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This is a revised version of Cohen’s 2008 Hebrew University dissertation. His corpus consists of the verbal forms in the Second Temple period books of Esther, Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah, and the nonsynoptic portions of Chronicles. Cohen describes his method as structuralist, grounded in the Saussurean distinctions between diachrony and synchrony, “langue” and “parole,” and syntagmatic and paradigmatic (p. 1). He sets forth a three-step process for his study: first, analyze the data (the “parole”), then present generalizations that explain specific instances (“parole”) and “undergird” an account of the “langue,” and third, elucidate the complex relationship between these two spheres. Cohen does not aspire to develop a new approach to the Biblical Hebrew verbal system but hopes “to establish a new overarching framework for the research of the Biblical Hebrew verbal system” (p. 2) and to “delineate the changes that marked the transition from the classical era to the Second Temple period” (p. 1). For this reason, he approaches the data synchronically as well as diachronically, in comparison with First Temple biblical texts and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Despite the promising aims, Cohen’s study is a disappointment at every level. Methodologically, Cohen seems ignorant of recent debates over diachrony and Biblical Hebrew (see, e.g., Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé and Ziony Zevit, Diachrony in Biblical Hebrew [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012]). His lack of acknowledgement (even if only to disagree) of the argument that no separation is possible between First Temple and Second Temple biblical literature, calls into question Cohen’s uncritical diachronic comparisons.

Cohen adopts his understanding of the Biblical Hebrew verbal system from Jan Joosten (e.g., “Do the Finite Verbal Forms in Biblical Hebrew Express Aspect?” Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University 29 [2002] 49–70) and Galia Hatav (esp. The Semantics of Aspect and Modality: Evidence from English and Biblical Hebrew [Studies in Language Companion 34; Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1997]): the system is relative tense and modality (a la Joosten) in which the concept of the reference point is exploited to distinguish between the semantically similar pairs wayyiqtol and qatal, and weqatal and yiqtol (a la Hatav). Cohen does not acknowledge criticisms of these theories, nor does he betray any awareness of the current status of Biblical Hebrew verbal theory (in his 9-page bibliography, only a dozen post-2000 sources are cited, most of which are the author’s and those of Hatav and Joosten). Cohen’s uncritical adoption of these views is less clear and compelling than Joosten’s and Hatav’s own presentations and does nothing to promote or enhance these theories.
A more serious theoretical flaw is Cohen’s employment of Reichenbach’s relative tense theory. According to Reichenbach (Elements of Symbolic Logic [London: Collier-Macmillan, 1947]), the analysis of tense requires attention to the relative temporal ordering not just of the event time (E) or speech time (S) but of a third parameter that he termed the reference time (or R-time). This reference-point (or R-point) insight has a pivotal role in almost all subsequent tense studies. However, Cohen seems to be unacquainted with the wealth of linguistic scholarship that has refined Reichenbach’s initial insight (see the survey in John A. Cook, Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb: The Expression of Tense, Aspect, and Modality in Biblical Hebrew [Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 7; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012] 1–76). As a result, one of the most confused parts of his theory is the use of Reichenbach’s R-point theory to analyze the irrealis mood verbal forms. Linguists have long exploited Reichenbach’s idea of a reference point to treat tense and aspect as interrelated parameters. But irrealis mood stands apart from tense and aspect, because it involves accessibility relations with alternative futures or worlds. Therefore, it is confusing and unhelpful to attempt, as Cohen does, to speak about accessibility relationships in terms of the temporal ordering of E, S, and R. To illustrate, Cohen proposes that the verbal forms in the corpus are best analyzed in terms of a R-time (tense) axis and a mode (mood) axis that “are engaged in an intricate game, wherein one of the axes is liable to be neutralized under certain circumstances” (p. 43). As an example of the balance between these two axes, he cites Esth 9:12 (“In the fortress Shushan the Jews have killed [וַיְרָג] a total of five hundred men”). He explains that the R-time axis is involved because of the placement of the event prior to the speech time (E < R = S), and that the mode axis is invoked by the realis status of the event. By contrast, he claims that R-time is ascendent and the mode axis is “attenuated” in Gen 43:10 (“If [לֹלָא] we had not dawdled, we could have returned [שָׁבוּ בְּ] twice”). He explains that the irrealis conditional sentence serves to “induce a modicum of de-actualization” by its “collision” with the qatal form’s [+ actuality, + concreteness] semantics. This explanation is confusing, because in both verses both axes are involved: the event expressed by the qatal is prior to the reference time (= speech time in Esth 9:12, and = qatal verb in the protasis of Gen 43:10) and the mode axis is involved through the realis and irrealis status of the two examples, respectively.

Finally, Cohen’s conclusions are either not novel or not convincing. He claims to have demonstrated by his analysis that the “sequential” forms wayyiqtol and weqatal “encompass their own reference time [R,E]” in contrast to their non-sequential counterparts qatal and yiqtol (p. 275). This view not novel, being adopted from Hatav (Semantics of Aspect and Modality, p. 22). And it is falsified by examples like 1 Sam 8:3 (“they did not walk [הלכו] in his ways, but turned away [וַיְרָח] after unjust gains and took [וָיקָחָו] bribes and perverted [וַיִּטְו] justice”), in which the clauses are all grounded in the reference time of the preceding “they (were) judges” (v. 2). This anaphoric stative anchor creates a habitual interpretation of these events, which would otherwise express narrative succession (see Cook, Time and the Biblical Hebrew Verb, p. 324).

Cohen lists a number of examples from his corpus and the Dead Sea Scrolls illustrating the increased use of the infinitive construct and then claims, “In these passages, there is a clear link between the infinitive and the participle
form. The periphrastic הוהי + infinitive construct replaces the classical ראהי + participle” (p. 233). No classical examples are cited for comparison, and none of his infinitive examples are convincing. In every example he cites, if the infinitive were replaced by the participle, the sense would be different: 2 Chr 26:5, “he applied himself to the worship [שדרוח],” versus 2 Chr 24:14, “they were offering up [ burnt offerings],” suggests that ראהי would express the progressive, “he was worshiping.”

The combination of synchronic and diachronic analyses of the verbal system in specific portions of the Hebrew Bible is a promising area of research. Unfortunately, Cohen's work is neither a model of the way we should conduct such a study, nor does it contribute to our understanding of the grammar of late Biblical Hebrew.

John A. Cook  
Asbury Theological Seminary


This great work represents the culmination of one of the passions of Professor Kitchen, a form-critical study of the vassal treaty structure in the OT and the ancient Near East. Ably assisted in their production by Paul Lawrence, these three volumes now provide the reader with a complete survey of the known treaties, legal collections, and covenants published and dated from the period before Christ. Until its appearance there has been no inclusive corpus of these texts from the ancient world. Indeed, I suspect there are few who would be familiar with every one of the 106 texts directly related to this discussion that are translated, let alone the dozens of fragments, edicts, and other materials listed after the basic materials studied in this collection. The collection is vast and only someone with such an encyclopedic command of the field could have brought together all these texts and provided a comparative analysis.

The volumes present 102 ancient Near Eastern treaties, legal collections, and covenants, with full bibliography, transliteration, translation, and (for treaties and covenants) a study of their organization. The second volume contains notes on specific matters of contents in the documents. This is not a line-by-line commentary but it does attempt to examine major points of interest, especially in anticipation of the third volume. The last volume looks at each treaty or covenant and examines the formal matters including those items that are unique to the particular text under study, those that may be common to the time period and the geographical region (as well as the language) from which the text originated, and those elements that distinguish this text from earlier and later works of a similar type. It places them all into a historical context and provides a survey of the development and changes in treaties and covenants.

For example, the oldest treaty is the Sumerian text between Eannatum of Lagash and Umma around 2500 B.C. Farther north (in Syria) from circa
2400 B.C. there originate six treaties from the palace archive of Ebla that were concluded between that city state and its neighbors. A clear difference in style exists between the two. The southern treaty has a repetitive style where the performance is recorded in full with each of the deities. This does not appear in the northern treaties, where there is a single presentation of the stipulations in each document. These sorts of distinctives as to form and content provide much of the analysis.

These differences become interesting from the biblical perspective when Kitchen and Lawrence place OT texts in their presumed chronological context and examine their comparative structures. Thus, the narratives recording “mini-treaties” between Abimelek of Gerar and Abraham (Gen 21:22–24, 25–33) and Isaac (Gen 26:26–31) all include elements in which a divine witness, an oath (with implied self-imprecation), stipulations, and a ceremonial meal are present (vol. 3, p. 73). These content areas appear in the family treaty of Gen 31:44–55, between Jacob and Laban. They also all appear in the Kanesh, Mari, and Shubat-Enlil treaties from the early second millennium B.C. By the 17th century B.C., the treaty between Abban of Aleppo and the king of Alalakh diverges from these basic elements, omitting some and including the prologue and final witnesses found in later treaties. Thus, only the early second millennium B.C. included all the elements of the Genesis covenants in the treaties.

By far the longest and most detailed study of biblical covenants is reserved for those of Exodus through Deuteronomy and Josh 24. Found in vol. 3, pp. 93–213, this moves well beyond the outline of elements found in Kitchen’s earlier works. In detailed studies of the form and contents of these covenants, the authors demonstrate the closest and clearest relationship with those Hittite vassal treaties of the Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 B.C.). While allowing for the updating of covenant texts, correlations remain in this period and not at all in the first millennium B.C. (or earlier in the second millennium B.C.). The following chapter considers those first millennium B.C. treaties that have been used for comparison with texts such as Deuteronomy. In particular, Kitchen and Lawrence carefully study the curses of the Esarhaddon vassal treaty and those of Deuteronomy as well as the whole survey of curses in treaties. The authors conclude that there is no special relationship between Deuteronomy and Esarhaddon’s vassal treaty (vol. 3, pp. 223–32).

Additional evidence, such as the recently published Tell Tayinat treaty (Jacob Lauringer, “Esarhaddon’s Succession Treaty at Tell Tayinat: Text and Commentary,” JCS 64 [2012] 87–123), does not alter these overall conclusions. With this impressive publication scholars can advance beyond generalizations about a first-millennium B.C. context for a covenant such as Deuteronomy and reexamine the biblical picture in the light of a much more complete corpus and detailed analysis of the treaty, covenant, and law of the ancient Near East. The question remains: Will they take this important evidence into account?

Richard S. Hess
Denver Seminary

Only a relatively short drive from Aleppo in Syria lies Tel Mardikh, the site of the ancient kingdom of Ebla. Ancient Ebla was influential during the Early and Middle Bronze Ages, and it was thrust to the forefront of scholarship in the late 1970s with the excavation of its tens of thousands of cuneiform tablets. Over time, this massive literary find has established Ebla as a valuable site and comparative tool for understanding elements of West Semitic and, by implication, Israelite society. Yet there are comparative obstacles between Eblaite and Israelite cultures that must be recognized as significant.

This volume is a compilation of 42 articles previously published by Matthiae between 1980 and 2010. Consequently, the significance of this volume principally does not exist in the novelty of ideas and theories but rather in the collection of diverse essays that the editor and the author have deemed as particularly important. For those who have a particular interest in Ebla or an interest in any one of the specific topics discussed, this volume will likely be welcome. But for the general biblicist, its importance remains to be seen, likely to be influenced by trends that invoke Ebla as a comparative tool. Thirteen essays appear in the section “History and Material Culture,” 15 in “Architecture: Space and Function,” and 14 in “Artistic Culture: Monuments and Traditions.” There are also 226 detailed plates offered at the conclusion as an appendix.

It is impossible to discuss each essay in this context, but there are a few points worthy of comment. In his essay “Figurative Themes and Literary Texts” (pp. 31–48), Matthiae explores the relationships between iconography and literature, discussing how iconography can supplement other historiographic sources. For example, inlaid panels celebrated military success. Other panels and reliefs celebrated aspects of daily life, and certain carvings memorialized the endeavors of kings and heroes. These considerations are important because iconographic approaches—interpretive approaches that consider the iconography of the ANE and ancient Israel as a critical context for interpretation—continue to develop and are offering fresh ideas in light of the swelling pool of data, which is a direct response to the increasing number of archaeological excavations. Furthermore, this evidence documents that figures and images were an effective form of communication in antiquity and thus a worthy source of analysis. There are also historical essays that detail the ebbs and flows of Ebla in its larger historical context. Examples include “The Destruction of Old Syrian Ebla at the End of Middle Bronze II” (pp. 177–200), “The Destruction of Ebla Royal Palace: Interconnections Between Syria, Mesopotamia, and Egypt in Late EB IVa” (pp. 57–94), and “Crisis and Collapse: Similarity and Diversity in Three Destructions of Ebla from EB IVa to MB II” (pp. 49–56). Such information is particularly important as sources for understanding the historical contours of Early Bronze and Middle Bronze Age Levant are at a premium.
Ultimately, one should still concede that Amihai Mazar’s comment offered in 1990 still generally applies. “It is now clear, however, that the Ebla archive can at best provide the general cultural background for the emergence of West Semitic peoples in the 3rd millennium B.C.E.” (Archaeology of the Land of the Bible: 10,000–586 B.C.E. [New York: Doubleday, 1990] 143). Other scholars echo this sentiment, including Hess, whose discussion of Ebla does not progress much past general sociological and onomastic connections. Wayne T. Pitard essentially concurs when he laments the disconnect between quality of data and quantity of data from Ebla as it applies to biblical studies (“Before Israel: Syria Palestine in The Bronze Age” in The Oxford History of the Biblical World [ed. Michael Coogan; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998] 31–33). Quite simply, the massive amount of data yielded at best indirectly applies to biblical studies. But perhaps this is why this volume is needed—to spark an interest in further understanding the dynamics of Ebla with the hope to increase the quality of its data as it applies to biblical studies. Indeed, Syria is currently being affected by conflict and civil war, and there is currently no timetable for excavations to resume at Tel Mardikh. But perhaps this volume will invigorate fresh analyses and new ideas that will drive excavations when they resume.

David B. Schreiner
Asbury University


This concise work introduces the reader to the entire Bible, including the Apocrypha, in a single volume. The authors have produced a unique work by approaching the text from three different perspectives (Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish). While far from exhaustive, the book addresses major themes in biblical scholarship in plain language, making it ideal for students and lay people unfamiliar with the academic study of religion.

The book can be divided into several sections. The first section helpfully provides a background to the discipline for those who are unfamiliar with it. It introduces the reader to the original languages and issues involved in translation, such as the lack of vowel pointing in the original Hebrew of the Hebrew Bible. Additionally, it discusses different source material and the growth of the Hebrew and NT cannons.

In addition to writing from three religious perspectives, this work is unique in the way it treats the Scriptures. First, a chapter is devoted to studying the Bible as sacred Scripture followed by one treating it as literature. The former chapter details the traditional Christian and Jewish interpretations of the Hebrew Bible and NT. From the Jewish perspective, it explains the way the Tanakh has been historically interpreted, and the way it has been used liturgically by the Jewish community. The Bible’s liturgical use by the Christian community is also discussed, as is traditional Christian interpretation of the Hebrew Bible by Jesus, Paul, and the church up to the reformation. The chapter
concerned with the Bible as literature discusses modern approaches including historical-critical methods, literary criticism, ideological, and sociopolitical criticism. An entire section is devoted to feminist criticism, and issues such as the Documentary Hypothesis are discussed at length. Finally, the first section concludes with a brief chapter explaining the difference between history and theological literature.

The second section deals with the Tanakh and follows the order of the Masoretic Text rather than English Bibles. In addition to chapters devoted to each book, there are introductions to the Torah, Prophets, Writings, and wisdom literature. Each chapter devoted to a book begins with an introduction containing an overview and summary of the book’s theological message. A section on controversies and debates discusses issues such as date and authorship, as well as hot-button theological issues such as the creation and evolution in Genesis. Due to the size of this work, it is not possible to treat each chapter of each biblical book. Instead, important sections and major themes are highlighted to give the reader a sense of the book’s message. Each chapter includes a discussion of the Jewish and Christian use of each book, and a concluding reflection. A brief chapter is devoted to the Apocrypha, and largely follows the patterns used in the section devoted to the Hebrew Bible.

The final section is devoted to the NT. As one would expect, it is written mostly from a Christian perspective, but the authors did not neglect to explain the NT’s Jewish background. There is a chapter introducing the entire NT, in addition to chapters introducing the Gospels, Pauline epistles, and General epistles. The first introduction elaborates on issues such as Hellenism, the Roman Empire, genre, and canon. The chapters devoted to NT books largely follow the pattern discussed above. Each book is introduced, and an overview of the major themes is given. This is followed by a section dedicated to controversies and debates, and a discussion of their major themes and sections.

In spite of the many advantages of the book, it has several drawbacks. As stated above, the Apocrypha is given much less treatment than the rest of the Bible. Only four books are briefly discussed, with only eight pages being devoted to the entire section. The book has no bibliography and contains no citations. While the book largely stays within the realm of scholarly consensus, the target audience is likely unfamiliar with many of the claims it makes. More than anything, this book would have benefited immensely from a list of “further reading” so an interested student could pursue topics further.

In spite of these drawbacks, the excellent scholarship and unique approach of this volume make it one of the best introductions available. It balances scholarship with readability; making it ideal for academic, parochial, or personal study. One of the most helpful features of the book is its treatment of Scripture as both literature and sacred Scripture. It is refreshing to find an introduction that honors both faith and intellectual integrity.

Joseph A. Perdue
Union Presbyterian Seminary

Bryan concisely surveys the history of post-Enlightenment biblical hermeneutics and provides his own constructive, explicitly Christian proposal. His slender volume is approachable for the novice (an undergraduate) but provides considerable fuel for a scholar’s or pastor’s reflection. His book reads at times as the memoir of a seasoned biblical scholar who narrates not only the progress of the discipline but also the development of his own understanding.

Bryan begins with a key dilemma facing any Christian biblical scholar: the seemingly irreconcilable division between faith-based and historical-critical approaches to the Bible. To understand this division better, Bryan offers a concise but insightful summary of “how we got here.” He treats some major figures (Schleiermacher, Jowett, and so on) and does an excellent job of summarizing how the conversation reached impasses requiring new proposals. He also shows some endemic problems, such as how historical Jesus research continually finds “a Jesus entirely congenial to themselves” (p. 18) or how NT scholarship appears to wrestle with ancient realities (e.g., Roman imperialism) when they are actually wrestling—knowingly and unknowingly—with modern insecurities (e.g., American imperialism).

Regarding the hermeneutic of suspicion, Bryan recognizes the dangers of excessive suspicion, but he also argues that suspicion is a necessary feature of interpretation, for sometimes texts do not tell us the whole truth. Employing suspicion enables one, for example, to downplay the gospels’ critique of Judaism as just one side of a “bitter family quarrel” (p. 25).

Bryan then asks the central question of his book: what is the task of the biblical scholar within the church? He puts forward three primary tasks: first, one must listen to the individual voices of Scripture. Here, Bryan attacks the fallacy that interpretation can be “presupposition-less” and argues that sharing Paul’s presuppositions may actually make one a better interpreter of Paul. For Bryan, what counts in this task is to be clear about what one’s presuppositions are, and to attend to the “matter” of the texts, not just issues of special introduction.

Second, one must consider these individual voices in relationship to the whole of Scripture, “asking how far an overall witness, a consensus, arises from Scripture, and if so what it is” (p. 45). For this task, Bryan attempts to steer a moderate course: on the one hand, he argues that the canon is unified by the Rule of Faith. But on the other, he believes that there are irreconcilable contradictions in the Bible. Nevertheless, Bryan argues that “Scripture itself makes clear which tradition is to be discarded” (p. 80). Hence, when some texts speak of God’s wrath toward the nations, while others speak of his grace toward them, “in the Scriptures taken as a whole, the story of God’s grace to the nations . . . is privileged over the more violent narrative” (p. 80).

Third, the interpreter must reflect on how the foregoing relates to the continuing life and witness of the church. Here, Bryan emphasizes the time it took for the church to recognize that certain practices that were tolerated in the Bible (e.g., slavery) are in fact “simply wrong” (p. 104). He also stresses the necessity of actualizing the written word, whether by speaking or performing
it in some way (a fascinating appendix by David Landon instructs the reader in public reading). The church best accomplishes its reflection and performance when it does so in surrender to the biblical story.

Bryan’s book is laden with insightful anecdotes, wise sayings, and thought-provoking examples. His humble tone stirs the reader to reexamine long-held biases, and his proposals are simple but reflect a penetrating grasp of the discipline.

Bryan emphasizes faithfulness (note the subtitle), but how faithful are Bryan’s proposals to the Bible? His hermeneutic leads him to discard many things that people find unacceptable in the Bible, but if the Bible cannot critique our cherished beliefs, are we actually “surrendering” to it? An attitude of surrender also seems at odds with his discussion of theological diversity. If the narratives of wrath and grace toward the nations are both from God—as the Bible offers them—then one must ask how these perspectives are actually complementary, not contradictory.

Ultimately, his doctrine of Scripture is at issue (a topic he only touches upon): if the Bible is genuinely “a creation of the Holy Spirit” (p. 129), then is the NT’s perspective on Judaism simply a “first-century family quarrel”? Can we apply a hermeneutic of suspicion to a word uttered by God without compromising his authority? When we find the Bible unacceptable, faithful interpreters must acknowledge that the problem is not in God’s word, but in us.

Notwithstanding these concerns, Bryan has provided an approachable essay on hermeneutics that is both well written and highly relevant to Christian scholars who are striving to be faithful in the academy and the church.

Matthew H. Patton
Wheaton College


In his previous, very successful, volume entitled Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith (1989), Professor Marvin R. Wilson sought to lay a broad introductory foundation of the fact that our Christian faith was rooted and grounded in Hebraic thought. In that volume he explored the history of Jewish-Christian relations as he strongly called for a greater appreciation for the contribution of the synagogue to the church. That same earlier volume was the driving force behind a national PBS television program entitled Jews and Christians: A Journey of Faith, which earned several awards.

In this new volume, Wilson proposes to bring Christians of every stripe and background into a renewal of their perspective on various biblical themes. However, the author is concerned that, despite Jews’ and Christians’ sharing the same book of the Bible, each tradition tends to limit itself merely to its own tradition, which is both unwise and myopic. Instead of talking mainly to ourselves in each of our own traditions, our shared Hebraic tradition would seem to call for a continued living conversation centered on the Bible. Wilson notes
at the outset the profound influence the writings of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel have had on his thinking these last 40 years as he has constantly taught a senior college seminar on Heschel. This reviewer would concur on Wilson's praise for Rabbi Heschel, for I too have used Heschel's work on the prophets over the years as an unusually fine resource for the study of the biblical prophets.

The book begins by asking “What is the central theme of the theological heart of the Old Testament?” Wilson answers: there is not one theme, but many themes with “the dynamic presence of the living God [being] the centerpiece” (p. 4). Hebraic theology cannot be reduced to one key strand of thought, he argues, thus instead of limiting our Christian theology to one correct position, it is usually preferable to think of several points of view. Wilson is wary of teaching that one particular theological tradition has it all “right” and the rest got it “wrong.” While this caution may have some positive applications, it becomes a little more troublesome when Wilson adds that “some texts may have multiple theological meanings, as opposed to one ‘correct’ meaning” (p. 6). Later, he returns to this same subject by affirming: “Literal-mindedness limits words [of the Bible] to one meaning when often they are meant as indicative words to be understood responsively with more than one meaning” (p. 45). This raises the prospect of the God of revelation being at times ambivalent or just plain undecided as to just what he had intended to assert when he revealed his word! But such lapses seem to be exceptional, for Wilson constantly strikes a sound note throughout the rest of his book with a nice emphasis on holding the truth in love. This is what makes this work an excellent conversation piece between Jewish persons interested in the faith and the Gentile Christian church.

In his thinking about Abraham and the critically important verse Gen 15:6, “Abraham believed the Lord,” Wilson finds that this text teaches that Abraham’s “covenant fidelity render[ed] him righteous before the Almighty” (p. 102). This answer could have been sharpened a bit more by pointing to the specific object of Abraham's faith which was no one less than the “Seed” that would come out of his own loins. Faith in the living God has and always will terminate on faith in Messiah (Acts 4:12), for that is what Gen 15:6 also taught. It is not that Abraham's faith was in itself an act of merit, which was added to his other meritorious acts; rather, it was focused on the one true and sole object of faith: the Messiah! This of course is the sticking point in Jewish-Christian conversations, but it is the elephant in the room that must be addressed if the conversation is to take on a realistic engagement.

Overall, this book is an excellent conversation-starter for Jews and Christians to rekindle a conversation that was unfortunately broken off early in the Christian centuries. Wilson's engagement with the Jewish Rabbis and Hebraic sources is worth the price of the book alone. He concludes his fine discussion of numerous theological matters by urging the church to abandon her sense of triumphalism that tragically led to Supersessionism, Replacement Theology, and in a real sense to the terrible blight in history of the Holocaust. This darkest chapter in history must be avoided as the world mistakenly once again revs up for another spike of anti-Semitism.

This book has to be on the required reading for both communities of faith, but especially for those in Christian colleges and seminaries. It will be a real
eye-opener for many who heretofore have had only a minimal appreciation for our joint heritage and for what our Hebraic heritage has meant for our roots and our possible renewal.

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Amidst the flurry of new Oxford reference works and encyclopedias relating to the Bible and archaeology stands this *Handbook of the Archaeology of the Levant.* In the introduction, the editors explain that Oxford, in fact, approached them with a request to edit a handbook of “biblical archaeology,” but they decided against this title in favor of the current title, to appeal to a broader audience in the English-speaking world with a more neutral term and to avoid some of the baggage of association with the religiously or politically inspired abuse of archaeology in the region. They also favor the term *Levant* (defined first geographically) as appropriately highlighting the region’s “cultural hybridity, with all its local peculiarities . . . illustrated in the archaeological record” (p. 3). Thus, while adopting a familiar chronological presentation style much like Ami Mazar’s classic *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible: 10,000–586 B.C.E.* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), the subsections are organized by the main archaeological periods (rather than by biblical epochs) and are divided regionally with many of the contributors intentionally engaging material peripheral to their foci.

Part 1, entitled “Archaeology of the Levant: Backgrounds and Definitions,” includes a Rainey-inspired overview of historical geography in the region (Suriano), coverage of the peoples and languages of the Bronze and Iron Age Levant (Gzella), and a brief history of research from the end of Ottoman rule to the present (Davis). This section also includes a helpful discussion of Levantine chronology (Sharon), focused more on terminology than on dating methods, and synthesizes the various names for archaeological periods used in this volume and other publications.

