–626. *Jesus, the Temple and the Coming Son of Man* includes additional bibliography, such as recent commentaries by Beavis, Black, Focant, Marcus, Wessel and Strauss, and key monographs by Adams, Chanikuzhy, Gray, and Pitre. The two introductory chapters and interpretive translation are completely new, and the commentary employs transliterated Greek and footnotes and appears to be moderately rewritten and expanded. Given Stein’s longstanding interest in redaction criticism (going back to his 1968 Princeton dissertation), it is somewhat surprising not to see

more discussion of the Synoptic parallels in Matthew 24 and Luke 21. Interested readers may consult Stein's article on Luke 21 in *SBJT* 16.3 (2012): 18–27.

Readers may quibble with some of Stein's conclusions or wish for more explanation in some places, but we may all be grateful for the author's lifetime of faithful scholarship on the Gospels. Pastors, students, scholars, and informed general readers can all benefit from this important book, which is the most thorough and helpful commentary available on Mark 13.

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Michael J. Thate, Kevin J. Vanhoozer, and Constantine R. Campbell, eds. *"In Christ" in Paul: Explorations in Paul's Theology of Union and Participation*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/384. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014. x + 577 pp. £96.15/\$150.00.

The preface to *"In Christ" in Paul* (ICIP) billboards the editors' hope that this volume will brook fresh avenues of research in the study of "union/participation" in Paul's letters (p. v). Kevin Vanhoozer's introductory essay—"From 'Blessed in Christ' to 'Being in Christ'" (pp. 3–33)—helpfully orients the reader to the compilation by articulating both its organizational strategy and *telos*. Organizationally, ICIP consists of three parts, building chronologically from "Pauline Theology and Exegesis" to "Some Highlights from Reception History" and concluding with "Theological Reflection." Teleologically, the volume seeks to deepen current discussions and to midwife new ones through detailed exegetical, historical, and theological investigations.

Part 1 hosts essays on "Participation and Faith in Paul" (D. Campbell), "Metaphor, Reality, and Union with Christ" (C. Campbell), "Incarnational Ontology and the Theology of Participation in Paul" (G. Macaskill), "Oneself in Another: Participation and the Spirit in Romans 8" (S. Eastman), "Real Participation': The Body of Christ & the Body of Sin in Evolutionary Perspective" (M. Croasmun), "Baptism and Union with Christ" (I. Morales), "Paul's Corporate, Cruciform, Missional *Theosis* in 2 Corinthians" (M. Gorman), "Paul and the Anxieties of (Imperial?) Succession: Galatians and the Politics of Neglect" (M. Thate), "Sharing the Heavenly Rule of Christ the King: Paul's Royal Participatory Language in Ephesians" (J. Jipp), and "Paul, *φρόνησις*, and Participation: The Shape of Space and the Reconfiguration of Place in Paul's Letter to the Philippians" (M. Thate). Not only is this section the lengthiest of the three, but it also contains the most avant-garde arguments and thus produces the most grist for further dialogue. Douglas Campbell, for instance, once again antagonizes the status quo in Pauline Studies by disavowing the legitimacy of rendering "faith" in Paul as a confessional designation. We need rather, he argues, to interpret it within a participatory frame, for only in so doing can we account for the "confessional, emotional, and ethical" nuances which it recurrently carries (p. 58).

Part 2 treats "Two Early Perspectives on Participation in Paul: Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria" (B. Blackwell), "Augustine and Participation: Some Reflections on His Exegesis of Romans" (D. Sarisky), "Apocalyptic Union: Martin Luther's Account of Faith in Christ" (S. Chester), "The Fatherhood of God



& Union with Christ in Calvin” (J. Canlis), “One with Him in Spirit’: Mystical Union and the Humanity of Christ in the Theology of John Owen” (T. Baylor), and “Karl Barth’s Reading of Paul’s Union with Christ” (K. Johnson). Though this section pays (shockingly!) disproportionate homage to the history of *Protestant* interpretation, the articles are well executed, by and large. The pieces by Blackwell and Canlis headline the bunch. Blackwell, extending his sterling research into the patristic characterizations of “participation,” lends credence to Richard Hays’s recently proposed “four models of participation” through careful examination of two figures: Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria. Canlis challenges the spate of publications highlighting Calvin’s conception of “union with Christ” by suggesting that this current absorption (and the in-fighting which it has generated) shrouds Calvin’s grander concern with adoption by the Father.

Part 3, lastly, takes what Vanhoozer describes as a “pastoral” turn (“From ‘Blessed in Christ,’” p. 12) with its analyses of “Fitting Participation: From the Holy Trinity to Christian Virtue” (A. Varma), “Participating in the Body of Christ: Christian Κοινωνία and the Lord’s Supper” (M. Patton), and “Until We Are One? Biopolitics and the United Body” (D. Singh). Singh’s piece is especially noteworthy. Building upon the limp averral that “union in Christ is a lived reality, a reality hazarded” (p. 529), he attentively examines “the discourse of the body and its links with concerns about contamination, tracing Paul’s language and the legacy it may have conveyed to modernity” (p. 539).

For all of its virtues, ICIP merits critique on several accounts. *First*, the book is undoubtedly cost-prohibitive. Several of the pieces in particular warrant wide circulation, but the expense will problematize the dissemination process and may hamper the book’s general impact. *Second*—and at the risk of pedantry—I found an unusually high number of typographical (e.g., “laubensverständnis” for “Glaubensverständnis,” “concerend” rather than “concerned,” “Theiselton” instead of “Thiselton” etc.) and formatting (e.g., missing italicizations, differing font types and sizes, straight rather than curly quotation marks, etc.) mistakes in the book. Not only is this distracting for the reader, but it will also prove provoking for those who fork over the small fortune necessary to acquire the volume. *Third*, it is surprising to consider the luminaries in the field who are *not* included in the collection (e.g., James Dunn, Morna Hooker, Stephen Fowl, or even more recently M. David Litwa). While I applaud the editors’ decision to create space for up-and-coming scholars, I nonetheless regretted not hearing from key figures who have had their finger on the pulse of the discipline for decades. I cannot help but wonder, moreover, if this might not undercut the editors’ aspiration to provide a “*substantial* new contribution” (p. v, emphasis added). *Fourth*, ICIP includes contributors from a narrow stream of scholarship. By my count, nearly half of the contributors have some past or present affiliation with Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, almost all were either raised or currently reside in the United States, and (perhaps most staggeringly) only *one* non-Protestant was included in the mélange. How might the study of “union/participation” in Paul be enhanced were it open to the critically constructive, constructively critical witness of the Other?

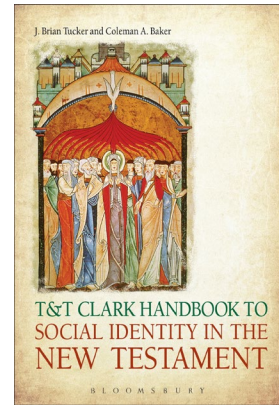
These critiques notwithstanding, ICIP is nevertheless a volume that anyone interested in the discipline will want to get their hands on. The authors’ thoughtful engagement with Paul’s “union/participation” motif from assorted vantages purchases long-term value for the collection. Moreover,

several of the more provocative essays in ICIP (e.g., D. Campbell's, Morales's, and Singh's) may well lay foundations upon which conference papers, journal articles, and even dissertations build.

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J. Brian Tucker and Coleman A. Baker, eds. *T&T Clark Handbook to Social Identity in the New Testament*. London: T&T Clark, 2014. xvi + 657 pp. £110.00/\$220.00.

Interdisciplinary methodologies within biblical studies have traditionally taken longer to gain traction than in the broader academy. The uptake of Social Identity Theory—a theory of identity based on group membership and differentiation from other groups—by biblical exegetes reflects this trend. Originally proposed in the seminal chapter by Henri Tajfel and John Turner (“An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict,” in *Psychology of Intergroup Relations* [ed. W. G. Austin and S. Worchel; Monterey: Brooks/Cole, 1979], 33–47) and its subsequent expansions, this psychological theory rapidly made inroads in the social sciences. However, the first known application in biblical studies had to wait until 1994 with Philip Esler’s BNTC paper on Matthew—only now published in this volume (pp. 147–72). Since then, engagements with this broad and robust psychological methodology have slowly gained momentum.



This volume stems from the interest in Social Identity Approaches (SIA) and seeks to provide a historical and methodological introduction along with concrete examples of application in a New Testament setting. The editors have gathered contributions from a wide variety of international scholars including established SIA scholars Philip Esler and Rafael Rodriguez. The book is organised into two major divisions: Part 1 dealing with Methodological Studies and Part 2 highlighting applications in Textual Studies.

The methodological section provides an excellent introduction to SIA and bridge for those with a prior understanding of SIA in other disciplines. Notable contributions here are Philip Esler’s history of SIA (pp. 13–40) and Coleman Baker’s integration of Social Memory and Narrative Theory with SIA (pp. 105–119). This section is rounded out with several essays investigating social features, such as ritual, that support SIA investigations.

The textual studies section seeks to provide several SIA applications to the biblical text with almost every New Testament book being covered—the Thessalonian letters being the notable exception. While the essays vary in quality and applicatory scope there is a high overall standard, and many essays provide nuanced insights into the chosen text. In this section Philip Esler’s paper on “Group Norms and Prototypes” in Matthew (pp. 147–72) is published for the first time, albeit in a revised form, and represents a robust example of applying Tajfelian Social Identity Theory methodology. Kar Yong Lim’s paper “If Anyone is in Christ, New Creation” (pp. 273–88) helpfully explores temporal aspects of SIA within the scope of 2 Corinthians. Jack Barentsen’s paper on “Stereotyping and Institutionalisation” (pp. 367–88) usefully picks up on a later SIA extension in stereotyping from S. Alexander Haslam, Penelope J. Oakes, and John C. Turner, *Stereotyping and Social Reality* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), while J. Brian

Tucker's paper on Philemon (pp. 389–407) provides insight on the issues surrounding multiplicity of competing identities.

This volume provides a broad perspective on social identity and as the editors note in their introduction they “have not attempted to restrict the ways scholars approach this topic.” While in many ways this breadth is laudable, it also contributes to an incongruity throughout the book. Although most contributors interpret Social Identity Theory as stemming from the work of Henri Tajfel and John Turner, some take a different approach. These papers apply a type of “socialised microsociological Identity Theory,” which can confuse the reader. But this confusion is not restricted to inter-disciplinary SIA applications, as even the psychologist Michael Hogg distinguishes the two theories as occupying “parallel but separate universes.” (Michael A. Hogg, Deborah J. Terry, and Katherine M. White, “A Tale of Two Theories: A Critical Comparison of Identity Theory with Social Identity Theory,” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 4 [1995]: 255.) This important distinction is often overlooked.

Throughout the methodology and application chapters many authors address key issues for the biblical and theological application of SIA. Questions such as the plausibility of constructing social models from orally derived texts and traditions, and the problems of identity salience within multiple overlapping identities, are investigated and preliminary solutions are proposed. Insightful essays from SIA stalwarts highlight key methodological concerns and pitfalls for newcomers to the field. Evidently these warnings and signposts are apt as even within this volume some papers seek to apply SIA in these ways. For example Esler notes that the nature of SIA is based upon the “social psychology of human groups in conflict” (p. 156). However some papers seek to apply Social Identity Theory in a static format, describing in-group factors, without any consideration of the inter- and intra-group conflict that forms the basis of SIA.

Finally while some authors in the volume recognise the broader scope of SIA, and include subsequent works by Hogg, Oakes, Haslam, and others, some papers simply apply the methodology as described in Tajfel and Turner's initial explorations. This unfortunate limitation of scope hampers the application of some papers as their methodology would have been strengthened and sharpened by the insights of the later Social Identity approaches. Nevertheless, as with many inter-disciplinary approaches, the techniques that are self-evident in the source discipline are often less than evident in the target discipline.

However, these issues are merely an indication of the burgeoning nature of SIA in biblical studies. Notwithstanding these, this volume successfully advances the methodology within biblical studies. It will prove invaluable for students and scholars seeking new insights into the biblical text, and also for those with a prior background in social psychology making the transition to biblical studies. This is already an important contribution to the field, and will serve as an excellent basis for further research.

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— HISTORY AND HISTORICAL THEOLOGY —

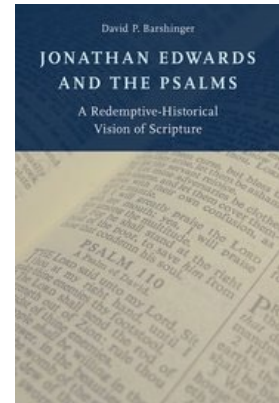
David P. Barshinger. *Jonathan Edwards and the Psalms: A Redemptive-Historical Vision of Scripture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. xiv + 470 pp. £47.99/\$74.00.

Jonathan Edwards is sometimes referred to as “America’s theologian” or is touted as the most important Christian thinker that America has yet produced. Often, he is portrayed as a philosophical theologian whose constructive thought marked a departure from the earlier Reformed tradition and opened the door for ongoing theological developments that continue to this day. While the former appellation may well be appropriate, and while there is some truth to the latter argument, scholars sometimes forget that Edwards was first and foremost a local church pastor whose main responsibility was to interpret the Scriptures to his parishioners.

Fortunately, several scholars in recent years have begun to advance a scholarly course-correction that grounds Edwards’s thought in his exegesis of the Scriptures rather than overemphasizing his philosophical speculations and theological innovations. Stephen Stein, Robert Brown, Stephen R. C. Nichols, and Douglas Sweeney are at the forefront of this line of argument; the latter has a forthcoming book that focuses upon Edwards as a biblical exegete. David Barshinger, whose doctoral studies were supervised by Sweeney, has offered an important contribution to this discussion with his fine monograph *Jonathan Edwards and the Psalms: A Redemptive-Historical Vision of Scripture*. The result is a signal study that provides a model for others interested in studying Edwards’s exegesis of particular books or sections of Scripture.

Barshinger argues that “in a world experiencing major epistemological shifts and liturgical challenges, Jonathan Edwards appropriated the Psalms as a divinely inspired anchor to proclaim the gospel and rehearse the redemptive-historical work of the Triune God” (p. 26). Though he could have chosen other books to study, Barshinger focuses upon the Psalms because Edwards preached from them regularly throughout his ministry, cited them frequently in his published and unpublished writings, and leaned heavily upon them in the religious psychology he developed in the midst of the revivals in New England. Concerning the latter, Barshinger argues Edwards “believed the Psalter was the premier book in Scripture for describing religious affections, and thus he used the Psalms regularly as a guide for authentic Christian piety” (p. 307).

Following an introduction that frames the book, Barshinger looks at the historical context of how the Psalms were interpreted by Reformed exegetes and other leading commentators from John Calvin to Edwards’s day. He then shows how Edwards engaged a variety of theological topics through the Psalms, including the doctrine of God, Scripture, theological anthropology, hamartiology, Christology, pneumatology, soteriology, sanctification, ecclesiology, and eschatology. Barshinger contends, “The Psalms functioned for Edwards as a progenitor and corroborator of doctrine” (p. 87). In each case, Edwards proves himself to be a creative theologian who was well aware of the intellectual currents of his day, but who nevertheless was principally concerned with commending historic Reformed theology for his contemporary context. His engagement of the Enlightenment was for the sake of offering a coherent apology for Reformed orthodoxy.



In emphasizing the redemptive-historical emphasis in Edwards's hermeneutic, Barshinger is not suggesting anachronistically that Edwards was part of a particular hermeneutical camp in contemporary evangelical debates. Rather, he is acknowledging the occasional nature of Edwards's theology and arguing that his way of theologizing more resembles biblical theological strategies rather than systematic theological approaches. The history of redemption was a topic close to Edwards's heart and, had he written a comprehensive theology, would have been the organizing principle of that work. Barshinger demonstrates that this redemptive-historical emphasis "propelled" Edwards's interpretations of the Psalms (p. 270) and allowed him to read the Psalms Christocentrically as a book for new covenant believers rather than simply interpreting them according to their presumed historical context. He also argues—and more could likely be said on this point—that Edwards was not a neo-medieval allegorizer who departed somewhat from Protestant hermeneutics, but was rather a Reformed theological exegete who offers a fruitful historical dialog partner for evangelicals (and others) interested in the Theological Interpretation of Scripture.

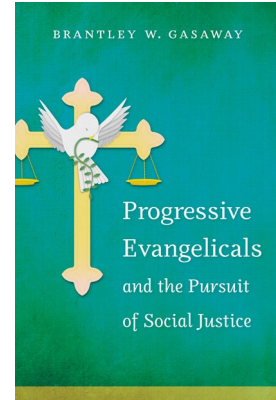
Jonathan Edwards and Psalms is a welcomed contribution to Edwardsean studies. Barshinger understands Edwards on his own terms as a Reformed theologian, but also concedes that Edwards regularly engaged Enlightenment thought for the sake of apologetics (especially related to biblical inspiration and authority). Furthermore, Barshinger shows how Edwards's redemptive-historical exegesis of the Psalms provides a helpful window into Edwards's doctrinal convictions, which is crucial for a theologian who never wrote a systematic theology. A helpful appendix lists all of Edwards's sermons from the Psalms, though Barshinger fortunately does not limit his own study to Edwards's sermons, an approach that provides a more fulsome interpretation of Edwards's engagement with the Psalter.

At times, *Jonathan Edwards and Psalms* still reads a bit too much like a dissertation; the introduction and conclusion especially read as if they came right out of Barshinger's dissertation, but with the obligatory "thesis jargon" removed. However, this should not prevent Edwardsean scholars, historians interested in the history of biblical interpretation, and even scholars and pastors interested in the Psalms from benefitting from Barshinger's excellent work. I hope Oxford University Press publishes a more affordable paperback edition of this book in the near future.

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Brantley W. Gasaway. *Progressive Evangelicals and the Pursuit of Social Justice*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014. xii + 324 pp. £23.95/\$29.95.

During the 1980–81 academic year I was a student at Fuller Theological Seminary. Ronald Sider came to campus to lecture, and a couple hundred students and faculty packed a room to hear him. The New Religious Right had just emerged in conjunction with Ronald Reagan’s first presidential campaign. During the Q&A, one student asked Sider what he thought of Jerry Falwell and the Moral Majority. To paraphrase, Sider said that after years of trying to organize and inspire evangelicals to get involved in politics, it was disappointing to see them finally doing so. The reason, of course, is that the New Religious Right took positions diametrically opposed to Sider’s progressive evangelicalism. Along with John Alexander, Jim Wallis, and some lesser lights, Sider is a major figure in Brantley Gasaway’s fine new book *Progressive Evangelicals and the Pursuit of Social Justice*.



This book makes up roughly half of the historiography of what can be called “progressive evangelicals” or the “evangelical left.” The other half is David Swartz’s *Moral Minority: The Evangelical Left in an Age of Conservatism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012). Hopefully, we will continue to see books of this caliber emerge as scholars study the wing of evangelicalism dwarfed by the Christian Right but still very significant. Using the 1973 Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern as his starting point, Gasaway focuses on three organizations: (1) Alexander and *The Other Side* magazine, (2) Wallis and Sojourners (both the magazine and community), and (3) Sider and Evangelicals for Social Action (ESA). Following chapters on the rise of the movement and the contours of its public theology, Gasaway organizes the rest of his book around six leading issues: racism, feminism, abortion, gay rights (including gay marriage), poverty, and war and peace.

There are two interesting and significant features of the movement that Gasaway probes. The first is the internal tension among his three organizations and their leaders. On war and peace, poverty, and racism the three presented nearly a united front. On abortion and gay marriage, however, *The Other Side* took the most progressive position, Sojourners stood in the middle, and ESA remained most traditional and evangelical. *The Other Side*, for example, focused primarily on abortion dialogue then gravitated toward a soft or implicit pro-choice position before finally dropping the issue in the 1990s. Sojourners opposed abortions morally and strategized on how to reduce them. Meanwhile, Sider and ESA worked for the reversal of *Roe v. Wade*. This left to right pecking order exhibited itself even more significantly on gay rights and gay marriage. *The Other Side* early on endorsed full affirmation of committed gay relationships; Sojourners argued for a biblically based heterosexual position until 2013, when Wallis personally came out in favor of legalizing same-sex marriage; while Sider and ESA argued throughout the period that the Bible supported sexual relationships only within the context of heterosexual marriage. Still, all three groups lobbied for civil rights for gays as a matter of public justice.

The second interesting and significant dynamic Gasaway probes is the relationship of progressive evangelicalism to secular progressivism. Here feminism was particularly at issue, especially for Sojourners and ESA. Because secular feminism holds abortion rights as the centerpiece of women’s rights, Sojourners and ESA were never completely on board. As Gasaway writes, “Even as they identified as feminists, progressive evangelicals never unreservedly endorsed the broader feminist movement” (p.

127). Likewise, while both groups argued for full civil rights for gays and even legal recognition of civil unions, their reluctance to affirm gay marriage put them at odds with the secular gay rights activism. This tension and at times opposition refutes the charge that progressive evangelicalism is but a mirror image of the Christian Right. Progressive evangelicals have consistently criticized their conservative counterparts by pointing out there is virtually no issue on which the Christian Right differs from the Republican Party. Progressive evangelicals have been especially critical of conservative evangelicals on issues of poverty, economics more broadly, and war.

There are at least two weaknesses of Gasaway's book. First, while Gasaway has read widely, deeply, and comprehensively in the literature published by progressive evangelicals, the book would be better had he been able to engage in extensive interviews. There is virtually no behind the scenes information or any sense of how painful, surprising, or disappointing key developments were for the leaders of these organizations. There are all sorts of inner dynamics one can pick up on when sitting across a table from historical actors that cannot be gleaned from the polished materials those actors publish. Because Gasaway's subjects are nearly all still alive and active, he did not have access to their letters and diaries. This makes interviews nearly indispensable.

The second criticism is less of Gasaway himself and more of our profession—scholarly history writing. The book takes the standard monographic form. Each chapter covers a particular part of the story over the time period 1973 to the present. While each is well organized and well written, by the third or fourth chapter the reader will be forgiven for thinking, "Okay, here we go again. 1973 and all that." The book would be more riveting if it had been done in a style where the author tells a story over the forty-year period with a narrative arc and full attention to the wider culture. This sort of writing is harder and takes longer, but it makes for books a non-scholarly audience is more likely to read. The problem, of course, is that most first books are revised dissertations, and dissertation directors and committees are often loath to allow the narrative style. This is a contested issue. Some say, traditionally, that history writing cannot or should not be narrative. I say it can be and should be.

