

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Adam as Israel: Genesis 1–3 as the Introduction to the Torah and Tanakh* by Seth D. Postell. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011. xii + 204 pp., \$24.00, softcover.

Seth Postell is Lecturer in Biblical Studies at Israel College of the Bible in Netanya, Israel. *Adam as Israel* is a revision of Postell’s doctoral dissertation at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. Postell indicates that the primary purpose of his book is to discover the literary relationship between Gen 1–3 and the rest of the Torah. He posits that “Genesis 1–3 intentionally foreshadows Israel’s failure to keep the Sinai Covenant as well as their exile from the Promised Land in order to point the reader to a future work of God in the ‘last days’” (p. 3). Thus Gen 1–3 functions as the literary introduction to the Torah, as well as to the whole Tanakh.

Postell’s work consists of seven chapters. The first chapter is a short introduction that orients the reader to Postell’s purpose and primary thesis. Chapters 2 and 3 examine the contributions of other scholars to the interpretation of Gen 1–3. Chapter 2 focuses on the history of interpretation. Postell traces the interpretive developments from pre-critical approaches through redaction and source critical approaches and ultimately concludes with a brief analysis of the rise of final form and literary interpretations of Gen 1–3. In chapter 3 Postell situates his work in the context of recent publications that are similarly interested in the literary shape of the Primeval History. He discusses the works of Thomas Keiser, André Sousan, Johnson Teng Kok Lim, C. John Collins, Tvi Erlich, and John Sailhamer, noting each author’s unique contribution to the study of Genesis’s literary shape.

In chapter 4 Postell “makes explicit the working assumptions upon which subsequent chapters are grounded” (p. 43). He identifies his hermeneutical method as a “text-centered” approach to the Hebrew Bible (p. 43). This approach is primarily concerned with reading Gen 1–3 in the literary context of the Torah and of the Tanakh. Postell explains that this methodology “does not minimize the importance of the events to which the text refers or the historical circumstances in which a text was produced” (p. 55). However, this approach does focus on the text in its final literary form as “the locus of meaning” rather on the text’s external historical referent (p. 56).

Chapters 5 and 6 are Postell's exegetical defense of his thesis. Postell separates his evidence into four sections. In the first section he analyzes Gen 1–3 in connection with the theme of "land" in the Pentateuch (82–107). Section two looks at the connections between the Sinai Covenant and the covenant between God and Adam (108–19). Section three discusses the relationship between Adam and Eve's failure to obey God's commands and Israel's failure to keep the Sinai Covenant (120–34). The final section "investigates two macro-structural inclusions in the final form Pentateuch: (1) the inclusion of pessimistic realism in the beginning and end of the Torah indicating the certainty of Israel's failure to keep the Sinai Covenant; and (2) the inclusion of hope at the conclusions of Genesis and Deuteronomy portraying Jacob and Moses as paradigmatic examples for the ideal reader who must wait hopefully in exile until God fulfills his promises concerning 'the last days'" (p. 76).

Finally chapter 7 explores the role of Gen 1–3 as the literary introduction to the Tanakh. Postell argues that this literary function becomes clear when Gen 1–3 is compared with the canonical "seams" at the major divisions within the canon. Connecting Gen 1–3 with Deut 34, Josh 1, Mal 3, Ps 1 and Chronicles, Postell posits that these "seams" demonstrate that the final form of the Tanakh "is an expression of faith and longing expectation for the coming of a conquering king." A king, who unlike Adam, will not fail (p. 166).

*Adam as Israel* has many positive attributes. Postell rigorously argues his thesis without becoming bogged down by the endless red herrings one might feel compelled to address when discussing a highly controversial text like Gen 1–3. Further, if the best books are those that spark fresh ways of thinking or reveal yet more vistas for exploration, then Postell's work has definitely hit the mark. His book is full of suggestive intertextual connections in the Hebrew Bible and readers will find a banquet of biblical-theological delicacies.