Part 2, “The Levant as the Crossroads between Empires: Egypt, Anatolia, Mesopotamia, and Persia,” underscores the commitment to understanding the archaeology of the Levant in its larger cultural, social, and political contexts. The succinct yet detailed coverage of Egypt (Mumford) is helpfully keyed to Levantine chronological periods targeted by the volume, and brief overviews of the Hittites (Klengel), the Assyrians and Babylonians (Schneider), and Achaemenid Persia (Elayi) are also provided.

Part 3, the bulk of the volume, entitled “The Archaeological Record,” then follows the traditional chronological progression of periods, with major subsections from the Neolithic through the Iron II (though, in fact, the individual chapters of the “Iron II” subsection continue through the Iron III/Babylonian-Persian periods), but with regionally focused chapters. This unique
layout allows for horizontal and vertical comparison and is consistent with the integrated aim of the volume.

Following a general introduction to the Neolithic (Finlayson), the period is treated in regional subdivisions of the northern Levant (Akkermans), the southern Cisjordan Levant (Goring-Morris and Belfer-Cohen), the southern Transjordan Levant (Betts), and Cyprus (Clarke). The Chalcolithic period is also covered by a general introduction (Levy) followed by regionally focused essays on the northern Levant (that is, the Lebanese-Syrian Coast [Artin]), as well as the Cisjordan (Rowan), the Transjordan (Kafafi), and Cyprus (Peltenburg).

The Early Bronze Age is then introduced (Greenberg) and followed by coverage of the northern Levant (that is, Syria [Cooper] and Lebanon [Genz]), the Cisjordan (de Miroshchidji), the Transjordan (Richard), and Cyprus (Webb). The Intermediate Bronze Age is also introduced (Weiss) in this section with specific coverage of the southern Levant (Prag). An introduction to the Middle Bronze Age Levant (Burke) follows with coverage of the northern region (that is, again, Syria [Morandi Bonacossi] and Lebanon [Charaf]), the southern Cisjordan (Cohen) and Transjordan (Bourke), and Cyprus (Frankel). The Late Bronze Age is likewise covered by an introduction (Sherratt) and regional treatment of the northern region (Syria [Luciani] and Lebanon [Heinz and Kulemann-Ossen]), as well as the Cisjordan (Panitz-Cohen), the Transjordan (Fischer), and Cyprus (Steel).

Next, the Iron Age I period is covered in the same manner with an introduction that includes treatment of the LBA/Iron I transition (Killebrew), followed by regional essays on the northern Levant (Sader), Cisjordan (Gilboa), Transjordan (Herr), and Cyprus (Iacovou), the latter here presented in conjunction with Cypriote chronology covering the settlement pattern crisis (LC IIC–IIIA) to the restructuring (LC IIIB).

The final section of the volume covers the Iron Age II period, as well as the Iron III, and, not surprisingly, contains the most essays. After the introduction (Steiner), more specificity is maintained in the regional treatments for the Iron II focused on the burgeoning polities of the Aramean states (Mazzoni, including coverage of Iron III), Phoenicia (Eugenia Aubet), Philistia (Ben-Shlomo), the Kingdom of (northern) Israel (Killebrew), Judah (Hardin), Ammon (Younker), Moab (Steiner), and Edom (Bienkowski). Cyprus is also covered in this section from the 11th century to ca. 300 B.C. (Iacovou), as well as the Babylonian (Zorn) and Persian (Lehmann) periods in the Levant.

The volume contains more than 200 high-quality black-and-white images, maps, and tables essential for a work such as this. The half-page “map of the Levant” placed immediately before the introduction, however, is somewhat disappointing; it seems that future editions of this work would be served well by a two-page regional map and a separate map of Israel and the Palestinian territories, locating major sites discussed in the volume. An adequate, but hardly exhaustive, index combining people, places, and topics is also included, but this single, “general” index makes navigation cumbersome. Most essays have a “suggested reading” bibliography as well as a “references” section, the former being a great help and the latter contributing unnecessarily to the length of the volume, as many citations are repeated in the various essays.

While some may question the motives of the publisher in commissioning so many niched reference works, the page-for-page worth of this handbook

This volume, containing 44 figures, 11 tables, and an appendix of cooking pot–rim profiles, represents a revision of Greer’s 2011 Ph.D. dissertation under the supervision of Baruch Halpern and Gary Knoppers at Pennsylvania State University. Greer currently serves as the Tel Dan project zooarchaeologist and has published numerous articles on the site and its cult.

Chapter 1 establishes a methodology for assessing the “evidence, nature, and role of sacred feasts at [Tel] Dan through a synthesis of textual and archaeological analyses” (p. 5) and provides a definition of cultic feasting. Chapter 2 is dedicated to an analysis of the biblical material regarding the cult at Dan, arguing that the cult is here presented as essentially Yahwistic with tribal elements. Acknowledging the complex formation history of 1 Kgs 12:25–33’s description of Jeroboam’s cult, Greer provides his own English translation before discussing the attitude of DH towards the cult. The apparent ambiguity surrounding the initial descriptions of Jeroboam’s cultic reforms suggests that the core account (1 Kgs 12:26–32a; 33c) may stem from the time of Hezekiah (DHH) with later polemical additions. Concerning the cult’s Yahwistic nature, Greer argues on the basis of Exod 32, the contemporaneous Tanaach cult stand, Dan plaque, and other evidences, that the usage of calf iconography at Dan may be consistent with early premonarchic Israelite depictions of YHWH. Furthermore, the dedicatory expression “behold, your God(s), O Israel, who brought you up from Egypt” (1 Kgs 12:28) likely represents an originally singular Yahwistic creed, polemically altered to a plural formulation by later scribes to discredit the cult. Finally, the Deuteronomic gloss בַּכּוֹת בֵּית (1 Kgs 12:31) may well stand as a polemical substitute for בְּכָי בִּיָּהוֹו. Tribal elements of the Danite cult may be identified in the likely archaic tradition of Jdg 17–18, the appointment of laity...
(1 Kgs 12) alongside traditional Levitical priesthood, and in the unique (possibly old tribal) dating of the pilgrim feast of 1 Kgs 12:22–23.

Chapter 3 provides an analysis of the material and faunal remains of the sacred precinct of Tel Dan (Area T), asking the question of whether these remains evidence sacred feasting and, if so, what may be discerned about this practice. Seven distinct concentrations of faunal and ceramic remains from relatively secure Iron Age II contexts were identified, two of which were pits and all of which likely represent intentional deposits. Two distinct spheres of activity may be established: the courtyard, with five deposits grouped around its large Iron II four-horned altar, and the Western Chambers, with two concentrations within the “altar room” in particular. Greer provides a rigorous analysis of 3,434 bones, 593 diagnostic ceramic fragments, and 15 artifacts, with special attention to taxa represented, mortality patterns, sexual dimorphism, butchery marks, right-to-left side meat proportions, meaty long bone to phalange proportions, ceramic types, and painted to unpainted ceramic ware proportions. Notable artifacts suggesting cultic activity (besides the large altars at each site) include six metal blades associated with the slaughter and preparation of animals, three small incense altars, a ceramic basin large enough for a mikvah, and two decorated stands; within the Western Chambers, a bronze bowl, three iron shovels, and several incised ceramic fragments of specialized usage also suggest cultic activity. From an extensive analysis of the above data, Greer concludes that eating events charged with religious significance likely took place within Area T on the basis of archaeological evidence alone. Finally, a reconstruction of events is provided: it appears that primarily sheep and goats, but also cattle, were slaughtered, prepared, stewed, and served in a variety of vessels in a communal setting at both the courtyard and Western Chambers. Left-sided portions were preferred within the larger feasts of the courtyard, while the right portion may have been consumed by smaller groups of higher social status within the Western Chambers.

Chapter 4 attempts to sharpen the reconstruction of chap. 3 through a synthesis of the biblical and archaeological data sets. Greer proposes that it may reasonably be ascertained that the courtyard was the stage for the sacred feasts of the offerers, while the Western Chambers were the domain of the priests. The Yahwistic nature of the Danite cult is strongly suggested by the priestly preference for right-side portions of especially sheep and goats, the common “altar kit” and mizqeq bowl of T-West, similarities between the architecture of Area T and the Solomonic temple description (1 Kgs 6–7), and the syntax of sacrificial practice in Area T in general. Concerning the question of whether the material remains from Area T reflect a period of Aramean occupation (1 Kgs 15:20), Greer convincingly argues that this occupation was short-lived, and Dan likely reverted back to Israelite rule by the time of the Omrides. A transition from traditional clan-based feasting at the site to increasing regulation of holy space in later phases is evidenced by the construction of a temenos wall, among other proofs. Chapter 5 provides a summary of findings and a reconstruction of Danite feasting in view of political developments of the Northern Kingdom. Greer proposes the Danite cult was (1) established under Jeroboam I in an effort to please disgruntled tribal factions; (2) grew significantly under the powerful Omrides with the construction of a large courtyard, possible temple renovations, and an enlarged altar; (3) was constricted by the addi-
tion of a temenos wall during the reign of the Nimshides; and (4) eventually fell to Tiglath-Pilesar III of Assyria. This reconstruction, although speculative, incorporates all available archaeological and textual data into a meaningful synthesis.

While the essential historicity of Jeroboam’s cult is widely accepted, it is not universally maintained. However, Greer’s findings make it increasingly difficult to deny the practice of cultic feasting at Dan during this period in general, and accumulating evidence seems to support the Yahwistic royal nature of the cult. Greer’s excellent and rigorous analysis provides a valuable contribution to not only our knowledge of Danite practices, but also to the relative dearth of knowledge of 10th–8th century B.C. Israelite religion in general.

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Archaeological remains of ancient Near Eastern cultures have recently offered new, intriguing data regarding ritual sacrifice. Therefore, Anne Porter and Glenn Schwartz organized a two-part American Schools of Oriental Research session “to examine some of these new data, to reconsider old material in new ways, and to see if it might be possible to develop new archaeological thinking on the topic of sacrifice” (p. 1). Sacred Killing: The Archaeology of Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East is the edited volume of essays that resulted from those sessions. The collection represents an important step forward in the study of both animal and human sacrifice. The essays are diachronic, considering data from the Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Hellenistic periods. In addition, the work is cross-cultural, exploring finds across modern Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Israel, and China. Each study is careful to consider the notion that sacrificial practices “are historically as well as culturally embedded in particular times and places” (p. 23).

Gillian Goslinga offers an anthropological study of current ritual practices in South India. The researcher sets out to examine specifically the annual goat sacrifice at the Pāndi Kōyil temple. The observations encompass several months leading up to the sacrifice through several weeks afterward. While the account offers little direct application to ancient Near Eastern studies, the author offers a glimpse into the thought process and often unrecorded praxis of ritual in archaeological studies. Goslinga argues that use of a prosaic hermeneutic allows for “a window onto the moral kaṅkku ‘reckoning’ of a ritual and its biographical context, returning us, if precariously, to idioms of auspiciousness, purity, and dharma” (p. 53).

The next two studies turn to the Neolithic period at Çatalhöyük in Anatolia. Sharon Moses offers a thought provoking argument for human sacrifice. The author bases her findings on the evidence of child foundation deposits under many dwellings and a calculated infant mortality rate twice the expected number. Moses proposes that the child sacrificial practice may represent
the beginnings of a shift from an egalitarian society to a class stratification society. For the purposes of this argument, Moses offers a modified definition of sacrifice. The new definition limits the term to the creation of “sacred spaces, imbue houses with sacred power, create bonds between people, and act as a supernatural link to the ancestors” (p. 58). Based on this definition, it is not essential that the children (neonates and infants) found in the foundation deposits were ritually killed but only that the placement of their bodies in the area under the floor of the dwelling held sacred meaning to those living in the space. To this end, Moses accomplishes her goal. The argument that the sacred space held greater societal significance may be determined speculative without additional research and evidence. Despite this shortcoming, the article offers a solid review of the Neolithic findings at Çatalhöyük.

In contrast, Nerissa Russell asserts that using archaeological evidence to explore prehistoric sacrifice has inherent challenges. As such, demonstrating that Neolithic-period sacrifice included offerings to a deity may be elusive. Therefore, she defines sacrifice as “the surrender of an individually owned animal to a larger cause, often including its communal consumption, feasting on domesticated animals” (p. 87). Russell evaluates new archaeological evidence demonstrating that cattle were not the staple diet at Çatalhöyük and that cattle were not domesticated at the site during this period. While these larger animals may have been eaten communally, they were not owned (that is, they were wild prey). Therefore, Russell finds that “while Çatalhöyük has been associated in the minds of many with cattle sacrifice, the evidence for this is extremely weak, although it is clear that cattle were important for feasting and trophy display and laden with symbolic meaning” (p. 90).

Elizabeth Carter offers an update on the work at Domuztepe during the Halaf period. She explores the remains in the “death pit,” finding that the remains are consistent with a complex communal ritual and possible sacrifice. This well-researched and argued article provides a clear methodology supporting human cannibalism and potential sacrifice at the site. Carter concludes by proposing the possible connection between cannibalism and the development of complex chiefly societies or, perhaps, a shamanistic world view.

A reevaluation of the classic human sacrificial burial site at Ur is the focus of the next essay by Aubrey Baadsgaard, Janet Monge, and Richard Zettler. This team upholds Woolley’s findings that the Ur III royal tombs contained court attendants buried with the royal figure for support in the afterlife. However, the authors argue that the mode of death “was not willing suicide by means of ingesting poison but rather a forceful blow to the skull by a sharp, weighted weapon” (p. 144). Further, that the killing took place outside the tomb, and the bodies were subjected to an early form of embalming (heat and mercury sulfide), dressed, and purposely arranged in the tomb to appear to participate in a royal feast. The authors postulate that the embalming of victims may have allowed for public mourning rituals and elaborate funerary proceedings involving music, wailing, and feasting.

The next two essays continue with studies in the third millennium B.C. Jill Weber examines the textual archaeological remains at Umm el-Marra (Syro-Mesopotamia) focusing on the mortuary complex. She argues that the equids found at the site represent a donkey-onager hybrid. These hybrid animals may have served in royal service and, as such, were deserving of special care in
burial. Weber finds that the draft animals pulled plows, wagons, or chariots (serving in farming, business, or war; p. 169). Some equids appear to have been used as sacrificial animals—perhaps to open a line of communication with the gods (p. 161). The author suggests that others may have served as royal symbols for court officials in order to legitimize royal succession and authority. Anne Porter follows with an examination of the burial sites at four third-millennium B.C. locations. Porter explores the possible connection between social stress and retainer human sacrifice. Schwartz (in this volume) argued that the social stress of urbanization and state formation may be a cause of human sacrifice. She questions this finding, arguing that if social stress was widespread, then evidence of human sacrifice would be more widespread. A significant finding of the study is the presence of mirroring in mass burials. Porter concludes that mirroring is “a very explicit expression of views of cosmological organization, and especially of the relationships between the world of the dead and the world of the living where they are the same but opposite” (p. 204).

Brian Hesse, Paula Wapnish, and Jonathan Greer offer an overview of the archaeological evidence surrounding animal sacrifice across the southern Levant. The team argues that ritual and sacrifice are distinct terms that intersect. Ritual implies repetition and a routinized sequence of actions. However, the action may or may not include a sacred meaning. Sacrifice includes an element of “giving up and giving to . . . events that are infused with a deeper meaning in relationship to the sacred” (p. 230). The authors utilize these definitions in their study of zooarchaeological remains across the Levant to construct detailed recreations of the sequence of actions that made up animal-related events and rituals (what they term “scripts”). Postulated scripts are explored for Megiddo, Tel Dan, Ashkelon, Tel Miqne-Ekron, Tel Dover, Tell el-ʿAjjul, and Tel Haror.

The next study explores both archaeological and textual evidence from Gordion (central Anatolia) during the Hellenistic period. This location is characterized by a long history of occupation (Hittite, Phrygian, Persian, Greek, and Galatian) with multiethnic influences for the period under study. Mary Voigt evaluates the animal and human remains, in conjunction with other signs of cultural stress, finding that European Celts (Galatians) migrated and arrived in the region during the middle of the third century B.C.

Beate Pongratz-Leisten studies the textual evidence of sacrifice and ritual killing in Mesopotamia. The study offers that ritual killing is primarily a cultural means of reestablishing the cosmic order as originally set by the gods (p. 292). Textual evidence for ritual killing is generally found in myth, ritual texts, and historiographical narrative. In contrast, the idea of sacrifice is modeled on the human action of gift-giving and a display of commitment—often with economic and communicative aspects (p. 295).

The final essay by Roderick Campbell examines the research methodologies employed in this work finding both commonalities and contrasts. Campbell offers his comments against the backdrop of Late Shang sacrificial practices (Bronze Age China). He cautions that modern Western definitions have too often become the norm and scholars should use local, holistic, contextual understandings as a precondition for comparisons of terms.

The studies in this volume represent a significant step forward in the use of archaeological evidence to examine the concepts of ritual, sacrifice, and sacred killing. The authors bring a diversity of approaches to evaluate
zooarchaeological remains. In addition, each contributor thoroughly explores the intersection of ritual and sacred concepts as supported by the archaeological evidence. The result is a compelling investigation into the ancient Near Eastern understanding and praxis of sacred killing and sacrifice.

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This volume contains revised versions of papers given at the 2008 ASOR sessions on household archaeology and aims to broaden understanding of the goals, methods, results, and importance of household archaeology in the Bronze and Iron Age Levant. In the introduction, the editors emphasize the potential of the study of household units for understanding the economy, politics, and social dynamics of the region. They highlight the dearth of studies in the 80s and 90s centered on household themes including kinship, social structures, and gender (though duly noting important exceptions) and suggest that the more narrowly defined agenda of “biblical archaeology” left little room for such explorations. They maintain that this narrow focus persists in some ways while that focus has shifted to big-picture issues such as identity and ethnicity and away from historicity and chronology (though debate about the 10th century would prove an important exception).

Hardin’s essay begins the volume with a reiteration of the importance of household archaeology and a brief history of studies pertaining to the Levant. He provides important definitions and emphasizes the varied methods applied, finding that the most effective studies are those that incorporate a variety of data sets.

The diverse methodologies are showcased in the next two essays. Shahack-Gross outlines the importance of geoarchaeological and micromorphological methods and includes relevant, cautionary case studies from Iron Age I Tel Dor and Megiddo. Marom and Zuckerman provide an introduction to the methodology they applied in analyzing the animal bone remains from the lower city of Hazor. Both contributions are especially valuable in the accessible overviews they provide to the essential subdisciplines of microarchaeology and zooarchaeology and their relevance to the study of household archaeology.

Yasur-Landau turns to anthropological models, undergirded by a variety of site evidence, in exploring interaction and conflict between social units at the dawn of MBI urbanization. He provides examples of the ways the development of early polities affected household units, especially in regard to the competition for land. Panitz-Cohen provides a detailed analysis of pottery from a succession of four houses at LB Tel Batash (biblical Timnah) and demonstrates the complexity of assessing household wealth. She concludes, in accord with similar studies, that a significant correlation between vessel quantity or quality
and household wealth cannot be maintained. Shai, Maeir, Gadot, and Uziel address architecturally expressed purpose in a case study from LBII Tell es-Safî/Gath. They highlight the complexity of determining the function of a building as public or private when evidence points in both directions, while suggesting that incorporating a close analysis of architecture and artifacts in reconstructing the syntax of movement can lead to progress.

The focus of the volume then moves to the Iron Age I with site-centered essays from the Levant. Ilan supplies an overview of the Iron I levels at Tel Dan (strata VI, V, and IVB), incorporating material, faunal, and botanical evidence to trace social changes that took place in the transition from a corporate village setting to a more regulated town inhabited by nuclear families. Gadot explores Iron I houses in the Yarkon River region (Aphek, 'Izbet Ŝartah, Tell Qasile, and Tel Gerisa), and notes the variability in the assemblages before concluding that 'Izbet Ŝartah was inhabited by a different ethnic group from the others based on patterns of social and economic organization. The similarities among the sites are explained by a lack of conflict following the notion that differences in material culture are most helpful in suggesting identity when groups are threatened by assimilation and seek to define themselves as “other.”

Shifting to Iron I sites in the broader Mediterranean, Ben-Shlomo affirms the importance of the analysis of remains from household contexts as most helpful in identifying ethnicity based on the idea that immigrants often express their identity more clearly in domestic settings and applies this notion to the Sea Peoples question. He examines the material culture of Philistia, Cyprus, and the Aegean to identify houses occupied by immigrants, their background, and the interaction between immigrants and locals, arguing for a complex multilateral interchange of ideas and peoples rather than a simplistic unidirectional migration. Stockhammer identifies changes in feasting activities in elite households at Tiryns on the Greek mainland between the Palatial and early post-Palatial periods and draws out links between architecture and feasting in regard to social space. He emphasizes a clear correlation between material culture and the status of participants in feasting contexts and concludes that the changes in feasting patterns mirror social and ideological changes occurring within the Aegean world.

Specific examples of households from Iron II contexts are then explored. Brody provides an analysis from Tell en-Naṣbeh (biblical Mizpah) and finds evidence for extended family compounds consisting of three nuclear families in an urban context, each with individualized living spaces unified by shared resources. Faust broadens the picture with a “macro level” examination of dozens of structures from Israel and Judah and draws general conclusions about the role of the household in Iron Age society. He finds evidence for extended family compounds in rural settings in contrast to nuclear family dwellings in urban contexts, though noting the coexistence of both patterns even within the same settlement (perhaps mitigating the apparent contrast with Brody’s findings in the preceding essay). Singer-Avitz complements the picture of nuclear family dwellings in urban contexts with her first English update of her spatial analysis of the planned settlement at Beersheba, touching inconclusively on issues of gender and relative wealth of the households. Herrmann explores whether and in what ways regional empires affected households living under their rule. She
contrasts the expectations of a core-periphery model and those of a patrimonial model and outlines some of the research questions for excavations at Zincirli (ancient Sam’al) as case study.

Turning to religion, Hitchcock reviews evidence of “cult corners” in Aegean, Cypriot, and Levantine contexts suggesting that a methodological interchange may be helpful in identifying cultic contexts in various regions. Nakhai discusses family religion practiced in households and the potential roles served by men and women in food preparation and issues concerning reproduction within Israelite society. Press addresses basic issues of identifying “cultic” contexts more generally before moving specifically to the identification of the domestic cult. He provides some provisional guidelines and evaluates two Philistine contexts identified as domestic cult spaces, ultimately concluding that they are merely domestic spaces where cultic activities may have taken place.

Without a doubt, this volume underscores the importance of archaeological explorations of households in a variety of contexts. The essays are indeed interdisciplinary and exercise a wide range of methodologies demonstrating the value of household archaeology for addressing familiar questions, such as ethnicity, and for pushing in new directions with promising trajectories. In fact, it is rewarding to see that even in the inevitable time gap between the delivery of the papers, the publication of the volume, and now this review, some of the methodologies introduced here and applied in the field have already yielded important results (see, e.g., Nimrod Marom and Sharon Zuckerman, “The Zooarchaeology of Exclusion and Expropriation: Looking Up from the Lower City of Hazor” JAA 31 [2012] 573–85). This merely demonstrates the rich potential of household archaeology in the Levant.

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This study deals with life circumstances of the citizens of the city Assur from the 9th to the 7th centuries B.C. The focus of this research is an examination of graves in the Neo-Assyrian period. Burial customs, rituals, and relevant indications of status are researched. Skeletons, personal possessions and other burial artifacts are observed in giving consideration to the relationship between the living and the dead. Concepts of death, the life beyond, and continued existence are included in the study through reference to the relevant texts of each period. The research is based on a thorough examination of all the documents related to graves in the archives of German Oriental Society (Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft) which, in the opinion of the authors, belonged to the Neo-Assyrian period. The study pursues three goals: (1) an understanding of how citizens of Assur dealt with death, both physical remains and the spirits of the dead; (2) an analysis of changes in grave remains and ritual practices, which
may disclose the social structures of Assur; (3) development of a new approach to the population and social history of the city of Assur in neo-Assyrian times.

The book is divided into eight chapters. The first three are background material for the detailed discussion of the grave material. The first chapter introduces the rituals of death and their importance, using the corroborating evidence of texts dealing with conceptions of death in the community and life beyond. Social order is expressed in burial ritual; eschatology deals with the relationship of corpse and soul; engagement with the dead provides for the gradual extinction of the social person. This information is used to analyze the positions of graves, possible places of ritual, and rites dealing with mortal remains in chapter six. The second chapter deals with the upheaval of social order in Assur during these centuries, as it ceased to be the political center when Nineveh became the capital city, but continued to be a religious and cultural center with a great influx of immigrants. These social changes have a significant impact on the results of burial investigations. This information is critical to understanding the distribution of the graves in the various urban divisions in chapter seven. The third chapter examines the cataloging of the data in the work of Arndt von Haller and Peter Miglus. The fourth chapter proposes entirely revised designations in the classifications of the numerous graves and tombs. This discussion is taken up in chapter five, which describes a system of burial when a death occurred. This chapter brings a new perspective to the location and orientation of the dead relative to the various types of graves. The sixth chapter then outlines the location of the graves in relationship to the living. Chapter seven is dedicated to questions of social status and organization. This gives the graves a comprehensive context in the developments of the city of Assur. The concluding chapter summarizes and evaluates the most significant results of the research. The study of graves enables an understanding of service to the dead, which in turn may be used to understand life in Assyria better.

The book has two appendixes. The first appendix enumerates the data of all the graves preserved in the documents of the society archives. The second appendix is a CD listing data of all the loci of graves in the neo-Assyrian period, which largely corresponds to that which served as the basis for Hauser's analysis of Assur. The CD has two advantages: it allows the data to be clearly preserved in print format, and it allows the data to be widely distributed and made available for further research. To this end, it is facilitated by commonly accessible versions of Microsoft Access and Microsoft Excel. It is a simple matter to export data from the access program to excel; even a Luddite like me could do so quite readily.

There are 13 color plates showing the layout of dwellings, palaces, graves, and tombs. The categorization of the graves in their distribution throughout the city is shown with indication of various weapons found. The tombs are shown according to their distribution and size.