Those criticisms aside, this is a good book and a must read for anyone interested in the subject. Any scholar or graduate student doing a research project on any aspect of progressive evangelicalism simply must read Swartz and Gasaway at the outset.

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Bryan M. Litfin. *Early Christian Martyr Stories: An Evangelical Introduction with New Translations*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014. 180 pp. £12.99/\$19.99.

Bryan Litfin, a professor of Theology at Moody Bible Institute, has created a helpful introduction to the phenomenon of martyrdom that would be suitable as an undergraduate text. The bulk of *Early Christian Martyr Stories* is Litfin's fresh translation of several key primary sources that provide evidence for the martyrdom phenomenon. He prefaces each of these translations with a brief introduction explaining the context of the source. He also provides helpful historical notes on the sources.

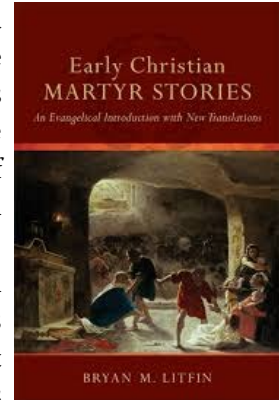
Litfin provides his reader with a chronological survey of the martyrdom phenomenon in a brief 175 pages. He begins with what he calls the Jewish martyrs from 2 Maccabees, who died in the 160s BC, and he ends with a sermon that Augustine of Hippo preached in the fifth century AD that shows martyrdom's legacy. Along the way, Litfin introduces his reader to some of the most famous martyrs from the early church: Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin, the martyrs of Lyons, the Scillitan martyrs, Perpetua, and some of the martyrs of Diocletian's Great Persecution.

Litfin also includes other documents that illuminate the martyrdom phenomenon. He provides excerpts from Tertullian's *To the Martyrs* and *Apology*; it is in the *Apology* that Tertullian coins the idea that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. Litfin also includes an excerpt from Origen's *Encouragement to Martyrdom*. These texts show some of the meanings that early Christians imputed to martyrdom. He even includes sources on the triumph of Constantine that signaled the end of persecution.

Litfin unapologetically writes from an evangelical perspective, and this perspective causes him to gently critique his sources at times. He reminds his reader that ransom theories of the atonement were common in the early church, but he rejects them. He also critiques Tertullian and Origen's tendency to see a martyr's blood as atoning for sin, though he confesses great admiration for their writings as a whole.

The translations in *Early Christian Martyr Stories* make the texts accessible for the average reader. Litfin has rendered the Latin and Greek into easy-to-read English, but some readers might find Litfin's style too colloquial. For example, in his translation of Polycarp's martyrdom, Quintus "took one look at the beasts and chickened out" (p. 57). Litfin's introductions err on the side of informality as well. He describes Christianity and Paganism as gunfighters in a western movie saying, "This town ain't big enough for the both of us" (p. 7), which might be colorful imagery, but it is not very helpful. Litfin himself admits that persecution was sporadic and localized, which means that in most cases a town was plenty big enough for both Paganism and Christianity. He also peppers his introductions with exclamation points and rhetorical questions of a devotional nature.

Even though this is an introductory text, I was surprised at some of the issues that Litfin dodges. I expected to see more discussion of what martyrdom actually is and where it came from. Litfin does not acknowledge that his choice to begin the book with 2 Maccabees is somewhat controversial. By beginning the book with the Maccabean martyrs, Litfin implies that martyrdom is a continuation of old covenant piety, but scholars have argued about the roots of martyrdom for decades. Some scholars have denied the Jewish roots of the martyrdom phenomenon, suggesting that it is a manifestation of



Roman ideals concerning noble death. Others have suggested that martyrdom is a uniquely Christian experience. Some third and fourth century bishops compared the Maccabean stories to Christian martyrdom, but similarity does not entail dependence.

Litfin follows his controversial first chapter with an interesting choice for his second chapter. In order to get from Maccabees to the more traditional stories of Ignatius and Polycarp, he includes excerpts from the *Acts of Peter* and the *Acts of Paul*. Litfin, however, admits that these somewhat heterodox sources were composed in the second century. If anything the letters of Ignatius and the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* influenced the creation of these texts, rather than the other way round.

I also found it surprising that Litfin chose not to engage the difficult subject of voluntary martyrdom. Litfin leaves out the most notable examples of Christians killing themselves in the name of Christ, and even when the included sources hint at voluntary martyrdom, he passes over it without comment. It seems that Litfin does not want to give his reader an opportunity to criticize the martyrs. Indeed, he continually describes them as “spirit-filled” and “grace-filled.”

On the whole, this book would make a good introduction to the topic of martyrdom for an undergraduate course on church history. However, students who want to dig deeper into the primary sources concerning martyrdom will still need to track down a copy of Herbert Musurillo’s *Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972). Musurillo offers twenty-eight of the earliest primary sources on martyrdom and includes discussions on context and transmission.

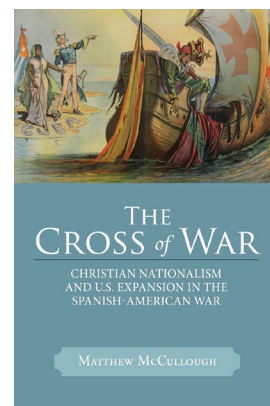
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Matthew McCullough. *The Cross of War: Christian Nationalism and U. S. Expansion in the Spanish American War*. Studies in American Thought and Culture. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014. Xiii + 200 pp. £25.50/\$29.95.

On 15 February 1898, the USS *Maine* exploded and sank in Havana Harbor. Hostilities between Spain and Cuban revolutionaries had been escalating for some time and the *Maine* had been deployed to Cuba to guarantee the safety of American citizens on the island. The *Maine*’s sinking led to the Spanish-American War, a war that lasted about ten weeks and resulted in a stunning American victory, a war that John Hay, United States Ambassador to the United Kingdom deemed “a splendid little war.”

In *The Cross of War*, Matthew McCullough argues that the war’s brevity belies its importance. Historians have tended either to study the Spanish-American War for its impact on diplomatic relations or overlook it because it ended quickly with minimal losses. In point of fact, McCullough argues that the war was vitally important for its far-reaching domestic and international implications. He makes a compelling case.

Initially, few wanted war with Spain, but Americans became increasingly horrified to learn of military atrocities in Cuba and the Philippines. At this point, McCullough maintains that American Protestantism became crucial to the war. Preachers from all denominations called for what he terms



“messianic interventionism,” the logic of which followed a standard format. If Christ died for the oppressed—and American missionaries had given ample testimony to the benighted state of people around the world—then it behooved “Christian America” to intervene on their behalf. It was a useful concept that tempered radical Americanism and anti-imperialists alike. After all, Americans wanted to extend democracy to the rest of the world. Who could argue with that? Further, American intervention amounted to an errand of mercy, not a plundering power grab. With such swift victory and minimal losses, few could deny that God appeared to be on America’s side.

In many ways, McCullough demonstrates that the “splendid little war” was also an “ironic little war.” Consider, for instance, the war’s healing effect at home as Civil War veterans watched soldiers from the north and south march off to war under a common banner. In the international arena, the war soothed a number of longstanding controversies between Great Britain and the United States even as American soldiers in Cuba and the Philippines were learning that a fine line separates liberator from oppressor. True, the war pitted Protestant America against Catholic Spain but even here, rival prelates managed to lay aside their differences and rally American Catholics to be Americans first. Through it all, African Americans could not help but experience their own special sense of irony. Jim Crow legislation and racism on the local, state, and national levels increasingly relegated African Americans to second-class status even as white America embarked on a mission to save the world with the same Jesus that African Americans preached. One might wish that McCullough had addressed this point in greater detail because his analysis begs the question, did the nation come together in the name of religion, racism, or both? He might also have delved deeper into “messianic interventionism” as it related to the Open Door Policy and the Monroe Doctrine. Perhaps he will develop these themes in his next work.

The Spanish American War also proved to be a “useful little war.” If McCullough is correct, “messianic intervention” actually synthesized religion and nationalism into one of the most powerful cultural forces America has ever known. Beyond the Spanish-American War, messianic interventionism helped frame America’s involvement in World War I, the war Woodrow Wilson claimed would make the world safe for democracy. It also helped furnish a rationale for America’s involvement in World War II, a war that would keep the world safe from Nazism/fascism.

In the eyes of most late nineteenth-century Americans, the world needed a messianic hope and the United States stood ready to deliver it. This is a story that McCullough tells well. Of course, that synthesis began to break down after World War II, with the United States and the Soviet Union emerging as global super powers, each with nuclear weapons. The Cold War precipitated a number of “police actions” where American service personnel engaged numerous foes, ostensibly to defend the downtrodden, even though foreign policy makers were more concerned about the “Domino Theory” than ultimate moral rectitude. By the twenty-first century, post-Vietnam Americans question whether or not America can engage an alleged enemy and claim any imperative apart from pure self-interest. Such issues are beyond McCullough’s immediate scope in *The Cross of War*, but readers will likely wonder.

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Hunter Powell. *The Crisis of British Protestantism: Church Power in the Puritan Revolution, 1638–44*. Politics, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015. 304 pp. £70.00/\$105.00.

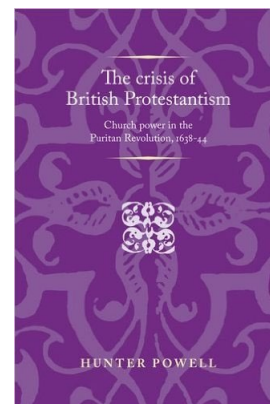
Paradigm-shifting books are not always received well. After all, the author usually needs to take apart a lot of current historiography in order explain why his/her case is more compelling than the arguments that have hitherto been advanced. Sometimes the shift is small; sometimes the shift is large. Good books receive good reviews; bad books receive bad reviews; and great books receive both. For that reason, I fully expect Hunter Powell's book to ignite a much-needed debate. It is hard to find a book that has taken such a close look at the ecclesiological debates, writings, and beliefs of some of Protestantism's most influential Puritan divines.

In the book, Powell shows that besides emerging in an intensely political context, Puritan ecclesiology was a highly theologized affair involving sophisticated Protestant scholastic distinctions used by Reformed theologians in an attempt to clarify the precise nature of power within the visible church. These distinctions ended up proving, among other things, that there were varieties of Presbyterianism as well as varieties of Congregationalism in England during the Puritan era.

As Powell notes, historians have continued to reappraise the ecclesiastical landscape of the English Revolution, building on longstanding, reductionist assumptions. This leads Powell to make the somewhat controversial, but important, contention that the “axiomatic binary conflict model of ‘presbyterian versus independent’” (p. 4) has led to monolithic and static categories, which unfortunately fail to do justice to the variety of ecclesiologies that emerged during the seventeenth century, even within the Presbyterian camp. Ironically, by creating theological heroes (and enemies!) modern Protestants have actually failed to do justice to just how brilliant, and flawed, the Puritans were. Powell's work shows that as important as Puritan divines were to modern Protestantism, they were nonetheless human actors, who could (and did) change their minds, based on the situation and when presented with compelling biblical arguments.

He rightly critiques previous work on the topic, such as J. R. De Witt, who did not believe that there was much diversity among English and Scottish Presbyterians (p. 200). Too often, theological historians have been led astray by “sensational” propaganda written by contemporary controversialists outside the assembly, or they read modern denominational or confessional assumptions back on their ecclesiastical forefathers.

Powell's book is the first to take a careful look at the *Minutes* of the Assembly alongside the understudied (and long) ecclesiological books written by the Assembly members. He untangles the exceedingly complex and erudite debates that took place between the Westminster divines. Powell gives us a framework for how to understand the *Minutes* and the men who wrote them. Robert Paul attempted to do this with a blow-by-blow account of the *Minutes*, but in doing so he introduced a whole host of false assumptions that still impact the way we think about the church. Powell's survey of how scholastic argumentation took place—something largely foreign to the modern reader—uncovers how many of our assumptions and beliefs of particular Puritans have been either wrong, or underdeveloped. Powell shows that there are moments in the Assembly that reveal the beliefs of Puritan divines, and there are



moments that reveal the debate has moved so far into scholastic dispute, that one must be exceedingly cautious in building a theological framework out of the complex, and well orchestrated, argumentative dance. For example, quite often a Puritan would argue his opponents' position in order to trick him into conceding an inconsistency. In the *Minutes*, this happens quite a bit, and it is not always clear when. Thus we see the importance of reading their personal diaries and writings alongside the *Minutes* of the assembly.

In order to shift the historiographical landscape to something more reliable, Powell discusses some highly specific theological debates in order to show just how intricate the topic of ecclesiology was for the Westminster divines in the 1640s. So, for example, regarding the keys given to Peter in Matthew 16:19 ("And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven"), whom did Peter represent? The views on this question in England during the seventeenth century were many, with even Presbyterians and Congregationalists disagreeing among themselves. A topic so fraught with confusion and complexity, the great Presbyterian historian Bannerman self-admittedly avoided it altogether.

Even so, Powell shows that some of the English Presbyterians were horrified by any power belonging to the people. Yet the Apologists (i.e., Congregationalists) "found sympathizers in men like Charles Herle who warned the assembly against the danger of pushing the denial of Peter's representing the faithful too far" (p. 74). As a result, some were caught between two extremes whereby if power does not belong to the people in some sense then the officers cannot represent the church, but on the other side lurked the Anabaptist danger ("member rule"). What we find is that these divines had beliefs that ran across this spectrum and changed depending on the particular topic at hand.

There was also the thorny question debated among Presbyterians and Congregationalists concerning the universal church. So insistent upon the primacy of the universal church were some English Presbyterians that they held that the universal church was the first subject of the power of the keys. Even Samuel Rutherford rejects this view, but it was current in England, according to Powell. As Powell notes, the English Presbyterians saw "all power as derivative from the Universal visible church, and therefore whether power trickled down to the particular congregation was not vital, in their mind, to a functioning Presbyterian government" (p. 80). This exposes a fascinating and overlooked notion that many English Presbyterians believe local churches did not need to have elders provided there was a presbytery overseeing those churches. In this way, many influential English Presbyterians retained their Prelatic tendencies and thus, from the perspective of the divines with foreign (i.e. continental) experience like the Scottish Presbyterians and Apologists, were standing outside the Reformed tradition.

In relation to the keys, the Presbyterians affirmed that the keys were given to the universal, visible church, which is represented in its officers. That explains their emphasis on the church as a national, political body, with the elders exercising authority over believers via synods.

By drawing in the transatlantic context, Powell reveals the massive influence the New England divine, John Cotton, had on both Presbyterians and Congregationalists, and indeed, continental divines. Turning received wisdom on its head, Powell shows that Cotton was not the radical separatist represented in modern historiographies, but someone who was regularly cited and praised by men like Gillespie, Rutherford, Calamy and a number of divines on the continent and was a central influence for Voetius's massive ecclesiastical tome, *Politicae Ecclesiasticae*.

Something needs to be said about the overall way in which the book reads. There is a lot of information offered by Powell. One gets the impression that he has mastered the sources, offers strong arguments, and does not simply rely on "block quotes" to prove his case. His analysis is acute, and budding scholars

can learn a lot from the flow of the argument in this book as they attempt to distinguish between a bona fide thesis and a simple summary of the facts.

In terms of criticism, there is no bibliography, which makes it more difficult for research, though, for those keen to dig a little, the footnotes are filled with all of the information one would need. Also, it would have been nice had the author drawn some wider connections to the 1650s. The influence on Owen, which is obviously there, for example, is not discussed. Thus the long-term implication of Powell's thesis is now a desideratum in Puritan studies.

In conclusion, Powell shows how seriously the Puritans—particularly the Westminster divines—took the church, and how carefully they thought about it. With the little regard our seminaries and churches give to this topic, it would be good for us to learn something more about ecclesiology in history. Personally, I would recommend spending the \$100 on the book mentioned above, especially for those Presbyterian ministers who take the Westminster Confession seriously. Others who wish to come to a better understanding on the robust theology embedded in the ecclesiology of the Puritans will find treasure upon treasure in this excellent volume.

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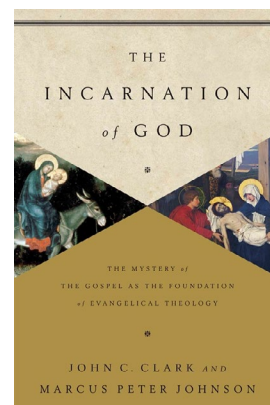
— SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY AND BIOETHICS —

John C. Clark and Marcus Peter Johnson. *The Incarnation of God: The Mystery of the Gospel as the Foundation of Evangelical Theology*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015. 255 pp. £14.99/\$21.99.

In this well written and in many ways splendid book the authors contend that “modern Christians” have neglected the incarnation. The focus of much theology and piety has been on the death of Christ. A coherent account of this supreme mystery, in its place at the heart of the gospel, has been missing. The authors are brilliantly clear in pointing out that a true knowledge of both God and humanity is to be sought in the God who comes to us in and as the man Jesus (p. 36). They apply this to union with Christ, redemption, the church and ethics. If the book fosters greater appreciation of the wonder of the incarnation and so to the assertion of the primacy of the *person* of Christ in salvation and theology, it will have done immense service.

The argument follows closely the thought of T. F. Torrance; it reminds me of repeated discussions I had with James Torrance, my PhD supervisor, back in the seventies. As such it has all the towering strengths of Torrance's theology together with its weaknesses.

I will focus my comments on chapter 4, which addresses the question of what kind of humanity the Son of God assumed. The thesis is that for Christ to identify with us in our fallen condition, it was necessary for him to have a fallen human nature. By assuming humanity in its fallenness he redeemed it from where it actually is, otherwise he could not have saved us in our actual state as fallen human beings. This is akin to the teachings of Edward Irving and Karl Barth, as well as Torrance.



This argument is a protest against all tendencies to docetism. An unfallen nature, it is held, would mean his humanity was not a real one for it would be detached from the world in which we find ourselves. Rather, Christ acted in redeeming love from within our own nature, sanctifying it and offering it up to the Father.

The authors cite Gregory of Nazianzus's famous dictum "whatever is not assumed cannot be healed" to argue that if Christ did not have the same nature as ours we could not be saved. However, Gregory wrote this against Apollinaris who claimed that the incarnate Christ did not have a human mind. Gregory was opposing an ontological claim, not asserting an ethical one. The authors, following Torrance, add other patristic citations in support. I consider, like Douglas Kelly (*Systematic Theology* [Fern, Scotland: Mentor, 2:310–313]), that these refer to the full humanity of Christ in contrast to claims of a heavenly body, one without a human mind, or the like. They oppose ancient heresies on ontological grounds rather than support modern ethically oriented ideas to which they could not be privy.

The argument paints an appealing picture of Christ living a sinless life within the precise conditions we are in, healing our humanity from within, so achieving a complete and thorough deliverance for us. Like Irving, Barth, and Torrance, the authors defend Christ's sinlessness vigorously (p. 121–22). Indeed, they argue that his triumph is *magnified* by his living a sinless life from out of the depths of our own fallen nature.

There are a range of problems with the claim. At best, it entails a Nestorian separation of the human nature from the person of Christ. The eternal Son—the person who takes humanity into union—is absolutely free from sin but the assumed humanity is fallen. If that were to be avoided, another hazard lurks; since Christ's humanity never exists by itself any attribution of fallenness to that nature is a statement about Christ, the eternal Son.

The authors do not consider biblical passages that tell against their views. Romans 5:12–21, crucial for understanding Paul's gospel, is not mentioned. If Christ had a fallen human nature it is unavoidable that he would be included in the sin of Adam and its consequences. In short, he could not have saved us since he would have needed atonement himself, if only for his inclusion in the sin of Adam.

The authors state that Christ assumed flesh "*corrupted by original sin in Adam*" (p. 116, italics original). He took a humanity "ruined and wrecked by sin" (p. 119), "corrupted human nature bent decisively toward sin" (p. 121). He healed the nature he took from us (p. 117). In this they acknowledge that a sinful nature and original sin are inextricably linked and that Christ himself needed healing. Such a Christ cannot save us for he needed saving himself.

Christ's healing of human nature happened from the moment of conception (p. 121–22). He was without sin. Thankfully this obviates the problem mentioned in the previous paragraph but simultaneously it destroys the argument for it means Christ's humanity was *not entirely like ours* after all. Indeed, a citation of John Webster follows, in which he emphasises that Christ does not identify with us to the extent of being a sinner, has "a peculiar distance" from our own performance, does not follow our path, and has an "estrangement from us" due to his obedience (p. 122–23).

The book's argument can be turned on its head. For it to be sustained Christ should have a *complete* identity with fallen human nature and be a sinner. In this case he really would have been just like us. This Clark and Johnson, quite rightly, find unacceptable. A line has to be drawn somewhere.

Throughout, the authors oppose the idea that Christ took into union a nature like Adam's before the fall. However, this is not the only alternative. Reformed theology has taught that Christ lived in a state of humiliation, sinless and righteous but with a nature bearing the consequences of the fall in its

mortality, its vulnerability and its suffering—but not fallen. Furthermore, the NT witness is that the incarnation is a new creation, the start of the new humanity, not a re-pristinization of the old. Christ is the second Adam, not the first. In the position the book opposes I fail to recognize the classic Reformed Christology.

The authors' premise is that anything other than a fallen nature would diminish Christ's identification with us in *our* humanity. However, a fallen nature is intrinsic to a *fallen* human being but it is not definitive of, but incidental to, a *human* being.

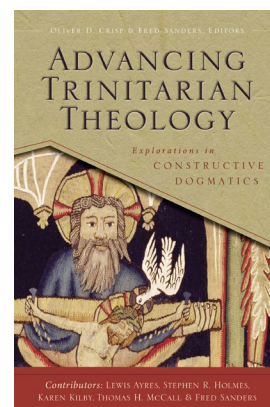
While the book's emphasis on the atoning *life* of Christ correctly integrates the atonement with the incarnation (cf. *Heidelberg Catechism*, 37) we miss the *repeated* stress in the NT on atonement being achieved by the *blood* of Christ, his life laid down in death. Instead of "redemption by his blood" (Eph. 1:7) and reconciliation by the death of the Son (Rom. 5:9–10) these realities are established "within the being and life of our Mediator" (p. 128). In seeking to correct a problem the book is in danger of presenting, in a phrase of R. P. C. Hanson's, redemption by a kind of sacred blood transfusion.