Postell's discussion of methodology is also quite helpful. I particularly appreciated his careful reflection on the relationship between the Bible as literature and as history. Postell does not see text-centered, literary approaches to the Pentateuch as necessarily in opposition to reading the Pentateuch historically. That is, Postell does not see history and literary artistry, or more simply history and theology, in opposition (pp. 44–47). Likewise, in a world where many biblical scholars do what is right in their own eyes and call it intertextuality, Postell has offered a careful, judicious explanation of his hermeneutical method and approach to intertextual reading. He carefully interacts with the most recent literature on intertextuality and judiciously weighs the issues before asserting his own methodological convictions.

The book does have a few shortcomings. The chapter on the history of interpretation is confusing. In his discussion of pre-critical approaches to Gen 1–3, Postell discusses the interpretations of Jerome, Nicholas of Lyra, John Calvin, Johannes Coccejus, and Matthew Poole. However, he does not provide any indication why he chose to analyze these particular interpreters or what significance, if any, they have for our understanding of pre-critical approaches to Gen 1–3. What is it that makes Johannes Coccejus or Matthew Poole significant in the history of interpretation? Postell does not provide an answer. The inclusion of these interpreters, at least for readers, appears random.

Nonetheless, *Adam as Israel* is a fresh and illuminating literary analysis of Gen 1–3. Even readers who do not agree with all of Postell's exegetical conclusions will find him a careful and thoughtful interpreter of Scripture. Readers interested in biblical theology or the canonical shape of the Hebrew Bible will find Postell enormously thought-provoking. Ultimately Postell offers readers a theologically rich reading of a familiar text which deserves careful consideration.

SAMUEL EMADI

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

*The Archaeology of Israelite Society in Iron Age II* by Avraham Faust. Translated by Ruth Ludlum; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012. 350 pp., \$49.50, hardcover.

In this work, Avraham Faust focuses his expertise upon ancient Israelite society during the latter part of Iron Age II (for Faust's extensive list of publications, see 287–90). Balancing a synthesis of old ideas with fresh ones, Faust's work is a must-read for scholars who specialize in any biblical book set against the Iron Age II backdrop. Faust sheds light on the "behind-the-text" issues that inform and influence the content of the biblical text. Thus, new doors are opened for one to understand the dynamics of God's revelation.

An impetus for this work is a perceived paradox. According to Faust, Israel enjoys the world's largest archaeological database, but that database is not utilized to discuss questions that interest archaeologists most (xiii). Faust, like so many others in his field, wants to "reverse the intellectual process" with respect to the interaction of biblical studies and archaeology (Faust desires a movement of archaeology → Bible vs. Bible → archaeology). To accomplish this, "Archaeological evidence constitutes the main source of information for this book" (2).

Consequently, in Faust's opening words one senses a veiled accusation against biblical scholars. Such comments unfortunately continue to revive the memory of past methodological shortcomings amongst biblical scholars, but Faust's position is not without some warrant. While irenic debate has occurred and continues to occur, biblical scholars—particularly evangelicals—must continue to develop paradigms that fundamentally assume a responsible synthesis of the literary demands of the text and results of archaeological research. This is the most efficient way to deflating unfortunate perceptions that still gravitate toward evangelical biblical scholars and historians.

This work exists in two distinct sections, the first of which is a brief *Forschungsgeschichte* regarding the history of archaeological research of ancient Israelite society. Faust can only paint broad strokes. Yet one senses many points of overlap between the first two chapters, which in turn causes one to wonder if both chapters could have been amalgamated. Nevertheless, Faust adequately contextualizes his study and properly draws the reader's attention to 1) the massive social changes that occurred in both Israelite and Judahite societies during the latter portion of Iron Age II and 2) the effects of Sennacherib's siege in that process. The second section moves from the macro-level to the micro-level—from an investigation of the urban and rural sectors to individual settlements and phenomena. When discussing the social dynamics of the urban sector in chapter 3, Faust focuses on residential buildings, for he believes that this data is one of the best tools, if not the best, for discerning social stratification and other social dynamics. (This is because Faust questions methods that utilize and prioritize small finds when trying to determine social stratification and other social dynamics. His rationale is articulated on p. 41 and in an Appendix at the conclusion of ch. 3.) Area, construction quality, walls, and the location of the residence within the city are all considered. Yet most fascinating about Faust's presentation is the adaptation of a Lorenz Curve, which has the benefit of coalescing objective and subjective criteria. Indeed, the subjective element will attract criticism, but Faust's curve allows one to register effectively the numerous issues that converge. Ultimately, Faust emphasizes: the ubiquity of the 4-room house, the economic systems were built upon state sanctioned and private entities, the state sanctioned a city's layout and organization, urban centers were classified in light of their role within the governmental system, and social stratification was incontrovertible.