The volume is a specialized study in Assyriology. It contains a vast amount of detailed information, which can easily be consulted, dozens of diagrams and charts in every chapter except the last. It is a valuable resource to the study of Assur and details of Assyrian life. The study is of interest to scholars focusing on biblical studies in observing the kind of data available for the study of one
of the nations that figures very prominently in biblical history, particularly the centuries with which this volume is concerned. The information on beliefs about death, the history of Assyria, and the ideology of Assyrians are relevant to historical and cultural studies related to the Scriptures. This is the best actual data available on family structures dealing with marriage, children, and the elderly in a Neo-Assyrian context; it also offers important insights to better understand relations between poor and rich, immigrants, royalty and ordinary citizens. The study is also valuable for understanding the city of Assur itself, which continued to be the main religious center of the Assyrian Empire until the city was destroyed in 614 B.C.

Most of the content of this volume is of value only to the specialist. Biblical scholars dealing with Assyriology will do well to consult it to be familiar with leading research and most current information about particular aspects of Assyrian history and life. Aspects of history, beliefs, and social order commonly cited in commentaries are not really matters of common knowledge. They are inferred from the kind of painstaking detailed analysis that is represented by this volume.

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This volume is a revision of Babcock’s 2011 dissertation supervised jointly by Richard S. Hess and Gordon Wenham. Babcock chooses Lev 23 from several versions of the Israelite festival calendar in the Hebrew Bible as a response to Jan Wagenaar’s 2005 work Origin and Transformation of Ancient Israelite Festival Calendar. While Wagenaar compares Lev 23 with the Babylonian Akitu festival texts, Babcock compares Lev 23 with Emar 446, a second millennium multi-month festival calendar from Emar written in Akkadian (pp. 1, 2).

For his methodology, Babcock follows Klingbeil’s “pragmatic approach.” In his work A Comparative Study of the Ritual of Ordination as Found in Leviticus 8 and Emar 369, published in 1998, Klingbeil adopts Hallo’s use of similarity and difference to analyze ritual texts. He also weaves in Malul’s emphasis on connection, corroboration, and testing for coincidence versus uniqueness. His method in this sense is an eclectic approach (pp. 6, 7, 9). For the definition of ritual, Babcock leans on Klingbeil’s comparative framework as presented in his volume Bridging the Gap: Ritual and Ritual Texts in the Bible, published in 2007 (p. 15).

In this volume, Babcock hopes to achieve two main aims: (1) “to demonstrate that Lev 23 preserves an early (2nd-millennium) West Semitic ritual tradition” and (2) “to explore the role that sacred time, sacred space, sacred objects, and participants play in West Semitic ritual” (p. 19). The book is divided into six chapters, the first being the introduction. Chapter 2 offers an overview of research in which he aims to lay the contextual foundation for a further treatment of Lev 23 in chapter 3 and Emar 446 in chapter 4. In chapter
5, Babcock addresses several questions that relate to the discrepancies between Lev 23, Exod 23 and 34, Num 28–29, Deut 16, and Ezek 45 (p. 215). His final chapter brings the whole work to a conclusion.

In his critique of Wagenaar’s postulation that Lev 23, at least in part, originates from a postexilic date, Babcock, argues vehemently inter alia that ritual texts from the 3rd and 2nd millennia are characterized by variations in dates, names, and detailed descriptions. He observes that some have fixed dates while others have flexible dates; some rituals are clearly identified by name; on the other hand others are unnamed. Some festival texts give a detailed description of ritual activities while others have a general list of gifts offered to the god (p. 65). Other important observations that Babcock makes should have been brought into the text of this volume rather than being relegated into the footnotes (p. 68). For example, in n. 138 he makes four important points against the placing of the festival dates of the Babylonian calendar to the first millennium. He concludes that “Wagenaar’s theory that the 1st millennium New Year’s Festival ‘transformed’ the Israelite festival calendar lacks corroboration” (pp. 68, 69). A full summary of his critique against Wagenaar is provided (pp. 76, 77) and finally calls to question Wagenaar’s comparative methodology, regarding it as faulty. His analysis of Wagenaar’s method is based on comparing two texts with different genres, failing to recognize significant textual differences, side-lining earlier textual evidence and thereby creating a circular argument for the late dating of Lev 23, and side-stepping the history of development for the Akītu festival as it is found in its ancient Near Eastern context. He dedicates the rest of the book (chapters 3–6) to the comparative analysis of Lev 23 and the 2nd-millennium Akkadian multi-month festival calendar found at Emar in Syria.

In chapter 3 of the volume, Lev 23 is analyzed based on the categories of sacred time, sacred space, sacred objects, ritual participants, and ritual sound. Babcock’s careful analysis of the text includes the text-critical analysis of Lev 23, as well as the structure, outline, and literary features. He does a detailed verbal analysis, which is very helpful for ritual texts in keeping the focus on the action words of the text (pp. 92, 93). He identifies small and large chiastic structures within the text (pp. 99, 100). Based on Rendtorff and Hartley, Babcock argues “the analytical genre of Lev 23 is a prescriptive multi-month ritual calendar” (p. 95). Therefore, the literary structure and the ritual elements of the festival calendar explain the nature and role of the text in its multimonth festival calendar.

Following through from chapter 3, Babcock in chapter 4 uses the same method to analyze the Emar 446 text. His starting point in this case is a review of the archaeological and geopolitical context of the Emar festival text within its 14th century B.C. historical context (pp. 141–50). In a few pages, Babcock is able to bring his readers up-to-date tracing the developments of the Emar project from its inception. He then presents a transliteration, normalization, and translation of Emar 446 (pp. 151–71). The literary and verbal analysis (pp. 172–79), though brief, captures the features of the text clearly. He evaluates the aspects of time, sacred space, sacred objects, and participants involved in the rituals of at Emar (pp. 180–208), ending this section with a good summary of his findings.

In chapter 5 of the volume, Babcock brings the argument to its climax. He ties up the intrabiblical study of Lev 23, which he started in chapter 2 with the
comparison of Lev 23 and Emar 446. In juxtaposing the related biblical festival texts, he observes apparent discrepancies between the passages. There are specific questions left unanswered from chapter 2 that he sets out to address in chapter 5, relating to his intrabiblical findings (pp. 214, 215). Babcock evaluates Wagenaar’s approach in handling these “seeming inconsistencies” (p. 215). The goal of the comparative study of Lev 23 and Emar 446 in this chapter is to resolve the apparent incongruities found through the intrabiblical analysis of the biblical festival texts (p. 216). Through a thorough comparative study (pp. 218–38), Babcock reaches a conclusion that the two texts are definitely connected. His main observations are summarized in nine points (pp. 238, 239). He further observes that “these nine points of comparison are significant because they are unexpected, and they represent aspects of ritual less frequently attested in other ancient Near Eastern texts” (p. 239). Babcock settles for common tradition as a type of connection that exists between these two texts. The main conclusion of this study is that the similarities between Lev 23 and Emar 446 exhibit a Late Bronze Age West Semitic tradition. These two texts share and are influenced by that tradition (p. 242). In his brief concluding chapter Babcock recognizes the weaknesses of his study and highlights questions for future research (pp. 242, 243).

This volume is well structured with good lead paragraphs, transitional statements, and summaries at the ends of major sections that characterize a well-written volume. The author has followed Klingbeil’s method closely and applied it consistently. He argues his point convincingly. I noticed, however, a big gap in the intratextual study. He spends too much time in chapter two with secondary literature and does not come through for me at this level of analysis. He then generates questions without really establishing much from his intratextual study and promises to deal with these at the second last chapter. In chapter five, he points back to findings that are not really based on a thorough intratextual analysis.

In spite of this weakness, which he partially admits himself, I commend him for taking on this big topic, creatively handling a major portion of it effectively, and clearly pointing to specific topics and questions for further study. This work is fitting as a reference guide for students of the Hebrew Bible on festival ritual texts. It settles the question of dating broadly speaking and situates these texts well in their historical context. This volume will be of interest to other fields as the festival rituals affect the NT and other related disciplines such as historiography and archaeology.

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Creation and Chaos is the published version of a series of essays originally presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest branches of the American Ori-
ental Society, held in conjunction with the Midwest branches of the Society of Biblical Literature and the American Schools of Oriental Research, in February 2011 at Olivet Nazarene University. The purported theme of these essays is a reassessment of Hermann Gunkel’s reading of the biblical creation narratives in light of the so-called Chaoskampf motif of Assyrian texts newly discovered in his generation—God battled Rahab, Leviathan, and Yam in Gen 1, after which he began to create. As Assyriology has continued to mature as a discipline, many of the conclusions made by Gunkel have been challenged, and contributors to the current volume attempt to update the discussion from a variety of disciplines and perspectives. The book is divided into six parts: part 1: “Creation and Chaos”; part 2: “Monster-Bashing Myths”; part 3: “Gunkel and His Times”; part 4: “Power and Politics”; part 5: “Kampf and Chaos”; and part 6: “Chaos and (Re)Creation.” Space will limit my analysis to observing a few noteworthy contributions from this volume and will therefore not offer comment on each chapter.

I found Scurlock’s suggestion of “purposeful movement” for the Hebrew root ṛḥp in Gen 1:2 especially insightful (pp. 48–61). She bases this meaning on Ugaritic ṛḥp and the preplanning sense of the Akkadian word ḫāṭu (p. 59). The purposeful movement of the Spirit of God prior to his creation activity signals skillful preparation. One wonders if this aspect of creation here would parallel the place of wisdom (ḥokmā) in the depictions of creation throughout Prov 8. A further assessment of this parallel might be worthwhile.

Gilan (pp. 98–111) tackles the vexing problem that arises in considering the relationship between myth and ritual, particularly as it relates to the Hittite Illuyanka text (CTH 321). Earlier proponents of the myth and ritual theory appealed to the Babylonian Akitu-Festival as a basis for supporting the claim that myths were meant to be performed in ritual. Though this theory has been seriously questioned in other disciplines (for example, criticisms of Theodor Gaster’s seasonal pattern for Ugaritic myth), Hittitological interpretations of Illuyanka still assume a kind of myth = performed ritual view, which Gilan attempts to undermine. Consequently for Gilan, the Illuyanka myth does not narrate a central cosmic drama to be enacted in a yearly festival but instead portrays the first Purulli festival in Kuškiluša as a mythological justification for the royal cult installed there and appeals to the audience for its maintenance. The ancient author is therefore seeking to legitimize his local cult (see esp. pp. 110–11).

Lundström (pp. 147–71) offers a helpful historical overview of the rise of Assyriology as a discipline and its subsequent effects on biblical studies in the German school in which Gunkel was a major player. Lundström observes that Gunkel “refused the conservative approach to Heilsgeschichte, which sets ancient Israel apart from any other culture” (p. 152). Instead of seeing a distinct Israelite culture and religion, he “required every culture’s history and religion to originate with God’s revelation,” which meant that Babylonian ideas about creation paved the way for the true faith as it would come to be revealed in the OT (p. 152). Particularly insightful is Lundström’s analysis of Gunkel’s attempt to defend the faith in direct response to Friedrich Delitzsch’s highly publicized “Babel-Bibel” lectures. In his Israel und Babylonien, Gunkel remarks, “If we have to change our perception of God’s ways in history because we are taught so
by solid facts, well then, we simply must relearn!” (Lundström’s translation, p. 160). In his attempt to defend the integrity of Scripture, Gunkel makes a subtle move toward granting primacy to general revelation as the arbiter of special revelation.

From a slightly different concern, Tugendhaft (pp. 190–98) poses the following question: Has the discovery of Canaanite and Ugaritic shifted scholarly attention away from Mesopotamian influence on the Bible in favor of the closer Canaanite background? (p. 192). And yet, the fact that scholars have begun to question whether the Ugaritic Ba‘al Cycle is in fact a cosmogony opens up the discussion about Mesopotamian influence all over again (p. 193). Pitard’s contribution in this volume (pp. 199–205) illustrates the point, arguing that the combat motif in Ugaritic differs significantly from its use in the Babylonian Enûma elîš. At Ugarit, the motif legitimizes the protocol of royal succession, whereas in Enûma elîš it “legitimates Babylon’s status as the political/religious center of the universe” (p. 205). Similarly, Tugendhaft sees differing functions for the combat motif in these two regions: in Babylonian sources it marks the transition from one eon to another—current order replaces previous disorder; at Ugarit the current world is constituted by ongoing struggle (p. 195). This observation leads Tugendhaft to offer two typological distinctions operative in the combat motif: (1) diachronic (Ugarit) vs. synchronic (Babylon and Bible) and (2) victory at work in the present (Ugarit and Babylon) vs. victory projected in the future (Bible) (p. 197). By use of typology, he concludes that Ugarit, Babylon, and the Bible often demonstrate “different approaches to understanding the relationship among politics, history, and the divine—all three making use of a combat motif,” but in different ways (p. 198).

It is useful to consider the chapters by Batto (pp. 217–36) and Averbeck (pp. 237–56) together, since they represent two distinct approaches to the combat motif in the Bible. Batto argues in favor of reading a combat myth in Gen 1 (and Ps 18; Isa 27:1; Job 7:12; 26:12–13) against those who have recently dismissed this motif for the Bible altogether. His main interlocutor is Rebecca S. Watson and her 2005 monograph, Chaos Uncreated: A Reassessment of the Theme of “Chaos” in the Hebrew Bible. One issue that arises in Batto’s discussion is this: To what degree are the biblical authors a product of their own times? Though he acknowledges that the biblical authors were true authors who were “creatively adapting existing materials,” he cautions, “Like all authors, however, they were children of their time, and their ideas were shaped in large measure by their cultures” (p. 233). They therefore used the combat motif, familiar to them from Babylon, “to further their own theological agenda” (p. 227), or more exactly, “as rhetorical foil to suggest that Yahweh was the true divine sovereign, and not Babylon’s god Marduk” (p. 236). Conversely, Averbeck denies the combat motif for Gen 1, pointing to the dearth of cosmic battle imagery therein (p. 249). Instead, he argues that the real battle begins in Gen 3 “where the correspondences to Chaoskampf in the early chapters of Genesis appear, but in a thoroughly transformed way” (p. 253). Averbeck argues that the biblical trajectory ties the cosmic struggle to the entrance of sin into God’s created world with its intensification and final resolution being depicted in John’s Revelation (pp. 255–56). These two chapters illustrate the degree to which one’s assumptions regarding the nature of the biblical text and its world tends to inform interpretation. Batto
is less willing to admit the theological independence of the biblical authors, urging that “it would have been well nigh impossible for them to be impervious to its [ANE] influence” on their view of the world, just as “they were not impervious to the polytheism of the ancient Near East” (p. 227). Averbeck, on the other hand, assumes theological independence, even as a polemic against the Babylonian world view. Batto acknowledges the polemical nature of the biblical perspective as well (p. 236), but it is of a more dependent kind—adoption of a motif in the service of the author’s theological agenda rather than a reaction against a theological perspective contrary to Yahwism (and thus a subversion of the motif). In this way, we may speak of two approaches to understanding the use of ANE motifs in the Bible: accommodation vs. subversion. Perhaps this is a rather subtle distinction, but it betrays two different underlying assumptions about scriptural revelation: one emphasizing Scripture more as human product (lesser independence from cultural context); the other emphasizing Scripture more as divine product (greater independence from cultural context).

Overall, *Creation and Chaos* is a stimulating read. As is often the case with this kind of volume, it is not always clear how a given essay is thought to conform to the conference theme. Part of the problem no doubt stems from the fact that the contributors do not all share the same conclusions about Gunkel’s *Chaoskampf*, be it his definition of the motif or its applicability to the biblical text. A concluding chapter tying together the loose ends of these essays would have been useful in an attempt to set the agenda for further inquiry, not only as it pertains to *Chaoskampf* in particular, but even as it relates to the broader comparative method itself. For instance, how does Gunkel’s employment of *Chaoskampf* inform current and future scholars of the comparative method? Furthermore, how do presuppositions about the biblical text inform the interpretation of available comparative data? If Scripture is divinely given, should one not expect the biblical text to stand in theological contradistinction to the views of its world on key points? Or, does the human nature of Scripture militate against this? Or, as Gunkel preferred, do we adjust our views of the Bible in light of the comparative data? Of course, these questions do not even begin to address the interpretation of the comparative materials in their own setting and the presuppositions of those who are interpreting them, much less how they might relate to the OT. This point is all the more pertinent in light of the fact that many of the views espoused about these Assyrian texts in Gunkel’s day have been adjusted, significantly altered, or abandoned altogether. Just as Sumerian, Akkadian, Hittite, Egyptian, and Ugaritic texts need to be analyzed in their own respective settings, so it would seem that the OT has to be interpreted on its own terms first, read only secondarily in light of its ANE setting. At the least, *Creation and Chaos* further highlights the need for greater precision (and caution!) in our use of comparative materials in the service of interpreting the biblical text.

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Using the term *chaos* well can be challenging since it is used in theological discourse variously to describe a primordial substratum in creation myths, forces inimical to the Creator, or a condition into which things fall. This difficulty is compounded by the various uses that physicists and mathematicians have for the term. Clarifying good uses of “chaos” and “creation” is the task Vail has set for himself.

After an initial survey of the varieties of “chaos” in contemporary biblical and scientific studies, the remainder of the first two chapters is given to a survey of the history of the doctrine of creation and its relationship to various shifts in philosophy and science. The middle three chapters are devoted to in-depth analyses of Jon Levenson’s *Creation and the Persistence of Evil*, David Tsumura’s *Creation and Destruction*, and Catherine Keller’s *Face of the Deep*.

The last two chapters set out to provide a new framework and grammar for understanding “creation” and “chaos.” Vail proposes the terms “transject,” “transcarnate,” and “throughin” as ways of talking about God’s relationship to creation that is neither simply transcendent nor immanent (p. 190). Within this framework, “God’s creative activity is synergistic with the very other who is being created. Without being preexistent to the call, the being-created-one speaks with/upon it” (p. 199). Vail’s account is explicitly trinitarian: “Through the Possibility of God for the other [Vail’s name for the Spirit] and by the Word a divine call is uttered throughin creation. Creation comes to be in relation to the very transjective and transcarnate presence of the Spirit and Word who make is possible. Creation’s response is not merely a matter of repetition . . . [but] is an imaginative self-expression of (God-natured) goodness by God’s-other made possible by God’s self-gift throughin creation” (p. 207). Within this context, “chaos” is “instances when any part of creation (organic or inorganic) holds its breath and/or says something in disharmony with the inseparably operating Spirit and Word” (pp. 214, 216).

Vail has looked far afield from his own discipline, engaging biblical scholarship and popular science. He has identified several of the central issues facing the doctrine of creation and poses careful distinctions at numerous points. Like a poet, he bravely attempts to push language in new directions in order to account for God’s work in the world. Finally, Vail is exemplary in rooting his conception of creation in his trinitarian understanding of the character of God.

At the same time, Vail has not paid careful attention to the landmarks before “charting a way forward,” and as a result I find his work unduly dismissive of the traditional paths while straying from the biblical text. Vail’s lengthy review of the history of the issues is entirely dependent on a handful of secondary sources, resulting in an account that is misleading at certain points and can be unfair (for example, Augustine and Aquinas are routinely criticized in caricature but Vail never provides quotes or references).

In reading Gen 1, Vail begins by noting that God addresses various “environments,” drawing them into participation in creation (the earth, 1:11, 1:24, the waters, 1:20). Second, Vail applies this “model”—God calling creatures into
cooperation—to all of Genesis 1 but never accounts for the apparent fiat in 1:3–5; the “fashioning” in 1:7, 16, 25; or the “dividing” in 1:4, 7. Similarly, though God “calls” the water and earth to bring forth creatures, in the descriptions of the fulfillments, God himself “creates” (1:21) and “fashions” (1:25) the water and earth creatures, there is no mention of water or land actually producing anything. Third, Vail subtly shifts from describing creation as being “called” to creation speaking back to God in “imaginative self-expression” (p. 207). Fourth, Vail explicitly denies that God first creates and then addresses his creatures but rather they synergistically cooperate with God in their own creation as they respond to his call (pp. 198–99). Vail offers no explanation of how either of these later two moves squares with the narrative dynamic of Gen 1.

Finally, turning from Vail’s framework to his grammatical proposals, I find myself troubled pragmatically. In an age of transfusions, trans-fat, and transgender politics, I am baffled as to how to conceive of a “transject” Spirit or the Word’s “transcarnation.” The imaginative use to which Vail puts this grammar is of no help: I simply do not know what it means that God’s creative activity “is the rub of the Word/call of God transcreation” generating “the friction of the expressed love of God—the Word transcarnate” (pp. 190–91)!

Similarly, Vail’s new definition of chaos does not take into account the historic uses of the word—in Greek, Latin, or English. Moreover, it is odd that he rejects the scientific/mathematic use of “chaos” as a near-synonym for “disorder,” preferring to equate “chaos” with “evil” (pp. 212, 221). This may be precisely where science has done theology a favor: “chaos,” in the scientific—but not mythological—sense seems to describe the state of things in Gen 1:2 quite well. Vail’s definition creates all sorts of problems: entropy and the collapse of stars cannot be called “chaotic” because these are not “evil” processes, but earthquakes and volcanoes may be part of the earth’s “infancy . . . or murderous acts” (p. 217). While Vail is helpful in drawing attention to several key issues in the doctrine of creation, I cannot commend either his framework for reading Gen 1 or his “trans-grammar” proposal.

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Jack Sasson’s volume on Judg 1–12 in the new version of the Anchor Bible series (now published by Yale) is a welcome addition for those studying the book of Judges. The book replaces R. G. Boling’s earlier volume on Judges, though this book is longer than Boling’s and only covers half the book of Judges! While the style of a commentary cannot please everyone, I found the exclusive use of transliteration when referring to Hebrew words and the extensive use of endnotes rather than footnotes (almost 80 pages of endnotes!) made the reading experience much more difficult than it needed to be. The book also includes a full translation of Judg 1–12 at the beginning of the commentary and then
repeats the relevant portion of the translation at the beginning of each section, which seemed somewhat redundant.

The heart of the commentary is set up like other volumes in the series: translation, notes, and comments. The notes section is a verse-by-verse commentary, with lots of details on various topics. At points, the commentary is almost constructed like a series of dictionary articles on topics that appear in the text. The comment section is designed to give an overarching view of the text.

One of the primary strengths of Sasson’s volume is his attention to the ancient Near East, especially Mari. Some of the parallels he presents seem forced (such as his reference to the Sumerian King List as a guide for thinking about the structure of Judges [p. 9]), but for the most part his parallels are enlightening and help us understand life in the ancient Near East (pp. 128–29, 153). For example, he notes that milk quickly spoiled in the ancient world and was not usually served to adults (p. 267). However, he is skeptical about making detailed connections between the biblical text and the ancient Near East, such as Achsah and Anat (p. 145).

Sasson is consistently skeptical about the historicity of the events recorded in the book of Judges. For example, he defends a literal reading of ʾelef as a 1,000 because “forcing them [Hebrew tellers] to be realistic would be a serious misreading of Scripture as well as a treacherous treading on historicizing” (p. 130). He is skeptical about locating any of the places in the Deborah story and critiques the Bible atlases that make maps of the battle (p. 274; see also p. 319). He views scatological readings of 3:24 as “marring” the text and does not view the Ehud story as a satire (p. 248). He is also skeptical about finding the historical source of a text, such as a Josianic setting in 2:1–5 (p. 183). However, on occasion he also reminds us that the Hebrew authors most likely had access to more material than we have today (p. 216), and he sometimes makes very specific historical assertions, such as his confident claim that Deborah was not the wife of Lappidoth but “a wielder of flames,” a divinatory practice (pp. 255–56).

Sasson does not try to uncover an “original” text, but looks at all the readings that he finds in the textual tradition. For example, in reference to a difference between the versions in 2:1–5, he says “I have preferences for both versions, each in its own setting, and would not want to reshape either for the sake of consistency or coherence” (p. 184; cf. p. 237 for a similar statement). He likewise is interested in reception history, especially Jewish sources.

The best part of the commentary is his lighthearted style, as he says he “adopted a chatty but I hope not a verbose style” (p. 30). The commentary is full of amusing statements that make one’s journey through the book a much more pleasant experience. Here are a few of my favorites. “Fewell labels the Hebrews Luddites for destroying a city named after records or writing [Qiryat-Sefer]. An amusing charge, for who would declare warriors to be tee-totalers for attacking Gath (‘Winepress’)?” (p. 144). He notes that he does not like the word judges as a translation, but “lacking the temerity to demand that the Anchor Yale Bible change the title of this volume,” he stayed with the translation (p. 187). In regard to difficulties determining the actors in 3:18–19, he says that “My translation avoids a confrontation and (wimpishly) keeps to pronouns where supplying names might have clarified the scene” (p. 230). He calls Deborah’s call to Barak not to fear to be “impressively cheeky” (p. 266).
The commentary advances some less common readings in the book of Judges. He argues that Ehud was not left-handed, but rather a warrior trained with a “hindered right arm” to use both arms in battle (p. 227). He reviews modern medical literature on abdominal injuries to determine that “deep knifing can severely compromise the main abdominal arteries or veins and deeply puncture or rip major internal organs” (p. 236). He views Shamgar as not being a judge, parallel to Jael (p. 245). The exit of someone from the house of Jephthah was always going to be a group, as victory songs were sung communally, which makes Jephthah’s choice of his daughter more deliberate, picking her out of a crowd (p. 439).

While Sasson is not writing this commentary with pastors preparing their sermons in mind, he does include a few observations that lead nicely to application. Othniel’s defeat of a king from Aram-naharayim reminds us of Abraham’s defeat of the four kings from Mesopotamia and “illustrates how size and prestige alone cannot guarantee permanent dominance, not when God wishes to accept the pleas of the repentant” (p. 220). The similarities between Gideon and Abimelech teaches that “men of the same flesh and of many similar characters are destined for opposite reputations when they do not share the affection or support of the God of Israel” (p. 405).

I recommend this commentary for anyone doing serious work on the book of Judges, though preachers will need other commentaries to help them think about application of the text to the modern world.