There are sweeping references to "modern Christians" throughout the book—who have consistently got it wrong. The tone is strident. The historical positions are painted as heretical, versions of what Torrance called "the Latin heresy." Yet the putative antidote is itself a modern idea. Attempting to correct a perceived imbalance the authors have set up one of their own.

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Oliver D. Crisp and Fred Sanders, eds. *Advancing Trinitarian Theology: Explorations in Constructive Dogmatics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014. 198 pp. £14.99/\$26.99.

Dogmatic theology in recent years has been marked by a flurry of activity with respect to the doctrine of the Trinity. The so-called "Trinitarian revival," led first by Barth and Rahner and carried on by Robert Jenson, Colin Gunton, and others, was the center of a great deal of interest and the foundation for a number of constructive proposals about the nature of the church, creation, personhood, politics, and more. Parallel to this movement, there has also been the analytic theology movement (see, for example, the work of Alvin Plantinga and Michael Rea) which uses the tools of analytic philosophy as a foundation in order to bring greater clarity and additional resources to the issues of dogmatic theology. But with the turn of the twenty-first century came a number of theologians, particularly those familiar with the figures essential to the fourth- and fifth-century formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity, who scrutinized both the Trinitarian revival and the analytic methodology with greater and greater concern. Among those involved in this reexamination of the historical roots of the doctrine of the Trinity, the works of Lewis Ayres (*Nicaea and its Legacy: The Doctrine of God in Scripture, History and Modernity* [Oxford: OUP, 2006]) and Stephen R. Holmes (*The Quest for the Trinity: The Doctrine of God in Scripture, History and Modernity* [Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012]) are representative in their depiction of the



early trinitarian tradition and in the contrast they draw between the Church Fathers and the great majority of modern trinitarian thought.

The relatively sharp turn from “revival” to “counter-revival” for one reason or another has not resulted in a charitable dialogue between the various players. Contemporary theologians have been dismissive of the recent re-evaluation of various Patristic figures and the essential elements of this tradition. Analytic theologians have derided the presuppositions that guided earlier thinkers and the accompanying ‘appeal to mystery’ and analogical modes of thinking. And historians have been for the most part concerned with identifying the earlier tradition and its most important elements while distinguishing it from various modern proposals. A more generous, and also more constructive, dialogue has been needed. The recent publication of *Advancing Trinitarian Theology*, which collects a number of the presentations of the 2nd annual Los Angeles Theology Conference, represents a significant step forward in this direction as it brings together a number of important theologians working from traditional, analytic, and more contemporary perspectives.

Recent scholarship on the doctrine of the Trinity has clustered around a number of distinct but interrelated doctrines, and this volume contains at least one essay related to each of the important conversations. Following Fred Sanders’s introductory essay, which provides orientation for the rest of the volume, Tom McCall’s essay examines the doctrine of divine simplicity from the perspective of analytic theology. In contrast to a number of analytic theologians, McCall has an appreciation of the doctrine born of his respect for the tradition of the church’s teaching: “I find implausible the notion that virtually the entire church was so wrong—and, if the critics are right, so *obviously* wrong, and so obviously and *devastatingly* wrong—about something so central” (p. 43). He then advances an argument for a modified form of divine simplicity. Lewis Ayres’s chapter on the logic of divine simplicity within the early church offers a fine contrast to McCall’s contribution. Both commend divine simplicity, but Ayres presents a significantly different understanding of how the doctrine functions, a point he makes with direct reference to McCall (p. 104). Ayres also suggests, quite significantly in this reader’s estimation, that there are elements of the patristic tradition which resonate with the concerns of “social trinitarianism” (p. 103n9).

Steve Holmes’s essay on “Trinitarian Action and Inseparable Operations” is an excellent summary of a doctrine which was essential to the reasoning of the first formulators of the doctrine of the Trinity but has been understood by contemporary theologians as opaque at best and misleading at worst. In line with his recent work, Holmes presents the doctrine of inseparable operations as one of a handful of doctrines which stands “in need in our context of retrieval and re-presentation to be rendered comprehensible and plausible in our culture” (p. 61) and the argument which follows fills this need in a clear and concise fashion. Darren Sumner’s chapter on “Obedience and Subordination in Karl Barth’s Trinitarian Theology” touches on a particularly controversial modern conversation: the relation between the Father-Son relation with respect to the immanent Trinity on the one hand and in the history of the Son which takes place in the economy on the other. Sumner gives an excellent window into the kind of insights which inform Barth’s work at this crucial point in his thought, and the essay provides a window into the kinds of dogmatic decisions Barth made which distinguish him from the tradition which comes before him, and why he made those decisions. Sumner also applies this argument to the current discussion of the nature of the Son’s subordination, an increasingly concerning conversation among evangelical scholars of the Trinity.

Special mention should be made of Karen Kilby's essay, "The Trinity and Politics: An Apophatic Approach." This contribution is to be commended first for the constructive contribution it provides from a more apophatic perspective, though Kilby acknowledges that her suggestions are relatively modest. But the real value of the essay can be seen in the intriguing and incisive analysis Kilby provides of the argument advanced by Miroslav Volf in his landmark essay, "The Trinity is Our Social Program." The close reading of this essay Kilby provides is noteworthy not only for its charity but also in her attention to why Volf's argument has been so influential:

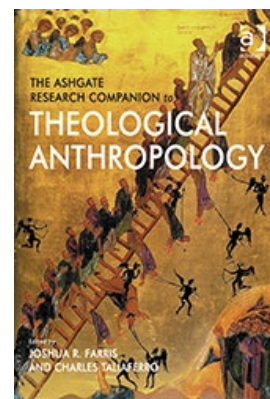
Kathryn Tanner suggests that the trinitarian concepts just happen to be well adapted to the kinds of political questions that currently preoccupy us, and this explains why the Trinity is in recent years such a popular site of political theology. This is right, I think, but not the whole story. There is also the enticement of having such an elusive, even paradoxical concept to work with; something like perichoresis, a notion that we don't really understand, has, precisely *because* it is paradoxical, elusive, and not really understood, a distinct flexibility. (p. 83)

Not all the essays are as strong as those already mentioned. In particular, R. Kendall Soulen's application of the book-length argument made in his *The Divine Name(s) and the Holy Trinity* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011) to the current debate about Barth's understanding of the Trinity and election seemed a bit too ambitious to be captured in the space he was given. But that does nothing to subtract from the overall value of this fine collection of essays. *Advancing Trinitarian Theology* is to be commended as an excellent constructive contribution to the current discussion surrounding the doctrine of the Trinity and represents a commendable effort to move the conversation forward.

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Joshua R. Farris and Charles Taliaferro, eds. *The Ashgate Companion to Theological Anthropology*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015. xix + 384 pp. £90.00/\$149.95.

There are few areas in theology where the sciences so directly impact the discussion than theological anthropology. As psychology, brain science, and sociology push forward the conversation in their own fields, philosophers and theologians work on parallel issues. In many cases, these discussions are had independent from each other, and, maybe more often than we would like to admit, they are ignored entirely. As a theologian, I can certainly understand this. Few fields seem more difficult to access than psychology. Nonetheless, in theological circles, anthropology seems set to be rethought, and it seems ready for a higher-level integration discussion. With James K. A. Smith's work raising questions about affective anthropology and liturgy, to David Kelsey's unwieldy *Eccentric Existence* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009), it seems that anthropology is coming to the fore of the current theological imagination. Furthermore, with questions concerning integration (particularly between theology and psychology), spiritual formation, and



liturgy/ecclesial formation, there is a greater need for deeper treatments of what human personhood and formation entail.

Farris and Taliaferro have put together a volume that seeks to further this conversation with what is, as far as I can tell, the best starting point into questions concerning anthropology. In particular, they have done a good job of bringing together voices from theology, the sciences, and philosophy to write about theological anthropology from within the confines of their own disciplines. To do so, the volume develops through seven sections. After an introduction, serving mostly as an overview to the volume itself, the first section offers two chapters on methodology. From there, the second section addresses the sciences and anthropology, while the third looks at various models available in the literature. The fourth section looks specifically at the *imago dei*, whereas the last three sections address human nature and freedom, sin and salvation, and Christological theological anthropology respectively. It should be obvious, at first glance, that each of these sections deserves an entire volume. This is certainly true. The goal of this companion is not to offer a holistic construction of each of these themes and approaches, but to navigate the field so that the reader is aware of the discussions and how certain scholars are engaging in argumentation. Incredibly, the essays do this in a short amount of space. Some of the essays do this well and others struggle to make an argument within such tight confines. But I personally found the length of the essays helpful (not too much and not too little).

If I could offer one critique, keeping in mind my praises, it is that this volume is so broad it can feel, at times, like it lacks focus. There are so many different proposals, issues, and methods employed throughout that it doesn't feel as though the volume goes anywhere. This may not be a problem, but it is worth noting. The opposite side of that issue is that the volume does not have too broad an *agenda*. It seeks, rather, to present the broad scope of the field and allow the reader to become acquainted with the positions through their proponents. This focus seems to parallel the goal of the companion series, which assume that one is already working in a field, either as a graduate student or scholar, so there isn't, on paper, any need to map the field of research and key issues and schools of thought. That said, because the field of theological anthropology reaches so widely across several disciplines, it would have been helpful to have a section that focused on mapping key developments in the field in one's area of research. It would have proven instructive, I think, to see the parallel movements in psychology, philosophy and theology (for instance). In a discussion like this, furthermore, it would have been helpful to see the editors' own angle on the topic, clearly leaning more on the philosophical theologians than dogmatic theologians. Overall, I think the editors put together a helpful volume that is entirely unique. Christian graduate students in these disciplines will be served as they work through it, and professors will find helpful essays for class preparation to familiarize themselves with current argumentation for a variety of views surrounding anthropology.

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Thomas O’Loughlin. *The Eucharist: Origins and Contemporary Understandings*. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015. xvii + 229 pp. £19.99/\$34.95.

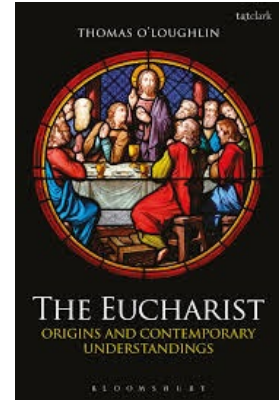
Thomas O’Loughlin wants to completely recontextualize our understanding of the Eucharist, and is willing to step “on several toes” to do this (p. 201). He calls us to recognize that the Eucharist is a meal of praise directed to the Father. This, rather than questions of transformed elements, sacramental presences, or validly ordained/authorized personnel needs to drive our approach to the meal that stands at the heart of the church’s memory of Jesus.

O’Loughlin begins by directing our attention to two basic and related facts. First, the Eucharist is an action before it is a concept or theory (pp. 10–17). Rather than parsing theological distinctions and abstractions, we must attend to what Christians are *doing* when they practice the Eucharist if we wish to understand it. Eucharistic theology arises to give expression and explanation to, as well as justification for, eucharistic practice. Second, the action in question is a meal (pp. 61–144). It is this latter point that proves to be of central concern to O’Loughlin’s vision of a renewed understanding (and practice!) of the Eucharist.

This twofold recognition of the Eucharist’s nature stems from a consideration of eucharistic origins, which O’Loughlin shows to be marked by plurality of both practice and outlook (pp. 1–10). No one form of eucharistic practice should become the norm for all others, insists O’Loughlin, for they all reflect the contingencies of history, which is not a straightforward march of positive developments. Instead there are wrong turns, dead ends, false starts, and regressions. While this is probably a helpful and needed introduction into the murky territory of early Christianity, Evangelical readers may find O’Loughlin’s overall cynicism regarding the extent to which we can know what Jesus actually said and did, including his assessment that the Last Supper is a construction of Christian communities in search of a reason for their already extant meal practices, difficult to swallow (pp. 7, 149–150).

Chapter two returns to the idea that the Eucharist is, above all, an action. Taking as his starting point the etymology of the term “Eucharist” (thanksgiving), O’Loughlin argues, persuasively, that the action of the Eucharist consists in giving thanks to God the Father for his blessings (pp. 42–59). The recognition that the Eucharist is an act of thanks and praise directed to the Father through the Son is salutary. Unfortunately, O’Loughlin contrasts this perspective with a Christocentric view of the Eucharist (see below). If we make the Eucharist Christ-centered, he argues, it becomes an individualized, fearful affair (pp. 28–42).

Chapters three, four, and five, which represent the heart of the book, are its strongest. In them O’Loughlin analyzes the Eucharist from the perspective of the phenomenology of meals. To share meals is to be human and vice versa, for this practice sets us apart from the other animals, is basic to our existence, and depends upon the entire interconnected web of human life and labor. By the time food reaches one’s table, the whole of society more or less has had a hand in getting it there (pp. 105–18). And O’Loughlin insists that we see the Eucharist as continuous with this basic feature of who we are as human creatures. It is not an otherworldly event, but rather a real shared meal (or at least it should be). That our memory of Jesus is fed in a common meal says much about the Christian vision of our relationship with God and with one another, as all the elements that make for the phenomenon of meal become expressive of God’s design for human thriving (pp. 123–44).



The final chapters chart O’Loughlin’s prospectus for a renewed Eucharistic practice. Where the first chapters were descriptive, he now becomes prescriptive, insisting on a proper meal (rather than a tokenized ritual) for those who wish to be faithful to Jesus’s memory (pp. 152–56). This meal should involve blessing addressed to the Father, and the sharing of a single loaf and common cup (pp. 159–76). The loaf and cup allow us to behold the unity of the people gathered in Christ, which is precisely one of those things for which we are to thank the Father. This meal should involve the real sharing of food, not only within the event, but also beyond it in the daily lives of believers, from which the Eucharist should not be considered separate. In this way, the community is faithful to and keeps alive the memory of Jesus (pp. 176–79).

Generally, O’Loughlin is helpful in that for which he advocates. A common loaf and cup do best depict the unity of Christ’s body the church. The Eucharist should be recognized as praise directed to the Father. Where O’Loughlin falters, though, is in what he denies. The choice between Father-directed and Christ-centered is a false one. Christ is the mediator between God and humanity, and to be centered on Christ is to be brought by him to the Father. In his insistence upon loaf and cup, he seems to have fallen into the hair-splitting insistences upon “validity” for which he shows very little patience elsewhere (e.g., pp. 32, 141–43, 158). This is related to what I perceive to be the book’s most significant shortcoming. Though O’Loughlin is helpful in that to which he directs our attention, his tone regarding positions with which he disagrees is invariably condescending. Not only is it condescending, it tends to caricature these viewpoints into the most absurd forms they could possibly take, thereby distorting them beyond recognition. For all his calls to attend to practice, and his recognitions of the plurality found at the meal’s origins, O’Loughlin’s outlook is fairly myopic. He notes the phenomenology of the meal, especially Greco-Roman symposia, but dismisses the ritual form the sacrament has taken over the vast majority of the church’s sojourn.

A more ambiguous criticism of the book is its eschewal of traditional questions regarding the Eucharist. For instance, the question of real presence is dealt with, dismissively and in passing, in the span of two pages (pp. 141–43). Because O’Loughlin’s agenda in the book is to shift our attention away from such abstract questions to the *action* of the Eucharist and its character as a meal, it is understandable that he would not treat these traditional concerns, and it would be unfair to insist that he do so. However, the fact that he declines to treat them means that the book’s utility as an introductory text is quite limited. Whatever merits his proposals have, the fact remains that answers to these sorts of questions are still sought, and often needed. Simply telling people that they are asking the wrong question strikes me as the wrong approach.

O’Loughlin’s *The Eucharist* deserves to be read, but probably needs to be a supplementary text to the work of other contemporary scholars like Andrew B. McGowan (*Ancient Christian Worship: Early Church Practices in Social, Historical, and Theological Perspective* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014]), and Louis-Marie Chauvet (*Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence* [Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1994]), both of whom adopt similar approaches and perspectives, but with a greater balance of concern and presentation.

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Jason Robert Radcliff. *Thomas F. Torrance and the Church Fathers: A Reformed, Evangelical and Ecumenical Reconstruction of the Patristic Tradition*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014. xx + 228 pp. £18.00/\$28.00.

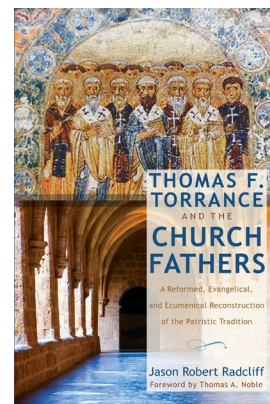
T. F. Torrance loved the church fathers, especially Athanasius. His works include a number of detailed studies on patristic thought, focusing on such themes as the doctrine of grace and biblical hermeneutics. Citations of the fathers also pervade his constructive theological writings, bringing patristic wisdom to bear on matters as diverse as epistemology, modern science, and ecumenical dialogue. Perhaps the crown jewel of the Torrance corpus, *The Trinitarian Faith* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), written after his retirement from the University of Edinburgh, provides an extensive treatment of the doctrine of God in the thought of the church fathers. Torrance's entire career testifies to the fact that he immersed his thinking and writing in patristic theology.

A careful study of Torrance's theological relationship with the church fathers has been much needed, but the task has been daunting, requiring a thorough command not only of Torrance's thought but also of a vast landscape of patristic literature. Jason Robert Radcliff has risen admirably to the challenge in this volume, based on his 2013 doctoral dissertation at the University of Edinburgh. The result is an accessible, engaging, and well-researched resource that will be of benefit to scholars of Torrance and patristic theology alike.

Radcliff observes that Torrance's account of patristic theology is often overlooked by scholars or simply dismissed as an anachronistic misinterpretation. As such, it has not received the recognition that it deserves as a project of theological reconstruction and ecumenical rapprochement. Torrance did not seek to produce a work of church history or historical theology, but rather a beneficial theological conversation between traditions separated by time but united in their faithful witness to Christ. He offers, in short, a reading of the church fathers shaped by the commitments and interests of Reformed evangelical theology. As Radcliff puts it, "Torrance interprets The Fathers as a theologian and a dogmatician rather than as a patrologist." This means that Torrance is able to offer new insights into patristic theology "by bringing fresh questions to The Fathers and attempting to imaginatively reconstruct their answers in order to explore their relevance in his own theological context" (p. 56).

To demonstrate the helpfulness of Torrance's lifelong reconstructive project, Radcliff compares it to past and present interpretations of patristic thought. In the first chapter (pp. 1–24), Radcliff presents a historical overview of past Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestant readings of the *consensus patrum*, the theological tradition common to the church fathers. He argues that the Reformed tradition since the mid-twentieth century has for the most part ignored the church fathers, a symptom of both liberal ambivalence toward early church teachings and of fundamentalist biblicism.

However, the church fathers are currently being rediscovered, as Radcliff notes in the second chapter (pp. 25–53). Radcliff observes that many young evangelicals are converting to the ancient traditions of Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy, particularly due to appealing counter-cultural elements such as the liturgy, sacramentalism, and monasticism (p. 31). He argues that such conversions are unnecessary, and that they are unfortunately grounded in a false notion of an ecclesial "golden age" which must be reprimed, as well as in the mistaken view of the converts that it is "impossible to retrieve the life and work of The Fathers within their own Protestant traditions" (p. 38). In contrast



to these converts, Torrance does not identify the substance of the Christian faith so inextricably with ecclesial culture, and thus enjoys the riches of patristic theology from within the evangelical tradition.

Radcliff also analyzes the use of the fathers in the emerging church movement, which “often misunderstands them completely,” for “rather than allowing the ideas of the classical Fathers to guide them, the emergent church is basically guided by their own eclecticism and idiosyncrasy” (p. 44). Lastly, Radcliff mentions the approach of paleo-orthodoxy, which reads “Western, Protestant, Augustinian theology back into Fathers who were not always Western, Protestant, or Augustinian,” whereas Torrance attempts to read the fathers “on their own terms” from within his Reformed evangelical theological context (p. 49).

In the third and fourth chapters, Radcliff turns to Torrance’s unique version of the *consensus patrum*. In chapter 3 (pp. 54–111), he notes that Torrance attempts to “indwell” the writings of the church fathers, in order that their biblical reasoning may become his own. Torrance then attempts to apply their reasoning to dogmatics. Radcliff refers primarily to *The Trinitarian Faith* throughout the chapter as it is the mature product of this indwelling (p. 57). In brief, summarizing sections Radcliff explores Torrance’s patristic reasoning regarding a wide variety of theological themes and fields, including Trinitarian theology, Christology, pneumatology, ecclesiology, sacramentology, asceticism, and epistemology. Radcliff rightly identifies the core principle of Torrance’s *consensus patrum* as the concept of *homoousion*, which Torrance uses to reconstruct and deepen the *solus Christus* affirmation of the Protestant Reformers. The Son who is one substance with the Father is alone the true incarnate revelation of who God is in eternity, and truly acts as God reconciling human beings to himself (pp. 66–70).

Chapter 4 (pp. 112–158) analyzes Torrance’s view of differing streams of thought that run through church history. Centrally important is the “evangelical stream,” which features theologians and movements that “best captured the inner structure of the Gospel” (p. 114). This stream primarily belongs to the Nicene and Reformed traditions, as well as to Karl Barth, who inherited both and synthesized them, bringing “the Trinity back to the forefront of theology and so returning modern theology to classical theology” (p. 117). Other streams, such as Augustinianism, present dualist conceptions of cosmology, epistemology, and soteriology that must be confronted and corrected, according to Torrance.

The final chapter (pp. 159–181) explores the ecumenical purchase of Torrance’s *consensus patrum*, particularly in relation to Torrance’s involvement in dialogue between Reformed and Eastern Orthodox churches. Radcliff argues that “the most unique element of Torrance is that he remains decisively Reformed while objectively appropriating the Greek Fathers” (p. 178). As such he stands as an example of a theologian who is robustly Reformed, catholic, and ecumenical in thought.

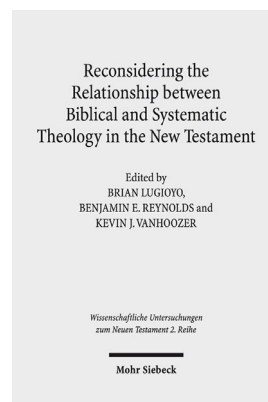
In the book’s conclusion (pp. 182–99), Radcliff recommends that evangelicals appropriate and continue Torrance’s reconstructive project. However, certain elements of the project should be dropped. One such element is Torrance’s constant search for problematic dualisms in Christianity, which causes him to over-simplify and reject out of hand certain thinkers and traditions (p. 193). Another is his lack of interaction with secondary texts on patristic theology, and thus his lack of transparency “about his filters for reading The Fathers” (p. 194). Radcliff is correct on both these counts.