Chapter 4 highlights the rural sector, discussing farms, villages, and large villages. Faust's definition of a village is difficult to understand (129), but by offering some definitive features of a village, confusion is ultimately pacified. Covering about one hectare in area, villages were

often hilltop settlements and were surrounded by a boundary wall. The 4-room house was ubiquitous, but its size (approximately 120–30 ft<sup>2</sup>) was significantly larger than those found in urban centers. Faust posits that this phenomenon is indicative not only of habitation by extended families (vs. nuclear families in the urban sector) but also the presence of numerous daily activities within the house. In other words, a commitment to traditional kinship values explains the contrasting size of homes between the rural and urban sectors. Villages also centered on particular agricultural endeavors and appeared to function with ideals of relative (not absolute, 169) equality.

Faust discusses the fortification networks of Israel and Judah in chapter 5, asserting that Judah boasted more fortresses (vs. Israel's "strongholds"). Faust also ponders whether Judah's military network was associated with its rural settlements when he proposes that the paucity of rural settlement may have forced Judah to develop a network of fortifications to secure its infrastructure. More definitive in Faust's mind, however, is the notion that the military and administrative systems of Judah and Israel were intertwined. Corvéé laborers were probably utilized to maintain these military sites.

Chapter 6 discusses the nature of Israel's and Judah's statehood, a particularly important topic for evangelicals. All scholars agree that by the latter portion of Iron Age II both were "states," and Faust classifies Israel as a "complex agrarian state" and Judah as a "simple agrarian state" (205). More importantly, the ebbs and flows of the Neo-Assyrian Empire dictated the existence and developments of both states. For example, Faust affirms that Judah's expansion into the fringe areas and the increased perception surrounding Jerusalem resulted from the Shephelah's destruction in the wake of Sennacherib's campaign. With respect to whether Judah can be classified as a state in the tenth century, Faust treads lightly. While Faust believes that the data does not rule out the possibility, it cannot settle the argument definitively (205). Such a posture is prudent.

Chapters 7–8 are the most provocative. Faust engages the difficult issue of whether ethnic markers and ideology can be distinguished via material culture. In chapter 7, Faust discusses the 4-room pillared house, ultimately concluding that while its initial usage stemmed from functional realities it was as an ethnic marker by Iron Age II (220). Here he criticizes his opponents by stating that many of the so-called non-Israelite 4-room houses have been misidentified (218). Faust further argues based on "access analysis" and "space syntax" that the layout of the 4-room house expresses ideology that is rooted in an egalitarian ethos (220–27). In chapter 8, Faust moves beyond the 4-room house to other phenomena, such as residential planning, architecture,

pottery, and faunal remains. Focusing on three small northern sites that were particularly susceptible to the amalgamation of cultures, Faust asserts that ethnic identification through material culture is possible, but it must be done cautiously. According to Faust, the rural sector is key. When the identification of traits is established there, one should then examine the urban sector.

Chapter 9 and the epilogue constitute an overview designed to emphasize the implications of his study and articulate avenues moving forward. Faust here emphasizes a discernible solidarity between Israel and Judah. Basic architectural forms, the ubiquity of the 4-room pillared house with its implicit ideology, the lack of decorated pottery and pig bones, and other observable phenomena synergize to suggest that both kingdoms “had in common their ideology, world views, and even their identity. . . . All these data clearly show that the affinity between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah was real and not invented by the biblical authors” (268).