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This is a revised doctoral dissertation which examines how Chronicles “constructs the relationship between Yhwh’s sole divinity and Judah’s focal institutions,” specifically the institutions of temple, temple personnel, and the monarchy. Lynch believes that Chronicles points the readers to God’s supremacy by describing the strong relationship between God and Judah’s focal institutions in the past and by doing this he affirms that God’s greatness and power are still available in spite of the exile. He sees the temple in Chronicles as the primary organizing manifestation of Yhwh’s supremacy, with the king and priesthood augmenting this perspective. He finds that Chronicles offers a middle road between an approach that radically separates monotheism and institutional particularism and an approach that asserts a limited, provisional, and partial relationship between divine supremacy and institutions. Chronicles exhibits bonds between Yhwh and institutions, makes distinctions between Yahwistic and non-Yahwistic institutions, and exalts those institutions that display Yhwh’s supremacy.

Chapter two defines monotheism as “the assertion of Yhwh’s categorical supremacy (or supreme uniqueness)” (p. 27), thus monotheistic rhetoric
related to temple, priesthood, and kingship has the function of manifesting and exalting Yhwh as having supremacy and supreme uniqueness. Through the limited, partial, and provisional divine-institutional synthesis in the stories in Chronicles, the Chronicler’s aim is to rhetorically convince his audience that the temple, priesthood, and Davidic kingship were the embodiment of God’s ongoing power in Israel; thus, they should allow these same institutions to orient their post-exilic thinking so that they can identify with this exalted deity.

The third chapter deals with how the temple augments the people’s understanding of divine supremacy by giving the temple: (a) a functional participation in Yhwh’s pure cultic worship which is totally distinct from idolatry (there is no syncretism); (b) a qualitative participation in the distinctiveness of Yhwh’s greatness, glory, and supremacy; and (c) a material participation in the distinctiveness of the temple which is: God’s design, placed at God’s chosen place, made through divine wisdom placed on the builder, constructed of glorious materials (massive amounts of gold and silver), and graced with the presence of the glory of God. Although Chronicles demonstrates that God is closely identified with the temple in these three ways, to protect his supremacy he is only periodically and in a limited sense there (his throne is in heaven), not intrinsically or permanently a part of the temple.

In chapter four, Lynch explains how the Chronicler connects the priesthood and divine supremacy by showing that: (a) the unified work of the priests and Levites at the temple is a testimony to God’s greatness (they were not fighting against each other); (b) the priests bear witness to God’s greatness in the way they carry out their enduring duties which God elected them to do according to his divine design; (c) the priests and Levites sing of God’s supremacy over Israel, the nations, the world, and all other gods (1 Chr 16:8–36); (d) the Levites sing of God’s presence and power to defeat other nations (2 Chr 20—God fights this battle); (e) the priests and Levites oppose Jeroboam’s cultic innovations in Israel (2 Chr 11:13–17; 13:4–18) so they move to Judah to honor the true God; and (f) the periodic restorations of worship in the temple involves the priests’ sanctification and reappointment to honor and glorify God in temple worship (2 Chr 15; 17; 19; 22; 29–31; 35).

Chapter five addresses the relationship between the Davidic monarchy and divine kingship by describing how “Chronicles integrates the Davidic royal throne, the temple cult, divine kingship, and exalts David as occupant of the throne over Yhwh’s kingdom” (p. 212). Chronicles does this by explaining: (a) David’s devotion to the temple and the supreme King (his focus on the ark, theological reforms, the use of his wealth, and his farewell speech); (b) David and Solomon are seen in the Davidic covenant as ruling on God’s throne over his kingdom and their prayers exalt and worship God him as Ruler over his people (1 Chr 17:16–27; 2 Chr 6); (c) Solomon is elected by God, given divine wisdom and royal splendor by God, promised an eternal heir on the throne of God, is exalted with fame, and builds an exalted temple for God; and (d) a few kings (Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah) aligned themselves with the divine king, testified to his exalted power, and championed pure worship at the temple.

In his conclusion, Lynch affirms that Chronicles renders praise to God, inspires praise, and provides the postexilic readers with evidence that should encourage them to see how the past understanding of the temple, the temple personnel, and the monarchy mediate and participate in expressing Yhwh’s
supremacy. The temple was the primary pointer to Yhwh’s exalted rule over Israel and the world, though God’s bond with his people is limited, partial, and provisional based on his own exalted status and the people’s (and some king’s) tendency not to identify with Yhwh, listen to his instruction, worship him, or exalt him. In spite of past failures and the alienation from the temple caused by the exile, postexilic readers should see the temple as a mediating expression of God’s greatness and reorient their thinking to its legitimate role.

This insightful examination of these themes in Chronicles is highly recommended for the evidence it marshals from the exegesis of relevant texts. It explains how these theological claims about God’s exalted supremacy are integrated into the fabric of the most significant spiritual and political institutions that organized and interpreted divine reality to the people. It notices how much of life (worship, war, success, failure, election, service) is centered around the exaltation of God. I highly recommend this study for those interested in Chronicles and OT theology.

Gary V. Smith
Bethel Seminary


Chase’s theological commentary gives readers a reflective and pastoral set of lenses through which to read Job. The author is intentional about interacting with ancient and modern voices as they have wrestled with the nature of God and suffering. Side-bars and “Further Reflections” enhance each section of the commentary and provide a “hearing” for these additional voices. Among his favorites are Ambrose, Gregory the Great, Calvin, Aquinas, Melville, Kafka, and modern commentators such as Gordis, Hartley, Habel, and Balentine. Chase is a master of evocative prose as his commentary style echoes in turn the language of Job, the friends, and the theophany.

The introduction addresses the usual array of issues. Chase chooses to read the text as we have it, avoiding knotty issues surrounding the prose framework and poetic dialogues and monologues. Because the sixth century B.C. was fraught with crisis, he locates the initial composition at that point, suggesting the author was one of Israel’s sages. The main theological issue is God’s ambiguous character—His hiddenness, responsibility for evil, and apparent lack of concern for suffering. Key recurring themes for Chase are silence, prayer, and transformation on Job’s spiritual journey. Chase sees much of the book as prayer, a position that is refreshing if occasionally overstated.

In his Further Reflection on Job’s initial curses against creation and life (chap. 3), Chase firmly indicates that the book is not a theodicy; that is a post-Enlightenment approach imposed on the text. Instead, Job is a warning against the despicable practice of silencing sufferers’ voices.

Notable gleanings from Chase’s observations regarding the first cycle of dialogue include Eliphaz’s penchant for double meanings; the contrast between the relational Abrahamic covenant and structural and judicial framework of
the Mosaic covenant—the latter being applied to Job by the friends; and Job’s prayers that include accusation, condemnation, and outright agony. As this cycle draws to a close, Job uses creation to undermine God’s power as Creator, singing of the destructive power of God.

The second cycle highlights the narrowing range of options for the friends. As they champion fear, Job’s verbal images suggest that he is losing his sense of coherence and the battle with sanity. Chase employs very powerful prose to describe the new and forceful ways that Job continues to confront God in prayer. In contrast, the descriptions of the friends’ tactics to maintain their own static positions sound boiler-plate; it is masterful. Chase deems all of Job’s words to God prayer and claims that humans are living prayers. This last may blur significant definitional boundaries.

The speeches disintegrate at every level in the third cycle. Following Bil-dad’s brief affirmations of God’s sovereignty over the celestial realms in 25:1–6, Job describes instead a creation cowering under the heavy hand of God. Job finds himself on a new trajectory in which the power of his words breaks apart “domesticated” gods as he wrestles with every possible perspective on his tragedy.

Chapter 28 is both a pause and a move forward. The first part addresses human ingenuity and activity as it penetrates darkness in search of rare gems. The second turns to the inability of humans because the way to wisdom is blocked by “primordial personifications who themselves know nothing of wisdom: the Sea, Abaddon, Sheol, Death” (p. 212). The rare verbs convey the inability of language to express this side of the pursuit.

The two divine speeches are brimming with interpretive possibilities; in a commentary of this limited scope, it is difficult to do them justice. Chase repeatedly emphasizes the mystery and chaos that reverberate through Yahweh’s utterances, and contrasts this theophany with the Sinai revelation. Order was instituted at Sinai; the whirlwind revels in apparently unresolved order and this very dangerous chaos is intimately linked with suffering. When Yahweh revealed to Job the monsters, Behemoth and Leviathan, He allowed Job to see chaos and face the source of his suffering. While this works well with Leviathan, it may be pressing the data too far to include Behemoth, whose description seems relatively benign.

Job’s own response in 42:6 is singularly ambiguous. Chase gives a good summary of the interpretive issues and positions, both ancient and contemporary. Most assume that Job acknowledges guilt even though that does not fit with the rest of the epilogue. Chase’s translation and interpretation do fit better; Job’s final words are acceptance but not submission. He is “quiet and comforted” (p. 281).

After his own transformative reflections, Chase’s closure left this reader slightly disappointed, but perhaps this is what Chase intended. After all, many readers are not satisfied with the ending of Job either. There are always questions remaining—and that is good.

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Gordon College

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A highly intriguing feature of the book is Flynn’s use of the recently developed method of “cultural translation” (CT). Flynn employs CT, or “how ideas are translated between cultures” (p. 176), to show how the expression of kingship changed from a warrior-type king for YHWH in the early literature (e.g., Exod 15) to a YHWH kingship rooted in creation with warrior connotations largely absent (Pss. 93, 95–99).

Flynn first compares two types of divine kingship. The assertion that YHWH is king is based on YHWH’s warrior activity against opposing Egyptian forces, as is clear from the militaristic language “Yahweh is a warrior” in “The Song of the Sea” (Exod 15:3). Such a portrait of YHWH is found in other texts, such as the Balaam story (Num 23), as well as in poetry (Deut 33:5; Ps 29). Flynn notes, however, that in the Psalms of a later date (Pss. 93, 95–99), while YHWH is still described as king, the tenor of the expression has changed. In that literature, as well as in the prophetic literature of comparable date (e.g., Isa 66:1–2) YHWH's kingship is associated with YHWH’s creation-type activity. Whereas the earlier portrait of kingship was limited and territorial, the later portrait is one of an elevated YHWH who is king universally.

Next, Flynn seeks to account for this changed presentation of the kingship of YHWH. The changed expression, he argues, had much to do with Assyrian power and pressure in the time of Tiglath-pileser III (8th century B.C.). Flynn arrives at this conclusion by elaborating on the method of CT, a method originally anchored in anthropology, but now considerably developed along ideological and sociological lines. Flynn traces the stages of this method's development, a method still new to biblical studies, by detailing the contributions of scholars Godfrey Lienhardt, Talal Asad, and especially Amitav Ghosh, a native of India, but at home in Egyptian and other cultures. “Primary among Ghosh’s advancements in CT is the role political and military power plays in the process of translating knowledge from one culture to another” (p. 84). Flynn summarizes the method as resting on several theoretical pillars: coherence (the way the ideology is laced with other related concepts); resonance (the level of importance a certain expression of that ideology has in the culture); motivations and their source (reasons); and cultural charity (awareness that parallels are often conceptual and not necessarily linguistic).

Applying the methodology of CT to the issue of kingship in Israel, Flynn points to the *Enûma eliš*, and argues that the central concern of that work is not creation but Marduk’s rising status as universal kingly deity. He supports this claim by showing how the *Enûma eliš* has for its agenda an answer to the divine monarchical claims made by Tukulti-Ninurta I (1215 B.C.). The premise is that a challenge in the political or intellectual arena to a basic conviction (e.g., the territorial dominance of Marduk) gives rise to revising and elevating that conviction (e.g., that Marduk is a universal monarch by reason of creation). Flynn
does not suggest, though he remains open to the possibility, that Israel substituted Yahweh for Marduk, and thus depicted Yahweh as the divine universal king. Rather, Flynn is intent on explaining the motivations that give rise to a variant or upgraded “theology.” Using the Babylon situation as an analogue, Flynn proposes that it was under the power and pressure of Tiglath-pileser III’s neo-Assyrian imperialism that Israel ratcheted up its view of YHWH. YHWH as warrior could take on political adversaries such as Pharaoh. But as a universal creator deity, YHWH was ruler over all rival deities.

Flynn’s work is marked by erudition and clarity of argument. The six chapters (e.g., “Stages of YHWH’s Kingship in Ancient Israel,” “Cultural Translation as Method,” “Marduk’s Kingship,” “The Context and Motivations for YHWH’s New Kingship”) each mark out the parameters of the discussion and end with a helpful summary. The book is something of a model of what good biblical research looks like. The conclusions reached are fascinating, but clearly entail views about dating, concept development, and method to which not all scholars will readily assent.

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Fresno Pacific University Biblical Seminary


The author, who teaches at Moore Theological College, Sydney, won his spurs as a Jeremiah scholar with the publication in 2002 of his dissertation on chap. 32. Writing from a position of Christian faith, he here tackles a much wider topic, the theological meaning of the word of God in Jeremiah. His introduction defines the nature of biblical theology as involving commitment and so requiring “the sort of criticism the Bible itself expects its readers to perform” (p. 37).

The first chapter turns to the content of Jeremiah as utterly word-related and analyzes the range of its positive usage of word or words. Shead is following in the footsteps of Else K. Holt, whose articles have focused on the word of God in Jeremiah. He regards “The words of Jeremiah” in 1:1 and “Thus far are the words of Jeremiah” in 51:64 as an inclusio in the MT and what lies between as a narrative about “the word of the LORD,” a phrase with the same basic meaning as “the words of Jeremiah” (cf. 1:1–2). The narrative ties together a collection of smaller documents. Like most scholars, he considers the LXX a witness to an earlier Hebrew edition of the book but bases his theological conclusions on the MT. Yet he does not link his preference to the canonical value of a final form. This is because he primarily defines the relationship between the two editions in terms not of the MT representing a newly expanded form but of each recension having used a common text, but less extensively in the case of the edition underlying the LXX. He regards both editions as very early; the first, he sides with Lundbom, in assigning to Baruch and the second either to Baruch or to his brother Seraiah (pp. 76–77). He is prepared to accept the
extra material in the MT at 33:14–26 as the prophet’s own, incorporated into the final edition (p. 79). His underlying concern is evidently to claim the authenticity of the contents of the book as closely connected to Jeremiah himself. The prose sermons that typically introduce literary blocks are taken as summaries of the poetic oracles, usually of following ones (p. 73). He leaves open the issue whether Jeremiah used his own words to express God’s word/message or passed on the precise words given by God. From the book’s usage he carefully differentiates between the divine word as what is heard and obeyed, and divine words as what is spoken or written, or else what is not heard or disobeyed. The chapter closes with a basic presentation of the elements of a word theology.

In the second chapter, Shead explores the role of the word of the Lord in Jeremiah, as the “main character” of the narrative. Of course, it provides the narrative’s structure by means of the introductory word formulas: “disjunctive headings” (“The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD” and the like) for blocks and “narrative formulas” (such as “The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah”) for sections within blocks. The author acknowledges the difficulty of establishing divisions and the need for word formulas to be balanced with other criteria. Readers need to keep markers in pp. 69 and 87–88 to remind themselves of his summarizing tables about the structure and its contents. His answer to the problem scholars find in apportioning chap. 25 is to take it as the beginning of the second half of the book, providing an initial recapitulation of earlier material. He finds and succinctly analyzes four “movements” in the book (chaps. 1–24, 25–34, 35–44, and 45–52), which present different angles or viewpoints of the total narrative, and the smaller units within them. Unusually he takes chaps. 31–34 as a unit, appealing to the continued presence of “covenant” in chap. 34, and links chap. 45 with chaps. 46–51 in the MT, regarding Baruch’s and Seraiah’s scrolls as a frame. In the so-called confessions he defines Jeremiah’s role as “a mirror in which the sufferings of both the people and their God are reflected” (p. 93).

The third chapter examines the relationship between the word and Jeremiah as speaker, including the use of literary techniques and featuring selected passages. His sweeping statement that “the discourse structure of the book co-opts all its words into service as the word of the LORD” (p. 136) made me uneasy. I preferred his unpacking of what he means in the sixth chapter. I understand “word” and “words” as form-critical terms referring to prophetic revelation; in particular, in the confessions I see Jeremiah standing over against God (cf. p. 245). And in Nebuzaradan’s speech in 40:2–5 I find not the “word” of v. 1 (I notice the Revised English Bible agrees with Shead), but side with Calvin’s quaint remark that in the rest of the chapter Jeremiah seems to have forgotten v. 1 and only cites the divine word much later. In fact, in a number of cases an initial word formula or even a messenger formula has an anticipatory role, highlighting an oracle later in a passage.

In the fourth chapter the author discusses the issue of false prophecy in chaps. 23, 27–28 and the people’s rejection of Jeremiah as a true prophet. His words “accelerate the downward spiral of disobedience and deafness” (p. 182). The fifth chapter turns to the oracles of hope as the powerful, transforming word of God, especially in chaps. 30–31 and 50–51. In the latter oracles he describes Babylon’s role as “the catalyst for Israel’s salvation” (p. 210), whose
death brings life to Israel and also to the nations. In this respect the book points beyond itself, by being set in an as yet unfinished exile. Turning to a consideration of how God’s word is powerful, the author takes symbolic acts simply as divinely authorized illustrations of the spoken word. He understands the judgment oracles as providing “a hardening in the hearers that triggered their destruction” (p. 219). Stead argues that God’s words through Jeremiah “not merely declare, but effect the contents of that declaration” (p. 225).

In the sixth chapter Shead finds in ch. 36 a paradigm for inscripturation: “The hearer of Scripture read may hear the word of the LORD in the same way as the hearer of prophecy spoken” (p. 242). He grapples with the biographical (rather than autobiographical) narratives from chap. 26 onward and concludes that divine intervention was involved in such editorial work. He finds divine superintendence (a term borrowed from Wolterstorff) in the process of God-given spoken words being written down, in some cases as literary compositions, yet with the same authority as the spoken words. The NT’s understanding of the OT as prophet-mediated writings (e.g., Rom 16:26) involves a legitimate “stretching” of the prophetic paradigm in terms of divine superintendence at various levels. In the final chapter, the author discusses his findings in Jeremiah in the light of Barth’s theology of the Word and discovers some correspondence but a large measure of dissonance. He closes this stimulating book with challenges to integrate biblical and systematic theology and to heed in obedience and worship the transforming Word of God.

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From the Depths of Despair to the Promise of Presence (hereafter, DDPP) is Joel Barker’s published version of his Ph.D. dissertation (April 2011), completed under the supervision of Mark Boda at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, Ontario. Through a rhetorical reading, Barker advances the thesis that the book of Joel “is a unified work of prophetic literature that moves from scenes of devastation to promises of restoration in persuading people to call and rely on YHWH in all circumstances and persuading YHWH to respond to their call” (p. 262).

The introduction to DDPP is a history of research on the development of rhetorical criticism, with special respect to the “art of persuasion” vis-à-vis the “art of composition.” After describing various rhetorical critical models, in the first chapter Barker defends his choice to follow his own slightly modified synthesis of the works of G. Kennedy on NT rhetorical criticism and K. Möller’s adaptation for use in the OT prophets. For Barker, this synthesis results in a four-step procedure for analyzing the text of the prophet Joel: (1) establish the boundaries of the rhetorical unit; (2) determine the rhetorical situation; (3) assess the rhetorical strategy; and (4) evaluate the rhetorical effectiveness of the
unit with regard to its persuasive potential. Using this model with the prophet, Joel presents the interpreter with some challenges. Barker acknowledges that the specific historical milieu of Joel is notoriously difficult to determine. Barker opts, therefore, for a synchronic approach to determining the rhetorical situation on the basis of the “world of the text” rather than the “world behind the text.” In other words, the rhetorical situation of the book is established by “examining the situation or exigencies that the text appears to create and to which it responds” (p. 47). Barker addresses another potential problem with applying this model to Joel, namely, the difficulty of assessing the persuasive effectiveness of the message without any explicit indications regarding the identity of the audience or how they responded to Joel’s message. Barker’s solution is to nuance the idea of audience to move beyond the original hearers/readers who are unknown. Thus, the universal timeless audience comes into view as well as the “implied audience,” which is assumed to be “an intellectually, emotionally, and morally competent audience” (p. 61), capable of being persuaded by the text’s rhetoric. So, following Patrick and Scult, Barker adopts a “hermeneutic of affirmation” and seeks to place himself among the implied audience and assess as honestly as possible whether or not the text is successful in its art of persuasion.

The bulk of *DDPP* is a unit-by-unit rhetorical analysis of Joel, employing the four-step method described above, with the rhetorical strategy (step 3) receiving the greatest attention. While arguing for Joel’s compositional unity, for the purposes of rhetorical analysis Barker divides the text into seven discreet units and proceeds to apply his rhetorical method to each. Thus, much of Barker’s study reads like a verse-by-verse commentary, with particular attention paid to the rhetorical features that contribute to the prophetic message’s persuasive appeal. As an example of his rhetorical strategy, Barker tackles one of the perplexing interpretive problems of Joel, namely the relationship between the description of a locust invasion in chapter 1 and the imagery of an invading horde in chapter 2. Barker concludes that the army imagery of chapter 2 is a rhetorical magnification of the description of the locust invasion of chapter 1, which “heightens the sense of threat against the implied audience” (p. 116). Barker argues that the persuasive purpose of Joel 2:1–11 is to bring the implied audience’s sense of despair to its ultimate climax in preparation for the proper response that the prophet will provide in Joel 2:12–17, which is to cry out to YHWH in penitence in hope of his mercy. It is at this point that the prophetic message takes a sharp turn, resulting in the rest of the prophecy pointing toward signs of hope and restoration. Through this verse-by-verse rhetorical analysis, Barker defends his thesis that the message of Joel is intended to bring the audience from the depths of despair in the midst of devastation to the promise of restoration in God’s presence.

The major strength of *DDPP* is Barker’s detailed descriptions of rhetorical features in the main section of each chapter, the “rhetorical strategy.” In keeping with his purpose, Barker is not content to describe rhetorical elements merely for their ornamental beauty. Rather, he effectively shows how these rhetorical features contribute to the persuasive effectiveness of the unit and the larger message of the book. Another strength is Barker’s keen eye to inner-biblical allusions. In opposition to those who have espoused multi-layered approaches to the book’s composition, Barker contends that the rhetoric of the book suggests...
a carefully constructed unified composition. Barker demonstrates a high view of the Masoretic text. Hesitant to emend, he often prefers interpretive solutions to textual difficulties. One benefit of Barker’s “hermeneutics of affirmation” approach that focuses on the implied audience is that his analysis of the text often results in timeless lessons on YHWH’s character and the proper response of his people to him.

As critique, Barker’s methodology exhibits a certain subjectivity, especially as applied to Joel’s prophecy, with its uncertain date and provenance. Barker’s rhetorical reading of Joel places everything within the “world of the text.” The historicity of a real situation is replaced by the exigencies implied by the text. A real audience is replaced by an “implied audience.” It would seem that to measure effectiveness, some interaction between the text and the real world would be necessary. Perhaps some engagement with the history of interpretation of Joel’s prophecy could inform Barker’s assessment of the rhetorical effectiveness of the book. Has this book persuaded real people in real time? Along these lines, for example, it was disappointing to not find some treatment of the use of Joel in Peter’s address in Acts 2 (other than a brief footnote). Observing its effect on a real audience in real time would seem to add credence to Joel’s rhetorical effectiveness. Barker’s focus on the “world of the text” resulted in the disappointing feature of disconnecting the text from any historical event(s). In the earlier part of Barker’s treatment, he argued that the invading horde of chapter 2 was a rhetorical heightening of the locust invasion of chapter 1, not a separate invasion by a human army. Then, later the reader finds out that Barker does not think that any of Joel 1–2 has any necessary connection to real historical events. Speaking of Joel 2:18–27, he says, “I do not claim that the prophet uttered these words against the backdrop of an actual year of agricultural recovery, just as I do not claim that Joel 1:1–2:17 reflects an actual locust invasion or drought” (p. 171). This abandonment of any attempt to connect Joel’s message to actual history or real events seems to undercut Barker’s rhetorical enterprise. Why would any audience find compelling a message that described a threat that had no connection to experiential reality? Admittedly, the original historical setting of Joel is elusive, but should this uncertainty result in a complete abandonment of any attempt to root the descriptions of Joel 1–2 in real events that the author and his audience would have been intimately acquainted with?

Setting these critiques aside, I was greatly encouraged and challenged by Barker’s rhetorical treatment of the text. I have found a very useful tool for understanding the persuasive message of Joel that I will return to often in preaching and teaching.

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This intriguing volume, authored by University of Leeds associate professor Johanna Stiebert, tackles an issue that is beset with (pardon the martial meta-
phors) roadblocks, landmines, and solid lines of barbed wires dividing clearly established trenches. It engages basic hermeneutical questions of how we read texts that were predominantly written by males, but understand appropriately core family relations in a world that is so far removed from our own reality. In an academic context rife with (often surprising) feminist readings of the HB or womanist interpretations of ancient social structures, Stiebert’s volume is unique as it approaches the data not from a combatant’s perspective (belonging to either side of the supposed divide), but rather seeking to allow the biblical text to “speak” for itself and accept complex, at times perhaps even contradictory, narratives. As a woman in academia and engaging feminist exegetes and interpreters, Stiebert has the credentials to attempt this challenging task—and in this reviewer’s perspective—has been up to it, significantly moving forward the general discussion.

But, let’s not get ahead of ourselves. Following a concise introduction (pp. 1–17), the volume is divided into four main chapters, followed by a detailed conclusion that highlights three key elements (pp. 208–229), a substantial bibliography (pp. 231–245), and several indexes (modern authors, subjects, and biblical references). Readers do well to pay close attention to Stiebert’s dense introduction. Besides the to-be-expected research history, engaging—both in the main text and in copious footnotes—scholars who have written on the subject, the author highlights her interdisciplinary approach and her irritation with, as she calls it, “glib” conclusions regarding the HB’s supposed androcentricity. Stiebert also registers concern when “contemporary feminist advocacy is superimposed on the biblical texts” (p. 8), a statement (together with others) that may result in lively reviews and discussion. She details very clearly her research methods, as well as her assumptions (pp. 9–17) and engages literary, social-scientific, psychoanalytical, feminist, and ideological-critical methods, resulting in a very eclectic (or “composite” as she calls in on p. 10) approach. I appreciated her careful discussion of both strong and weak points of a particular methodology, generally providing at least two opposing representatives of an approach and aligning herself with one or the other or opting for a middle path. Her previous work on the shame and honour paradigm (The Construction of Shame in the Hebrew Bible: The Prophetic Contribution [JSOTSup 346; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002]) has uniquely equipped her for treading a careful line engaging social-scientific research, yet also recognizing the predominantly literary nature of our primary data. While critical to overgeneralization or reading an ancient text through the lens of 21st-century ideology, Stiebert is not approaching the text as a believer. “I am not a believing insider and privileging biblical texts as somehow inherently special, or such notions as divine agency or inspiration, is not a way forward for me” (p. 12) clearly states her approach to the biblical text and does not require further elaboration. She embraces Rainer Albertz’ “personal piety” concept within the context of the household (p. 13) and argues for care when dealing with a topic that is highly charged with potential ideological conflict. Her approach to the biblical text is synchronic and topical (p. 16). She wonders about the tendency of contemporary scholarship to date more and more texts in clusters around the exile and focus on the exile as the key watershed moment of biblical theology (quoting approvingly a highly critical 1910 statement by C. C. Torrey). Finally,
she urges that “our starting point . . . remains the text and any investigation should begin with what it says and what its ideologies promote—before probing what is not said, what these ideologies obscure, and why” (p. 17).