In summary, this volume presents an excellent analysis of Torrance's thought and wise encouragement to drink deeply of the well of past tradition.

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Benjamin E. Reynolds, Brian Lugioyo, and Kevin J. Vanhoozer, eds. *Reconsidering the Relationship between Biblical and Systematic Theology in the New Testament: Essays by Theologians and New Testament Scholars*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/369. Mohr Siebeck: Tübingen, 2014. viii + 308 pp. £83.85/\$97.00.

What is the relationship between biblical and systematic theology? Are they disciplines related sequentially, one necessarily following the other; or, are they parallel disciplines which, starting with the biblical text, gather theological data only to arrange such data according to different sets of criteria? This volume brings together NT scholars and theologians who are interested in the intersection of biblical and systematic theology. The essays are composed by students of Robert H. Gundry as a kind of *festschrift* paying tribute to his influence. Appropriately, then, the guiding question taken up throughout the volume is Gundry's own: "Ought systematic theology to dominate biblical theology, or vice versa? Or ought they form a partnership of equals, or go their separate ways?" (p. 1). Relying on either a particular exegetical issue or contemporary theological topic, the essays themselves wrestle with the relationship between biblical and systematic theology, while their authors, in tribute to Gundry, thoughtfully interact with the guiding questions posed by their former professor.



The volume is divided into three parts: Part 1 (pp. 7–38) introduces the theme of the volume with two essays. Benjamin Reynolds offers some introductory observations in his chapter "The Relationship between Biblical and Systematic Theology in the Work of Robert H. Gundry." Reynolds outlines Gundry's legacy of rich NT research with sensitivity to the questions of systematic theology. Following Reynolds's opening survey, Kevin J. Vanhoozer offers his own sketch of the relationship between systematic and NT theology in his essay, "Is the Theology of the New Testament One or Many?" Vanhoozer charts the history of this relationship considering five case studies of how biblical and systematic theology find their relation in the work of Thomas Schreiner, Ben Witherington III, G. K. Beale, Michael Bird, and in the recent biblical theology by Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum. Reacting to his colleague's version of the relationship, Vanhoozer argues "Carson is not against systematic theology *tout court*, but he blesses it with faint praise only: 'What is transparently clear . . . is that its organizing principles do not encourage the exploration of the Bible's plot-line, except incidentally. The categories of systematic theology are logical and hierarchical, not temporal'" (p. 24). Quoting Carson, Vanhoozer continues, "I do not think that systematic theology is necessarily 'a little further removed from the biblical text' than biblical theology" (p. 24). Vanhoozer concludes, "Systematic theology is not simply a second step that follows biblical theology; rather, it is a partner in the exegetical process itself" (p. 38). I think the disagreement between Vanhoozer and Carson gets at one of the central issues—the prevailing assumption that biblical theology as a historical-exegetical discipline is necessarily closer or perhaps truer to the text.

Part 2 (pp. 41–153) contains five essays composed by NT scholars considering the intersection between biblical and systematic theology. Mark Strauss's essay, "Christology or Christological Purpose in the Synoptic Gospels," focuses on the degree of unity between the synoptic accounts of Jesus. He notes, "This challenge of unity and diversity is particularly acute with reference to the various Christologies of the NT" (p. 41). Rather than presenting hopelessly distinct Christologies, or a merely evolutionary ("history-of-religions-school") or developmental Christology, Strauss concludes that the Synoptics contain a messianic, implicitly "high," Christology which sets the foundation for later Trinitarian reflection (p. 61).

Reynolds's second essay reflects on the history of interpretation of John 6, considering whether one should understand the imperative to eat and drink Jesus's flesh and blood in light of the Eucharist. His essay helpfully wrestles with whether or not "systematic theology or biblical theology 'should dominate the other' or whether they should 'form a partnership of equals'" (p. 80). Though Reynolds ultimately concludes that the language of John 6 is not Eucharistic, he argues for the "hand-in-hand" relationship of biblical and systematic theology. Roy Kotansky compares the differences between 1 Corinthians 15 and the Gospel narratives as they list the individual witnesses to the resurrection ("The Resurrection of Jesus in Biblical Theology"). The formative question for Kotansky is whether one should harmonize such accounts for the sake of a uniform biblical theology, or if biblical theology is better served by merely appreciating the complex portrait of the resurrection as reflected in the tension. He concludes: "Systematic theology can only come about when the details of historical exegesis, coupled with the source-critical analysis of even the smallest literary units within our available records, are first exiguously carried out" (p. 104). Thus, rather than mutual partners, the relationship is more of a one-way street from historical-critical exegesis through biblical theology to systematic theology.

Judith Gundry's essay, "Anxiety or Care for People?," reaches a similar conclusion. After a close reading of 1 Corinthians 7:32–34, she concludes that because of Paul's eschatological concerns he addresses the theme of striving for the benefit of others vis-à-vis one's marriage commitments. Reflecting on the implications of her study upon the relationship between biblical and systematic theology, Gundry asserts that historical-critical exegesis must be the starting point for any good interpretation of scripture such that scholarly investigation must have priority over theological reflection and application. J. Webb Mealy offers a final essay taking up the Christian theological commitment of reading biblical passages in light of a greater unity ("Revelation is One: Revelation 20 and the Quest to Make the Scriptures Agree"). He contrasts his own reading of the text with that of G. K. Beale and notes that "each of us brings an external agenda to the passage" (p. 135). The result is that two different theological approaches to the text are thrown into sharp relief—one a rubric focused on amillennialism (Beale) and the other focused on premillennialism (Mealy).

Part 3 (pp. 157–271) contains five essays composed by systematic theologians considering the influence of the NT on the task of systematic theology. In "James, 'The Book of Straw,' in Reformational Biblical Exegesis," Jennifer McNutt considers the complex and nuanced appreciation of the authority of James within the exegetical work of both radical and magisterial reformers. Though Luther judged James critically for its "urging works alone apart from faith . . . its neglect of Christ and the chaotic organization of its topics," the reformer nonetheless appealed to James in a number of ways in order to support his theological convictions (p. 172). It was Luther's conviction regarding the unity of the text of Scripture that enabled him to be critical of James while at the same time relying on James where it aligned theologically with other texts. McNutt sees "a level of partnership between text and theology . . .

in the practice of Reformation exegesis . . . rooted . . . in one's hermeneutical assessment of scripture and the value, above all, of the unity of the text" (p. 176). In a second essay, Vanhoozer contrasts Classical and Evangelical Calvinism in their respective understanding of union with Christ ("The Origin of Paul's Soteriology: Election, Incarnation, and Union with Christ in Ephesians 1:4 [with special reference to Evangelical Calvinism]"). After considering Evangelical Calvinism's claims for ontological union with Christ for all, Vanhoozer argues in favor of the Classical view that union with Christ is reserved only for the elect who have been incorporated into Christ's person and work through faith—concluding, with Gundry, that "older is better." Brian Lugioyo considers how exegesis and theology are necessary for understanding how the text speaks to contemporary issues of neuroscience ("Ministering to Bodies: Anthropological views of *Sōma* in the New Testament, Theology, and Neuroscience"). Roger Newell challenges what he considers "sentimental exegesis" bound up in pre-tribulation rapture eschatology-escapism ("Instead of Sentimental Exegesis: The Significance of Suffering for Christ and his Church"). And finally, Gary Deddo offers an insightful outline of T. F. Torrance's theological method ("T. F. Torrance on Theological and Biblical Studies as Co-Servants of the Word of God, Living and Written"). Deddo argues that aligned properly with God's work of revealing himself and reconciling humanity to himself, "biblical studies and theology may very well be reconciled while still offering distinct but overlapping . . . service" (p. 271). This is followed by a postscript written by Stan D. Gaede and an appendix listing in full Robert Gundry's publications. The volume also includes a brief foreword written by close friend and present Robert H. Gundry Professor of Biblical Studies at Westmont College, Tremper Longman III.

The volume itself focuses on a clear question (the relationship between biblical and systematic theology), yet individual essays posit this relationship in various ways (the relationship between NT theology and Systematic theology; unity and diversity in the NT; biblical studies and theology; biblical and systematic theology; text and theology). Indicative of the wide range of possible construals of the relationship, this diversity is true to the current state of the discussion. Revealing too is the fact that some essays implicitly reject the relationship as a "partnership of equals" (Kotansky concludes that theology is beholden to historical exegesis; Judith Gundry understands that the historical-critical method is largely uninterested in questions of modern relevancy) or only register the question of the relationship as an add-on question to an otherwise unrelated research question (Strauss only mentions the relationship in his opening paragraph failing to return to it directly).

Other essays are more successful in integrating exegetical or theological study into the larger question of the volume. Mealy's essay on Revelation and Reynolds's second essay on John 6 are good examples of balancing careful exegetical and reception-historical investigation with probing methodological questions regarding the relationship between biblical and systematic theology. Several essays in the collection echo Vanhoozer's judgment that biblical and systematic theology must truly walk together hand-in-hand in order to penetrate the text's meaning. Thoughtfully representing a variety of perspectives, this collection contributes to the ongoing Christian reflection on the Bible's unity and contemporary relevance in light of the academic disciplines of biblical and systematic theology.

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Kevin J. Vanhoozer. *Faith Speaking Understanding: Performing the Drama of Doctrine*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014. xvii + 278 pp. £20.99/\$30.00.

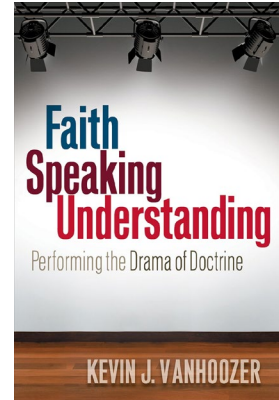
To assess this book properly, we must begin by referencing Vanhoozer's previous work *The Drama of Doctrine*. While there are points of contact between the works, *Faith Speaking Understanding* is neither a distillation nor popularization of *Drama of Doctrine*. The author suggests that it is better to view this volume picking up where the previous one left off and yet targeting a different audience. But while the book does not require the same background knowledge of theological arguments about doctrine and theology, it is not necessarily a lighter read.

In Part 1 Vanhoozer lays out his premise. First, Christian doctrine is not dry information that is mentally assented to but disconnected from daily life, but rather serves as directions in how to enact the Christ-life faithfully. Second, the role doctrine has in the life of the church can be best articulated through the use of theater and drama as an extended metaphor. Recognizing the uniqueness of the dramatic metaphor for addressing doctrine and church practice he makes a case for the fitness of dramatic concepts for capturing what should be the dynamic relationship between doctrine and practice in the church. Most importantly, theatrical language draws out what is often lacking in doctrinal education: the necessity of living out the faith, of "performing" what we believe. Church and humanity are caught up in a drama in which the Divine Dramatist invites audience participation. Fitting participation involves faithfully enacting "what is in Christ," a key phrase throughout the book. (He also addresses concerns with the use of the theatrical metaphor both here and in an appendix).

What follows in Part 2 might rightly be considered a dramatic theology in outline, bearing many of the marks of systematic theology in that the following chapters canvass the main theological loci, though in an admittedly distinct manner: theological anthropology, Trinity, Scripture, Christ and salvation, and church.

To begin, Vanhoozer presents the malaise that is the contemporary crisis of identity and authenticity and offers what could be called a theological anthropology of incarnational communicative action. It is communicative action that defines being and it is in Christ that both divine and human communicative action reach their apex. Christ is the authentic divine-human actor and we are most authentically human when we act as he did.

In what may be the most challenging section of the book for many readers, Vanhoozer roots the drama of redemption in the Trinity. That is, "God's mighty work in the history of redemption enacts the perfections of God's inner life" (p. 74). Both in eternity past in himself and in his action in the drama, God has been involved in self-communication. The interaction of the Father and Son in eternity past—sharing glory, life and love—corresponds to their relationship in time. Here Vanhoozer delves into the question of the divine decree, giving it a dialogical twist by discussing it first as covenant between Father and Son regarding the plan of redemption and their respective roles. This *pactum salutis* roots the substance of the drama of redemption in the divine relationships before the world began. From there he depicts the mission of the Father's sending of the Son as an instantiation in time of the eternal procession of the Son. This is the view of the drama "from above."



In the same chapter Vanhoozer also considers the drama “from below.” The divine drama can be seen as a series of entrances and exits or moves between heaven and earth. Though brief, some of his comments on the relationship between heaven and earth here offer a much needed corrective to the simplistic ideas that often hold sway. But it is also here where Vanhoozer weighs in on the structure of the biblical drama and how one ought to divide it. He interacts with the proposals of N. T. Wright (5 acts: Creation, Fall, Israel, Jesus, Church), Samuel Wells (5 acts: Creation, Israel, Jesus, Church, Eschaton), Craig Bartholomew and Michael Goheen (6 acts: Creation, Fall, Israel, Jesus, Church, Eschaton). Perhaps not surprisingly, he chides them for never considering what constitutes a dramatic act. He proposes a five-act drama in which each act centers on a key action in the outworking of the divine decree. His acts, therefore, are: Creation, Election of Abraham/Israel, Sending of the Son, Sending of the Spirit, Return of the King; a noticeably more theological rather than strictly narratival organization. Both here and in the discussion of the *pactum salutis* one can begin to see the role that covenant plays in Vanhoozer’s understanding of the plot of the drama. Before closing this key chapter, he sketches his conception of the plot of the drama in such a way as to weave together the themes of covenant, kingdom and courtroom.

These foundational matters set, he moves to consider how the Christian should act in light of the nature and direction of the drama. In short, the Christian’s call is to put on Christ, to act out Christ. Here he addresses the question of whether this dramatic model encourages “faking it.” He exploits acting theory to suggest that true acting involves inhabiting the role as totally as possible. Here, too, he addresses the ministry of Word and Spirit in forming the actors.

Two more chapters engage directly with the church and its dramatic role within and without. Church practices such as catechesis, confessions, and the creed are for the purpose of rehearsing doctrine and preparing for performance outside the church. Key elements of his practice are reconciliation, fidelity (especially in marriage), generosity, and hospitality. He also addresses the Lord’s Supper at some length as a particularly dramatic moment in the church’s performance of the Gospel. With reference to its acts in the world, Vanhoozer steers the church away from thinking it exists to effect redemption in the world toward a call to proclaim that redemption has come. The church does this through careful improvisation on the biblical and doctrinal themes rather than mere repetition. This improvisation is constrained principally by checking it against Christ.

Most readers will find something to quibble with either in the dramatic metaphor or in the theological content. At various points this reader wished that the book was either longer or shorter. Several issues could have benefitted from greater development and other pieces seemed repetitive. Since the emphasis is on “rehearsal” and “performing” one might have expected more reflection on the spiritual disciplines such as prayer and fasting.

It is a bit difficult to say if readers will find this work practical and helpful. While there is little doubt of the author’s immense creativity and freshness of thought, sometimes this surplus of creativity threatens to undermine clarity and succinctness. Each reader will have to decide if the dramatic metaphor works at the broadest level, but it seems clear that dramatic language and concepts do offer new and poignant ways to speak about doctrine and the performance of the faith.

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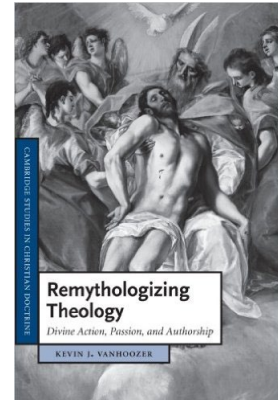
Kevin J. Vanhoozer. *Remythologizing Theology: Divine Action, Passion and Authorship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. £79.99/\$144.99.

The work of Professor Kevin Vanhoozer of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School is well known and highly regarded. Those who have an opportunity to dip into this major contribution from his pen will immediately understand why. His depth of engagement with a wide range of authors, his creative synthesis of biblical, theological and philosophical insights, his penetration through to the core substantial issues and his determined faithfulness to the word which the living and speaking God has given us, are all on display in this important book.

The title is deliberately provocative. ‘Remythologizing’ suggests a turning back of the clock before the contribution of Bultmann and the liberal theological agenda which dismissed so much of what is depicted in the Bible in their search for a symbolic or existential meaning for modern human beings. Yet Vanhoozer is adamant: ‘Remythologizing is not a “fall back into myth” but a spring forward into metaphysics’ (p. 27). It is true that he exposes the limitations of the project associated with Feuerbach and Bultmann, though it is clear he has read those with whom he disagrees with a great deal of sympathy. Yet he doesn’t simply return to an older ‘classical theism’ either, as if the concerns of Bultmann had never been expressed or the Protestant recovery of the doctrine of the Trinity associated with Barth had never happened.

The first of the three parts of the book opens up a survey of the landscape that provides the biblical ground and demonstrates the theological value of what he calls ‘triune communicative theism’ (p. 37). He briefly touches upon a succession of key moments in the unfolding biblical narrative where ‘the economy of triune communicative interaction’ is most clearly on display (Gen 1:1–3; 18:22–33; Exod 3:13–15; 33:7–17; 34:5–7; Job 38:1–4; Hos 11:8–9; Mark 15:33–4, 37; John 1:14; 12:27–30; Rom 8:15–6; Heb 1:1–3) and then draws out important conceptual implications (the active voice of God, anthropomorphism, the Creator-creature distinction, the covenant Lord-servant relation, the economic and immanent trinity, time and eternity). He explores a range of major theological approaches, including the Trinitarian turn and such things as ‘open theism,’ while along the way raising serious questions about ‘the Hellenization thesis’ associated with Harnack and others. He characterises the new orthodoxy of the early twenty-first century as a ‘kenotic-perichoretic relational version of theism and panentheism’ in which (1) the divine persons are seen in not substantial but *relational* terms; (2) God’s love for the world is seen as *perichoretic* relationality; and (3) God’s suffering is seen as a necessary consequence of his *kenotic* relatedness (p. 140).

Vanhoozer’s own creative proposal comes in the second part and makes use of the insights he has gained over the past three decades, most particularly associated with speech-act theory and a performance model of theological method. ‘The way forward,’ he writes, ‘beyond relational theism or panentheism and back to something more like classical theism, is to think through God’s love, and being, in terms of neither impersonal causality nor personal mutuality alone but rather in terms of communicative and self-communicative action, God’s sharing his own life with what is other than (“outside”) himself’ (pp. 176–77). Here a robust trinitarianism comes together with communicative theory to provide refreshing insights into God’s being in act and his attributes. The latter are to be construed as ‘schemas of communicative action’ (p. 275). It is in this context that a richly stimulating discussion of divine simplicity is to be found.



The third part of the book explores the God-world relation in the light of all that has come before. Here there is a brief foray into the problem of evil and the reality of human freedom as well as one of the most illuminating contemporary treatments of divine impassibility. The very last sentence of the book stimulates us to think further: 'Only the communicating God can help' (p. 504).

This is without doubt a very important book. It is not easy. So much is being said and so much is informing what is being said that this book cannot simply be skim-read and then put down. I have made extensive use of it repeatedly in graduate classes on the doctrine of God over the past five years. Each time I return to it with an even greater appreciation of Vanhoozer's achievement. The points at which I remain unconvinced are all inconsequential. You will need to set aside some undistracted time to give this book the careful attention it requires and deserves. This reviewer is convinced it is well worth the effort.

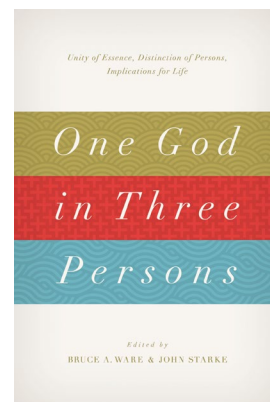
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Bruce A. Ware and John Starke, eds. *One God in Three Persons: Unity of Essence, Distinction of Persons, Implications for Life*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015. £14.99/\$21.99.

This book arrives as the latest entry in the debate, taking place in certain sectors of evangelicalism for the past two decades, over how the Trinity informs issues concerning gender relations. Broadly speaking, in this debate, if 'egalitarians' think the equality of the divine persons leads to the interchangeability of roles between women and men in the home and church, then 'complementarians' argue for a strict adherence to distinct roles and functions in the home and church on the basis of the divine persons' equality of essence but distinction in authority and function. There are also other voices on the perimeter, arguing that these issues are unrelated and a failure to separate them has infelicitous consequences for the doctrine of the Trinity. This volume gives the reader eleven essays supporting the complementarian position, ten of which are devoted to arguing that Christ's obedience 'has a basis in the eternal Son of God' (p. 11).

Nevertheless, most of these essays argue that the Son's temporal obedience is an extension of an eternal obedience or at least represents an eternal functional submission (EFS) of the Son to the Father. The volume's polemical focus therefore begets some controversial claims. For the purposes of this review I focus critically on a common thread woven through several essays arguing for the EFS view.

The common thread in question concerns the status and function of 'fatherhood' and 'sonship' as the personal properties of the Father and Son, respectively. To keep matters as brief as possible, in classical trinitarian theology 'personal properties' designate *that on account of which* we distinguish the persons from one another. Whatever it is that makes them distinct from one another cannot be anything they have in common, like their deity or their 'personhood'. Rather, as Augustine explains, what is unique to each person is what is meant by the names 'Father', 'Son', or 'Holy Spirit' (*De trinitate* VII.4.8). The Trinity is not three Fathers, nor three Sons, nor three Spirits, so that 'whereby' they are unique must be something that is designated by these names. 'Properties' just are ways of reflecting on the names of the divine persons in order to grasp why the Father is *Father* and not the Son or the Spirit,



why the Son is *Son* and not the Father or the Spirit, and so forth. Thus we say the Father is distinct from the Son on account of his *paternity* (i.e., fatherhood), the Son is distinct from the Father on account of his *filiation* (i.e., sonship), and the Spirit is distinct from both because of his *spiration* (or 'procession'). Since the three divine persons are one God, equal in all things, and distinct only in relation to one another, personal properties are the sole means of grasping what it is that makes them distinct. Consider John of Damascus, synthesizing Greek thought in the eighth century: the three persons are 'one in all things except . . . the properties of fatherhood, and sonship, and procession only' (*De fide orthodoxa* I.8). Now, that 'only' is important, because it voices a conviction that God is incomprehensible (note: not 'unknowable') in himself and so when we speak of the eternal distinctions between the persons we do so with humility. We do this not in order to detract from the distinctions between the persons, but in order not to say more than is warranted by Scripture. What little warrant there is in Scripture to speak of personal properties has traditionally been found in the personal names of Father, Son, and Spirit 'as the abstract in the concrete' (Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* Ia, q. 32, a. 2, *ad* 1). The personal properties then inform us about the eternal relations. When we have chastened our concepts of 'fatherhood' and 'sonship,' for example, from their creaturely associations with matter, space, and time (and thus from what we know of *created* fathers and sons) we confess that the Father is related to the Son by way of 'eternal generation,' which simply states that the Son is eternally *from* the Father in a non-sequentially and non-hierarchically ordered relation. In this way, reflection on the personal properties helps us grasp the eternal order of the trinitarian relations (Father → Son → Holy Spirit) that is reflected in God's acts towards us in salvation history: God the Father does all things through his Son and by his Holy Spirit.