Evangelicals should receive this work favorably. The data is vast and Faust’s conclusions are balanced. The difficulty however will be bringing the technical information to bear upon the biblical text. It is an archaeological study, and so the biblical scholar will be responsible for properly applying the implications to exegetical and theological studies. Nevertheless, the most important implications for biblical studies are clear. The dynamics of Israelite and Judahite society were complex, and differences existed between the urban and rural sectors. The kinship values that marked the nascent stages of Israel’s existence were evolving, and in the urban sector this was happening quicker. There were also immense political changes, which catalyzed those social developments. Thus, the latter portion of Iron Age II was an era of momentous change that would influence the people of God moving forward. No wonder so much of Old Testament literature was set against this backdrop and devoted to understanding the period.

DAVID B. SCHREINER  
Asbury University

*Birth Annunciations in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near East: A Literary Analysis of the Forms and Functions of the Heavenly Foretelling of the Destiny of a Special Child* by Scott A. Ashmon. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2012. vi + 433 pp., US \$49.95, softcover.

Dr. Ashmon, currently an Associate Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew and Director of the Core Curriculum at Concordia University in Irvine, CA, developed a scholarly interest in fertility and birth as early as 1998 as a graduate student at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO. He co-authored an article on barrenness in the Bible with Dr. Robert Weise, his professor in a bioethics class. This early study led to Ashmon's pursuit of the related topic of birth annunciations in the Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near East, his dissertation topic under the direction of Nili S. Fox at Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, OH. This is his first major publication.

Ashmon examines all those annunciations in the Hebrew Bible as well as the ancient Near East so that the reader will “perceive more plainly and completely” their forms, functions, origins, and developments and will see “key theological themes and tenets, or political aspirations and ideologies, of each culture.” He hopes that his research will provide “a useful vantage point from which to (re)view the NT birth annunciations” (iv).

Ashmon defines an annunciation of birth as a “heavenly or human being foretelling the conception/birth and destiny of a specific” child or children to a directly affected party. In the ancient Near Eastern world it may include both sons and daughters and is given to a king or god(s). The annunciation is distinct from promises of progeny, announcements of a child's birth, marriage blessings, priestly benedictions, and prophetic announcements of a coming king (1–3). Using this definition, Ashmon identifies eleven such scenes in the Old Testament (Gen 15:1–6; 16:7–14; 17:1–22; 18:1–6; 25:20–23; Judg 13:2–23; 2 Sam 7:4–17; 1 Kgs 13:1–3; 2 Kgs 4:11–16; 1 Chr 22:8–10; and Isa 7:10, 17) and nine in other ancient Near Eastern literature (“The Prophecies of Neferti,” “King Cheops and the Magicians,” and three versions of the Birth-Myth of the God-King in Egyptian; in Ugaritic “Keret” and “Aqhat” texts; in Hittite the “Appu” and in Sumerian the “Shulgi G” text). Since no previous study has examined all these works together, Ashmon examines each text both synchronically and diachronically.

After a careful review of past investigations, including my own work in this area, Ashmon defines his own methodology. Depending on the work of Shemaryahu Talmon and William Hallo, he explains that the basic goal of both investigators “is to illumine the similarities *and* differences, or common *and* unique features, of the HB in comparison with its wider ANE context. Both also seek to understand the HB synchronically—by examining the final form of text in its literary setting and dating it—and dia-chronically [*sic*]—by addressing the issues of literary influence and genre history” (49). He then outlines eight rules

that will guide his study and will enable an analysis of each text in itself before he makes any comparisons within or across cultural boundaries. The end result is that each text will stand on its own merit before any comparisons or conclusions are drawn about its relation to other texts.

Ashmon then spends the next two hundred pages in the careful analysis of the twenty texts from the Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near Eastern world. Only after this thorough review of each text does he begin his comparison across cultures and between the ancient Near Eastern world and the Hebrew Bible. He sustains his methodology throughout, but in such a way that future researchers have the key texts at their fingertips for review such that a different interpretation of the text might emerge. This clarity of presentation is to be commended.