Chapter 1 (“The Father and his Daughter”) reviews the semantic range of אב and בת and highlights their roles and relations. Recognizing a general cultural preference for sons in the HB, Stiebert nonetheless suggests that the biblical perspective is more nuanced. Daughters were not invisible in the HB, and father-daughter relations more present in the texts than mother-daughter relations (p. 69).

Chapter 2 tackles the disturbing story of Judg 11 and the sacrifice of Jephthah’s daughter (pp. 72–101). Stiebert reads the text as pointing to a human sacrifice. However, the story is more about the father than about his (nameless) daughter. She concludes this chapter: “The story of Jephthah’s daughter, then, does not demonstrate that daughters are more disposable or expendable than sons but that daughters, like sons, can be worthy sacrifices and tragic victims” (p. 101).

Stiebert focuses on the omission of daughters in the incest laws (Lev 18 and 20) and incest in biblical narrative (Gen 19; 38; Ruth) in chapter 3. Recognizing the problem in contemporary society, she nonetheless suggests that the scarcity of father-daughter incest stories in the HB, as well as general incest laws “seem to reflect a wider, near-universal abhorrence of incest, especially first-degree sexual encounter” (p. 165). The author suggests that the HB’s lack of clear articulation is due to the conventions of rhetoric (p. 164 and earlier, quoting Joosten). All in all, I found this chapter to be the weakest in terms of engagement with the biblical text, which may, in fact, underline Stiebert’s main point: “The Hebrew Bible has little to contribute on the topic of father-daughter incest” (p. 164).

The final major chapter (“God the Father and his Daughters”) focuses on metaphors and myth, discussing Eve, wisdom (personified in feminine terms), and the daughter Zion motif. Stiebert’s reminder that “daughter Zion is not a real daughter and God not a real father” (p. 205) reminds readers of the power—and purpose—of metaphors. They communicate emotions, characteristics, ideals and are well fitted to inform theological thought.

Stiebert emphasizes three elements in her conclusion. First, while the honor-shame model has been helpful in many respects, the biblical text’s descriptions of father-daughter relations do not seem to fit the paradigm completely. Among others, the model “does not adequately address the affective dimensions of the father-daughter relationship” (p. 219). Second, Roman sources provide helpful parallels to the biblical father-daughter relations in terms of close relations, paternal/parental protection, paternal authority and obedience, but paternal fondness (as evidenced in Roman sources) is generally not depicted in the HB. Third, while patriarchy as an important family model can be observed, a more nuanced heuristic model called “hetarchy” may describe family realities in the HB in a better way. Hetarchy calls for “recognition of the possibility of multiple systems and multiple loci of power, with women as well as men shaping society” (p. 229, quoting Meyers).

To a father of three teenage daughters, Stiebert’s volume was intriguing, and her call to nuanced analysis felt heartening. The well-written book is an
easy read. I ran across only one error (it should be Von Gott verwundet instead of Von Gott verwunde in n. 41 on p. 30). Kudos to Stiebert and Oxford University Press for a well-written, tightly-argued, and level-headed volume on an important subject.

Gerald A. Klingbeil
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This volume is a collection of papers from an international symposium at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin in 2011. The symposium sought to bring together scholars from various disciplines to examine the relationship between wisdom and Torah in the Second Temple period. Following the introduction by both Schipper and Teeter, the volume contains 13 articles and looks at wisdom and Torah in Deuteronomy, Proverbs, Psalms, Qohelet, Ben Sira, Baruch, Qumran, Jubilees, select Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Wisdom of Solomon. The volume concludes with a afterward by Bernd Schipper, “Wisdom and Torah: Insights and Perspectives.” This collection of essays seeks to begin to answer a perennial question on the relationship between wisdom and Torah in the Postexilic Period. The aim of this work is to focus on the reception of the Torah in wisdom literature and the discursive nature of wisdom on Torah.

The 1st essay, “The Blinded Eyes of the Wise,” by Reinhard Müller, analyzes Deut 16:19–20 as an example of the relationship between wisdom and Torah. Adopting a diachronic approach, he argues that older notions of wisdom are transformed in light of Mosaic Torah. The deuteronomic adoption of wisdom also serves as a critique of self-acquired wisdom, thus relativizing Israel’s judges claim to be wise.

The 2nd essay also focuses on Deuteronomy, “Law and Wisdom according to Deut 4:5–8” by Thomas Krüger analyzes a key text that mentions both Torah and wisdom. In Krüger’s estimation, this text shows the reworking of deuteronomic law in light of sapiential wisdom. This reformulation serves an apologetic purpose for Israel among the political realities of its time, and this colors the value of the text vis-a-vis the theoretical relationship between Torah and wisdom.

The 3rd essay, “When Wisdom Is Not Enough! The Discourse on Wisdom and Torah and the Composition of the Book of Proverbs” by Bernd Schipper, argues uncontroversially that Proverbs contains a pluriform notion of wisdom. Schipper focuses on allusions to the Shema, the canon formula, and the decalogue along with various Deuteronomistic terminology to show the reception of Deuteronomy in Proverbs. With this reception, wisdom serves as a hermeneutic to Torah. The conversation between Proverb’s wisdom and deuteronomic Torah raises the debate concerning two conceptions of revaluation that stand opposite to one another—one in which wisdom is taught from generation to generation and the other, in which God reveals wisdom to humanity.
The 4th essay, “Job in Conversation with the Torah” by Markus Witte, proposes that Job (in its various literary strata) reveals a critical engagement with the theology of the book of Deuteronomy and the understanding of God.

The 5th essay, “‘Fear God and Keep His Commandments’: Could Qohelet Have Said This?” by Stuart Weeks analyzes the concluding verses of Qohelet and their relationship to the book as a whole. He does not view these verses as contradictory to the rest of the book, although he does argue that these verses (12:12–14) would not represent the Qohelet’s thought. Rather, these verses should be understood as part of the epilogue that seeks to contextualize and transform the teaching of the book from unnerving teaching of Qohelet to careful study for it’s recipients.

Both the 6th and 7th essays focus on the psalms, especially 19 and 119. Karin Finsterbusch’s article focuses on the rhetorical “I” of Ps 119 that she argues invites any Israelite to identify with the “I” of the psalm. Anja Klein’s article looks at the close relationship between wisdom and Torah in Ps 19 and focuses on inner-biblical exegesis and its use in Ben Sira writings. Psalm 19 serves as a convergence link between Torah and wisdom and serves as a precursor to Ben Sira with its emphasis on creation and Torah.

The 8th article by Benjamin G. Wright III, “Torah and Sapiental Pedagogy in Ben Sira” concerns itself with three issues: (1) the identification of Torah for Ben Sira; (2) the lack of any explicit citation of the Pentateuch and its explanation; and (3) the place and function of Torah within the pedagogical methods of Ben Sira. Wright concludes that “Torah” does mean Mosaic Torah and the ‘use’ of Torah with the absence of any direct quotation is part of the Second Temple use of authoritative texts.

Sebastian Grätz contributes the 9th article, “Wisdom and Torah in the Book of Baruch,” which focuses on Bar 3:9–4:4, where the author construes wisdom as a means of understanding the Torah. Deuteronomy functions as an important text for Baruch that introduces Israel to Torah.

William A Tooman provides the 10th article, “Wisdom and Torah at Qumran: Evidence from Sapiential Texts” and focuses on two texts (4Q525 and 4Q185) that he sees as unique in comparison to other sapiential texts.

Both the 11th and 12th articles focus on the rewritten Bible traditions. The article by Andrew Teeter, entitled “Torah, Wisdom, and the Composition of Rewritten Scripture: Jubilees and 11QPsal in Comparative Perspective,” chooses to compare two very different texts and carefully identifies the process of rewriting the biblical tradition based on a notion of “Torah-oriented wisdom” that sapientializes the Torah and subsumes wisdom under Torah. The article by Reinhard G. Kratz, “Rewriting Torah in the Hebrew Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” places the notion of “rewriting” within a broader context of nonbiblical corporuses, specifically the Damascus Document and the Rule of the Community at Qumran. He shows how both these documents rewrite Torah and interact with the community’s practices.

The final article, “Νόμος and Νομοι in the Wisdom of Solomon” by Joachim Schaper, focuses on the use of law and commandments within the book of Wisdom. He argues that there is no fusing of wisdom and Torah but that these concepts are correlated within the book, as Torah is the key to wisdom and wisdom allows for the fulfillment of Torah. Although closely related, Schaper argues that Torah and Wisdom remain distinct in this book.
An assessment of such a diversity of essays is difficult, because the volume as a whole collection is valuable. The strengths of each of the essays will be appreciated by the specialists within their respective domains of biblical studies. The editors have done a good job of offering a concluding afterword to tie together the findings of the contributors. One area not included that obviously stands out for comment is the NT in this discussion. One wonders why this was left out. Finally, the usefulness of the volume will be entirely dependent on one's focus of research.

*Jason A. Myers*

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This volume is a collection of 18 studies on the Qumran *Rule* texts. All but one of the studies appeared in print between 1996 and 2012. The final study, “‘Haskalah’ at Qumran? The Eclectic Character of Qumran Cave 4,” is published here for the first time. The volume is divided into eight parts.

Part one of the book focuses on the nature of the communities reflected in the Scrolls. Chapter 2 examines issues of admission, communal organization, and disciplinary procedures. The primary contribution of the chapter is Hempel’s close reading of the regulations on admission into the community in 1QS 6, 1QS 5, and CD 15. Chapter 3 examines 1QSa 1:6–2:11a and its relationship to the Laws of the *Damascus Document*. Hempel argues that the regulations for communal life in 1QSa are more closely related to the *Damascus Document* than to the *Rule of the Community*.

Chapters 4–6 all relate to the emergence of communal life; each chapter offers a fresh reading of counter narratives of “beginnings.” First, Hempel re-examines the various descriptions of the emergence of a movement contained in the Admonition of the *Damascus Document*. Second, she argues that, despite the fact that the first lines of 1QS 8 have for a long time been related to community origins, 1QS 6:2–4 provides a more credible historical scenario of emerging communal life. Third, Hempel offers a comparative study of 1QS 6:3 and CD 13:2–3.

In part three of the book, “The Community Rule Traditions,” Hempel addresses the much-debated issue of the literary development of the S tradition. Instead of focusing on variants between the different manuscripts, she proposes that it is the elements of continuity coupled with notable instances of discontinuity within individual manuscripts that shed light on this important question.

Part four focuses on one of the most debated literary relationships in the corpus of the Dead Sea Scrolls, that between the *Damascus Document* and the *Community Rule*. In chapter 8, Hempel demonstrates that a careful comparison between 1QS 8–9 and CD 20 provides scholars with additional vital evidence to consider when contemplating the textual mosaic of 1QS 8–9. Chapter 9 supplements the focus of the previous study by drawing up a profile of points of contact between the *Community Rule* and the *Damascus Document*. 
The next three chapters examine the context of Rule texts in relation to sapiential and legal works. Hempel first explores evidence for sectarian elements in the Qumran wisdom texts as well as considering a selection of sapiential concepts in the Rule books (chapter 10). She then argues that the number of concrete points of contact between the Laws of the Damascus Document and 4QMMT suggest that earlier collections of halakhot were incorporated into both (chapter 11). She further argues that 4Q159 preserves the kind of collection of halakhot that was incorporated into the Damascus Document and MMT (chapter 12).

Part six, “Priesthood in the Rule Texts and Beyond,” is composed of two chapters. The first analyzes all references to the sons of Aaron in the Scrolls and identifies a trajectory of priestly authority beginning with the sons of Aaron in a national context (the Damascus Document), to the sons of Aaron as priestly authorities within the community (the Community Rule), to the sons of Zadok as priestly authorities within the community in a different literary stage of the Community Rule. The next chapter demonstrates that references to the sons of Zadok are now heavily outnumbered by references to the sons of Aaron, especially in the more recently published manuscripts from Cave 4.

Scholars have long attempted to identify the roots of Jewish sectarianism in the corpus of what were at the time still the emerging Scriptures. In chapters 15 and 16, Hempel explores the basis of such claims with reference to Daniel and Ezra–Nehemiah. Following this, she devotes a chapter to the task of stimulating more intellectual dialogue and less apartheid between the scholarly debates on the emerging Bible and the textual fluidity of the Community Rule manuscripts (chapter 17). Chapter 18 examines what Hempel considers to be intriguing points of contact between embryonic sectarianism, as identified in chapters 5 and 6, with emerging sectarianism in the Hebrew Bible. The final chapter of the book offers a reconsideration of the nature of Cave 4.

This is a useful collection of tightly argued studies, written by one who has devoted more than 20 years to investigating the Damascus Document, the Community Rule, 4QMMT, and other Qumran texts. Those working on these texts will find much here to stimulate their own thinking.

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There may be no one more qualified for the task of writing this book than Craig Keener, widely known for his prolific work on the NT and his erudition when it comes to its social, cultural, and religious background. This commentary, now in a new and apparently slightly expanded edition, allows readers of all levels, from scholars to laypeople, easy access to a lifetime’s accumulation of biblically relevant learning.

“Background” is here understood in the widest sense, including archaeological discoveries, Greco-Roman and Jewish writings that shed light on the
social, cultural, and religious context, as well as the most important background: the OT. Despite the clear focus on such material, the book does not read as a lexicon of information that is more or less related to the message of the NT. Keener has avoided the temptation to write a number of essays that could be subsumed under the heading “Do You Know What Else Is Interesting?” He has been disciplined enough to include topics that genuinely throw light on the NT and that help the reader move closer to the world in which the NT authors lived and thought. But Keener does not restrict himself to providing background information; he also makes interpretive choices. The book is therefore a genuine commentary, where Keener draws on his knowledge of the biblical world to make cautious judgments about the meaning of the text.

To praise the book in this way is also to direct attention to the biggest question I have about it: is the accumulation of background information really the best way to explain the meaning of the Bible? Keener seems to think so. In his introduction, he defends his focus on background to the relative neglect of context and literary structure: “readers can ascertain the context on their own by studying the Bible itself” (p. 14). I am not equally confident. We often need help to see the context within Scripture itself, and how this context explains the meaning of individual words and expressions. For example, Luke’s very profound use of the term Lord is probably lost on most readers (including the readers of Keener’s commentary) unless someone explains that Luke uses this term as a name both for God the Father (as it is used in the OT) and as a name for Jesus, thereby showing the divinity of Jesus and his unity with the Father.

With respect to Luke’s use of this terminology, Keener’s interest in background may also downplay the uniqueness of Luke’s contribution, as he refers to the Jewish Psalms of Solomon (17:32) for the use of the phrase “the Lord Christ” (p. 185 on Luke 2:15). This information gives the impression that “Lord” is a messianic title, and that Luke’s language is echoing Jewish expectations. Luke does much more, however, as an inquiry into the background of the Psalms of Solomon might show. In Psalms of Solomon 17:32, “Lord” (Greek kyrios) is probably a translation of the Hebrew adonai (not necessarily referring to God), whereas Luke’s use of “Lord” (Greek kyrios) must be understood against the background of the Hebrew name for God, Yhwh. Luke’s point is that Jesus is the Messiah, but he is a Messiah who is also God.

There are other examples of how the focus on background may tend to underestimate the uniqueness of the NT. A much debated question concerns Jesus’ use of the word “Father” when he prayed to God and when he taught his disciples to pray. Joachim Jeremias famously stated that this was something completely unique and that Jesus in this way introduced people to an entirely new and more intimate way of relating to God. Subsequent research has shown that Jeremias overstated his case, as there are other examples of Jews praying to God as Father. Keener gives a long list of references to God being called Father, both in the OT and in Jewish literature (pp. 60–61), but he fails to mention one important distinction: it was common to refer to God as “Father,” but it was quite unusual to address him as such in prayer. None of the references that Keener provides contain an example of God being addressed in prayer as “Father.”

In most cases, however, I found Keener’s background information to be extremely helpful, and I have learned a lot from this book. My questions concern
the hermeneutical presuppositions for his approach. It appears that Keener thinks that what is needed to understand the Bible is sufficient background knowledge coupled with an open mind. That our reading of the Bible may be clouded by our own theological bias does not seem to be a big problem, at least not in his own case, as he avers: “I genuinely try to derive my theology and applications only from my study of the biblical text, but if the reverse has occasionally happened, I ask the reader’s pardon” (p. 20). Keener here echoes our heritage from the Reformation, which has taught us that Scripture is the source and norm, and that all theology should be derived from it. It should not be the other way around, that our own reason determines how we interpret the Bible. We all strive toward this goal, but if the recent focus on hermeneutics has taught us anything, it is that this is easier said than done. Our presuppositions tend to influence our work more than we know.

Readers may find examples of Keener’s bias in his selection of background information. He makes a point of the relative reliability of history-writing at the time of the NT and argues that the Gospels should be considered accurate accounts of history (pp. 38–39). But if he wants to rely on this argument, should he not also grant the validity of a related argument: if contemporary history writers felt free to embellish their sources occasionally, should not the NT authors be expected to do the same? I don’t think they should, but my point is that Keener’s argument betrays his bias in favor of the historical reliability of the Gospels (in this case, I agree), and, once again, I am not convinced that the NT’s similarity to contemporary writings tells the whole story.

As I conclude this review, I should make a confession: I have not read the whole 816-page book; I have only sampled it. But I have read enough to say confidently that to mention everything that could be learned from perusing this book would require a book review of 816 pages. This commentary represents the gold standard, not only of learning, but also of the art of communicating economically. It is amazing how much material Keener is able to pack into this work, in many cases more than what full-length commentaries on individual books provide. I would be very much surprised if there is any commentary that provides more learning per page than this does. As a one-volume commentary on the NT, this work certainly has no match.

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The long-awaited collection of papers from the second Princeton-Prague Symposium on Jesus research, held back in 2007, has finally appeared. It is well worth the wait. Its six main sections are entitled “Methodologies in Jesus Research,” “Archaeology and Topography,” “Jesus within Judaism,” “Psychobiography,” “Sources,” and “Jesus’ Life and Teaching.” Altogether, 39 scholars contribute to the volume, many with international acclaim. All suggest, from a
wide variety of angles and to greatly varying degrees, that there are important reasons to be optimistic about what we can recover of the historical Jesus while still employing many of the standard critical tools.

Section one contains essays by Geza Vermes on making sure Jesus is thoroughly Jewish, by Walter Weaver on the original quest and the strengths and weaknesses of Schweitzer’s demolition of it, by Daniel Moore on the increasing openness of Jewish scholars to recovering a Jesus who is both historical and admirable, and by Stanley Porter on the limitations of the standard criteria of authenticity and the need for integrating them with a fuller range of data in a linguistically informed approach to writing history.

Section two ranges from Charlesworth and Mordecai Aviam addressing 10 major problems in reconstructing first-century Galilee as the backdrop for Jesus’ ministry, to Sean Freyne reimagining Jesus in his Galilean culture, to Jeremy Hutton’s treatment of the location of John’s baptismal ministry as coinciding with where David crossed the Jordan back into Israel to retake his kingship after Absalom’s demise in 2 Sam 19. Gabriel Mazor then highlights how imperial power was reflected in urban architecture in the Eastern Roman provinces, while David Hendin explores numismatics to show the importance of coins for reconstructing Jesus and his world.

In section three, we move closer to the heart of speaking about Jesus himself. Tom Holmén summarizes his continuum approach that stresses points of continuity between Jesus’ Jewish background, Jesus himself, and the church that followed him. Dale Allison, without consciously utilizing the continuum approach, next gives an outstanding example of it with his defense of Jesus the apocalypticist. Gerd Theissen applies role analysis to the titles teacher, prophet, Messiah, and Son of man to show the increasingly contingent status of each when ranked in that sequence. People can choose to become teachers, they must be called to be prophets, the Messiah must be appointed by God, and Jesus trusted that God would assign him a future eschatological role as the Son of man. Peter Flint ably sums up what the Dead Sea Scrolls do and do not disclose about the Judaism of Jesus’ day and their similarities and differences with Jesus’ teaching, while Michael Daise discusses the statis questionis on the Jewish festivals and how Jesus’ ministry fit in with them. Bruce Chilton tries to strike a balance in the use of the Targums for Jesus research between those who entirely exclude them on chronological grounds and those who appeal to them indiscriminately as preserving oral tradition from the first century or earlier. Richard Horsley continues his thesis of Jesus seeking to renew village communities as countercultural alternatives to Roman rule, while Arye Edrei and Doron Mendels argue that Paul succeeded in spreading the Gospel to the west by being willing to translate and contextualize the message for a Greco-Roman context in ways that the rabbis never did.

Section four consists of only two essays, but they are both important. Donald Capps shows how psychological studies of Jesus fell out of favor because of Schweitzer’s critique of them in his day, when they all required Jesus to have been delusional. Capps argues instead that Jesus adopted a fictive personality as a positive way of overcoming the conventional limitations of his context. In other words, he projected the persona of not being limited to whoever most everyone else says you are and of overcoming a predictable destiny.
and creating hope for a future. Charlesworth himself then summarizes recent “psychobiography” and concludes that it can help us support the idea that Jesus had a messianic self-understanding.

Section five, on sources and their transmission of the traditions they contain, offers the most homogeneously grouped set of essays apart from the brief section on psychobiography. Those familiar with the authors’ previous work can predict much of the contents of these chapters. Richard Bauckham summarizes the case for the Gospels building on eyewitness testimony. In keeping with his more recent rejection of his earlier either-or approach to the Gospels as oral rather than scribal transmission, Kelber explores the ways in which the two interact with each other in the evolving Jesus tradition. Kathy Ehrensperger highlights the common ground between Paul and Jesus with the importance of fellowship meals that each stresses. Darrell Bock finds substantial historicity in Mark; Ulrich Luz is much more cautious with Matthew. Craig Keener is extremely optimistic for Luke, while Moody Smith sees a bit more in John than is often accepted. Craig Evans shows how very little of value for understanding the historical Jesus is contained in the most celebrated extracanonical sources, while Pheme Perkins does the same for the less-well-known “New Testament Apocrypha.” Casey Elledge demonstrates that Josephus, Tacitus, and Suetonius alone adequately disprove the notion that Jesus never existed and confirm that his death was the most significant part of his life. Idiosyncratically, Étienne Nodet argues that Josephus originally was much more positive toward Jesus than he later became, possibly due to fear of Roman reaction, in an essay supposedly about Jesus’ humanity. Finally, Suleiman Mourad briefly surveys the Quranic material on Jesus, noting that it is more positive toward him when taken on its own, apart from various subsequent Islamic spins.

The final section begins with Robert Webb’s methodological reflections on the differences between Crossan’s and Allison’s understandings of the relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus. Allison is both clearer about and consistent in the use of his method, along with being more convincing in drawing the lines of continuity which he does from John to Jesus to the early church. Gerber Oegema discusses Jesus’ use of the Scriptures centering on the categories of identification and actualization. Jesus taught in full awareness of the whole range of sources, methods and interpretations utilized also by the early rabbis. As consistently in his work elsewhere, Lee McDonald minimizes any sense of biblical canon that might have existed in the first century and thus that Jesus might have adopted. George Parsenios builds on Chrysostom’s homily on John 4 to propose flexibility as a key category for understanding the historical Jesus and the different angles on him found in the Fourth Gospel that differ from the Synoptics. Jan Roskovec argues for at least some historical basis for the miracles, including even nature miracles and resurrection. Credibility should be the more important criterion than plausibility, and surprise should be a part of a realistic world view. Pokorny reconstructs the most verifiable parts of the Passion narrative, while Lidija Novakovic reflects on historiographical considerations for the resurrection. Contra many, the topic is not out of bounds for historical research and there are reasons to believe in it. Only the interpretive conclusion that God was responsible for it moves into a theological arena that historical study cannot assess.
As in any anthology of this size, the essays vary widely in value, but none is entirely without merit. Some fit less well than others into the categories they have been assigned, and one or two seem only marginally related to the quest for the historical Jesus. Most are abreast of the state of the art in their subdisciplines; many offer valid, new contributions to the Third Quest. Several summarize work presented elsewhere in even fuller form; these chapters will be most helpful for those unfamiliar with the larger works on which they are based and needing more succinct introductions to the topics. Several of the Eastern European scholars will be new to most Western readers, but their contributions are uniformly provocative and helpful.

Charlesworth’s call for more and better psychobiography invites properly trained scholars to fill a large void in the literature. While there are the occasional intersections with Johannine research, Paul Anderson’s repeated call for a Fourth Quest in which John is an equal partner with the Synoptics was not discussed. Where there are genuinely new methods or new uses of old methods proposed, it would have been good to see more actual samples of those methods in actions. It seems that it is always easier for scholars to critique old methods and call for or even propose new ones than it is to actually put them into practice. But the potential for ongoing Jesus research, if evaluated solely by the contributions to this volume, remains enormous. The scholarship represented here is certainly moving in encouraging directions.

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This monograph is a thorough revision of the author’s doctoral dissertation which was submitted to the School of Religion at Claremont Graduate University under the direction of James Robinson.

In chapter 1 Joseph introduces the task and methodology of his study. He seeks to do a comparative study between Q and the Qumran scrolls. He notes that numerous scholars have tried to identify the relationship between the Qumran scrolls and the NT, but no consensus has emerged and the guild is somewhat at an impasse. Joseph believes that the most reliable approach would be to identify “the earliest Palestinian Jewish texts and traditions associated with the early Jesus movement” and compare them to the Qumran scrolls (p. 21). Joseph identifies Q as this earliest stratum of the Jesus movement. His study “seeks to explore a new perspective on Q and new models for the complex historical, literary, and theological relationships within which the historical Jesus and the Jesus tradition can be located in first-century Judaism” (p. 27). Joseph delineates numerous similarities between Q and the Dead Sea Scrolls, which provide the justification for his study.