This is important to keep in mind because several of the essays in this volume argue for the EFS position, either from Scripture or from the tradition, by conflating the personal properties of the Father and Son with 'authority' and 'submission,' respectively. Two illustrations suffice to establish the point. First, Wayne Grudem conflates these concepts when he accuses a man who defends the Son's eternal generation from the Father of modalism (p. 19). This accusation is curious, but I think what drives it is a conflation of 'authority over the Son' with 'fatherhood' and 'submission to the Father' with 'sonship.' Thus Grudem thinks that if one fails to confess the Father's *eternal* authority over the Son and the Son's *eternal* submission to the Father, one simply fails to distinguish between the persons at all. John Starke provides a less extreme example, arguing that Augustine's doctrine of eternal generation implies an order of 'noncompetitive initiating authority and receptive obedience between the Father and Son' (p. 164). Here again we see the conflation in question: confusing 'begetter' (paternity) with 'initiating authority' and 'begotten' (sonship) with 'receptive obedience.' This is unconvincing as a reading of Augustine, but Starke insists upon EFS's traditional pedigree by invoking Calvin, Owen, and Aquinas as well. Do any of these supply EFS with traditional moorings?

The short answer is 'no,' but space permits only one example. Starke's appeal to John Owen seems strongest, since Owen describes the Father's relation to the Son with the language of 'authority.' However, Starke misses that Owen's use of this language is strictly *covenantal*. Within the terms of the covenant of redemption (*pactum salutis*), which is completely resolved into the essential operation of the divine will, the Son may be 'sent' and may be submissive to the Father. This is very different from the claims of EFS. In his commentary on Hebrews, Owen says that the founding of the *pactum salutis* 'introduceth an inequality and subordination in the covenanters *as to the common ends of the covenant*, however on other accounts they may be equal' (*Works of John Owen*, 19:83, italics added). The Son's subordination to the Father is not absolutely necessary to him as the eternal Son, but is rather a function of his person *within the terms of the covenant*, which *might not have been*. Thus Owen thinks Jesus' statement, 'the

Father is greater than I' (John 14:28), refers not to the eternal Son's deity, but to the Son's role as Mediator of the covenant. This connection to the *pactum salutis* is clear in light of the exegetical signposts Owen leaves in the very passages in *Christologia* from which Starke quotes (see, for example, the appeal to Ps 40:8 in *Works of John Owen*, 1:213; cf. *ibid.*, 19:84). Owen teaches that the Son is not submissive to the Father *qua* eternal Son, but only as the Mediator of the covenant, a 'role' which is wholly contingent and might not have been. These refinements may be easy to miss, but only by overlooking them can one misinterpret Owen as tradent of EFS.

The point of highlighting the differences between classical trinitarian theology and EFS is to underscore the *novelty* of the EFS position historically. This novelty is inescapable even where it is supposed that paternity/sonship are not identical, but merely compatible with authority/submission (cf. Robert Letham's contribution). This still represents a departure from the tradition's caution before God's incomprehensibility. Thus Bruce Ware argues for *more* than the tradition's three personal properties, suggesting that 'submission to the Father' is a constitutive personal property of the Son alongside 'sonship' (pp. 242–5). This is not heresy, but it's certainly untraditional and is in fact a significant innovation. Now in itself, novelty doesn't make a position wrong, nor should we shun doctrinal development. But any position that represents a departure from or innovation to a traditional doctrine has the burden of proof on its shoulders.

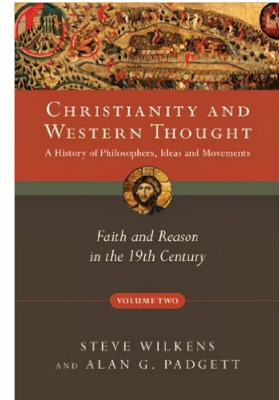
It is important to emphasize all of this because there are hints that the main proponents of EFS equate their doctrine with faithfulness to Scripture *tout court*. Thus Ware: 'Faithfulness to Scripture requires affirming both the full equality of essence of the Father, Son, and Spirit, and the eternal authority-submission relationship distinctions among those persons' (p. 248). Surely even Ware will admit such claims are excessive, for some of his fellow contributors disagree. Likewise, Grudem believes certain biblical evidence supports EFS so transparently that he accuses those who ignore his proof-texts with 'implicitly' rejecting Scripture's authority (p. 45). It's hard to take such rhetorical gestures seriously, for the distance between EFS and the tradition just means that the purported biblical evidence has always been read differently and therefore is not the clear support he claims it is. If proponents of EFS will not relinquish their position, one can at least hope they will defend it more softly.

Focusing on criticism can unfortunately obscure important areas of agreement as well as helpful development. Notably there are some welcome developments in this volume: Kyle Claunch argues for a complementarian position from the Trinity's economic works, but not immanent being, and Starke advocates for EFS without sacrificing the Son's eternal generation or the inseparable operations of the Trinity. Perhaps if complementarians encourage such instincts, they will find better trinitarian *and* complementarian theology alike.

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Steve Wilkens, ed. *Faith and Reason: Three Views*. Spectrum Multiview. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014. 187 pp. £16.51/\$25.00.

This volume is another contribution to the multiple views genre, a swelling collection of books that address disputed issues within contemporary theology. The burden of this iteration of the genre is how to best characterize the relationship between faith and reason. Steve Wilkens brings together three contributors to address the question: Carl A. Raschke, whose chapter is titled “Faith and Philosophy in Tension,” Allan G. Padgett offers a “Faith Seeking Understanding” model, and Craig A. Boyd develops a case for “The Synthesis of Reason and Faith.” The book begins with a helpful introduction by Wilkens in which he summarizes the positions while outlining some of the historical antecedents and motivating factors for each view.



Raschke begins his chapter with a resuscitated variant of the Harnack thesis: “Hellenism” and “Hebraism” are fundamentally opposed, Paul rejected “Hellenistic wisdom” outright in 1 Corinthians 2, and Platonism was smuggled back in by the “so-called Apologists” of the Second Century (pp. 36–39). Raschke’s contribution to this line of argumentation is his claim that Paul, relying on the Old Testament usage of *’ēmûnâ*, meaning “trust” or “firmness” rather than “belief,” uses the term *pistis* in repudiation of Plato’s use of the term (p. 43). Whereas “for Plato, *pistis* was an inferior version of truth” and third from the top in a fourfold hierarchy of knowledge, Raschke claims that “Paul refutes Plato by pushing *pistis* to the peak of the hierarchy” (pp. 44–45).

From this claim he moves to an outline of Kierkegaard’s “leap of faith” contrasting it with Hegel’s “rationalism.” Following this section he invokes the Protestant Reformer’s (alleged) suspicion of all efforts to “rationalize” faith, referencing Luther’s famous identification of reason as “a great whore.” After this he moves to a historical narrative about the rise of analytic philosophy in the twentieth century and the “Mephistophelian bargain” struck between Christian philosophers and the analytic method. He concludes by suggesting that faith is “impervious to propositional or dialectical reasoning” and “hence, is in the final analysis not rational but *relational*” (p. 64, emphasis original).

Padgett builds a case for the interdependence of faith and reason, arguing that they work together in the disciplines of theology and philosophy. Padgett defines his terms as follows: by faith, he means trust (a disposition), rather than the content of faith (beliefs), or practices associated with faith (embodied faith). Reason is “a function of the whole embodied human person” and cannot be separated from other activities of the human person, including trust (p. 87). Thus, all rational processes depend on faith—construed broadly as trust and not merely as saving faith. It follows that faith and reason do not belong in two radically separate categories but are mutually interdependent. Padgett then turns to the relationship between theology and philosophy. He constructs an argument for the validity of “informal reasoning” within these two disciplines which he defines as inferential and inductive processes handed on within a tradition of inquiry whose standards of rationality are internal to that tradition (a concept somewhat similar to Alasdair MacIntyre’s “social practices”). Though philosophy and theology should be collegial, theology should not be beholden to the standards of philosophy or (presumably) vice versa.

Boyd’s chapter develops a case for “the synthesis of faith and reason” built on a Thomistic account of the relationship between nature and grace. In abbreviated form, his argument runs as follows: “nature” is both an object of scientific inquiry and the fulfillment of the natural *telos* embedded in humans in

creation which was damaged but not destroyed by the fall. “Sin,” understood as a privation, is parasitic on that which is more basic—nature. Thus, grace does not destroy nature but rather presupposes, heals, and perfects it. Analogously, “reason” is the faculty by which humans apprehend, judge, and engage in discursive processes. Faith presupposes reason in as much as it is an act of apprehension and judgment, and perfects reason because it supplies access to truths not knowable by reason alone. It follows that there is a deep congruity between truths known by reason and those known by faith, though he is careful to point out, “It is a mistake to assume that reason is ever ‘unaided’ by divine grace since it was created by divine grace and—although damaged by sin—never fully loses its efficacy” (p. 158).

Readers familiar with the multiple views genre are likely aware of the liabilities inherent in the format: a level of reductionism, as well as the implication that there are three (rather than thirty) possible positions on an issue can be expected of any text that utilizes this approach. Nevertheless, this volume suffers from more than these predictable concerns. The first regarding the scope of the book: Wilkens is unclear in the introduction whether the book intends to address the relationship between faith and reason on the one hand, or between theology and philosophy on the other. These questions overlap, but they are by no means coextensive. The failure to select one question obscures the aim of the book and complicates assessing the various proposals: Padgett deals extensively with the relationship between the disciplines of theology and philosophy, whereas Boyd focuses on faith and reason.

It is also unclear the extent to which Padgett and Boyd’s positions differ. Their difference appears to lie in that Boyd affirms the ability of reason to arrive at truths about God aided by the creational grace of God, but unaided by special grace (p. 149). In contrast, Padgett argues for the work of prevenient, special grace as a necessary condition for arriving at truths about God—this seems to be the one substantive difference between them (pp. 171–72). Given their agreement on other issues (e.g., the interdependence of faith and reason, the legitimacy of natural theology, and the deleterious effects of the fall) it may have been preferable to select contributors with more divergent views.

Finally, Raschke’s chapter is a poor representation of the fideist position. Padgett and Boyd point out several problems: the use of false dichotomies, his “biblical” concept of wisdom that relies on dubious word studies, his readings of Luther and Kierkegaard, and his narrative about the advent of “relativism.” However, there are further lapses than these. For example, his claim that analytic philosophers “give lip service to the [Western philosophical] tradition” but fail to actually engage figures like Descartes, Leibniz, and Kant. On the surface this statement is obviously false, and unless Raschke clarifies his statement in non-obvious ways this claim is actually false—Harry Frankfurt on Descartes, Robert Adams on Leibniz, and Andrew Chignell on Kant being conspicuous counterexamples (p. 60). His claim regarding Aquinas adopting “Aristotelianism *carte blanche*” is likewise a problematic caricature (p. 47). Moreover, his argument against Christian analytic philosophy depends on his assumption that because the analytic tradition was pioneered by “militant atheists” like Bertrand Russell, philosophers who would use this method are “making an unintended pact with the devil” (p. 57). The assumption seems to be that because method X was pioneered by atheist Y, Christian philosophers should not make use of method X. Of course, this assumption is equally applicable to Raschke’s methodological preference for the Continental tradition—an implication he does not address. Boyd observes that Raschke’s chapter employs “equivocation of terms, definitions, and meanings combined with straw-men arguments” (pp. 76–77). I consider that to be an accurate assessment.

These concerns make it difficult to give more than a qualified endorsement, as the strengths of the multiple views genre are that it should display distinctions between positions and serve as an introduction

to a disputation within a field of study. Boyd's chapter provides an exemplary account of the Thomistic construal, and Padgett raises some important concerns regarding whether or not reason can ever be unaided by special grace. Yet, as Boyd notes, the difference between their positions is ultimately "one of degree rather than kind" (p. 125). Boyd and Padgett may be worth the price of admission, but Raschke's chapter contains enough problematic elements to forego recommending the volume to students new to the field.

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— ETHICS AND PASTORALIA —

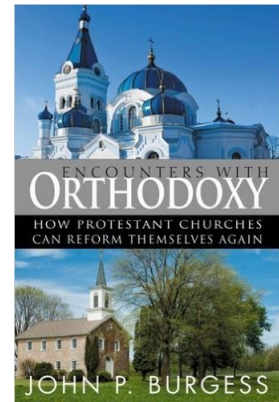
John P. Burgess. *Encounters with Orthodoxy: How Protestant Churches Can Reform Themselves Again*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2013. ix + 207 pp. £17.99/\$25.00.

In this book John Burgess of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary writes an account of his encounter with the Orthodox Church in Russia. He relates the way that through his experience he began to rethink Protestant understandings of the Orthodox Church and how he subsequently wishes to introduce concepts that will recapture the Protestant mind.

In the introduction Burgess asserts, "the Orthodox tradition has spiritual riches that Protestants desperately need if we are to find our way into the future" (p. xiv). Burgess introduces how Protestants can learn from the Orthodox Church practice, though his goal is not to give the reader an explanation of Orthodox doctrine. He divides his work into eight chapters that outline Orthodoxy as he sees it.

Chapter 1 relates Burgess's initial experience in Russia for his sabbatical year. He remarks on living conditions and the experience of parish life. Burgess's family attended church services and felt both uncomfortable and unfriended at first. He initially provides some contrasts between Orthodoxy and Protestantism that made living in Russia more difficult. Burgess claims that Russia "was not yet set up for Westerners" (p. 9) and still had many difficulties due to the financial collapse in the 1990s. This presented challenges, both in language and in general standard of living. Burgess closes this chapter with a call to be a pilgrim and to appreciate the differences in language and culture, which may cause a different view of one's own Christian tradition.

Chapters 2 through 4 explore the themes of holiness and ritual in the life of the Orthodox church. Burgess contrasts the formality and ritual of the Orthodox Church in Russia with the informal Protestant churches in America. In the section on "Holy Things" Burgess describes the use of icons and relics to bring healing, change of fortune, or help for those who pray to them. While he seems to be more comfortable with the use of icons by Protestant churches, he also expresses reservations in the use of them. He clarifies that the Orthodox Church "is constantly on guard against idolatry, the ascription of an absolute god-like status to things of the world" (p. 39). Regarding Orthodox liturgy, Burgess contrasts the prescribed worship in Orthodoxy with the varied worship styles and church order



used by Protestants, noting that “Protestantism is ritually improvised” (p. 48). He connects this idea to the freedom that Protestant churches have in worship, connecting this to the disunity that he sees in Protestantism. Chapter 4 asserts that beauty, particularly in churches and iconography, is central to Orthodox theology. The paintings of transfigured saints, for example, represent revelation of divine truth. According to Burgess, “icons set forth the same Word of God in visual form that the church sets forth in auditory form when the priest preaches” (p. 75). Stated differently, icons not only reflect the beauty of God, but also remind us that we are living in the company of saints.

Chapters 5 through 7 deal with a number of issues concerning more mystical elements in Orthodoxy. Burgess suggests miracles are foreign to minds shaped by Enlightenment ideas. Icons are again put forth as conduits of divine energy and miracles. Burgess’s fondness for icons comes into sharp focus in chapter 5, as he relates the experiences of healing and answered prayers from those who asked the saints for help. Concerning monks in chapter 6, Burgess relates more personal stories of his interactions with monastic life, noting their rituals, prayer life, and discipline. Furthermore, regarding the Eucharist, Burgess asserts that “Protestants in North America are too lackadaisical about Communion” (p. 143). He applauds the seriousness of Orthodox confession, practices, and preparation for communion. Regrettably, he reduces Communion in American churches to “nothing more than a celebration of human community” (p. 143). However, because he did not interact with Orthodox theology, he misses the needed theological explanation and contrast of the two underlying views of Communion in Protestant and Orthodox churches, respectively. One also would like to see a clearer acknowledgement of the diversity of views on Communion within Protestantism.

In the final chapter and conclusion, Burgess again shares more of this experience—how it changed him, and brought his own North American church model into focus. He expresses gratitude for the liberty of conscience enjoyed in American church life, but he notes the problem of American religion becoming capitalistic. He notes the Eucharist was the major area where Protestants and Orthodox do not share fellowship, but connects this more to active life and membership in the Orthodox Church than clearly thought out theological differences. Burgess goes so far as to conclude, “I have come to believe that Orthodoxy does indeed offer a fuller expression of the Christian faith than Protestantism” (p. 181). However, he offers this to his reader without serious critique of Russian Orthodoxy as a state church and does not sufficiently engage theological issues that arise from its approach to theology. The final pages offer a plea for Protestant churches to utilize other Christian traditions as a means of renewal.

This book could be strengthened in some vital areas. Regarding the book’s purpose, there are a few concerns. First, Burgess did not intend to interact with Orthodox theology, but Orthodox practice is informed by its theology. Indeed, the book is filled with references to Orthodox theology. It cannot be escaped. Second, while he said he did not want to interact with Orthodox theology, he advanced ideas concerning the use of icons for Protestants in chapter 8 as well as call for reforms that are based in Orthodox theology. The use of icons, relics and the like are deeply rooted in Orthodox theology, and he had to interact with them in order to write the book. The importation of iconography into Protestant Christianity, without theological backing, may be an over-simplification.

Moreover, Burgess suggests the lack of liturgical success in Reformed churches stems from a divergence from the church’s deep theological heritage. He maintains the unrelenting theological and liturgical framework of Eastern Orthodoxy can help the Western Reformed churches find a deep connection to ancient Christianity. This work is a call for authenticity within Reformed churches,

and he believes Orthodoxy can be helpful toward this goal. However, he lacks much needed objective critique of Orthodox practices and theology. That is, he wishes to take on board what is helpful from the Orthodox tradition, yet fails to identify what is unhelpful in this tradition.

While this book is therefore an interesting read as it comes out of the author's own life experience, it ultimately fails to paint a compelling portrait of a Protestantism informed by Orthodoxy.

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Timothy Keller. *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*. New York: Dutton, 2014. 336 pp. £16.99/\$26.95.

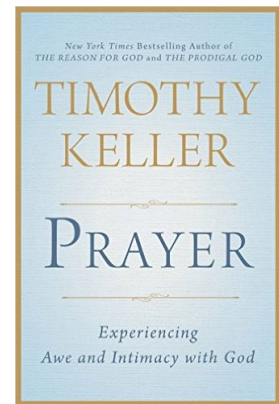
Pastor Timothy Keller has continued his excellent trend of providing both practical and theologically sound material for Christians. In this book, Keller explores the topic of prayer by analyzing the theological, experiential, and methodological aspects of this practice (p. 1). Keller is clear from the outset about his intended goal. He notes, "This book will show that prayer is both conversation *and* encounter with God" (p. 5).

In part 1, Keller discusses the importance of desiring to pray. He says: "We are not called to choose between a Christian life based on truth and doctrine *or* a life filled with spiritual power and experience. They go together" (pp. 16–17). This is one of the main arguments of the book. As Christians, we should see religious experience and sound theology standing in concord rather than as conflicting opponents. According to Keller, "Prayer is awe, intimacy, struggle—yet the way to reality. There is nothing more important, or harder, or richer, or more life altering" (p. 32). Simply put, prayer is a way of life.

Part 2 focuses on understanding prayer. One of the greatest insights from this section was when Keller says: "Prayer is continuing a conversation that God has started through his Word and his grace, which eventually becomes a full encounter with him" (p. 48). This is why Christians must be immersed in God's Word constantly. Knowledge of the Word enables Christians not only to meet with God but also to encounter Him. As Keller notes, "Prayer turns theology into experience" (p. 80).

In part 3, Keller considers the importance of learning how to pray. By discussing some of the great works on prayer by Augustine of Hippo, John Calvin, and Martin Luther, Keller shows how Christians can benefit from reading and meditating on the words of wisdom handed down from these great Christian teachers. These chapters are invaluable and are worth extended reflection. Keller then shifts to a very practical discussion of the Lord's Prayer. Keller dissects the prayer section by section and shows why Christians would be wise to keep Matthew 6:9–13 central in their lives. Keller concludes this section with a brief overview of what prayer entails and what it does to us as we are engulfed in its practice.

Part 4 focuses on deepening prayer. In this section, Keller discusses Christian meditation. He says, "Meditation is spiritually 'tasting' the Scripture—delighting in it, sensing the sweetness of the teaching, feeling the conviction of what it tells us about ourselves, and thanking God and praising God for what



it shows us about him” (p. 151). In chapter 11, Keller expounds more upon the notion that truth and experience can stand together. This is an extremely important chapter and one that could be read and reread profitably.

Part 5 concludes with a practical discussion of prayer. In this section Keller discusses three basic kinds of prayer. Upward prayer is praise and thanksgiving that focuses on God himself. Inward prayer focuses on self-examination and confession of sin. Outward prayer focuses on supplication and intercession (p. 189). Chapters 12, 13, and 14 specifically focus on these three modes of prayer, and readers would be wise to absorb what Keller has to say in these chapters. In chapter 15, Keller discusses the importance of daily prayer and concludes by offering up practical plans on how to make prayer a daily exercise.

In summary, Keller has done both believers and non-believers a great service in providing them with such a practical and yet theologically rich book on the importance and nature of prayer. One of the most unique things about Keller’s book is his discussion of Christian mysticism. In Reformed circles this is not discussed often and is usually viewed as taboo. As Keller rightly notes, “many Protestants are hesitant about spiritual experience” (p. 183). Nevertheless, Keller presents valid reasons as to why Christians should be open to experiencing God through prayer and Bible reading. He says, “The irony is that many conservative Christians, most concerned about conserving true and sound doctrine, neglect the importance of prayer and make no effort to experience God, and this can lead to eventual loss of sound doctrine” (p. 180). Keller’s challenge to Christians to be open to experiencing a sound biblical mysticism is extremely valuable and needed.