After the examination of all the texts, Ashmon does reach the following conclusions: “While the formal elements employed in the HB and ANE are not the same in every annunciation, there are three elements that appear in each annunciation: an authoritative speaker, a birth annunciation message, and an authoritative hearer(s)” (323). “However, a significant difference between the HB and ANE is that mostly commoners—and even a slave—receive annunciations in the HB, while only nobility or god(s) receive annunciations in the ANE” (324). In my own view, both Hagar and Sarah are the matriarchs of great peoples. Sarah has been taken into two royal households. In Rebekah’s case this relation to the selection of the progenitors of nations is apparent—“two nations are in your womb . . . the elder shall serve the younger” (Gen 25:23). The identification of each of these sons in this way brings these annunciations far closer to their ancient Near Eastern counterparts than Ashmon suggests.

Another key conclusion relates to the character of the child promised in the annunciation. “Also, only the ANE—specifically Egypt—has the function of positing the humanity and divinity of the child(ren) to be born . . . focusing on elevating/supporting a god’s status and that god’s priests . . . Hebrew annunciations focus on the issues of covenant faith/doubt, and God’s character . . .” (330). This assertion is particularly true in the prophetic and Deuteronomistic traditions where obedience defines destiny as in the case of Samson and Josiah (Judg 13 and 1 Kgs 13:1–3) and the Immanuel sign (Isa 7:10–17).

Ashmon asserts that while there may have been some literary borrowing, it is more likely that the birth annunciations arose independently in each culture. “One, birth annunciations were part of a common cognitive environment across the ANE . . . Two, the birth annunciations arose naturally and independently in different cultures each culture was addressing a similar aim, proclaiming/legitimizing the special birth and destiny of a specific child(ren)—with a similar



cognitive framework—in particular, a function-oriented ontology and theistic world view” (349). In my view the setting for establishing this primacy of birth and destination would appear to be the royal household where there are multiple wives and births. An annunciation establishing the royal heir on the basis of the mother would be essential, as is most clearly seen in the case of Solomon. While not a royal household but a revered one, the selection of Isaac defines the line of Abraham in the context of divergent claims of multiple children and wives.

At the conclusion of his work, Ashmon discusses further lines of study that include investigation of the later literature in Egypt and the intertestamental Jewish literature and the meaning of his study for New Testament annunciations. He has provided a platform for these investigations and has succeeded in his stated purpose. Serious students and researchers in the field of Old Testament will find this volume an invaluable tool in future study of birth narratives and annunciation literature in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near Eastern world.

ROBERT W. NEFF

Lecturer at the Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center

*The Concept of Canonical Intertextuality and the Book of Daniel* by Jordan M. Scheetz. Cambridge: James Clarke, 2011. ix + 159 pp., \$21.00, softcover.

*The Concept of Canonical Intertextuality* analyzes how the Book of Daniel develops its themes through the strategic use and reuse of key words and phrases, both within the book and within the biblical corpus. Scheetz is the Chair of Biblical and Exegetical Studies at Tyndale Theological Seminary in the Netherlands. He also serves as Research Associate in the Institute for the Old Testament Studies and Biblical Archaeology in the Protestant Theological Faculty of the University of Vienna. In this volume, Scheetz presents intertextuality as a form of inner-biblical exegesis that explores the dialogue inherent in the biblical text under study and with other texts in the biblical canon.

Scheetz begins with the usual review of research into the subject of intertextuality in literature. He summarizes the ideas of Julia Kristeva and Michael Bahktin with regard to literature in general, then moves to the contributions of Michael Fishbane, James Sanders, and Brevard Childs for the biblical writings. The latter three are the more pertinent for Scheetz’s purposes, but are subsumed under the heading “Theories of Canonical Process.” As Scheetz sees it, what they have in common is