In chapter 2 Joseph engages in “reconstructing Q.” He discusses in turn Q’s existence, history of research, ethnicity, Aramaic substratum, composition,
community, provenance, and social structure(s). Joseph interacts with an impressive array of scholarly literature as he evaluates competing views about the nature of Q. This chapter provides an excellent overview of Q research. He concludes that “Q is a mid-first century Palestinian Jewish Greek text of the early Jesus movement” (p. 93). Q contains mixed genres including sapiental, prophetic, eschatological, and apocalyptic materials. While its provenance cannot be determined, Joseph thinks that it is reasonable to conclude that it “emerged within a Palestinian/Jewish network of village communities dedicated to the message and teachings of Jesus” (p. 93).

Chapter 3 is dedicated to the description of the Qumran community. While there are some differences between the description of the Essenes in the classical sources (Josephus, Philo, Pliny, Hippolytus) and the Qumran literature, Joseph concludes that the archaeological, paleographical, geographical, and internal evidence best supports the hypothesis that the residents of Qumran were members of the Essene sect. The Qumran Essenes were only a part of a larger Essene movement that was spread throughout Palestine. Joseph also notes the influence of the Enochic literature on the Qumran community and that the community had strong messianic expectations.

In chapter 4, Joseph discusses the portrait of John the Baptist in Q, his relationship to Jesus, and his possible connection with the Essene community. In Q, John is depicted as a prophet who predicts imminent judgment, calls Israel to repentance, and announces the imminent arrival of “the Coming One.” John is depicted in Q as a figure who is an equal to Jesus, but the gospel writers subordinate John’s role to Jesus. Joseph notes that the numerous parallels between John’s ministry and the Qumran writings suggest a possible connection between John and the Qumran community or the larger Essene movement. John is also depicted as a priestly figure who plays a mediatorial role of administering baptism. In light of the Qumran expectation of two messiahs—a Davidic royal messiah and a priestly messiah—Joseph surmises that some Essenes may have considered John to be a priestly messianic figure.

In chapter 5, Joseph notes that Q and the Qumran writings share similarities in that they both show familiarity with the wisdom tradition and have applied it to an eschatological context. In particular, Joseph singles out the beatitudes of Q and the Community Rule (1QS), 4QInstruction, and 4QBeatitude (4Q525). The similarities between 4Q525 and the beatitudes of Q suggest to Joseph possible Essenic influences on Q.

In chapter 6, Joseph argues for a literary dependence between Q 7:22 and 4Q521. Q 7:22 functions as a confirmation that Jesus was the fulfillment of John the Baptist’s anticipation of “The One Who Is to Come.” 4Q521 contains an explicit reference to a messianic figure whom Joseph regards to be a royal messianic figure. Both texts connect Isa 61:1 with the raising of the dead, and both give similar descriptions of eschatological blessings that accompany the messiah. Joseph concludes that 4Q521 exerted a “non-literary, exegetical influence” on the author of Q.

The chapters in this book read more like a series of essays rather than as a sustained argument. Joseph spends about two-thirds of the book (chapters 1–3) on what seems to me to be preliminary issues, while it is only in the last third (chapters 4–6) of the book that he engages in the heart of his project of show-
ing the potential influence of the Qumran literature on the early Jesus tradition. One of the strengths of the study is Joseph's broad familiarity with the scholarship on Q studies. Joseph also raises a number of provocative questions regarding the relationship between the Qumran literature and the early Jesus tradition. Naturally, the persuasiveness of his study is in part dependent on the possibility of reconstructing Q. The confidence that some scholars have in reconstructing Q, in distinguishing redactional layers in Q, and in describing the community that lies behind it, is simply astonishing. While I believe that something like Q is still the best explanation for accounting for the similarities between Matthew and Luke that are not found in Mark, I am more skeptical about the possibility of reconstructing Q. While Joseph does acknowledge that these issues are contested, he nevertheless proceeds with a great deal of certainty as evidenced by the fact that he repeatedly cites chapters and verses of Q as if we already had an established text. Joseph's study will certainly prove to be of interest to those who are engaged in studies of Q and/or the early Jesus movement.

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This book positions itself between three views (see pp. 1–2). First, Oliver Crisp argues that the virgin birth (or virginal conception; hereafter VB) is essential to Christian confession and understanding of the incarnation. Lincoln disagrees. Second, Gerd Lüdemann views the ancient VB traditions as “a lie.” Lincoln rejects this position. Third, J. D. Crossan views the NT’s VB accounts as making a theological statement about Jesus, not a biological statement about what happened to Mary. Lincoln does not want to be seen as holding quite this view, either. Lincoln’s book is a nuanced exploration of a space he seeks to carve out between these (and related) positions.

Chapter 1, like all the book argued carefully and densely, establishes the parameters of Lincoln’s discussion. Helpful here are ways he differs from scholars as varied as Raymond Brown (whose historical work was impressive but who left theological implications to the Catholic magisterium) and Bishop Spong (whom Lincoln casts as ill-informed and intemperate). Chapter 2 looks at NT evidence and discovers that the NT contains rival traditions—not all NT writers agreed with gospel reports (in Matthew and Luke) of Jesus’ supernatural origin. Based on the NT, we could discount the VB and still stand on Scripture.

Chapter 3 investigates ancient biography and argues that it is in this genre and no other that the gospel birth narratives should be read. Chapter 4 zeroes in on Matthew’s Gospel and concludes, barely, that it testifies to the VB (or virginal conception—Lincoln uses the terms interchangeably; see p. 2 n. 4). Chapter 5 unpacks Luke’s Gospel with similar thoroughness and highlights
“ancient conventions about dual paternity” (p. 123) which permitted belief in Jesus’ origin both in divine work and in human ancestry.

Chapter 6 presents detailed discussion of the VB and historicity. Lincoln concludes that “the balance of probabilities is against the virgin birth belonging to the earliest stratum of Christian memories about Jesus’ life”; rather, the VB is “a particular elaboration of affirmations about Jesus based on belief in the resurrection” (p. 149). It is at points such as this that it is challenging to distinguish between Lincoln’s view and Crossan’s when it comes to the factuality of the sources, or of traditions lying behind them. Lincoln stresses repeatedly that “given the relatively sparse sources and given our distance in time from them and our different take on what might constitute historical reality, any historical judgment will have to be a fairly cautious one” (pp. 163–64). One detects little caution, however, in his consistent opposition (at over a dozen junctures) to J. Gresham Machen’s classic treatment of this topic. It is fair to say he regards Machen as more of an opponent than an ally. Comments in chap. 9, which deals with Scripture and hermeneutics, are particularly telling: Lincoln chalks up Machen’s insistence on the close connection between facts and truth in Machen’s thought, not to the Bible’s outlook (which Machen thought he was presenting and defending), but to “modernist assumptions” deployed “within a supernaturalistic perspective” (p. 246). At least he grants Machen the courtesy of interaction.

Chapter 7 traces the development of the VB tradition subsequent to NT times. Chapter 8 interacts with F. D. E. Schleiermacher and shows how his position continues to “set the agenda” (p. 239) for discussion of the VB today (which helps explain Lincoln’s disagreement with Machen, who was not willing to allow Schleiermacher to “set the agenda”). Chapter 10 discusses Christology and creed and argues that “the consequence” of Lincoln’s approach to the VB “is not that all doctrinal truth becomes relative” (p. 294). But one can wonder about this. Lincoln certainly relativizes the NT’s VB’s claims, preferring an emphasis on the incarnation (the note on which the book concludes; p. 302). I do not see how the Bible’s incarnation traditions would fare any better under the atomistic examination to which Lincoln submits the VB reports. It would just take a longer book to show how incarnation can be roundly doubted without in any way jeopardizing the integrity of Christian confession.

So in a way, this book is not so much about its putative subject of the VB as it is a restatement of Schleiermacher’s view of the nature of Christian faith and how clear affirmations of Scripture need not function authoritatively in dogmatic understanding (in part because Scripture contains contradictory affirmations, so that dogmatic affirmations are really about higher truths, not necessarily picayune assertions about narrative details like who conceived Jesus). Those who share Lincoln’s historiography (and confessional orientation) will find much here that is convincing. All readers can gain from his painstaking and sweeping handling of the subject matter across a wide range of disciplines.

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The question of the relation between Judaism and Christianity has long historical roots. In the last decades, it has become especially pertinent in light of a growing awareness of anti-Semitic tendencies in Christian history and theology and more recent contributions of Jewish scholars in NT studies. Multiple books are now available on the Jewish roots of the NT. In Isaac Oliver’s *Torah Praxis after 70 CE*, his published dissertation, he challenges the long held view that Luke–Acts were written by a Gentile Christian. Instead he argues that Luke–Acts is just as much a Jewish text as the more commonly accepted Jewish roots of Matthew. In this, he develops Jacob Jervell’s claim in *Luke and the People of God* from 1972, that Luke–Acts were Jewish Christian documents written by a Torah-observant Jew. Even if this view was published before E. P. Sanders’ seminal work *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* in 1977 and the New Perspective on Paul, and before the third quest for the historical Jesus since the 1980s, the Gentile Christian identification of Luke–Acts has proven to be persistent and dominant.

Oliver approaches the question of the identity of Luke–Acts through a comparison with Matthew regarding halakic matters traditionally viewed as markers of Jewish identity, namely, the Sabbath, food laws, and circumcision. He concludes that both Matthew and Luke were born and raised Jews and wrote their books immersed and keenly aware of Jewish halakah. They both expected Jewish followers of Jesus to practice Sabbath, food laws, and circumcision, while Gentiles were expected to observe only some aspects of Mosaic legislation to preserve their newly acquired purity and accommodate their fellow Jewish believers, while only voluntarily keeping the laws of clean/unclean food and the Sabbath (pp. 41, 193, 235–36, 253, 255, 299, 317, 319, 364, 366, 402, 432). Oliver adopts what he calls a “halakic-critical approach,” where the NT documents are read from a thorough engagement with alternative halakic positions in the Second Temple period, besides a redaction/composition criticism taking Matthew and Luke as the final redactors of their sources (p. 36).

First of all, Oliver should be commended for his extensive research, especially into the ancient sources. Readers will find references and discussions that shed significant light on the question of Torah in the Gospels and Acts. After *Torah Praxis after 70 CE*, I cannot see how the claim of the Jewish roots of Luke–Acts can be ignored in future scholarship. One implication of Oliver’s study is that dating the parting of ways between Judaism and Christianity—to the degree that they did part—as found already in the NT must be called into question. Furthermore, Oliver calls for a reconsideration of commonly held antinomian readings of passages in the Gospels and Acts.

There are some issues I do not feel Oliver’s dissertation answers satisfactorily. First, he describes Jesus’ Sabbath praxis as a momentary breach or suspension of the Sabbath in order to include the treatment of nonfatal illnesses on the Sabbath (p. 124), based on the resemblance between the rabbinic concept of שומן נפש (“saving a life”) and Jesus’ ψυχὴν σῶσαι (“to save life”) in Mark 3:4 (p. 126). Later, he writes that Luke saw Jesus’ acts on the Sabbath as
an “obligation” (p. 135). An obligation seems to imply a rather integral part of Jesus’ theology of the Sabbath, rather than a suspension of the Sabbath. Second, Oliver presents Acts 15 as prescribing rules for table fellowship, where the converted Gentiles accommodate Jewish kosher rules so as not to offend them. But is this really the basic thrust of Acts 15? Is it not rather a correction to those Jews demanding that the Gentile followers of Jesus be circumcised? Third, Oliver does a good job in showing how the four rules laid on the Gentiles are rooted in Lev 17–18 (cf. pp. 370–93), but his claim that table fellowship was the basic reason behind the Apostolic decision does not adequately explain the inclusion of, for example, πορνεία among the four (cf. p. 368). Further, his explanation for the inclusion of Acts 15:21 to show that the four decisions in vv. 20 are “anchored in the Mosaic Torah” seem unsatisfactory (p. 214). If this was the case, why does James also speak of the reading of Moses every Sabbath in the synagogues? Fourth, regarding the “double standard” for Jewish and Gentile followers of Jesus, Oliver writes regarding Matthew that “it is impossible to prove such a thesis” (p. 181). He finds the basic support for this thesis in Luke–Acts and the Apostolic Decree regarding circumcision (p. 402). Given the nonexplicit nature of much of the textual material, the last word on what was obligatory and voluntary for Jewish and Gentile followers of Jesus is certainly not written. Despite the need for further studies, Oliver has here given an insightful contribution. His Torah Praxis after 70 ce is a careful, thorough, and challenging analysis of the Jewish background of Matthew and Luke–Acts, deserving serious thought by scholars and students of Luke in particular and the Gospels in general.

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Andrews University


This book asks how does one make sense of what happened at the crucifixion and how does the NT improve that understanding. Wedderburn contends that exegetes are often content with little thought for the theological and philosophical questions that arise from exegesis, while systematic theologians tend to read more into the NT accounts than is warranted. Wedderburn is retired professor of NT at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich.

In chapter 1 (“Introduction”), Wedderburn interacts with a variety of historical Jesus scholars and notes that there is little in the gospel accounts that prepared the disciples to understand Jesus’ death and, therefore, reflects more a post-Easter interpretation, as evidenced by their surprise after he died. And yet, he follows Jörg Frey and Paul Fiddes that a soteriological interpretation of Jesus’ death is still possible, whether or not enunciated by the earthly Jesus.

In chapter 2 (“A Deepening Shadow”), he additionally argues that one cannot tell how much Jesus understood about his own death. And yet, there is sufficient evidence—growing opposition to his teaching and the death of John
the Baptist—to conclude that Jesus was aware of suffering and perhaps death. Thus, the passion predictions probably reflect *vaticinia ex eventu*. In spite of this, Mark 10:45b as well as Jesus’ last words to the disciples suggests he possibly viewed his death as salvific. And yet, as his death neared, Jesus emphasized the woes that would come upon his people rather than salvation.

Wedderburn, in chapter 3 (“Jesus’ Last Meal”), raises the question whether Jesus conveyed understanding of his death at his last meal. Contra Albert Schweitzer, who argued that Jesus’ last words revealed a change in strategy, Wedderburn concludes that it is not necessary to presuppose the introduction of new or salvific words at the end. Rather, his last words reveal a hope in the soon revealing of the eschatological banquet, and his last supper reveals a celebration of the fellowship between himself and his disciples.

In chapter 4 (“Forsaken by God?”), Wedderburn surveys the traditions involving the prayer of Jesus in Gethsemane and his “agonized” cry from the cross. He concludes that there is “no hint” that Jesus sees redemption or atonement in his death in either the garden scene or in his cry of forsakenness. Jesus’ primary message was a call for people to repent and return to God, to do the will of God, and welcome his coming reign.

In chapter 5 (“Between Jesus and Paul”), Wedderburn detects in Paul early Christian interpretations of Jesus’ death. Even after acceptance of his death, the key question remains why Jesus had to die in such a manner. After examining 1 Cor 11:23–6; 15:—7; Rom 3:25–26a; 2 Cor 5:21; Rom 4:25; and Phil 2:6–11, Wedderburn concludes that the many images used by Paul warn against exalting any one image, such as sacrificial imagery, to express the purpose of Christ’s death, and that Paul developed a “rich profusion” of imagery to capture so complex an event.

Chapter 6 (“The Folly of the Cross”), argues that Paul’s references to Christ’s death are more theological than historically focused. He uses the cross as a way of doing theology and in so doing causes things to happen in the church. To the Jewish and Graeco-Roman polemical worlds, Paul adds the third context of “cross language” to an entirely new type of believer. In the process of setting the “folly of the cross” against the worldly Greek wisdom, Paul used common, but redefined, language to express a wisdom that came into its own as the primary means to explain Jesus’ death.

Similarly, chapter 7 (“Participation in Christ”), argues that while Paul’s soteriology is not easy to understand, it is impactful. His “in Christ” language is not formulaic, but ultimately refers to corporate spiritual unity. 2 Cor 5:14 and Rom 6:11 reveal both identification of believers with Jesus and Jesus’ identification with us and further suggests, before we have died, that we are dead to sin through our association with Christ. The participation with Christ imagery reflects, not that we have chosen Christ to be our representative, but that God himself has chosen on our behalf.

In addressing righteousness and justification—chapter 8—Wedderburn helpfully notes that a solely forensic interpretation is possibly misleading and unhelpful in discerning God’s role in saving humans. While speaking of a future revealing of God’s righteousness would have been accepted, understanding the present aspect in the midst of such evil would have been surprising. The use of righteousness language is polyvalent and caution is urged in limiting
Paul to only some of his intended meanings. Similarly, linking justification and righteousness ultimately represents a restored relationship with God and helps us understand the new creation.

In chapter 9 (“Epilogue”), Wedderburn points out that the death of Jesus is more than just declaring someone innocent or guilty; it involves putting to rights that which is wrong. Those characteristics that we should share with God involve his loving and merciful character. This is supported by Paul’s selective use of Jesus material.

This is an excellent study that represents a lifetime of reflection as well as a healthy use of historical-critical methodology. He presents a well-researched argument and critically engages a vast amount of German NT scholars, all the while remaining respectful of their differing perspectives. His thesis provides further clarifying ideas to move the discussion on the death of Jesus and Paul’s use of the story forward in a healthy manner. The bibliography and indexes are very helpful in quickly locating significant material. This work is written at a scholarly level and should be considered by all engaged in serious study of the death of Jesus and Paul’s corresponding theology.

James M. Howard
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Three important events led to this volume. The first was the discovery of a tomb in Talpiyot Jerusalem outside the walls of the Old City in 1980. The tomb contained 10 ossuaries, 6 inscribed with names found in the NT in connection with Jesus and his family, e.g. “Jesus [?], son of Joseph,” “Maria,” “Mariamne,” “Joseh,” “Judah, son of Jesus,” “Matia” [Matthew]. The second event was the Discovery Channel broadcast The Lost Tomb of Jesus in 2007, which made a number of sensational claims about the discovery. The third event was a symposium of scholars who met in Jerusalem in 2008 to discuss and assess the previous two events. This volume is a compilation of papers presented at the 2008 symposium. The essays are produced by scholars from a very diverse range of disciplines, from archaeology to linguistics to mathematics to theology. Most of the essays probe the evidence of the Talpiyot tomb from different perspectives. Could this be the tomb of Jesus’ family? If so, what are the implications for scholarship and for faith?

The introduction by Charlesworth sets the scene for the rest of the essays by orienting the reader to the issues, surveying some of the claims made about the Talpiyot tomb, some of the “facts” about the tomb and its discovery, and some historical and theological presuppositions related to the discovery. Charlesworth signals the tone for what I detected to be the general consensus of the essays: the claim that the tomb at Talpiyot is to be identified as the tomb of Jesus and his family is questionable (as the punctuation of the title of the volume suggests), though the essayists arrive at different levels of probability
that this could be Jesus’ family tomb, even if most doubt that it is (but none
deen it completely impossible).

The first section of the book consists of a series of essays that evaluate
the Talpiyot tomb in light of ossuaries and Jewish burial customs. Here, the
layout of the tomb is helpfully described and illustrated in an essay by Amos
Kloner and Shimon Gibson. The essay by Claude Cohen-Matlofsky analyzes
the evidence and the names inscribed on the ossuaries and concludes that it is
possible that the tomb belonged to Jesus’ family, arguing that rock-cut tombs
were not owned only by the wealthy. A short essay on Jewish burial customs
by Mordechai Aviam and an essay on the ossuary of Simon and Alexander by
Andre Lemaire round out the section.

The second section of the book is dedicated to evaluating the names in-
scribed on the ossuaries from the tomb. Rachel Hachlili analyzes the names
found on the ossuaries in light of naming and names found in the Second
Temple period and concludes that the tomb was probably not the tomb of Je-
sus’ family. Stephen Pfann also analyzes the names on the ossuaries, as well as
the patina and the DNA. In spite of the claim that the only Greek inscription
MARIMNOUNH M MARA (?) refers to Mary Magdalene (e.g., the Discovery
Channel broadcast), Pfann convincingly argues that the Greek inscription re-
veals two separate hands, referring to two separate persons, and should read
MARIAMH KAI MARA. In a chapter on prosopography, mitochondrial DNA,
and statistics, Christopher Rollston argues that it is difficult to determine the
exact nature of the relationship of those interred in the Talpiyot tomb. Mark
Spigelman argues that the mitochondrial DNA evidence is inconclusive as to
the identity of those in the tomb. Charles Pellegrino concludes on the basis of
the patina history of the tomb that the “James” ossuary is possibly the 10th os-
suary from the Talpiyot tomb. In a section dealing more specifically with Jesus
family and Mary Magdalene, James Tabor raises the question, is there sufficient
evidence to conclude that the Talpiyot tomb was the tomb of Jesus’ family?
While Tabor thinks that the names found on the ossuaries were common, the
cluster is nevertheless telling, and raises the identification of this tomb with
Jesus’ family tomb above a mere hypothesis. He also rejects the conclusion that
this could not be the family tomb of Jesus simply based on the fact that his
family was too poor to own a tomb. Two essays by April DeConick and Jane
Schaberg on the memory and role of Mary Magdalene in the early church,
though offering interesting readings, probably do not belong in this collection.
An essay by Jonathan Price examines why the Mariam ossuary is inscribed in
Greek, and concludes that the reason remains unknown.

A further section treats the issue of the authenticity of the “James” ossu-
ary and its implications. Joseph Fitzmyer analyzes the names on the ossuary
and the meaning of the Aramaic “brother” and concludes that it probably did
not belong to “James, the brother of Jesus,” from the NT, but draws several
implications from the meaning of the Aramaic “brother” for interpreting the
NT evidence relating to Jesus’ family. Amnon Rosenfeld, Howard Feldman,
and Wolfgang Krumbein also analyze the “James” ossuary and conclude that
the inscription is not forged since the inscribed names do not cut through the
patina, and the chemical fingerprint of the patina and soil is consistent with
that of the Talpiyot tomb. They think that if this ossuary is the 10th from the
tomb, it raises the level of probability that this is the tomb of Jesus’ family. A further section includes a number of essays considering the statistical probability based on the names found on the ossuaries that this is the family tomb of Jesus. The statistical arguments are complex, and I am not qualified to evaluate them, but in the end the results seem to be inconclusive.

The final section of the book contains a collection of essays that deal with beliefs about burial and the afterlife in Second Temple Judaism and earliest Christianity by Lee McDonald (on Jesus’ burial in light of Jewish burial practices and Roman practice of crucifixions), Casey Elledge (on Josephus’ view of the afterlife), Konstantinos Zarras (on death and burial customs in Early Christianity), and Peter Pokorny (on how burial practices impinge on faith in the resurrection). The latter essay is disappointing in its reflections on the Jesus’ resurrection, while I found McDonald’s essay more engaging. The book ends with conclusions and reflections on the symposium by James Charlesworth and a chapter on an additional tomb, the “Patio Tomb,” also found at Talpiyot.

Despite some overlap in the essays at times, the essays in this volume provide helpful discussions on issues related to assessing archaeological discoveries, such as ancient tombs. It also adds to our knowledge of Jewish burial practices. The essays dispel many of the unsupported and unsubstantiated sensational claims about the Talpiyot tomb, even though a couple of the reconstructions offered are likewise unsupported. Even if this is not the tomb of Jesus’ family (and having read these essays I am still convinced that it probably was not), it provides the overall context for understanding Jesus’ burial in light of Jewish burial practices in and around the 1st century. The weakest part of the volume, to be expected in a series of essays such as this (though in several places they do address these issues, so it is valid to raise the point), was theological and apologetic reflection on these findings. The book raises important questions concerning the relationship of archeological finds to Christian faith. Despite the conclusion of some of the essays, if the Gospel records (where the followers of Jesus encountered an empty tomb and saw the resurrected Christ) are to be trusted, then whether Jesus’ bones were located in an ossuary in this tomb or in some other does have important consequences!

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Matthew R. Malcolm is Lecturer in NT at Trinity Theological College, Western Australia. This work is a revision of his doctoral dissertation for the University of Nottingham under the direction of Ronald Deines and supervisor Anthony Thiselton. Malcolm’s aim in this study is to present a coherent and satisfying account of the arrangement of 1 Corinthians. While Malcolm acknowledges the ease with which Paul draws on Greco-Roman communicative devices and Jewish conceptual motifs, he contends that Paul’s kerygma exerts decisive influence
on his large-scale epistolary arrangement and ethical formulation. Between a brief introduction (pp. 1–4) and compressed conclusion (pp. 267–70) the body of Malcolm’s study consists of five chapters (pp. 5–266): (1) “The kerygma of reversal”; (2) “The Unity and Coherence of 1 Corinthians”; (3) “1 Corinthians 1–4: Divisive Boasting over Human Leaders Is Set against the Present Inhabitation of Christ’s Cross”; (4) “1 Corinthians 5–14 and Paul’s Ethics ‘in the Lord’”; and (5) “1 Corinthians 15: Pessimism for the Dead Is Set against Future Inhabitation of Christ’s Resurrection.” A detailed bibliography (pp. 271–95) and three indexes—biblical, ancient, and general (names and subjects)—round out the volume.

Malcolm examines in chapter 1 (pp. 5–57) the theme of dual reversal (condemned boaster and vindicated sufferer) as a Jewish motif, both as a literary pattern and interpretive motif. He further notes how the historical Jesus and early Christianity appropriated this theme. Paul especially renegotiated it Christologically in connection with the Christ event. Malcolm contends that an appreciation of Paul’s argument in 1 Corinthians must do justice to the decisive influence of his kerygma on his macro-rhetorical arrangement. Hence, 1 Cor 1–4 and 15 evince the kerygmatic dual motif of the condemned boaster and the vindicated cruciform sufferer; 1 Cor 5–14, by contrast, serve as extended ethical application. The function of this macro-arrangement, Malcolm maintains, is “to summon the Corinthians to ‘inhabit’ Christ the cruciform sufferer in the present as they await his manifestation, rather than to emulate the boastful ‘rulers of this age’ who await condemnation” (p. 57).