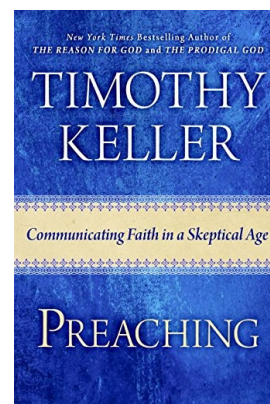
Almost everything that Keller discusses in *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God* is thorough and in-depth. On the whole, Tim Keller truly has offered readers a remarkable and well-rounded discussion of prayer. He succeeds in discussing the theological, experiential, and methodological practices of prayer, and he does so with grace and clarity. Christians would be wise to read this book, and then to come back to it again and again as they continue on their spiritual journey.

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Timothy Keller. *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism*. New York: Viking, 2015. 309 pp. £16.99/\$19.95.

Tim Keller got a C in preaching at Westminster Seminary in the early 1970s (p. 211). For those who know his preaching *today* well enough to pick up this book, that in itself is testimony to the possibility of growth as a preacher throughout one’s life. This book will be a catalyst for many of today’s preachers to take a big step forward in their own growth in preaching. For some, it will be the most important book on preaching they ever read.

Tim Keller is not known publicly for his praying, though his recent book on prayer (also reviewed in this issue of *Themelios*) is being warmly welcomed. He is not widely known for suffering, though his book on that subject is filled with rich insight. He does not have a famously healthy marriage, though his work on



that subject is equally helpful. If he is known for anything, it is his preaching. If any of Keller's books are to be warmly received by the church and by Christian leaders in particular, therefore, I believe this is it. Reading the book confirms that belief.

It is difficult to assess comprehensively a book that brings together such a variety of strengths into a single volume. Perhaps this observation itself is the first thing to note about the book. That is, one reason this book is so compelling (and Keller's preaching so persuasive) is that he is able to bring together what are often polarizing approaches. Keller reflects at length on what it means to preach expositionally, for example, and then at equal length on what it looks like to engage the culture. Very few of us push equally hard in both directions. Many of us emphasize biblical faithfulness to the neglect of deep probing of the assumptions and belief structures of our culture. Others of us seek to engage the culture and win a hearing with unbelievers to the neglect of deep biblical study.

This ability to wed what are often held apart is perhaps the key contribution of this book. Throughout, Keller brings together the objectivity of exegetical study and the subjectivity of felt affection; the need for pleading persuasiveness and also for reliance upon the Lord's power; the need for the rationality of logical deduction and also awareness of the pervasive irrationality of the human heart; deep reading in ancient church history and also in contemporary secular periodicals; preaching the gospel in every sermon and also attending to the shape and tone of the text at hand in every sermon; the appropriateness of carefully thought through methods to preach Christ well and also the importance of instinct in preaching Christ well. This refusal to latch on to one truth at the expense of another lends credibility and persuasiveness to his writing on preaching. Perhaps at times Keller and those who follow his lead should be aware of the temptation to avoid coming down clearly on one end of a spectrum when that is called for. But I believe this ability to be non-parochial and non-polarized is one reason—to bring together yet two more generally polarized clumps—that an ordained minister in one of the most conservative denominations in the world can be a *New York Times* bestselling author.

How is the book shaped? Keller's opening premise is that he can help preachers go from bad to good, but not from good to great. This is because "the difference between good preaching and *great* preaching lies mainly in the work of the Holy Spirit" (p. 11, emphasis original). Keller suggests therefore that it is the preacher's responsibility to make his preaching good, but only God can make his preaching great. This is a wise and solid foundation on which to build a book on preaching, especially a book by one whom many deem a "great" preacher, because it is both optimistic yet realistic. It brings together human responsibility (working hard to be a good preacher) and divine sovereignty (leaving greatness in God's hands). It is therefore a truly Calvinistic homiletical approach, neither Arminian (emphasizing human responsibility to the neglect of divine sovereignty) nor hyper-Calvinistic (emphasizing divine sovereignty to the neglect of human responsibility).

From there Keller goes on to three basic areas of attention for the preacher: the text (Part One, "Serving the Word"), the listeners (Part Two, "Reaching the People"), and the preacher himself (Part Three, "In Demonstration of the Spirit and of Power"). Readers familiar with Keller's ministry will find in the book a fascinating inside look at the mechanics of Keller's own preaching. Those who have heard him teach on preaching will find much of that material here, though freshly articulated.

Part One deals with the Scripture itself. Chapter 1 argues that preaching is an unfolding of the Bible, not the preacher's own thoughts. Keller argues for an expository approach, though acknowledges the propriety of occasional topical messages. One distinctive is that he believes it is simplistic to assert that every text has one main point. Chapter 2 then encourages preachers to make sure they preach the

gospel in every sermon. Keller explains that this does not mean that every sermon should be evangelistic, because not only unbelievers but believers too need to hear the gospel—unbelievers to be converted, believers to grow. Chapter 3 is related to this and exhorts us to preach Christ from every text. Building on the work of writers such as Sidney Greidanus and Graeme Goldsworthy, Keller outlines a series of ways to legitimately connect the text at hand with Jesus Christ. The chapter wisely closes by pointing out that preaching Christ requires a certain instinct: “Though you should employ many of these ways to preach Christ from all of Scripture, too rigid a formula (or set of formulas) results in being predictable. Often the line from the text to Christ is best perceived by intuition rather than composed by a defined method” (p. 86).

Part Two moves to the listener. This part of the book contains guidance that is harder to find in other homiletical resources than Parts One and Three. In chapter 4 we are helped to preach to the culture not by choosing between adapting and confronting but rather by adapting to the culture *in order to* confront it. Chapter 5 helps us to engage what Keller calls the “deep narrative structures” of the late Modern mind (Keller avoids the label “postmodern” as he believes Modernism and Postmodernism fundamentally agree on the assumption of individual human autonomy [pp. 122–23]). We are instructed in how to preach to the heart in chapter 6, being reminded (largely via Jonathan Edwards) that the heart is not a matter of emotions only but the animating center of all human thought, feeling, and action. Keller explores six aspects of preaching to the heart.

Part Three is a single chapter on preaching that is fired by the Spirit. This is a return to Keller’s opening premise that the final effectiveness of our preaching is in the Lord’s hands. Preachers will do well to ponder Keller’s solemnizing reflection in this chapter on the tendency for ministers to confuse natural gifting with spiritual grace.

In this summary of the book’s content I have skipped over much of what Keller says, so perhaps I can close by identifying a few further strengths to the book. I will not identify weaknesses, not because I found none, but because a book of such singular helpfulness and insight ought not to be nitpicked; to do so would be disproportionate.

The book, first, is well written. The style is crisply moving prose that covers the territory effectively and then quickly moves on. The tone is informal and engaging without becoming cutesy or distractingly colloquial.

Second, one finds a unique wisdom in this book. Consider the following, as he explains how one can do expository preaching and engage the cultural mindset at the same time.

It is . . . wrong to think that Bible exposition can’t have a very strong focus on human need. Nearly all Bible texts do address such existential issues directly or indirectly. However, if we start with our questions and look only to the Bible for answers, we assume that we are asking all the right questions—that we properly understand our need. However, we need not only the Bible’s prescription to our problems but also its diagnosis of them. We may even have maladies we are completely unaware of. If we don’t begin with the Bible, we will almost certainly come to superficial conclusions, having stacked the deck in favor of our own biases and assumptions. (p. 97).

In this paragraph Keller goes deeper than most of us in *both* directions—both in the direction of acknowledging that the Bible does address felt human needs, *and* in the direction of recognizing that our own innate perception of our needs will invariably fall short of Scripture’s revelation of who

we really are and how deep our deficiencies really run. This is an example of the wisdom, balance, shrewdness, and maturity that Keller brings to this book on preaching.

Third and finally, I celebrate the note on which Keller concludes the book, a theme that is sprinkled throughout the book but is most clearly articulated at the end: the crucial intersection in preaching of human weakness with divine power. This is doubly needed in a book on preaching from Keller. On the one hand, to welcome our weakness is so deeply counter-intuitive, something so strongly and deeply resisted by the flesh—this inescapably apostolic notion that it is in my weakness that the power of Christ rests upon us. We yearn to preach well, even as we find within us a yearning to be impressive. But the two are mutually exclusive; we cannot preach a Christ worthy of our adoration when we do so with a subtext that communicates the desire for our own adoration. On the other hand, to close the book in this way is needed in a *Keller* book on preaching. This book is so brimming with penetrating insights worthy of immediate integration into one's preaching that toward the end of the book one might easily begin to feel overwhelmed. It was wise of him therefore to address this directly. After summarizing that preaching Christ from the heart means to preach powerfully, wondrously, affectionately, authentically, and Christ-adoringly, he remarks: "Feel overwhelmed? Me too. However, a key to developing these traits is not to directly try to have them. Instead, glory in your infirmities so his power may be made perfect in weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9)" (pp. 206–7).

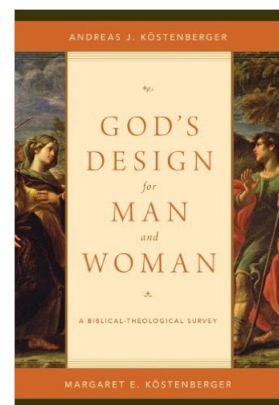
And it is on this note, liberating for all preachers who long to preach in the power of the Spirit, that the book ends in its final paragraph. "If you proclaim Christ and not yourself and let God's Word come to people through you, you can also become a voice, like John did. It doesn't matter if in yourself you feel weak. All the better" (p. 210).

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Andreas J. Köstenberger and Margaret E. Köstenberger. *God's Design for Man and Woman: A Biblical-Theological Survey*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014. 380 pp. £12.99/\$17.99.

The ongoing disputes over gender roles in our society is seemingly at a fever pitch, and shows no real signs of abating. Even in the church there is confusion and a genuine need for clarity on the matter of biblical manhood and womanhood. Thankfully, there are a growing number of ministries and resources to offer precise, relevant answers on the matter. One new resource to take note of is this work by Andreas and Margaret Köstenberger.

As husband and wife, the authors have teamed up to write this book because they are convinced "it is vital to wrestle with our identity as men and women for the sake of healthy marriages, families, and churches but, more importantly, for the true expression of the gospel of Jesus Christ in our world" (p. 14). Working out of a complementarian framework, the authors demonstrate from numerous biblical texts the fact that men and women are equal in value, dignity, and worth, yet different in role and function. The authors believe this goal of biblical manhood and womanhood is knowable, attainable, and necessary.



The authors both teach at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (Andreas as senior research professor of New Testament and Biblical Theology, Margaret as adjunct professor of women's studies). They also speak a great deal in this work about their own marriage as well as the details of parenting four children. The authors' previous publications on this subject (including Andreas's book *God, Marriage, and Family*, 2nd ed. [Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010] and Margaret's published dissertation *Jesus and the Feminists* [Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008]) lead the reader to expect that this will be a well-researched project, and this is certainly the case. Offering a "gradual unfolding of God's plan through Scripture" (p. 17) on this topic, the authors offer a thorough and helpful resource to the church at large.

The authors develop the biblical pattern of manhood and womanhood beginning with the OT. Starting in Genesis 1–3 (ch. 1) they treat these foundational chapters in relation to both original design of manhood and womanhood as well as the specific and negative consequences that resulted from the Fall. Data is then culled from the remainder of the OT in order to demonstrate the predominant pattern of male leadership as it relates to the patriarchs, judges, kings, priests, and prophets (ch. 2). The next several chapters deal with the information to be found on this subject in the Gospels (ch. 3), Acts (ch. 4), Paul's letters (chs. 5–6), and the remainder of the NT (ch. 7). Throughout these chapters the authors demonstrate the fact that the pattern of Scripture shows forth men as leaders in the home as well as in the church (which is in keeping with the OT pattern of men serving as priests and kings). Women serve in a complementary fashion, submitting to and sustaining the leading role of the husband—and, while not serving as elders, ministering in the church in a variety of meaningful ways.

The final chapter deals with a number of points of application, seeking to demonstrate specific ways that both men and women serve in the home and church (ch. 8). The book ends with three appendices, dealing with a survey of women's history, the importance of hermeneutics, and special issues in interpreting gender passages.

The greatest contribution of this work is the sheer scope of passages covered in both the OT and NT. Often in these discussions there are a handful of texts selected for analysis, but the authors here do a tremendous job of showing not only excellent exegetical details, but also historical background and biblical-theological connections that must be made for proper interpretation. The trajectory of OT to NT is noted clearly, and a pattern of biblical manhood and womanhood emerges.

Another strength is the accessibility of this book. The language is friendly toward the average church reader, and the exegetical work is not rushed. The authors take their time making their points, show how it comes together from a number of angles, and offer crucial and relevant implications that emerge for us today.

While the authors cover these issues in great detail, two matters could receive additional attention. First, in regard to the qualifications for elders in 1 Timothy 3, scant attention is given to divorce when discussing the phrase "husband of one wife" (p. 221). At the very least, attention could be drawn to Andreas Köstenberger's work *God, Marriage, and Family*, where an entire chapter was dedicated to the topic, but here there are only two paragraphs and no footnotes. This is not the main thrust of the work, of course, but in terms of a model for biblical manhood a bit more could be said here in terms of nurturing faithfulness in marriage. Also, more could be said on the matter of singleness (pp. 273–74). Again, one cannot add drastically to a book that is already full of valuable information, but this is a key need to touch upon in the final chapter. The church is seeing the number of singles increase in our midst, and we must minister to them well and teach them what biblical manhood and womanhood

looks like. It must be acknowledged, however, that not every topic can be grappled with in adequate detail, and my remarks here should not signify undue criticism to what is an outstanding work.

Biblical manhood and womanhood is a burgeoning area academically and practically, and the authors have here contributed to this matter on both fronts. In a time of confusion regarding gender, leadership, and family relations, this book pierces through the fog of uncertainty with the light of biblical-theological precision. While appropriate for college and seminary classrooms, this work should be read by pastors, and utilized in Sunday School and small group settings, as it really is quite readable, albeit somewhat daunting in length. May this work equip scores of Christian disciples to understand the fine details, as well as the overarching biblical metanarrative, both of which give rise to a complementarian perspective on manhood and womanhood.

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Peter J. Leithart. *Gratitude: An Intellectual History*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014. 340 pp. £41.99/\$49.95.

The concept of “the gift” has for many years been discussed and debated in cultural anthropology, philosophy, and theology. Yet, as Peter Leithart notes in his introduction to *Gratitude: An Intellectual History*, relatively little thought has been given to *responses* to gifts—specifically, gratitude and ingratitude. Leithart’s book is an elegantly written, intellectually stimulating, and practically helpful attempt to begin filling that hole.

Choosing to define the concept of gratitude very broadly (“Gratitude is the label for a favorable response to a gift or favor, while ingratitude labels an unfavorable response to a gift or favor”), Leithart focuses his history on Western intellectual life. After an introduction providing an overview of the argument, chapters 1–2 focus on the place of gratitude in Greece and Rome. Chapter 3 then offers an account of Jewish and Christian thought on gratitude and ingratitude, followed by a look at medieval Christianity in chapter 4.

The next major section investigates the views of gratitude among the Reformers and other sixteenth- and seventeenth-century thinkers (ch. 5), early modern political and economic theorists (ch. 6), and philosophers (ch. 7). The final section examines the concepts of gift and gratitude as explored in cultural anthropology (ch. 8), the philosophy of Heidegger and Gadamer (ch. 9), and the works of Derrida and Marion (ch. 10). Leithart’s concluding chapter offers a brief summary of his historical survey; an analysis of our current cultural moment; various contemporary attempts to revive and incorporate gratitude into social, economic, and political theory; and a prescriptive call for the Christian church to reappropriate the “infinite circle” of biblical Christian gratitude.

Leithart’s use of the image of a circle and a line to illustrate various approaches to gift and gratitude is very helpful. Ancient Greece and Rome (with notable exceptions such as the political system of Athens) considered gift-giving and gratitude to be circular: the proper response to a gift received was a return gift or favor. Into this context, Christianity introduced a radically God-centered approach that vastly



enlarged the circle of gift and response. Jesus and Paul taught that God was the ultimate giver of every gift and therefore, thanks was due to God himself. Placing God at the center of all gift-giving had several major consequences. Jesus's disciples were to give to others without anticipating a return from those to whom they gave, since they knew God himself would reward them. This freed them to give to those from whom they could not expect a return. Moreover, Christians were not to be beholden to anyone who gave to them; instead of owing favors and allegiance to benefactors, the Christian's duty was to make good use of gifts received. Leithart nicely summarizes this view of gift and gratitude: "Christian givers impose no debts; Christian recipients acknowledge no debts, except to love" (p. 7). This new teaching undermined Roman society and political life in profound ways and branded Christians as ingrates in the minds of their Roman contemporaries.

One of Leithart's central arguments is that Western approaches to gift and gratitude subsequent to the NT have drawn on only part of the biblical teaching, thus fracturing the infinite circle of Christian thanks. For example, medieval Christianity valued some aspects of "linear" giving but also retained many aspects of Roman reciprocity. The reformers attempted to restore the biblical idea of grace and gift to a Catholic Church that had largely lost it, but struggled themselves to incorporate the biblical teaching on rewards. Political thinkers in post-Reformation Europe, such as John Locke, sought to build a political theory on the grounds of consent, rather than on relationships based on gifts and gratitude. While Locke's approach had Christian roots, he adopted only parts of the Christian circle of gratitude and in effect shut God out of his political theory. Similarly, both Enlightenment philosophy and later postmodern philosophers such as Derrida drew upon the "ungrateful" Christian instinct not to be beholden to previous traditions and customs, but took their philosophy in profoundly non-Christian directions. In each instance, the appropriation of only part of the Christian teaching on gratitude resulted in flawed, inadequate approaches.

Leithart ends his book by posing a crucial question. Is there a way to retain the many benefits of modernity's approach to gift and gratitude, the many blessings of liberal order, while simultaneously resisting its materialist approach and instrumentalizing of human beings? Leithart's proposal is to return to the "infinite circle" of the biblical teaching, which pushes gratitude into every field of human endeavor and experience, allows humans to sacrifice for others with the knowledge that God will repay them, and balances personalism and freedom. The church must "cultivate habits of ingratitude" (p. 229), giving thanks only to God, refusing to be beholden to others in ways that would compromise the gospel, and returning the Eucharist to its central place in the life of the church and the Christian.

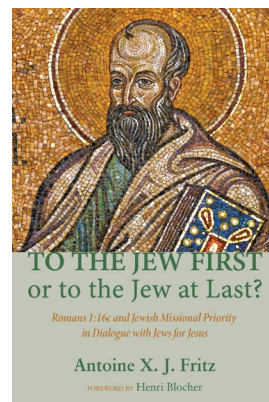
The broad sweep of Leithart's book has the advantage of allowing him to take a panoramic historical view of gift and gratitude. The drawback is that it doesn't allow him to linger and probe more deeply in some places where that would be helpful. I would have liked to see some additional interaction with the NT teaching, particularly Paul's teaching on the sin of ingratitude in Romans 1. Similarly, Leithart's excellent and thought-provoking prescriptive conclusion, laying out a positive program for the church in restoring Godward gratitude to its central place, could usefully have been expanded. Of course, Leithart himself notes that one goal of this book is to stimulate others to explore this rich and profitable topic. I am (it seems fitting to say) grateful to God for Peter Leithart and his excellent book.

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— MISSION AND CULTURE —

Antoine X. J. Fritz, *To the Jew First or to the Jew at Last? Romans 1:16c and Jewish Missional Priority in Dialogue with Jews for Jesus*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013. xxxix + 237 pp. £20.00/\$31.00.

This book is a critique of a missiological principle informing the beliefs and practice of the organisation *Jews for Jesus* (JFJ). This principle is that the church today must “prioritize evangelizing Jews over Gentiles” (p. xxxix). The idea is based on an interpretation of the phrase “to the Jew *first*, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16c). Fritz, who worked as Office Manager of the Paris Branch of JFJ from 2003 to 2009, labels this interpretation of Romans 1:16c “[Jewish] Missional Priority” (MP). He distinguishes it from two other possible understandings of the passage, “Historical Priority” (HP)—i.e. the simple acknowledgement that the gospel was preached to Jews first as indisputable historical precedence—and “Historico-Covenantal Priority” (HCP)—i.e. the further acknowledgement that this first-century historical pattern was grounded in God’s covenant with the nation of Israel. While for Fritz HP and HCP are limited in their application to the first century, MP maintains that the church’s mission today must, wherever practicable, give priority to Jewish evangelism. Fritz’s critique of MP in favour of HCP is friendly, yet thoroughgoing.



In Part I, *Wirkungsgeschichte*, Fritz traces the interpretation and the impact of Romans 1:16c from the early church through the medieval period and the Reformation up to modernity. Fritz’s work here is an original and valuable contribution to the understanding of historic Christian attitudes towards Jewish evangelism. He finds that the MP interpretation of Romans 1:16c is a relatively recent phenomenon. Although the church’s attitudes to Jewish people throughout history have varied considerably—sometimes positive, sometimes tragically negative—a strong MP interpretation cannot be found before the early nineteenth century. It first appears in a report of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews (1809) (p. 28). From then on it has gained great popularity in a number of circles, especially among Dispensationalists and American Zionists, and in particular JFJ (see also pp. 177–82).

In Part II, *Status Quaestionis*, Fritz gathers and critically surveys the main arguments put forward for the MP interpretation, particularly by those associated with JFJ. These arguments include but are not limited to: the idea that the Abrahamic covenant gives the Jewish people a special ongoing role to bless the world or to be a light to the Gentiles; the pattern in Acts, in which Paul went first to the Jews; the view that those who bless Jews will be blessed by God; an eschatological expectation that “it is the mission of the Jewish people to become the greatest evangelists ever seen” (p. 82); and a pragmatic contention that without MP we will neglect Jewish evangelism entirely. Although Fritz’s argument in this section is sometimes a little hard to follow (it is difficult in places to discern where he is summarising others and where he is stating his own views), it is nevertheless original, enlightening, and largely persuasive. Fritz demonstrates that many of the arguments put forward by JFJ to support the MP interpretation are either invalid, or support the HCP interpretation better (e.g., pp. 69–70). He also demonstrates that many proponents of this MP interpretation are themselves inconsistent in their application of its principles (e.g., pp. 74, 97).