In chapter 2 (pp. 58–112), Malcolm turns to the literary integrity of 1 Corinthians. He acknowledges that it has often been challenged on one of two bases: a lack of unified literary coherence, and possible evidence of an editor. Malcolm finds editorial theories vulnerable at the level of historical plausibility. However, he also finds several approaches to the literary unity of 1 Cor (e.g., Greco-Roman epistolary analysis and rhetorical analysis) not particularly helpful. Malcolm prefers an explanation along pastoral and theological lines. Paul’s pastorally-driven macro-rhetoric and micro-level rhetorical techniques offer insights into the problematic aspects of the letter’s overall coherence.

The remaining three chapters (pp. 113–266) focus on three broad portions of the text of 1 Corinthians. In chapter 3, Malcolm draws on insights from John Chrysostom as both an expositor and applier of 1 Corinthians to his Antiochene hearers. Paul’s solution to the current problems of boastful pride, present wealth, and human autonomy among the Corinthian believers was God’s contrary way of the cross. Malcolm’s analysis of 1:10–4:21 as the rhetorical unit identifies a theologically significant orientation of boastful, present-obsessed human autonomy to which Paul applies the cross. In chapter 4, Malcolm turns his attention to 1 Cor 5–14. He sums up the macro-structural theme as “the cross applied ethically.” He organizes it in two subsections: (1) sexual immorality, greed, bodies belonging to the Lord (chs. 5–7); and (2) self-restraint, love, participation in the one body (chs. 8–14). Malcolm identifies four rhetorical units in this section (5:1–7:40; 8:1–11:1; 11:2–11:34; and 12:1–14:40). He maintains this fourfold section reflects Paul’s kerygmatic renegotiation of the Pharisaic ethics he inherited. It functions as a cruciform corrective to the problems implied in 1 Cor 1–4. In the final chapter, Malcolm treats 1 Cor 15. At the

macro-rhetorical level, he suggests that resurrection functions in accordance with Paul's *kerygma* of reversal. The discussion heightens the problem of cross-defying human autonomy identified in 1 Cor 1–4. It also provides a climactic resolution: “humans are in need of the embodied immortality that can only come from God to the dead in Christ” (p. 265; his emphasis).

Malcolm’s study is a welcome contribution to the study of Paul more generally, and of 1 Corinthians in particular. Scholars and students will be challenged by it to think afresh about the role that Paul’s *kerygma* played in informing his macro-rhetorical epistolary arrangement and ethical formulation. In contrast to the widespread contemporary focus on Paul’s use of Greco-Roman communicative devices and/or Jewish conceptual motifs, Malcolm contends that both are subservient to his *kerygma*. Malcolm also reminds readers of the importance of bringing a pastoral-theological perspective to bear on 1 Corinthians (and other Pauline letters) in conjunction with the detailed sociohistorical work that has been done on it (them). At the same time, one could take issue with the format of his presentation. His substantiation of the unity and coherence of 1 Corinthians (chapter 2) might have been attempted before assuming it in the later portions of chapter 1 (pp. 38–57), only to address it (chapter 2) after it was already assumed. The mark of any proffered thesis, however, is its explanatory power. Readers will need to wrestle with the question of whether Malcolm’s distilled structural summary (e.g., pp. xiv–xvi, 166, 228–29, 264–65) enables them to understand the content and plan of 1 Corinthians more clearly than other proposals. I still find more plausible a structure organized broadly around Paul’s response to oral reports (1:10–6:20 [1:11]) and to the Corinthians’ own letter (7:1–14:40 [7:1]; e.g., Barrett, BTNc, 1968; Fee, NICNT, 1987; Fitzmyer, AB, 2008). At the editorial level, the title header of chapter 4 (pp. 170–230, even pages) should be “1 Cor. 5–14 and Paul’s ethics” rather than “Cor. 5–14 and Paul’s ethics.”

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Doug Moo’s new commentary on Galatians is a much-welcomed addition to the literature devoted to the letter. Because of the limitations imposed on this review, account can be taken of only a cross-section of its distinctive features.

The introduction canvasses the standard issues of author, destination, date, occasion/purpose, theological themes, genre, and rhetorical stance. Because no one seriously disputes the Pauline authorship of the letter, Paul is taken to be the writer, though with the assistance of an amanuensis, who was probably given some leeway in the actual wording of the epistle. The occasion is “the crisis in Galatia” (à la George Howard), brought on by the Galatians’ flirtation with “another gospel.” Paul’s response is in three stages. (1) He draws on his own experience to illustrate the relationship between the truth of the
gospel and the law of Moses, with a particular focus on the Jerusalem apostles. (2) He uses the Galatians’ experience and especially Scripture to argue that the justification that accompanies belonging to the seed of Abraham is by faith, apart from Torah-observance. (3) He shows that conduct pleasing to God is secured by that same faith and work of God’s Spirit apart from the Torah. As for the destination, Moo slightly favors the South Galatian view, with the date of composition set at A.D. 48, just before the Apostolic Conference of Acts 15, making Galatians Paul’s earliest extant letter.

Four of the introduction’s features particularly stand out. First, there is the logic of Paul’s response to the Galatian situation. In terms of his interpretive model, Moo argues for “the traditional but currently unfashionable view that underlying Paul’s polemic against doing the Torah in Galatians is his concern about human ‘doing’ in general” (p. 27). This thesis is then elaborated in some detail (pp. 27–31), one that rests, at least to some extent, on a “pessimistic anthropology” (p. 31). Thus: “A distinction between human doing and believing, while not the focus in the letter, does underlie the argument of Galatians” (p. 31).

Second is the overview of the theological themes of Galatians (pp. 31–62). This segment canvasses salvation history/apocalyptic, the gospel, Christ, the Spirit, the law, the Christian life, “the faith of Christ,” and an extended treatment of justification/righteousness. The last-mentioned provides a handy compendium of the biblical data and offers an outstanding starting point for any study of these theologically charged concepts.

Third, as pertains particularly to the relationship between membership in the people of God and justification, Moo maintains that the two are closely related but still not identical. Paul argues both points in Galatians, but, he writes, justification does not in itself refer to belonging to God’s people, still less does justification include how one knows a person belongs to this people, contra N. T. Wright (p. 55). The crux of Moo’s take on the means of justification is articulated on pp. 59–60. It is acknowledged that Paul’s argument in Galatians is characterized by “a strongly salvation-historical framework that focus on the extension of God’s blessing to Gentiles in the new covenant era.” But there are “strong indications” that Paul argues at least implicitly on another level, as supported by a quotation of Stephen Westerholm: “The fundamental question addressed by Galatians thus is not ‘What is wrong with Judaism (or the Sinaitic law)? but ‘What is wrong with humanity that Judaism (and the Sinaitic law) cannot remedy?’” By way of application of this premise to Gal 3:3, Paul’s question to the readers is not just salvation-historical but also anthropological: “After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort” (NIV 1984)? The sum of the whole is stated in these terms: “Works are a problem in Galatians not simply because they involve an outmoded Torah; they are also a problem, and more fundamentally, because human inability renders them incapable of delivering people from sin” (p. 60).

Fourth, there is the time of justification. Moo writes that Galatians is not mainly about sanctification or even justification in its usual sense of initial acceptance but rather is about ultimate justification. In response to his opponents who claimed that this vindication can only be experienced by those who identify with Israel by doing the Torah, Paul reads salvation history in light
of the epochal significance of the cross and insists that faith and faith alone maintains one’s relationship to Christ, in whose person the people of God are now constituted, however, with the proviso that faith is accompanied by the transforming power of the Spirit (pp. 61–62).

By way of interaction with the commentary, a number of factors stand at the fore. First, there is Paul’s perennially debated phrase “faith of Jesus Christ.” Swimming against the contemporary tide, Moo argues persuasively that \textit{pistis Iēsou Christou} is an objective genitive—faith directed toward Christ.

Second, there is the endorsement of the \textit{NIV’s} paraphrase of 3:3. In treating this verse, there is an appropriate cross-reference to Phil 1:6, the only other instance of beginning in the Spirit and finishing in the flesh, with an acknowledgment of the two-stage eschatology entailed in this formulation. That said, the onus is still placed on “human doing,” which is equated with “synergism” (p. 184–85). The effect of this reading is a downplay of the eschatology of Spirit versus flesh, one that fails to take on board Paul’s actual polemic. That is to say, the Galatians are “so foolish” just because their quest for perfection is anachronistic: they are going in the wrong direction; they want to reverse the plan of the ages; theirs is a futile attempt to swim against the current of salvation history. This datum also explains Paul’s “consistently negative portrayal of the law in Galatians” (p. 36). Once the Torah has served its purpose, it must pass off the scene and give way to “the law of Christ” (6:2). It is for such a reason that Paul can write that the readers were in danger of falling away from grace (5:4). In this warning, his stance is decidedly \textit{heilsgeschichtlich}: the Galatians were in danger of retreating from the era of grace back into that of the law. This salvation-historical cadre of the verse is given rather short shrift, with Moo opting instead for the interpretation that pursuing the law is wrong “mainly” because this pursuit as a means of justification involves “an attempt to find security with God by means of human effort” (p. 326). This interpretation is, at least, consistent with the author’s underlying premise that Paul is out to demolish the “legalism” of the opponents.

Third, there is Gal 5:5: “we await the hope of righteousness.” Under the rubric of “The Time of Justification” in the introduction, Moo correctly writes that by seeking to “supplement” their faith in Christ with Torah-observance the Galatians were in danger of forfeiting their standing in Christ and, therefore, of failing to achieve their final vindication. Also correct is that Paul reads salvation history in light of the epochal significance of the cross and faith. Nevertheless, in the exposition of the verse, the weight is placed on “faith alone” (p. 62), with only a parenthetical nod to “the transforming power of the Spirit.” In keeping with the tenor of the commentary, it is not surprising that righteousness in 5:5 is said to be forensic only, that is, “right standing” (pp. 327–29). But it is none other than the “the transforming power of the Spirit” or the “fruit of the Spirit” (5:22–26) that will prove to be indispensable to a favorable verdict in the judgment (6:4–5, 7–9). In other words, it is not “faith alone” abstractly considered but “faith working through love” (5:6), “the obedience of faith” (Rom 1:5; 16:26), or a faith completed by works (Jas 2:18–26) that forms the criterion of the final vindication of the faithful people of Christ. In fairness, it is to be appreciated that Moo endeavors to acknowledge this “Not-Yet” dimension of righteousness. But the attempt to limit the scope of the term to the forensic
is artificial, especially given its covenantal setting in the Hebrew Scriptures. Against this backdrop, J. A. Ziesler's assessment of the text is more “biblical”: Paul has in view “the full realization of the new character now in Christ begun” (*The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul: A Linguistic and Theological Enquiry* [SNTSMS 20. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972] 179).

Fourth, it is certainly valid for Moo to criticize Wright's insistence that justification does not inform one how to be saved; rather, for Wright, it is a way of saying how one can tell that one belongs to the covenant community. This is a false dichotomy. On the other side, it is possible to drive a conceptual wedge between justification and participation in the life of the covenant, as Moo apparently does by writing that in Paul's letters justification “in itself” does not refer to belonging to God's people; still less does it include how one knows a person belongs to God's people (p. 55). This assessment does not take adequate stock of the fact that the Pauline doctrine of justification is grounded in the Prophets of Israel, according to whom the “true Israel” will return from exile and, at that time, be vindicated (justified) as covenant-keepers, as distinct from the idolaters of the nation. To be sure, Moo is well aware of this backdrop, as evidenced throughout the commentary. But a consistent application of the data entails that in relating this perspective to the mainly Gentile Galatians, Paul is informing them that they, along with believing Jews, now form the end-time community, “the Israel of God” (6:16).

Fifth, it is one thing to acknowledge, in principle, that Galatians precludes any kind of human effort as a substitute for the grace of God in the gospel—which is undoubtedly the case (although frequently this notion is said to be “implicit”). However, it is another thing to maintain that such a polemic takes us to the core of Paul's reason for penning the epistle. I would submit that “the heart of the letter” is not that posed by Westerholm's question, “What is wrong with humanity that Judaism (and the Sinaitic law) cannot remedy?” It is, instead, under what covenant do Christians live, that of Moses or of Christ? In a nutshell, this is what Galatians is about. Given this sort of understanding of Paul's intentions, the letter's “payoff” is the freedom to which Christ has called us (5:1), a liberty from the imposition on believers of any body of tradition: Jewish, pagan, or church-historical. In this light, chapters 1–4 serve to furnish the salvation-historical basis of this grand conclusion of Paul's and the application of his thought to the church.

In sum, notwithstanding the various critical rejoinders, this is a fine treatment of Galatians, one that is certain to remain a standard for many years to come. In keeping with this series of commentaries, it will be of service to readers across a broad spectrum of biblical training and interests.

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In this book, Yongbom Lee traces the origins of Pauline Christology. He combines the historical critical method with intertextuality in discerning if Paul may have been echoing, alluding to, or even citing early Christian traditions when developing his unique Adam Christology. Many are puzzled that “the Son of Man” designation, so familiar from the Gospels, is missing from the Pauline corpus and some have concluded that Paul was not aware of it (p. 2). The author is showing that Adam Christology is not a Pauline ex nihilo invention, but rather a refinement of existing primitive Christian traditions that presented Jesus as the eschatological Son of Man.

The bulk of the argument is linguistic and exegetical. The author relies on the detection of intertextual echoes in various NT passages when looking for tradition linking Paul and the gospels (not the precise texts). It would be difficult to argue for Paul’s reliance on the gospel texts for the obvious reason that the Pauline epistles predate the Gospels. The project is risky as is, however, it is similar to the attempts of reconstructing Q. The author adapts a three-tier terminology to distinguish the level of allusion to tradition: explicit reference, verbal and formal similarity, and conceptual similarity (p. 20).

In chapter 2, Lee analyzes traditions reflected in Phil 2:6–11, Heb 2:5–11 and Mark 14:62 and concludes that, “while these passages obviously are not verbatim quotations of the early church tradition, they reflect certain traditional elements” (p 94). Paul took what existed in a more primitive form as a basis for his more expanded and sophisticated Adam Christology in Phil 2, Rom 5, and 1 Cor 15 (p. 95).

A focal point of this chapter is Phil 2:6–11, which Lee considers to be a pre-Pauline “confessional formula” (p. 44) that possesses “significant authority over Paul and his readers” (p. 32). Based on many hapax legomena and Hebraisms, the author concludes that it may be of Aramaic origin. Although there are no exact linguistic parallels between Phil 2:6–11 and Paul’s Adam Christology (Rom 5; 1 Cor 15; cf. Gen 1–3), Lee suggests that there are verbal and conceptual parallels to indicate that Paul accessed a “primitive Adam-Jesus typology” (p. 45). For example, Lee notes a conceptual parallel between Phil 2:6 and Gen 1:27 Christ/Adam as the form/image of God (p. 45).

In chapter 3, the author argues that in Rom 5:8,15,19; 3:24; 4:25; 8:32; 1 Cor 15:3; 2 Cor 4:11; Gal 2:20 (cf. Eph 5:2,25) Paul alluded to the early Christian Son of Man traditions behind Mark 10:45 and Matt 19:28 // Luke 22:30 in his Adam Christology that contrasts the reign of death and sin through Adam with the reign of Jesus in righteousness through Christ. He also examines the alternative possibility that Paul based his theology solely on Isa 53 and Dan 7 without any influence from the church tradition (p. 22), but considers it unlikely. The rhetoric of 1 Cor 6:2, “Do you not know that,” signals that Paul is citing a common tradition when establishing that those in Christ will judge the world (p. 122).

As an evangelical scholar, I find the book informative, clarifying, and compelling in its main thesis that Paul’s Last Adam Christology is an elaboration on the early Christian Son of Man tradition. If true, that this “has not been
seriously considered in recent New Testament scholarship” (p. 23), then Yong-bom Lee has provided an important correction. The book is not one-sided; the author cautions readers where the evidence is lacking or the argument may become circular (p. 20). The book deserves serious consideration by all who are interested in the origins of Pauline Christology.

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This eighth volume in the series Pauline Studies centers on Paul and pseudepigraphy. After an introductory essay by Stanley Porter, the collection unfolds in three parts. Part one comprises half of the book and focuses on critical issues in Pauline pseudepigraphy. Armin Baum provides a collection of the most relevant source texts regarding ancient and early Christian authorship and pseudepigraphy, and an annotated bibliography of important and recent scholarly discussions on ancient pseudepigraphy. Stanley Porter examines the chronological markers in the Pastoral letters and concludes that they cannot definitively resolve the issue of the letters’ pseudonymity. Gregory Fewster eschews historical and canonical approaches to the study of Pauline pseudepigraphy. He proposes a different perspective that understands authorship in functional categories and applies this hermeneutic to the head/body motif in Colossians and Ephesians. Andrew Pitts uses a register design model to examine the shift in style between the Pastoral letters and the rest of the Pauline corpus and argues that this style-shift falls within the parameters for a single author. Jermo van Nes reassesses P. N. Harrison’s The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles and shows how its statistical argument and fragment theory of authorship are fallacious. He consequently considers Harrison’s overall thesis to be invalid and incapable of supporting the pseudonymity of the Pastorals.

In contrast to the method-driven studies of part one, part two focuses on general issues concerning Pauline pseudepigraphy within the Christian canon. Sigurd Grindheim compares the ecclesiology of Colossians and Ephesians to that of the undisputed letters and notes that, although they show traces of a later development, these two letters must be attributed to Paul. Christina Kreinecker finds that the request formulas (employing ἐρωτῶ, παρακαλῶ, and παραγγέλλω) in 2 Thessalonians break with the writing conventions of the first century A.D., and therefore concludes that the letter is pseudonymous. Linda Belleville reevaluates the Christological language in the Pastorals and argues that they are not late. Rather, the language is consistent with the imperial epiphany language of the first century and reflect the challenges faced by the church in the temple-warden city of Ephesus. Clare Rothschild argues that Hebrews should be understood as an interpretive guide or early Christian commentary on seminal ideas present in Romans. Contending against the view that Hebrews is a Pauline pseudepigraphon, Bryan Dyer concludes that
Hebrews only demonstrates Pauline influence because the closing of the book also evinces parallels with other NT and ancient letter closings.

Part three consists of various studies on Pauline pseudepigraphy outside the Christian canon. Philip Tite insists that the apocryphal epistle to the Laodiceans is worthy of study because it shows an internal logic and rhetorical situation. Ilaria Ramelli reassesses the pseudepigraphical correspondence between Paul and Seneca and concludes that Letters XI and XIV do not belong to the original correspondence but were subsequent additions. Finally, Michael Kaler compares the Apocalypse of Paul and the Prayer of Paul the Apostle with the rest of the Nag Hammadi material and notes that these two pseudepigrapha present Paul as a master of esoteric knowledge, a figurehead for the quest of intellectual enlightenment.

This volume is a welcome contribution to the study of Pauline pseudepigraphy. The mix of contributions is carefully crafted with a judicious blend of essays. Some focus on methodological and critical issues, while others examine specific pseudepigraphical texts. The essays examining texts outside the NT further add to our understanding of the portrayal of Paul in early Christianity. A few essays in this volume are significant. Baum’s collection of translated source texts and annotated bibliography of important publications (including recent German titles) make these resources accessible to English speaking readers. Pitts’s register design model, undergirded by the foundations of linguistic theory, provides a meaningful tool to measure the variations in authorial style stemming from situational factors. Other essays in this volume however appear to claim more than what the data supports. For example, Rothschild correctly notes the similar thought of Christ’s once-for-all death in Heb 7:27; 9:12, 26; 10:10, 12; and Rom 6:10. But it is too strong to suggest and then conclude that a primary motivation for the writing of Hebrews “was precisely to explain and interpret certain compact and important sententia in Rom 6:10” (p. 258; her emphasis). Rather than a literary dependence on Romans, the presence of similar motifs in 1 Pet 3:18 suggests that Hebrews drew on a pool of traditions. Rothschild’s further claim that Hebrews was deliberately composed as an instructional appendix to Romans is also too bold. The early church, affirming the Pauline authorship of Hebrews, certainly used it to explain various sections of Romans. But if Hebrews was intended by its unknown author as an early Christian commentary on Romans, how does Rothschild explain the absence of key Pauline concepts such as righteousness by faith apart from the law or the tension between Israel and the church?

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This volume stems from a conference held in Wittenburg, January 13–16, 2011, which brought together NT scholars and papyrologists in an interdisciplinary exploration of the role papyrology can play in NT interpretation. It features
seven essays: Larry W. Hurtado, “The Early New Testament Papyri: A Survey of Their Significance” (pp. 1–18); Joachim Hengstl, “Rechtterminologie in den griechischen Papyri und ihrer Bedeutung für die Interpretation neutestamentlicher Texte” (pp. 19–45); Reinhold Scholl and Margit Homann, “Antike Briefkultur unter Familienmitgliedern” (pp. 47–126); Peter Arzt-Grabner, “Die Stellung des Judentums in neutestamentlicher Zeit anhand der Politeuma-Papyri und anderer Texte” (pp. 127–58); Karl-Henrich Ostmeyer, “Politeuma im Neuen Testament und die Politeuma-Papyri von Herakleopolis” (pp. 159–71); Roberta Mazza, “The Papyrological Commentary of the Gospel of Mark: Themes, Issues and Some Results of a Work in Progress” (pp. 173–93); and Martin Meiser, “Heilungsvollzüge und ihre Beschreibung in frühjüdischer Literatur und im Markusevangelium” (pp. 195–216). An introduction by Jens Herzer (pp. v–xii) describes the background and context for the work and also offers an overview of its contents. In addition to indexes of subjects and persons (pp. 232–35) and Greek words (pp. 236–37), the volume features an index of ancient writings that includes biblical texts, early Jewish and Christian compositions, Greek and Roman writings, biblical manuscripts, and nonliterary works (papyri, ostraca, and inscriptions; pp. 219–31). Photos of some papyri examined appear at the conclusion of the essays by Scholl and Homann (pp. 113–26) and Arzt-Grabner (pp. 156–58).

The work features no formal subsections, but the essays fall into four categories based on approach and topic. The essays by Hengstl and Scholl and Homann mark the first category. Both essays analyze how papyri shed light on everyday life at the time of the NT’s composition, featuring Greek texts and (German) translations of numerous papyri along with comments on their contents (Hengstl includes Philemon because it features similarities to many papyri). A second category includes essays examining the significance of the 2001 publication of the Politeuma-Papyri in Herakleopolis by James M. S. Cowey and Klaus Maresch, as Arzt-Grabner and Ostmeyer each consider these papyri and their potential implications for Phil 3:20 and 1 Cor 6:1–8. Category three consists of essays on the topic of healing in Mark, with Mazza’s work focusing on the contribution of papyri for understanding the healings of fever, leprosy, and the hemorrhaging woman in Mark and Meiser’s study comparing the miracles of Mark with early Jewish healings in an exploration of the background for these miracles. Hurtado’s essay stands alone in the fourth category, as he offers an introduction to the various NT papyri and notes their significance for textual criticism as well as other topics like the circulation of particular texts, Christian use of the codex, scribal practices, and the private use of texts by early Christians.

I suspect that Hurtado’s contribution might have the widest value among these essays because it ventures into textual criticism and Christian origins, but the other contributions feature insights that scholars with various interests would be wise not to overlook. While their study does not directly address any NT writing, the work of Scholl and Homann is illuminating and entertaining because the letters show concerns and issues in ancient families that are similar to today, as, for example, soldiers complain when their families did not send presents and fathers remind their sons to study hard. Future commentators on Philippians (and, to a lesser extent, 1 Corinthians) need to consult the essays...
by Arzt-Grabner and Ostmeyer. Mazza’s preview of her forthcoming commentary on Mark in the Papyrologische Kommentare zum Neuen Testament series by Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht points to its being a welcome addition to the field and also indicates that the already-published volumes (1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon) and future volumes in the series can serve as helpful supplements to traditional commentaries.

Overall, these essays remind scholars that NT studies need to consider the new finds and publications on the papyri in order to understand the everyday world of the biblical texts. Along these lines, Arzt-Grabner offers important methodological cautions and limitations on the use of papyri (see pp. 148–49) and a helpful example of how to understand the papyri on their own terms before moving to see their significance for particular NT texts. While the specialization that marks today’s scholarly world prohibits NT scholars from becoming papyrologists, the two groups need to be friends so NT scholars can utilize papyrological insights in their quest to interpret the biblical texts.

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I imagine that finding an appropriate title for Luke Timothy Johnson’s collection of 35 essays, written over a span of 35 years, was not an easy task. The essays are divided into five fairly neat categories (“Jesus and the Gospels,” “Luke-Acts,” “Paul,” “Other NT Compositions,” and “Issues in Christian Origins”). But a quick scan of those categories could conceal the fact that Johnson has not simply specialized, as many scholars do, in one, two, or maybe three areas but has, rather, worked across disciplines and made significant contributions to an incredible variety of issues related to NT studies and Christian origins. Virtually every essay is marked by serious attention to exegetical detail, is widely conversant with the symbolic world of the NT texts, and numerous essays dissent from well-known scholarly constructs. In what follows, rather than summarize a few of these essays, I set forth in no particular order what are, I think, five defining characteristics of Johnson’s work as manifested in these essays.

First, despite serious points of diversity in the NT compositions, Johnson finds the particular character and pattern of Jesus’ humanity occupying a central role in many of the compositions. The authors of the Gospels, for example, are less concerned with “the story of Israel” than they are with showing how the “most obvious element defining Jesus’ human character is his obedient faith in God, whom he calls Father” (p. 47). Similarly, in Rom 3:21–26, Johnson understands πίστις as Jesus’ obedient and faithful response to God, a response that is soteriologically significant as it “provides the basis for the faith response of others” (p. 254). In “Transformation of the Mind and Moral Discernment in Paul,” Johnson shows how in Rom 12–14 (and Phil 2; 1 Cor 2; Gal 5–6) “the
habits Paul seeks to shape in his readers are the habits of Jesus, the character he seeks to model in his communities is the character of Jesus Christ” (p. 275).

Second, while virtually all of Johnson’s essays are concerned with historical matters, Johnson resists the hegemonic impulses of the so-called historical-critical method and is attentive to both the limits of history and discourses used by the early Christians that are not best understood as historical language. The first three essays, for example, argue for the limitations inherent in the quests for the historical Jesus. History, for Johnson, cannot be equated with “the past” or “what happened in the past” but is rather “the result . . . of a human process of critical analysis and creative imagination” (p. 36). History, furthermore, is limited by time, space, and sources. And perhaps most importantly, history can only talk about the past; it cannot give norms or make prescriptions for future action. Questers, however, frequently overstep the limitations of history and thereby their constructions lack methodological integrity. Therefore, in its place, Johnson says that “approaching Jesus as a literary character within the Gospel narratives . . . provides our best access to history with respect to Jesus” (p. 50). It is, after all, this Jesus whom Christians through the ages “engage and come to know as a character in the canonical Gospels [as] also the historic Christ” (p. 50). In two essays devoted to body and Spirit in 1 Corinthians (chaps. 16–17) Johnson shows the limits of history for understanding Paul’s claims because “Paul’s language demands of us an ability to think and speak in ontological rather than exclusively historical terms” (pp. 279–80).

A third characteristic of Johnson’s essays is a willingness to question scholarly hypotheses. Many would recognize Johnson as a well-known critic of the Jesus Seminar, but Johnson also takes to task N. T. Wright’s historiographical failings in his Jesus and the Victory of God (chap. 3). Never one to mince words, Johnson suggests that “Wright’s Jesus never existed until Wright constructed him” (p. 67) and “Bad historical method is bad historical method, whatever the ideology driving it” (p. xvii). Perhaps most well-known here is his willingness to entertain the possibility that the Pastorals are first-century letters written by Paul, an argument that stems in part from his understanding of the letters as mandata principis and that this rhetorical feature of the text accounts for the rhetorical, stylistic, and thematic differences from Paul’s other epistles (see chaps. 19–21).

A fourth defining mark of Johnson’s work is his attention to the narrative and literary features of the compositions he examines. This is particularly evident in his essays on Luke–Acts. So, for example, Johnson criticizes (then) recent work on the Christology of Luke–Acts since they adopt a frame of reference outside the narrative (that is, Jewish messianic expectations, primitive Christology, and so on). Johnson argues that “the way the story is told expresses the argument” (p. 151), and given that Luke and Acts are both narratives, one must attend to how Luke’s theme is worked out through the interplay of setting, characters, and plot. Attending to precisely these features, Johnson argues that Luke can be thought of as a story the centers on “The Prophet and The People,” that is, how Jesus and, then, the apostles are portrayed as prophetic figures that enact and embody God’s visitations of his people. “Telling the story this way serves Luke’s rhetorical purposes, showing how God proved faithful to the promises made to Abraham, and that therefore the faith of the Gentiles
such as Theophilus is secure, . . . Thus, the image of Jesus and the argument made by the composition reinforce each other” (p. 157).

The final feature of Johnson’s work that I will mention is his recognition and corresponding treatment of the NT writings as religious texts that witness to real and powerful experiences of God by the early Christians. His rejection of the quests stems, in part, from his belief that “The Jesus they [the questers] present is a dead person of the past. For those, in contrast, whose lives are being transformed by the Spirit of the Living One, the Jesus depicted in the literary compositions of the New Testament is recognized as true, both to his life and to theirs” (p. 28). But Johnson also recognizes the way in which NT texts have described Jews has had deleterious and shameful ramifications, and, while refusing to play down these horrible consequences, places the NT’s polemic rhetoric in its historical and rhetorical context (see chaps. 28–30).

More defining features of Johnson’s work could be added, and more examples of the characteristics mentioned from these 35 essays could be offered, but these strike me as some of the most significant. In full disclosure, perhaps I should mention that I studied with Luke Timothy Johnson at Emory where I completed my Ph.D. in 2012, and I have great admiration for his work. While I have benefited and learned much from his books, essays, and personal conversations, what is even more valuable, and a lesson set forth for other younger scholars, is the way in which his refusal to accept the dominant scholarly paradigms and constructs has allowed him (whether one agrees or not) to make original and lasting contributions to the study of the NT and Christian Origins. 

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The 46 essays in this two-volume work focus on early Christianity in its Greco-Roman and Hellenistic Jewish contexts, respectively. A third volume in the project has been published under the title The Language of the New Testament: Context, History, and Development, as volume six in the series Linguistic Biblical Studies, also edited by S. E. Porter and A. W. Pitt, who are both working at McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario. Both volumes begin with an introductory essay by Porter and Pitt, who summarize the context of each essay in the volume.

Eleven essays are devoted to Greco-Roman social contexts (1:15–346): M. J. Kruger writes on manuscripts, scribes, and book production within early Christianity; S. E. Porter on reconstructing early Christianity from its manuscripts, as well as on recent efforts to reconstruct early Christianity on the basis of its papyrological evidence; C. S. Keener on Jesus and parallel Jewish and Greco-Roman figures; T. Costa on the exorcisms and healings of Jesus within
classical culture; M. F. Lowe on atonement and release from oppression in the imperial context of Luke’s Gospel; O. Umurhan and T. Penner on Luke and Juvenal at the crossroads focusing on space, movement, and morality in the Roman Empire; R. H. Hock on Jesus, the Beloved Disciple, and Greco-Roman friendship conventions; J. R. Harrison on the imitation of the “Great Man” in antiquity, discussing Paul’s inversion of a cultural icon; F. J. Long on Ephesians and Paul’s political theology in Greco-Roman political context; B. M. Rapske on exiles, islands, and the identity and perspective of John in Revelation.


Nine essays treat Hellenistic Jewish contexts (2:13–279). L. M. McDonald writes on Hellenism and Biblical Canons; A. K. Marshak on Herod the Great and his Jewish royal predecessors; P. M. Sprinkle on Palestinian Judaism in light of Pseudo-Philo’s Biblical Antiquities; C. D. Elledge on resurrection and immortality in Hellenistic Judaism; A. W. Pitts and S. Pollinger on the Spirit in Second Temple Jewish monotheism and the origins of early Christology; C. D. Stanley on the ethnic context of Paul’s letters; T. Costa on Paul’s calling as prophetic divine commissioning; P. Frick on monotheism and philosophy as it relates to the concept of God in Philo and Paul (Rom 1:18–21); E. Wasserman on the Judaism/Hellenism divide, taking as a test case Paul’s anthropology in Rom 7 and 2 Cor 4–5.

Ten essays discuss Hellenistic Jewish literary and religious contexts. S. E. Porter writes once more on the question whether John the Baptist was a member of the Qumran community; W. V. Cirafesi writes on the Temple attitudes of John and Qumran in the light of Hellenistic Judaism; L. G. Perdue on rhetoric and the art of persuasion in the Wisdom of Solomon; J. Neusner on philosophical and talmudic dialectics; C. Hezser on ancient “science fiction” in journeys into space and visions of the world in Jewish, Christian, and Greco-Roman literature; S. A. Adams on the formation of Luke–Acts and its relationship to Jewish apologetic historiography; B. M. Stovell on rivers, springs, and wells of living water and metaphorical transformation in the Johannine corpus; J. J. Williams on martyr theology in Hellenistic Judaism and Paul’s conception of Jesus’ death in Rom 3:21–26; C. Mosser on Torah instruction, discussion, and prophecy in first-century synagogues; W. Varner on two fragmentary Jewish-Christian dialogues from the ancient church.

The listing of all 46 essays is deliberate: it demonstrates the scope of historical and literary matters that are discussed, and it suggests that wealth of
An unfortunate cavil in the great book by Stephen Neill (with N. T. Wright), *The Interpretation of the New Testament* 1861–1986 is against B. F. Westcott’s *An Introductory Study of the Gospels* (6th ed., 1881). Westcott’s study (dedicated to his father) opens with a lengthy chapter on the inspiration of Scripture as affirmed in the early church. This is a conviction that has fallen on hard times in Gospels research for generations now (as reflected in Neill’s pique at Westcott; Neill evidently shared the disdain for patristic testimony expressed by many German biblical critics). Michael Graves’ *The Inspiration and Interpretation of Scripture* returns to this great theme (and, some would say, reality) and goes far toward exonerating Westcott’s judgment that inspiration is relevant to optimal interpretation of not only the canonical Gospels but the entire NT corpus.

After an introductory chapter, the meat of the book describes patristic use of Scripture under five headings, eventually distilling a full 20 interpretive principles. This is, then, a loosely inductive study that groups passages for discussion’s sake and aims for a broad synthesis. Chapter 2’s heading is “Usefulness,” under which Graves observes five tacit assumptions about patristic conviction concerning Scripture. The fathers viewed Scripture as (1) useful for instruction, (2) meaningful in every detail, (3) productive in solving problems posed to it by diligent readers; (4) describing characters whom believers do well to emulate (or not), and (5) the supreme authority for Christian teaching and living.

Chapter 3 explores “The Spiritual and Supernatural Dimension” in patristic usage and notes three more assumptions: (6) biblical interpretation requires divine illumination, (7) Scripture contains multiple senses, and (8) Scripture contains accurate predictions about the future, especially concerning Jesus. Chapter 4 deals with Scripture’s “mode of expression” and observes how early church interpreters grasped that (9) Scripture speaks in riddles and enigmas, (10) Scripture may use etymologies to convey meaning, (11) the speaker in Scripture, “directly and timelessly,” is God, and (12) some Scripture (though not all) was aesthetically impressive as literature.

Chapter 5 combs the fathers for their view of the Bible’s “Historicity and Factuality.” Graves finds that according to the fathers, “[13] Events narrated in the Bible actually happened, [14] Scripture does not have any errors in its facts, [15] Scripture is not in conflict with ‘pagan’ learning,” and “[16] The original text of Scripture is authoritative.”

A sixth chapter regards patristic use of Scripture from the standpoint of its “agreement with truth.” Grave concludes that, in the fathers, “[17] Scripture’s teaching is internally consistent, [18] Scripture does not deceive. [19] Scripture’s
teaching agrees with a recognized external authority,” and “[20] Scripture’s teaching must be worthy of God.”

A full one-fourth of the book consists of endnotes and full indexes (ancient authors, works, and figures; modern authors; Scripture references). Much of chaps. 2–6 is exposition of patristic passages. Graves shows himself to be a master of the corpus and skilled in its explication.

The concluding chapter sounds a note of caution. Contemporary readers should not suppose that repristination of patristic usage is either possible or desirable. “No one today believes everything that early Christians believed about Scripture. The challenge is to identify the most insightful dimensions of early Christian thought and to explain how these dimensions continue to be significant” (p. 135).

But Graves’ stress is primarily on the promise of revisiting the hermeneutics of the early Christian centuries. Christians can gain, for example, from this period’s insight into God’s purpose in Scripture, the centrality of Christ in Scripture, and the positive role of the church (“community and traditions”; p. 136) in discerning Scripture’s optimal appropriation. Add to this early Christian conviction that biblical teaching “must be worthy of God” as presented in Scripture (and especially the OT) and requires divine illumination for its proper reception (p. 137). These are all principles that modern academic readers have tended to downplay or indeed reject. Graves’ book makes the case that patristic excess or error (of which there are abundant examples) should not lull later interpreters (including contemporary ones) into overlooking their valid and often enduring wisdom. Nor should it escape today’s notice that our favored vantage points and conclusions are probably no less fraught with culture-determined baggage than was theirs. Modern and postmodern progress is unlikely to be free of regress.

This leads us back to square one: what does the Bible say, in its context and with a view to relevance for ours? Graves gives masterful guidance in interpreting scores of patristic passages and models hermeneutical wisdom in discussing what to make of them today.

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As the title suggests, this collection of 17 essays gives a defense for the authority of Scripture. As the introductory essay makes clear, the Bible has come under vigorous attack in the post-Christian culture of the West. All of the contributors hold to a very high view of Scripture. They hold to the verbal, plenary, and divine inspiration of Scripture. The Bible is authoritative for matters of faith and practice and is infallible, inerrant, and absolutely truthful. The 18 contributors are predominately from the United States (one is from Australia and one is from New Zealand), Baptist, and male (there is one female contributor).
The essays are divided into three sections. Each chapter heading is formulated as a question that the chapter seeks to answer. Part one deals with philosophical and methodological challenges. In chapter 1, Douglas Geivett employs an imaginary dialogue between two interlocutors to argue that it is logical to conclude that God is capable of speaking to humanity and that God wants to communicate to humanity. In chapter 2, Douglas Blount argues that the Bible is wholly truthful in that it makes no false assertions and that it is rational to affirm the doctrine of inerrancy. In chapter 3, Charles Quarles discusses some of the advancements that higher criticism has attained, but he also warns against the abuses of the methodology. In chapter 4, Richard Melick claims that ordinary people can understand the Bible, and he explains some of the basics of hermeneutical theory.

Part two addresses textual and historical challenges. In chapter 5, Paul Wegner describes the nature and process of OT textual criticism, and he compares its transmission history to the Quran and the Book of Mormon to demonstrate that the OT text has been faithfully transmitted. In chapter 6, Daniel Wallace argues that, given the number and nature of textual variants, we can be extremely confident about recovering the original text of the NT and that the small percentage of meaningful and viable variants has no significant effect on its theology. In chapter 7, Terry Wilder argues that there are no forgeries or pseudonymous writings in the Bible, and in particular he defends the authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles and Daniel. In chapter 8, Mary Jo Sharp refutes the notion that the story of Jesus was borrowed from pagan myths. In chapter 9, Walter Kaiser adduces archaeological evidence to support his contention that the OT is historically reliable. In chapter 10, Paul Barnett presents eight theses to argue for the historical reliability of the NT. In chapter 11, Paul Barnett presents eight theses to argue for the historical reliability of the NT. In chapter 12, Matthew Flannagan and Paul Copan counter arguments that claim that the Bible condones genocide. In chapter 13, James Hamilton argues that the Bible does not condone slavery or sexism (although he does defend complementarianism) but that these are distortions of divinely-ordered human relationships. In chapter 14, William Dembski argues for the compatibility of the Bible and science; whenever they conflict, then there needs to be a reinterpretation of the Bible, nature, or both. In chapter 15, after giving a brief historical survey of the challenges to the unity of the Bible, Craig Blaising identifies two reasons why the challenges failed (inadequate epistemology and dismissal of the text's claims) and affirms the literary and theological coherence of the Bible. In chapter 16, the trio Paul Wegner, Terry Wilder, and Darrell Bock describe the development of the OT and NT canons and the reasons why certain books were included. They also explain why other books (such as the Apocrypha, the Apostolic Fathers, and the extracanonical gospels) were excluded. In the final chapter, Steven Cowan uses an evidentialist Christological approach in arguing that we should accept the divine inspiration of the Bible based on the authoritative testimony of Jesus.

The essays in this collection naturally vary in quality. Some of the essays provide stronger argumentation and evidence than others. I suspect that those
who share the theological commitments of the authors will be more persuaded by the arguments presented in this book than those who do not. The authors are often guided by their presuppositions that the Bible is ultimately authored by God and hence without error. The book is geared toward the nonspecialist and generally is very readable, although some of the essays contain more technical material. The book provides a “comprehensive” apologetic in terms of the topics covered but not necessarily in the treatment of each topic. For example, Wegner does not discuss the role of the LXX in reconstructing the OT text and how that might affect our view of the reliability of the text. Kaiser, in his survey of archaeological evidence, ignores the lack of archaeological evidence for the exodus or conquest. In addressing the topic of pseudonymity, Wilder does not address, for example, the authorship of 2 Peter or the wisdom literature. The essays, thus, do not answer all questions or resolve all problems. Hence, it would have been useful if the authors had provided a listing of additional resources for the reader who wanted to delve into a given topic in greater depth. These essays provide a good introduction to the current state of biblical apologetics, but interested readers will certainly want to explore additional resources.

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The first volume in this new collaborative series between Baylor and Mohr Siebeck, a series that “aims to facilitate increased dialogue between German and Anglophone scholarship by making recent German research available in English translation” (p. vii), makes accessible to an English-speaking audience the work of one of the premier German NT scholars. Schröter’s aim is to “clarify the contribution of New Testament science to the overall theological discourse,” (p. 5), that is, to show how the early Christian compositions’ witness to the past can be brought into a historical account that simultaneously satisfies the conditions of scientific historical research and makes this historical research accessible and relevant for theological discourse.

The monograph contains 16 essays, divided into four parts. Part 1 (“Recollection and History in Early Christianity,” chaps. 1–4) contains Schröter’s methodological reflections on how “New Testament science is to mediate to the respective present a picture of the beginnings of Christianity that is based on the early Christian witnesses” (p. 9). Schröter suggests that, while the past is accessible through the Gospel sources, the historian must reckon with the way in which they mediate the past through their selective construction of the past. The Gospels contain, then, both the memories of Jesus’ words and deeds as well as the specific social and historical contexts of the figures and communities who remembered him. The Gospels are “representations of the history of Jesus” and “at the same time historical sources that provide information about their own
time as well as the narrated time” (p. 19). The influence of Paul Ricoeur, Hayden White, and others is evident here.

Schröter’s hermeneutical and historiographical reflections lead into part 2 (“Jesus-Paul-Luke,” chaps. 5–11) where he applies his methodological insights to the three major figures comprising the NT canon. Rather than engage in the more traditional literary form of searching for the earliest sources of the historical Jesus, Schröter seeks to show how the Jesus tradition was shaped, formulated, and handed on in a way that continued to negotiate the significance of these Jesus memories for the contemporary life of the church. With respect to the Gospel of Mark, for example, Schröter rejects both alternative notions that the Gospel (or portions of it) can be securely identified with the past as well as the view that the Gospel is purely the result of the early Christians’ theological beliefs and ideas. Rather, for Schröter, “the Markan narrative represents the person of Jesus in such a way that the past is illuminated from a certain perspective in the process. There can be no doubt that this representation is not simply identical with the past” (p. 131). Chapters 7–9 are devoted to the role of the law in the early church and the controversies it engendered as well as some of the Christological metaphors Paul uses to develop the implications of the gospel in particular communities. The function of the essays on Paul for Schröter’s broader thesis, it would seem, is to show how the one apostolic gospel (chap. 7) or Paul’s Christology (chap. 9) could be shaped and reformulated so that it could be applied to fit the varying situations and social context of the early churches. With respect to Luke’s two volumes, Schröter suggests that Luke’s work falls within the typical expectations and conventions for Hellenistic historiography. In order to determine the historical value of Acts, one must distinguish between this matter and Luke’s intention, and Schröter thinks that in his composition of Acts, Luke adds creative color to the concrete historical knowledge he possesses. In chap. 11, Schröter takes up the challenging question of whether Luke presents an end to a Christian mission to the Jews and their final exclusion from salvation. He steers something of a middle way between the proposals of Haenchen/Conzelmann and Jervell. For Luke “The Gentiles are admitted into [the people of God] without replacing Israel and thereby ousting it from the people of God” (p. 244), and thus the history of the church remains rooted in God’s covenantal dealings with Israel, even though Israel has experienced a rejection that is “absolutely fundamental in character” and is “the historical realization of the divine plan to harden Israel and to turn salvation initially to the Gentiles” (p. 244).

Parts 3 (“On the Way to the New Testament,” chaps. 12–14) and 4 (“What Is ‘Theology of the New Testament?’” chaps. 15–16) build on Schröter’s historiographical and hermeneutical reflections (part 1) and forays into the major figures of the NT (part 2) by exploring the impulses that resulted in the NT canon. The development of the NT canon is indebted to and likely originated from “the authority of the teaching of Jesus” (p. 255) even as this authoritative (and “free and living,” pp. 265, 270) Jesus tradition was applied to a variety of situations. The role of the Acts of the Apostles in the formation of the NT canon can be seen in how it helps to illuminate the relationship between the, already authoritative, two primary portions of Scripture—the four Gospels and the Pauline letter collection. The already existing authority of Paul and the Gospel
of Luke functions to legitimate the authority of Acts. Finally, Schröter also suggests that the discipline of NT theology and its primary difficulty of how to present its coherent theology in light of its diverse witnesses and theologies may be reinvigorated by attending to “the emergence and significance of the New Testament canon as a constitutive presupposition of a theology of the New Testament” (p. 332). This approach would factor in the way in which the NT canon “unifies a variety of early Christian faith witnesses in itself because it came about not through a formal fixation but through the exclusion of those writings that did not satisfy the aforementioned criteria” (p. 344). This approach would show the common contours, symbols, and worldview of the NT without “wanting to systematize their respective particularities more strongly than they themselves allow” (p. 344).

From Jesus to the New Testament is a stimulating monograph for multiple reasons, and should, I expect, elicit excitement for more volumes from the joint venture of Baylor and Mohr-Siebeck. The translation by Wayne Coppins is clear and readable, and he should be thanked for his work in making Schröter’s work accessible. Schröter is thoroughly conversant with the academic lore of NT studies (especially on the German side), and his ability to interact with both the intellectual gains as well as provide suggestions for moving past their errors and excesses is a model for students of the NT and provides opportunities to explore the impact of these figures on the history of NT interpretation. The same is true for his interaction with contemporary works on historiography and hermeneutics, and while not all will appreciate or find helpful his particular hermeneutical approach to historiography, it will appear to most to helpfully avoid both historicist and positivist readings of the NT without sacrificing the belief that the NT texts really do provide access to a reality witnessed to by the texts.

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Werner Eck, until 2007 Professor for Ancient History at the Universität zu Köln, publishes in this volume 24 essays on Roman Judea which were written during his co-editorship of the Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae since 1993. The essays, which have been revised in the light of new documentary evidence and discussion, are published in the language in which they were originally written: mostly in German, four in English; one essay that originally appeared in Hebrew appears in German.

The 11 essays of part 1 (“Inschriften als Objekt und Subjekt einer Provinzgeschichte”) have a methodological focus, either explaining methods relevant for the use of epigraphical sources in understanding and writing history, or evaluating individual inscriptions in an effort to understand various aspects of
the history of individual Roman provinces, in particular Judea. Particularly en-
lightening for the study of the world of the NT is the first essay which discusses
the publication of administrative documents in a non-permanent manner
(through public reading or on wooden *tabulae dealbatae*) and the public prom-
ulgation in stone or bronze with the goal of collective and especially individual
memoria, that is, the motivation of the perpetuation of public self-portrayal of
emperors, governors or other officials. This difference explains why we have
numerous edicts of Egyptian governors, surviving on papyrus, while general
edicts in other provinces have survived only rarely. The second essay extends
the investigation of the motivation of perpetual memoria to monuments, for
example, triumphal arches. The third essay presents evidence from Judea for
the communication of Roman power via the presence of soldiers in uniform
close to the praefectus, the signa of troops (with a discussion of the incident
under Pontius Pilatus mentioned by Josephus, *Bell.* 2.169ff.; *Ant.* 18.5ff., and
Philo), statues, and inscriptions in Latin. Eck reminds us that there is no other
Roman province for which we have such ample material illustrating the specific
forms in which Roman officials represented the power of the empire before
the provincial population, conveying the message that everybody is subject to
Rome’s rule and required to conform to Rome’s will (p. 49). The discussion in
ch. 4 of T. Grüll’s publication of an inscription (*IEJ* 56 [2006] 183ff.) establishes
that it does not represent additional evidence for Lucius Flavius Silva, the con-
queroir of Masada mentioned by Josephus. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of
the career of Flavius Iunctus, mentioned in a Latin inscription from Ephesus
(*AE* 1935 157; *I. Ephesus* 7.2 4112), as evidence that Flavius Iunctus, born in Flavi
Neapolis in the province of Judea, later procurator of Asia under Hadrian,
began his equestrian career under Trajan, a fact that demonstrates that Judea
was not as isolated in the early second century as is often assumed. The next
essays discuss inscriptions from Gerasa, Jericho, Jerusalem, Caesarea, Hippos,
Yotvata, and Ashkelon, with comments on matters as varied as the erasure
of names in inscriptions, balsam production in Jericho, Roman cavalry in the
Negev, and the popularity of Ashkelon wine in world markets.

Part 2 (“Eigenheiten und Wandlungen in einer Provinz”) presents 13 es-
says which explore thematic aspects of the history of Judea. Chapter 12 surveys
the Latin inscriptions of Ephesus, Perge, Heliopolis, and Caesarea Maritima,
and concludes that Rome and its representatives in the eastern provinces never
sought to impose the use of Latin, although, when necessary, “Latin could vin-
dicate itself as the language of power” (p. 149). Chapter 13 describes Caesarea
Maritima, founded after Rome’s victory in A.D. 7 as a colonia civium Romae-
norum. Chapter 14 argues that Josephus, as a Roman citizen, had the name
T(itus) Flavius Josephus, not Josephus Flavius (the latter being sometimes used
in dictionaries, encyclopedias, and monographs). Chapter 15 discusses the de-
scription of Rome’s representatives in Judea by Josephus (and Philo), arguing
that in order to arrive at a fair evaluation, for example, of Pilate, we need to
factor in the usual responsibilities of Rome as the dominant power as well
as the perspectives of Jewish authors that guide their narrative. Chapter 16
corrects the impression created by the Babatha and Salome Komaise archives
which seem to suggest that the Roman governor was the sole representative
of Roman provincial power; as soon as provinces were created, a conventus
(dioikesis) system was introduced which the governor visited annually at a fixed time of the year; lack of documentary evidence for Judea is of no significance. Chapter 17 discusses the balsam plantations in Jericho; chapter 18 the epigraphic evidence for the Bar Kokhba revolt; chapter 19 the consequences of the Bar Kokhba revolt for Syria Palaestina; chapter 20 military diplomas of Sextus Iulius Severus, who was governor of Iudea/Syria Palaestina under Hadrian; chapter 21 a newly acquired military diploma for the troops of Syria Palaestina from A.D. 160, which cast light on the problems that the Bar Kokhba revolt caused for Roman commanders; chapter 22 the evidence in P. Berol. 21652 for an equestrian procurator of the province Syria Palaestina with the name Calpurnius Quintianus in the second century and for land distribution to veterans; chapter 23 the confiscation of the property of Jewish participants in the Bar Kokhba revolt and its distribution to veterans; chapter 24 a funerary inscription (probably dating to the early third century) reproducing a poem found in Aquincum on the Danube, taken to Syria Palaestina by a member of the military; the text reflects a “modest epicureanism” (p. 292) in its outlook on life and death. The volume ends with an index of names, places, and subjects; unfortunately there is no index of ancient sources.

Everyone who has read the work of Werner Eck is not surprised by the consistent attention to detail without neglecting larger historical, political, social or cultural contexts and developments. NT scholars will learn much about the province in which Jesus was executed, Peter preached, and Paul was educated. And they will want to appreciate the illustration of the necessity of having in-depth knowledge about Rome and its provinces, and of the caution that is required of interpreters of ancient texts if they want to avoid unsubstantiated and one-sided conclusions.

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