In Part III, *Propositio*, Fritz offers a detailed exegesis of Romans 1:16–17, especially the phrase, “to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (v. 16c). He demonstrates that the MP interpretation of this phrase

advocated by JFJ is exegetically unsustainable. Paul's main purpose was not to appeal to his readers to evangelize Jewish people first, but rather to assert the truth that God's actions through Israel—fulfilling his covenant with Abraham by the death and resurrection of the Messiah—had worldwide implications. The most interesting and possibility-laden element of Fritz's exegesis is his linking of the term "first" (*prōton*) in 1:16 with the use of the term later in Romans 3:1–2 (also 2:9–10). Thus, "the privilege of the Jewish people lies in the fact that they have been entrusted with the oracles of God; the idea of a priority regarding evangelism is not the point of 1:16" (pp. 132–133, cf. p. 136).

In Part IV, *Heilsgeschichte*, Fritz examines the implications of the salvation-historical teaching of Romans 9–11. He argues that Romans 9–11 is not about evangelism to Jews. For example: Romans 10:14–15 is speaking about a universal mission to all people rather than a specific mission to Israel; the motif of "provoking to jealousy" in Romans 11:11–15 is more a stimulus to Gentile evangelism than to Jewish evangelism; Romans 11:25–32 is describing a future great Jewish revival coinciding with the return of Christ (not all readers will agree with every detail of the eschatological schema, including myself, p. 161). Connected with this, Fritz also adds a stimulating discussion about the connection between Paul's salvation-historical teaching and Jesus's statements about or allusions to the concept of the "first" being "last" and vice versa.

Thus for Fritz, the statements about Jewish priority in Romans are more about the past (Rom 1:16) and eschatological future (Rom 11) of God's salvation-historical plan, rather than the present. The "first" of Romans 1:16c does not refer to an ongoing Jewish MP, but rather to a HCP which was only applicable to the situation before AD 70.

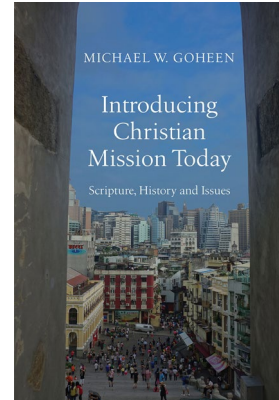
I found Fritz's critique of the strong MP advocated by JFJ largely persuasive. Fritz advocates for a "balanced" position in which Jewish evangelism is encouraged but only in the context of the priority of mission to all unreached people groups (pp. 192–97). On reflection, however, I did wonder whether the HCP interpretation of Romans 1:16c may still have other, unexplored, practical implications for the present, particularly for those who do not share all the details of Fritz's future-oriented interpretation of Romans 11:25–32. Indeed, it would be interesting to investigate further how Fritz's suggestion that "we need to preach the gospel to the Jewish people today because of the remnant, and we need to be prepared for this Jewish revival" (p. 169) might inform how we share the gospel with Jewish people today. In any case, Fritz's book is highly recommended as a cordial and cogent engagement with an important missiological question.

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Michael W. Goheen, *Introducing Christian Mission Today: Scripture, History and Issues*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014. £19.81/\$30.00.

It has been a long time since I have been impacted in so many different ways through the reading of one book. There are gems of wisdom and poignant challenges on nearly every page. This is a book that not only brings the reader up to date with the latest in mission theory but inspires one to get involved. After a quick overview of the book a few points will be queried and others of interest touched upon.

Goheen is theological director in missional theology at the Missional Training Center in Phoenix, and he begins by looking at the paradigm shift in Missions Studies today. He examines the great changes that have occurred in the global church with Christianity declining in the West whilst growing in the South. 1980 marked a turning point where there were for the first time more Christians in the global south than elsewhere and more Pentecostal believers than all other Protestant Christians (p. 19). He defines the new understanding of mission through four definitions (pp. 25–26). First, ‘the witness from all six continents.’ He then shares Christopher Wright’s definition of mission as: ‘our committed participation as God’s people, at God’s invitation and command, in God’s mission with the history of the world for the redemption of God’s creation.’ Third, mission is no longer the geographical expansion of the gospel but its global communication, and finally, ‘mission is the whole church, taking the whole gospel to the whole person in the whole world.’



With that foundation, part one of the book reflects biblically and theologically on mission (chs. 1–2). Part two examines historical and contemporary reflection on mission (chs. 3–5) before part three reflects on issues in mission today (chs. 6–11). Here Goheen discusses issues ranging from holistic mission, contextualization, the missionising of Western culture, encountering world religions, urban mission, and mission to unreached areas.

In the first section it was slightly surprising that on outlining a biblical theology for mission, Goheen begins in Genesis 3 with the first messianic promise: ‘God announces his intention to restore the creation right after Adam and Eve’s treasonous act of rebellion (Gen 3.15)’ rather than in the creation narratives in Genesis 1–2. Later he uses N. T. Wright’s useful illustration of how the biblical narrative might fall into six acts if it were a play (pp. 69–70) but skips over Act 1. Half a dozen pages later creation is finally mentioned but only as a flashback when Goheen considers how the instruction the Israelites received in the Law led to a threefold orientation for their lives that enabled them to be a model for the nations: ‘They were oriented *backward* to creation: they were to be a picture of what God originally intended for human life in creation’ (p. 44, emphasis original).

Although starting with the fall rather than creation is hardly new among Protestant theologians, with Goheen’s emphasis on *missio Dei* it could have been more instructive to start with God’s purposes for humanity in the creation stories. He could have examined what some theologians have called the cultural, social and relational mandates, as a basis for what God expected for his people, before fleshing out how, despite the fall, God initiated covenants with his creatures to ultimately bless all nations.

Goheen rightly emphasizes the critical importance of a biblical theology of mission rather than using proof texts to support the mission task:

The Bible is a narrative record of God's mission in and through his people for the sake of the world. It tells a story in which mission is a central thread—God's mission, Israel's mission, Christ's mission, the Spirit's mission, the church's mission. Indeed, 'the whole Bible is itself a "missional" phenomenon' (p. 37, citing Christopher Wright).

There are many thought provoking ideas and quotes throughout the book. From ch. 2: 'The formation of the church for mission should be the motivating force that shapes and energizes our theological labors in all their diversity and distinctiveness' (p. 87, citing Darrell Guder). In looking at historical paradigms of mission (ch. 3) he quotes Adolf Harnack speaking of the attractive power of the local congregation in the first three centuries of the church: 'we may take for granted that the mere existence and persistent activity of the individual Christian communities did more than anything else to bring about the extension of the Christian religion. . . . These communities exerted a magnetic force on thousands, and thus proved of extraordinary service to the Christian mission' (p. 123). One of the great strengths of this book is how Goheen avoids bypassing the role of the local church to focus on paraecclesiastical mission organisations: 'The church is not only the place but also the instrument of the Kingdom' (p. 249). The people of God play the fundamental role in the mission of God through Christ's church.

In the fourth chapter on an emerging ecumenical paradigm of mission, I was forced to reflect on how my local church could be more contextualized, which quickly led me to rethink our practices of worship in song, preaching, and discipleship. Although faithful to his evangelical, reformed tradition, Goheen is ecumenical in his reflection on contributions from other ecclesial traditions such as Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Pentecostal. He does very well in highlighting what can be admired in other traditions such as the Roman Catholicism, prevalent here in Latin America, with its critique of Modern Western culture, 'especially of secularization, pluralism, individualism, globalization and consumerism' (p. 175). He still gently critiques their weaknesses when necessary, such as the inclusivist position of the Roman Catholic Church regarding other religions: 'It is clearly affirmed that salvation is only through Jesus Christ; however, that affirmation is held along with two other factors: salvation is possible outside explicit faith in Christ, and other religions can be a channel of that salvation' (p. 173).

However I felt he was too generous toward the Jesuits. He glosses over their role in the Counter Reformation and in general avoids a critique of the Spanish and Portuguese methods of 'doing mission' in the sixteenth century conquest of the Americas. He rightly highlights the Jesuit radicalism in contextualization (a precursor perhaps to the efforts of Hudson Taylor in the protestant mission to China centuries later): 'they sought to indigenize the faith in those non-Western cultures with various experiments that adopted cultural customs, employed vernacular languages, and utilized the religious concepts and books of the people' (p. 275). This is contrasted with the Dominican efforts, with Goheen concluding, 'Unfortunately, after a protracted battle for over a century, the Roman Catholic Church finally sided with the Dominicans and suppressed the creative efforts of the Jesuits' (p. 276). It could be strongly argued, however, that they went too far down the route of syncretism, for example in encouraging the emergence of the Virgin of Guadalupe-Tonantzin in Mexico.

Whilst not feeling competent to comment on the development of the church's mission in the rest of the world as outlined in ch. 5, since I know something about the situation in Latin America, it seems clear that Goheen has done his homework. His overview is very good, although a few small details have escaped him. Missiologist René Padilla is actually Ecuadorian and not Argentine, although he spent around four decades living in Buenos Aires. Goheen goes on to quote Padilla saying that the

Ecclesiastical Base Communities [usually called EBCs in English and CEBs in Spanish and Portuguese rather than BECs, as Goheen mistakenly has] ‘may well become the most powerful challenge to the Church of Jesus Christ in the next few years’ (p. 201). Goheen makes it appear as if this was said recently and is still applicable to life in Latin America today, even though the footnote makes it clear that Padilla wrote those words almost thirty years ago and this was an example of where he was simply wrong. There is a well-known aphorism that says that whilst the Catholics opted for the poor, the poor opted for Pentecostalism! Here and in a few other places Goheen’s apparent reliance on course notes put together over a twenty-five year career teaching on mission becomes apparent. Conversely we see the advantage that he is not a slave to only recent missiological writing; in fact part of the richness of this book are the quotes from historically wide-ranging sources.

Goheen astutely analyses the strengths and weakness of church growth in Latin America (mainly Pentecostal) and indigenous theological systems such as liberation theology. Their contribution to the world church often tends to be praised uncritically or rejected completely without understanding the context in which they arose and their impact (or lack of) to society today. Both extremes are well avoided.

The highlight of the chapters on current issues was the one on urban mission. With plenty of stats Goheen shows that ‘if the church is to reach the people of the world, it must be in the cities where they live.’ Amid engagement with Tim Keller’s address to the third Lausanne Congress in Cape Town, ‘Why God Loves Cities’, Goheen stated that, ‘The strategic importance of urban mission is apparent when we see that there are four kinds of people in the cities: the next generation, the unreached, the poor and the shapers of culture’ (p. 374). Throughout the book we are challenged to rethink our deep belief in mission as a movement from the ‘civilized West’ to the rest.

One final quibble. On occasions Goheen does not critically engage with some of his sources such—e.g., Lesslie Newbigin (on whom he did his doctoral research) and David Bosch. On the one occasion when he slightly critiqued Bosch it came as somewhat of a surprise. However, Goheen nowhere claims to provide an original analysis of missiology, but rather a survey of World Christianity which aim he fulfils admirably. Indeed, one of the great strengths of the book is precisely its introduction to many of the great names in missiological thought.

Many are familiar with the aforementioned Bosch and Newbigin, along with old practitioners Roland Allen, Stephen Neill and recent writers like Samuel Escobar, Andrew Kirk, Alan Kreider, René Padilla, and Lamin Sanneh. There were also several new names such as Hendrikus Berkhof, J. H. Bavinck, Hendrik Kraemer (all Dutch), Harvie Conn and Ross Hastings (from or teaching in Canada) who were added to my reading list.

Through perusing the pages of *Introducing Christian Mission Today: Scripture, History and Issues*, I was convinced that I am not a missionary but a cross-cultural worker. Goheen argues that ‘what defines missions today is not exclusively the crossing of cultural or national boundaries with the gospel, but creating a gospel witness where it is absent or weak’ (p. 403). I struggled to argue the point before conceding that he is probably right and that part of my role in Latin America now is to raise up non-Western missionaries to reach groups that traditional Western missionaries will struggle to reach.

The urban challenge along with that of the 1.6 billion unreached Muslims, 1.3 billion Chinese and almost 1.6 billion Hindus (p. 416) highlights the huge task the Christian church is still faced with. As Jesus stated (p. 52): ‘the harvest is’ indeed ‘plentiful but the workers are few’ (Mark 9:37–38). This

excellent book by Michael Goheen will be widely used to challenge the next generation of Christians to encourage, support and even be part of the ‘few’.

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Vincent E. Bacote. *The Political Disciple: A Theology of Public Life*. Ordinary Theology. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015. 96 pp. £7.99/\$11.99.

Gene L. Green. *The Scalpel and the Cross: A Theology of Surgery*. Ordinary Theology. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015. 96 pp. £7.99/\$11.99.

Beth Felker Jones. *Faithful: A Theology of Sex*. Ordinary Theology. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015. 112 pp. £7.99/\$11.99.

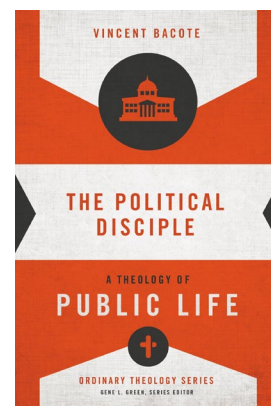
Noah J. Toly. *Cities of Tomorrow and the City to Come: A Theology of Urban Life*. Ordinary Theology. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015. 96 pp. £7.99/\$11.99.

Publishers and authors always seek to develop ways of meaningfully connecting great written material with reader audiences. This remains as true in the wider publishing world as in the evangelical one, and increasingly so, with technology induced shrinking attention spans, fast-paced forms of media distribution, and a world of increasing population and intense demands on the time and lives of ordinary Christians.

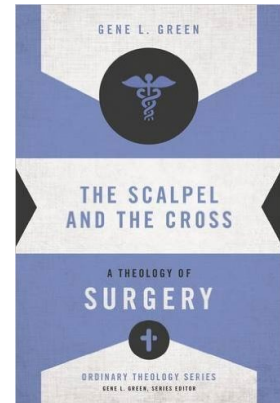
Numerous efforts currently are at various stages of development with different evangelical publishers, including one aiming to introduce doctrinal subjects to readers in short (under one-hundred-page) accessible volumes. At the forefront of these efforts, however, stands Zondervan’s new Ordinary Theology series, brought to life by Wheaton College Professor of NT, Gene L. Green, who serves as series editor.

The effort Gene Green and his authors establish in this series is no mere academic exercise. They’re trying to put tools in the hands of ordinary Christians that will help them more meaningfully to *be theologians*. They aim to see all things in everyday life as “extremely theological,” requiring meaningful biblical-theological reflection on all matters of life, developing theology in the places we find ourselves. It’s thus something like a balancing act between seeing all things as theological and then also developing theological responses to matters in the course of normal life. The church in the English-speaking world has needed a series like this for some time now.

But not everything under the sun can be covered. So for a series like this the question becomes which features of everyday life demand attention. Naturally, the first authors in the series either chose issues that were related to major recent life experiences (as in the case of Green choosing to write on surgery) or their academic expertise (as in the case of each of the other three), or both. Although each of these initial volumes carries both a deftness with academic discourse as well as deeply personal, storied, and engaging accounts of the subjects.



The first volume in the series, Green's *The Scalpel and the Cross*, begins with the author's own personal experience with open-heart surgery. After searching for literature on thinking theologically on the subject, as he was anticipating the imminent scalpel, he found none, thus birthing the idea for this series. Throughout the book Green locates surgery in the wider context of the divine work of salvation history, under the creation-fall-restoration narrative. As such, surgery is seen as "a violent act carried out in compassion as it challenges the destiny stamped upon a broken human frame—a frame that needs restoration" (p. 25). This powerful imagery is carried on throughout the book, highlighting surgery as a social phenomenon, involving the care of many others on hospital staff, as well as those outwith the professional medical care team, including family, church, friends. Green explores moral and spiritual dimensions of surgery, and he gives careful consideration to how humans relate to "replacement parts," such as those from a pig (as in his case!). Drawing from Native Indian Christian spirituality as developed by the late Richard Twiss, with a consciousness of the interconnectedness of all creation in its sharedness *as creation*, gratitude and solidarity become part of what it means to hallow all things and to live in harmonious community with other creatures who we depend on for life, even as parts of their bodies can make fitting transplant parts for ours.

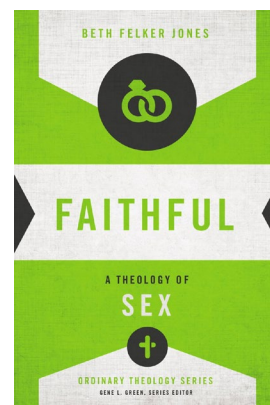


Green argues that surgery should be marked by "access" to all (p. 67) as a matter of social justice to which the gospel witnesses in laboring for societal goods. After reflecting on the role of recovery in the surgical process, Green ponders the reality that sometimes surgery results in failure, requiring the presence of others and a vision of hope found in Scripture. Yet in light of these situations of loss or failure (always not merely a possibility but a reality in this fallen world), the surgeon stands with Christ, imitating his way and skill, following his ministry to bring healing and wholeness to diseased bodies, even though it's never an easy road getting there. As such, "The violent intervention of surgery echoes the story of the cross since out of harm comes good, out of wounds comes life" (p. 90).

I've not read anything like this book, although I'm glad I did. Surgery has invaded the life of my family in incredible ways the last four years, with my youngest child having four brain surgeries between Paris, France and Orange County, California, ultimately resulting in a hemispherectomy. We still live with ongoing effects—many opening new possibilities, and many presenting new challenges. We've considered much in the area of the hope the incarnation and resurrection brings, for the healing of all things now broken. And we've been slowly working our way through works by leading figures in disability theology like Jean Vanier, John Swinton, Brian Brock, and Stanley Hauerwas. But we've not much thought about the act of surgery itself, and how it might be theologically located. Frankly, the neurosurgeon and anesthesiologists who have come into our lives and who are Christian people would benefit immensely from this book, especially as they too are often seeking resources to interpret their vocation in light of the astonishing good they are able to help bring about, as well as the times when their profound expertise is insufficient to remove the impediments for flourishing. Sometimes it even results in death.

I think every surgeon and doctor would be well served by picking up a copy of this book, as should hospital chaplains, other medical personnel, along with pastors and families facing the reality of surgery.

In the second book I read in this series, Wheaton College professor Beth Felker Jones explores a theology of sex. Moving toward a robust account of sexuality within the context of marriedness and singleness, her book treats matters directly. Aside from the powerful biblical expositions throughout the book, mixed with theological sensibility and with a finger on relevant questions swirling around in contemporary culture about the matter of sexuality, the book identifies sex as something that is real, embodied, and good. Some of the goodness has been removed, and sex has become in virtually every context something that is broken (ch. 4) and yet is redeemed back to the delights for which it was intended (ch. 5). An outstanding exposition of Song of Songs is given to show how this is so.

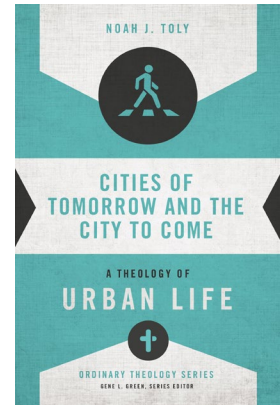


The author is attuned to the biblical text and the issues within first-century forms of sexuality (which inform her NT exegesis), and she brings all of this together with a sensitivity to Christians who will be struggling in the matter of sexuality and sexual relations. The strength of her previous work on the theology of the body, *Marks of His Wounds: Gender Politics and Bodily Resurrection* (Oxford: OUP, 2007) comes through clearly as she lands serious critique against any approaches to the body that would treat it as a commodity or “merchandise.” And she provides a steady levelling of the “purity rules” paradigm (ch. 7), ultimately developing a positive theology of sexuality within the context of marriage and singleness, since “the body is one hundred percent for the Lord” (p. 100).

Throughout the book, Felker Jones interacts with a number of predominate views on sex and marriage today, and does so with a deep understanding of pressing cultural issues that have shaped much of the Christian consciousness. What I didn’t find in the book (and was somewhat waiting for) was any kind of engagement with matters related to LGBTQIA issues, especially with the Supreme Court’s decision on same sex marriage in June 2015, or with the increasing attention that evangelicals are giving to intersex in correlation with Megan DeFranza’s work, *Sex Difference in Christian Theology: Male, Female, and Intersex in the Image of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), or in light of the high profile situation of Bruce/Caitlyn Jenner and transsexuality.

There’s no doubt in my mind that Felker Jones will be a very careful guide through a number of these matters, and perhaps a revision of this book might allow for this (although it is currently the longest book in the series). But in this short book, she does not touch any of these issues. If a revision doesn’t, I reckon that a book in this *Ordinary Theology* series that might address these issues would be one on a theology of humanness, or anthropology, which is an increasingly relevant question in our contemporary world. And yet, with that caveat, this book is the best short introduction to a theology of sexuality that I have ever seen, getting right to the heart of the matter that our bodies are for the Lord.

For the sake of space of this review of the series, I will only briefly mention the contributions from two other Wheaton professors Noah Toly and Vincent Bacote. As one of the leading young urbanists, engaged with the best of the wider world of urban theory, sociology, and philosophy of human spaces and built environment, Toly gives a brilliant exposition of what it means to live in American cities, among both the affluent and the hurting, among success and cultural decay. He brings keen insight, especially with regards to his familiarity with Chicago, one of the most complicated cities in America. As with the others, his exposition of Scripture (especially Daniel in ch. 5) was particularly helpful, reflecting especially on how to care for the vulnerable among us.



As with each of these books, Bacote also executes brilliantly, mixing personal narrative, social commentary, biblical exegesis, some creative writing (e.g., pp. 25–26), and theological reflection. *The Political Disciple* goes quite autobiographical as Bacote discloses his own journey with evangelicalism (e.g., his daily evangelical radio preacher diet along with its strong and unchecked political right impulses, pp. 38–39). But the book shows how in spite of different voices competing for our allegiances, our money, our minds, and (perhaps ultimately) our votes, the question every Christian should ask is one about his or her public posture as a means of pursuing what Bacote calls “public holiness” (pp. 66–67). In other words, the question (one of sanctification) becomes, “What does it mean to pursue holiness in a way that extends to and permeates the public dimension of our faith?” (p. 59).

Each of the chapters in this series begins with a story, sometimes from culture, sometimes from the personal life of the authors. As such, the authors are really trying to (and, I believe) succeeding at storying their own kinds of theological reflections into the minds of their readers, not so readers can have a better theology (although hopefully that would result) but also so that “ordinary” believers, as it were, can have confidence to take the tools within their own grasp in order to better engage with matters in everyday life. That they might, again, *be theologians*.

In this process, another strength of the series is that the authors shed both the academic and evangelical jargon to really write from their hearts, which creates the best kind of writing. This series promises to be a very interesting one. I read Green’s book at the beach with my family. I read Jones’s book during an afternoon. I read Toly’s and Bacote’s each in an evening.

The only downside of such a series like this is that it suggests that our churches (and perhaps our evangelical institutions) have failed in helping to cultivate better engagement with culture. I have found this to be the case with my own work with Fred Sanders and others seeking to meaningfully engage regional issues regarding California in interdisciplinary theological perspective, which has yielded, Fred Sanders and Jason S. Sexton, ed., *Theology and California: Theological Refractions on California’s Culture* ((Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014). But we are increasingly succeeding at efforts to encourage the churches, and I trust Gene Green’s effort with this series will as well. I trust this will especially be so as the series authors expand from beyond the scope of Wheaton, Illinois, to the wider world beyond, and

to more subjects that confront us in our everyday lives. I look forward to recommending the volumes as far and wide as I can, and also to learning from the next volumes that come out in this series.

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Trevor Hart. *Making Good: Creation, Creativity, and Artistry*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014. xii + 368 pp. £58.50/\$69.95.

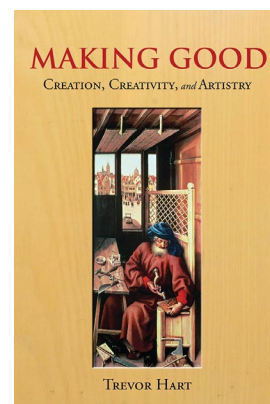
In this first volume of his larger project *A Poetics of Redemption*, Trevor Hart locates human creativity within God's created, broken, and recreated world. Hart's overall thesis is that while God is the supreme Creator-Artist, there is space within God's economy for human artistry and creativity, meaningfully participating in God's mission of making good. This humble, responsive creativity is the opposite of idolatry, which rises out of an "artistic autonomy" that clashes with and distorts "the master craftsman's vision" (p. 57). Technically, only God "creates" (in the *ex nihilo* manner), but he enlists human *poesis* to add depth and significance to the splendor of his world and work.

Hart explores how the modern notion of the artist stands in direct opposition to how an artist should live out his or her vocation in God's world. For the modern artist, creativity is about expressing one's inner vision with unbridled freedom and autonomy, rather than responding within the liberating constraints of God's creation and human traditions. In other words, the modern—and often most popular—view of creativity is essentially anthropocentric, displacing God's sovereign agency in making all things new and placing this responsibility on the shoulders of human artists. Beginning with early Renaissance humanism and continuing through certain forms of postmodern art, Hart traces "a shift from an economy of gift and response to one centered and reliant instead on autonomous human merits and achievements" (p. 219).

In contrast to an anthropocentric approach to creativity, a theo-centric approach recognizes that human creativity always depends on and stems from divine creativity. This does not mean, however, that any faithful form of creativity needs to be limited to imitating reality as God designed and sustains it. As Hart explains, there is no "pure" representation; all *mimesis* involves an imaginative engagement with reality that interprets and transforms reality. The Christian counterpart to creative hubris, therefore, is not slavish imitation, but spirited improvisation within God's created and re-created order.

This perspective dismantles common misunderstandings about creativity and situates it snugly within a vision of imaginative Christian obedience. Creativity is less about novelty and more about improvisational response to the given. Creativity is less about isolated inspiration and more about receptive collaboration with materials, tradition, and the artistic community. Creativity is less about being original and more about being obvious. Drawing on the seminal work of Nicholas Wolterstorff, Hart describes artists as "workers in fittingness" who find ways of crafting works of art that imaginatively fit with the grain of the universe.

The argument Hart weaves together in *Making Good* is erudite and extensive, and that is both the book's strength and weakness. It's a strength, because I know of no other theology of creativity



that deals as widely and thoroughly with scholars in every relevant field, whether biblical studies, theology, philosophy, or creativity studies. The scholars and theologians Hart favors—Karl Barth, Jürgen Moltmann, Paul Ricoeur, Dorothy Sayers, Nicholas Wolterstorff, George Steiner, and others—are not bandied about without serious engagement with detracting voices. As such, Hart’s scholarship is careful, comprehensive, and critical without being dismissive. As a weakness, however, this wide-ranging interaction with scholars of every stripe can be laborious to read at times. Add to this Hart’s proclivity toward long, complex sentences, and this is unfortunately one of those books that many people might start with gusto have difficulty completing with equal enthusiasm. This book is a gift, but I only wish it was poised to reach a wider audience rather than a relatively small cadre of academically inclined readers who will benefit greatly for persevering to the end.

It’s also important to mention that the basic question of *Making Good* may seem odd to those who don’t share Hart’s theological commitments. Stated simply: if God is the sovereign creator and sustainer of all that is good and beautiful, what room is there for human creativity? For some, this question might seem inhibited by a faulty premise. But for someone whose worldview is permeated by the action of a sovereign God, it is absolutely essential to work out an understanding of human creativity that doesn’t “trespass on the soil of divine prerogatives,” but participates in God’s mission to make all things new (p. 330). Sprinkled throughout the book, Hart hints at how this view of human creativity and artistry centers on trinitarian theology and Christology, although a full unfolding of this claim will have to wait until Hart’s second volume in *A Poetics of Redemption*. In the last sentence of the book, however, there’s an intimation of what this entails: “the suggestion that human beings are called to be genuinely creative (albeit as created ‘sub-creators’ rather than ‘co-creators’) situates all human response to the world potentially within the field of an action at once eucharistic and eschatological, grounded in the vicarious self-substitution of Christ for us, and opened out by the work of the Spirit of Christ in and through us in the direction of that New Creation promised by the Father” (p. 339).

“Sub-creation” was J. R. R. Tolkien’s term, which he used to describe how human making is subservient to divine creation. Any act of human creativity is a genuine contribution, but it’s always “sub-creation” by virtue of its imaginative response to God’s acts of creation and re-creation. Hart summarizes: “Only God can bring about the ‘new creation’ to which the apostles and prophets bear poetic witness; but in the meanwhile, we are called already to live in ways that declare this new creation to be a hidden reality, performing parables of it in the midst of history, and so conforming historical existence, piece by piece, more fully to its promised destiny in God’s hands” (p. 328).

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Ron Highfield. *God, Freedom and Human Dignity: Embracing a God-Centered Identity in a Me-Centered Culture*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013. 229 pp. £14.52/\$22.00.

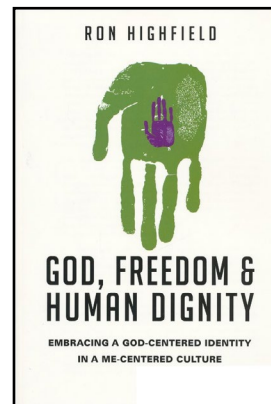
Bred from a pastoral concern for the frequent indifference toward God displayed particularly by young Westerners, Ron Highfield endeavors to show that God and the gospel fulfill key human aspirations rather than dampening them. He contends that God does not threaten human freedom or dignity but rather grounds and completes them.

The first part of the book diagnoses the “me-centered self” of contemporary culture by showing the historical path toward founding dignity within the individual. God has come to be viewed as a competitor. His freedom and power impinge upon my own. His exhaustive knowledge invades my privileged inner world. I may then respond with Promethean rebellion (ch. 2), mercenary and idolatrous subservience (ch. 3), or the indifference of the aesthete, success-driven, fame-seeking, or agnostic (ch. 4). If God has complete freedom, power, presence, and knowledge, then it would not appear that there is any room for me (ch. 5). Anything that is my own—my freedom, my space—are completely squeezed out of existence. Since I may wish to establish my worth (dignity) and freely pursue my desires to determine my own destiny, God will be perceived as an enviable, competitive threat (ch. 6). However, these human aspirations for self-determination don’t withstand scrutiny (ch. 7). The range of options available to me always restricts my freedom. I lack knowledge of the consequences of my actions and of the deepest recesses of my self. It is deluded for me to believe I am self-caused.

Part two, on the God-centered self, aims to show that the Christian understanding of God and humanity grounds “perfect freedom and the highest dignity conceivable” (p. 113). Free creation and free redemption show the gracious love God has for humanity and confer dignity upon us as a reflection of the love relations within the Trinity (ch. 8). Clearing up misconceptions concerning God’s power (ch. 9) and God’s presence and knowledge (ch. 10) shows that God sustains our dignity rather than threatening it. The Incarnation perfectly exemplifies God-dependent humanity (ch. 11). In adoption, we are called to resemble God’s character and love in a godly manner (ch. 12). Our freedom is then affirmed when it perfects our God-given nature and *telos*, and avoids the slavery of sin (chs. 13–14). Our dignity derives not primarily from our natural or moral excellence but from the relationship of being loved by God (ch. 15). The conditions of separation, scarcity, and unfulfilled desire that tempt us toward competition with God will be erased in future full union with God (ch. 16).

The book provides useful and accessible correlations between conceptions of humanity and the implicit theology behind them, showing that every account of the nature of the human person also has an understanding of God’s nature in the background. Highfield skillfully links theology to cultural concerns and philosophical reflection while sensitively responding to concerns present within the culture.

The book is not a thoroughgoing theological anthropology, nor is its purpose to provide detailed theological discussions of core concepts such as the atonement, the image of God, or the Trinity. In contexts where accessibility is needed, this will be a strength. For this reason, I could envision this book being used in introductory Christian worldview or theological anthropology courses, or as a supplement to more advanced discussions of these topics. I believe advanced church study groups could make good



use of it, and those in ministry will find it useful for contextualizing the gospel among contemporary Western religious skeptics, and perhaps religious “nones.” Those ministering to teens and young adults will particularly want to absorb the content of this book.

The strength of accessibility also comes with loose philosophical and theological interpretations and formulations. Explication of the ideas of modern philosophers in the early parts of the book closely follows the analyses of Charles Taylor and of Alasdair MacIntyre; those are fine sources, yet in places the original positions suffer distortion. Theological argumentation in the book depends fairly extensively on a kind of Hegelian “social” or relational trinitarianism. Perhaps the most clear instance of this occurs in the pivotal conclusion that “dignity is a relation of love in which one person bestows worth on others by loving them” and therefore “our dignity and God’s dignity have the same ground: the love of the Father, Son and Spirit” (p. 204). At least in the case of God, it would seem that dignity is intrinsic rather than contingent on the recognition of another. As formulated by Highfield, dignity becomes a property of the triune person and not of the divine essence. Only in loving himself does God find dignity. This supposedly relational interpretation of dignity would appear to fall prey to some of the same criticisms Highfield made against modern thought in earlier parts of the book.

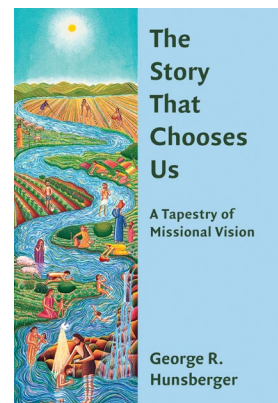
Fortunately, many of the conclusions remain sound and insightful independently of a few questionable theological and philosophical assumptions. For instance, Highfield thankfully does not bow to the fashionable and misguided trend of affirming a purely relational or functional perspective of the image of God, but allows for an intrinsic understanding of the image as well.

Dignity and freedom certainly concern modern people. How pervasively do worries about them thwart acceptance of the gospel? I’m not able to say. Insofar as they do, this book will be a useful and sought-after resource.

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George R. Hunsberger. *The Story that Chooses Us: A Tapestry of Missional Vision*. The Gospel and Our Culture. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015. x + 166 pp. £15.84/\$24.00.

“The Chinese character for *crisis*, we are told, is a combination of the characters for ‘danger’ and ‘opportunity’” (p. 118). Many missiologists would agree that the church is currently presented with both. It will have to decide how it will face those dangers and opportunities. Over the last several decades missiologist George Hunsberger has written many essays in order to help the church face this crisis of missional identity and practice. *The Story that Chooses Us* collects some of these. Covering topics like calling, community, and formation, these essays contain a number of reoccurring themes that weave cohesively into what Hunsberger calls “a tapestry of missional-ecclesial vision” (p. ix). The overall scope of this project is wide and the topics addressed are diverse, yet these reoccurring themes bring a sense of cohesion. Instead of addressing individual chapters in this review, I will cover some of these themes (the current crisis of



the church, the current shape of the church, the identity of the church, the mission of the church) and offer some critical thoughts about this collection of essays.

The first theme we encounter concerns the current crisis the Western church is facing. Hunsberger says, “the crisis is that we have not thought carefully, critically, or theologically about our assumptions regarding the church and we have failed to notice how much they have been shaped by the character of modern American life” (p. 31). Modern American life is characterized by the privatization of faith, the postmodern condition, and a post-Christendom environment, according to Hunsberger. These current trends and other contextual factors have played a large role in the church’s understanding of its role in society. According to Hunsberger, “we have come to view the church as ‘a vendor of religious services and goods’” (p. 35). This “vendor-shaped church” is a problem because Scripture never speaks about the church in this way. In light of this misunderstanding about the nature of the church, we are faced with a question, “How shall we make a shift towards a more biblical identity?” Hunsberger’s answer is that we will have to return to the gospel. Reorienting ourselves around the gospel will aid the church in recovering its identity. By centering on the gospel of the kingdom the church will be able to live its identity as a community, servant, and messenger. The church will find that by living out its gospel-shaped identity it will begin to fulfill its mission to represent the reign of God. Hunsberger understands the word “represent” in two ways, both actively and passively. In its passive sense it means that the church is a sign or foretaste of the reign of God. In its active sense it means that it is an agent or instrument. It is quite clear how much of Hunsberger’s thought is indebted to Lesslie Newbigin’s missiology. Much like Newbigin, Hunsberger’s work endeavors to help the Western church see the issues it is facing and better embody its missionary character as a sign, foretaste, and instrument of the reign of God.

There is much to be appreciated about this collection of essays. First, we should appreciate the balance Hunsberger displays in his discussion of the mission of the church. The current missional conversation is dominated by language of “building” or “establishing” the reign of God. The reign of God is turned into a social project, which is often just a “baptized” version of whatever social projects are currently in vogue in society. Hunsberger avoids this and emphasizes the fact that while the church certainly is a servant to society it is also a messenger called to embody and speak the gospel, which will often critique culture. Hunsberger displays a nuanced understanding of culture, refusing to fall into the trap that many do, pitting gospel against culture assuming that the church neatly falls into the gospel side of the dialogue. Rather he emphasizes that there is a three-way dialogue involving the gospel, the church, and the culture that the church finds itself to be a part of. The reader will appreciate the fact that he grounds evangelism in gospel motivations. Evangelism is not simply an assignment, it is a part of our identity as people shaped by an encounter with Christ.

Despite these and other strengths, this book has its flaws. The most significant flaw is that Hunsberger creates a false dichotomy between the two notions that the church is a “place where things happen” and “a body of people sent on a mission” (p. 34). Also, much like other books in the missional conversation, this book almost completely ignores discussing the missional nature of suburban churches in favor of addressing mission in urban settings. This is a detriment because a good number of the readers of this book will likely not find themselves serving in urban settings.

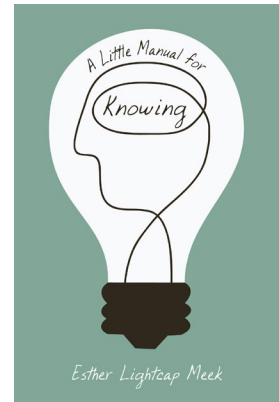
Hunsberger concludes this collection of essays by describing the impact Newbigin has had on preachers. He describes how Newbigin’s work is a resource for those seeking to recover more biblical ways of believing, witnessing, and being community in our “post-everything” world. The same thing

could be said of Hunsberger and his work. Hopefully this book will introduce many to the resource that is George Hunsberger's work.

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Esther Lightcap Meek. *A Little Manual for Knowing*. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014. 104 pp. £9.00/\$14.00.

Over the last few years, Esther Meek has joined a great cloud of fellow philosophers who have come to challenge the notion that knowledge is prepackaged information that passively exists in an upper realm waiting to be plucked by some mildly inquisitive individual—static, impersonal, cold. Helping to correct our defective epistemic setting by appropriating scientist-philosopher Michael Polanyi's "subsidiary-focal integration" model, Meek makes the case that knowing is the process of working through subsidiaries—what in *Longing to Know* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2003), her first major work, Meek refers to as clues—to draw together an integral pattern, which then opens up and further enriches reality. The master pianist, for instance, indwells the keys to his or her instrument subsidiarily to the focal point of the musical piece, producing a deeply rich knowing experience.



Meek's latest work, *A Little Manual for Knowing*, can be considered a succinct introduction to the current state of her unique philosophy. Knowing—more importantly, the process of coming to know—is both a pilgrimage and a gift whereby the knower commits or pledges in faith to what is yet to be known. This journey begins with wonder, with an adumbrated love—a love of the journey itself—not yet fully articulated. "The knowing venture," Meek writes, "calls us to trust ourselves to something we seek to know, to trust ourselves to its developments, to trust ourselves to a reality that is relationally responsive and generous, to trust ourselves to relationship, to trust ourselves to carefully chosen guides and to companions on the journey, to trust ourselves in the knowing venture" (p. 29). Meek calls this "covenant epistemology," an idea introduced and defined in her second book, *Loving to Know: Covenant Epistemology* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011).

The idea that knowledge requires moving beyond the individual, who must submit to another, further suggests that knowledge is communal in nature. Knowledge requires a community, a dynamic community itself in formation. In *Little Manual*, Meek links this covenant epistemology to the formation of being. Community is not only necessary for knowing, it is also necessary for human identity. Coming to know something through community is the process of self-becoming. The master musician not only submits to an authoritative guide, but also to a community of artists. Such artists in community mutually constitute one another, strengthening, thereby, the community.

An interesting part of *Little Manual* is the central place of both "the Void" and "the Holy" in the knowing process and in human becoming. The Void—"the deep realization that we might not exist, that we need something, someone, beyond ourselves"—is our "coping with our situation," opening up ourselves to where the situation might take us. Those familiar with *Loving to Know* should be reminded of Meek's encouragement to open ourselves up to the "contingency of being," to invite the real. Our

momentary (or often not-so momentary) communion with the Void precedes our epiphanic surprises, our “Aha!” moments—moments of clear insight. Another important function of the Void not articulated by Meek in *Little Manual* but intimated in *Longing to Know* is how it helps us avoid the temptation of being, as Arthur Schopenhauer once said, “shut-up in our own solipsistic blockhouse.” It forces us to reject a pure subjectivism, the philosophically unsophisticated idea that we can create our own reality. To cast in a more positive light, our acceptance of the Void is, in fact, a manifestation of our faith in the real.

The mind is shaped by the reality that meets our faithful invitation and indwelling of it. In fact, there is no mind apart from external reality. This relates to the second attribute of our humanness, the Holy. The Holy, the “gracious possibility of new being,” according to Meek, immediately follows the “Aha!” moment. We are transformed when we embrace reality and when reality embraces us. Think again of the musician whose physicality is changed by his communing with a musical piece as well as the musical instrument. The music saturates his blood, changes habits, and moves him or her to see the world in a new, more enriching way.

This speaks to Meek’s notion that knowledge is not only a pilgrimage, it is also a gift. What follows encountering reality and being transformed by it in the sequence of knowing is a kind of dance, a continual loving relationship with the known world. “We move,” she writes, “to and fro in conversations, in growing understanding, in growing solidarity and mutual trust” (p. 81). The dance is a continual opening up of reality, a “continuously dynamic, ever-new gift” (p. 88). This dance—this submissive and mutual reciprocity (whereby our inviting and indwelling SFI [subsidiary-focal integration], our faithful covenantal pledge that transforms us)—brings a sense of relief, a quiet peace. Ignorance is unsettling. The Void is something that we contend with in order to reach the “Aha!” moment. Students struggle through difficult ideas and arguments. They feel a sense of relief when they solve a complex problem. This is part of the journey. Augustine admitted this sense of shalom when he finally submitted himself to the highest knowledge. When he found God, his restless heart also found rest.

If general readers were to locate Meek’s covenant epistemology within a philosophical tradition it would be that of American pragmatism. For pragmatists from William James to Richard Rorty, ideas are provisional and only “become” true when removed from the individual. The pragmatist submits his or her ideas to an authoritative community. As Charles Pierce said in the late-nineteenth century, “the opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed to by all who investigate, is what we mean by the truth, and the object represented in this opinion is the real.” The notion that our provisional ideas are critically examined by an authoritative community was revived by neo-Pragmatist Richard Rorty in the twentieth-century: “Truth is what your contemporaries let you get away with.” The Pragmatist’s goal is not to discuss the nature of ideas but rather to reorient our attitude toward them. Modern thought since Descartes has attempted to play the role of God, neglecting the fallibility of human ideas—ideas that need to be examined by others. And it’s from this community that an idea or argument is sharpened and quite often transformed, along with the person who makes the original argument. Such an orientation is hostile to the stiff-necked Cartesian hubris that has created our defective epistemic paradigm. What Descartes offered was not “the triumph of the prideful individual subject freed from scholastic shackles so much as the triumph of the quest for certainty over the quest for wisdom,” according to Rorty. The Christian perspective would echo the pragmatist emphasis on the humbling limitations of human thought. For the Christian reader, Meek’s philosophy—highlighting the critical role of inviting and submitting to the yet-unknown—offers one of the best, though subtle, presentations of biblical wisdom.

Indeed, modern philosophy has in many ways lost sight of its first love—the love of wisdom. Godly wisdom rests on submission—submission to God and to others (parents, spouses, neighbors, friends, etc.) that cultivates humility and openness. Wisdom is covenantal knowledge.

A few critical observations of this introduction to Meek's philosophy may be offered. A discussion of the epistemological impact of the fall is conspicuously absent. The dance metaphor can easily be changed to one of war. What role does the antithesis play in the knowing journey, especially when scripture often uses militant language about "taking captive" every thought? Readers may also wonder about the historical conditions that have led to modern philosophy's epistemic illness. The historical process is also part of the journey of knowing. Finally, is there a way to create an epistemological environment that could jumpstart or offer a preliminary shape to a knower's love? These criticisms notwithstanding, Meek's easily digestible but no less profound prescriptions in *Little Manual* will go some ways in seeking to heal the ills of contemporary epistemology.

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