seeing “the development of the canon as a complex process that cannot be easily identified with any one person, group of people, or even time period” (19). What distinguishes their respective viewpoints is the motivation for that development. In Fishbane’s approach, the motivation mainly is exegetical, with Sanders it is sociological, and for Childs it is theological. Scheetz also gives equal time to the other side: he considers criticisms of Childs’s views that others have set forth, most notably those of James Barr (*The Concept of Biblical Theology*). After a look at other related topics such as intratextuality—e.g., George Lindbeck’s discussions of a cultural-linguistic approach to religion and doctrine—and the “Kanonisch-Intertextuelle Lektüre” approach of Georg Steins, Scheetz finally sets forth his concept of canonical intertextuality. Simply put, he holds that it is the “dialogue inherent in the canonical text” (33), and what makes the text canonical is that it is “a particular collection of literature . . . intentionally placed together” (33). All this is the concern of Chapter 1.

Chapter 2 is considerably shorter and simply reviews the basic positions regarding the date and provenance of Daniel: the traditional position holds that it comes from the Babylonian era (sixth century BC), the “critical” position holds that it comes from the Maccabean era (second century BC), and other positions either are somewhere in between or decline to take sides in the debate. Chapters 3 and 4 get down to the nuts and bolts of the matter, analyzing each half of the book in turn, the narratives (Dan 1–6) and the visions (Dan 7–12). With both kinds of literature, Scheetz works his way through each chapter of Daniel, identifying and commenting on verbal correspondences, explaining what he believes to be the intertextual connection between the passage under consideration and other texts.

For example, in 3:29 Nebuchadnezzar pronounces judgment upon anyone who speaks against the God of Daniel’s friends. Having witnessed their miraculous deliverance from the fiery furnace, the king gives as his reason the recognition that no other god delivers like this. Scheetz, however, zeroes in on the details of the threatened judgment: dismemberment and the destruction of the offender’s house. The same words and phrases occur in 2:5 when Nebuchadnezzar is warning his wise men what will happen if they fail to give him the contents and explanation of a dream he had the previous night. Another case is the use of the verb “to raise or erect” in the opening verse of the fiery furnace narrative (3:1) and also in 2:44 (both texts use a causative form of the verb *qûm*). Nebuchadnezzar “erects” a massive golden statue, while the God of Heaven will “raise” an enduring kingdom that will smash the kingdoms of this world, represented in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream by another statue made of various materials. Scheetz sees these and other

instances as examples of what he means by canonical intertextuality: “shifts in key terms and phrases” (61) from one text to another, presumably in a way that conveys the message and themes of Daniel. For a similar case in the visionary material, Scheetz compares the use of the phrase “desolating abomination” in 8:13 and 9:27. As he sees it, the effect is to link the ram and goat vision of Dan 8 and the “seventy weeks” prophecy of Dan 9. Specifically, it ties together the ram and goat vision, the seventy years of exile foretold by Jeremiah (25:8–11) and referenced by Daniel (9:2), and the explanation of the seventy weeks (9:20–27): “Far from Daniel finding comfort, it has been determined that there will be further destruction . . . the seventy years becoming seventy weeks of years that will again entail ‘causing horror’” (114–15).

The final two chapters of Scheetz’s study extend these sorts of considerations to the Old Testament and the New Testament as canons. For the former, he points out verbal correspondences between texts in Daniel and other passages in the Hebrew Bible. An example would be Dan 9:11, which makes reference to “the curse” and “the oath” written in the Law of Moses. Because these terms are used in Deut 29:19–20, Scheetz sees these as “clear verbal connections” (138) that invoke the sanctions listed in the Torah for failure to keep the covenant God made with Israel. The rest of the chapter on Old Testament intertextual connections is given to the place of Daniel in the Hebrew canon as attested in primary sources such as Josephus and the Apocrypha. For a case of New Testament intertextual connection, one could cite the use of the phrases about the “Son of Man, coming on the clouds of Heaven.” Used in the vision about the four beasts out of the sea in Dan 7, they seem to occur three places in the NT: Jesus’s eschatological discourse (Matt 24:30 and Synoptic parallels), his trial before the Sanhedrin (Matt 26:64 and Synoptic parallels), and the opening of the Apocalypse (Rev 1:7). According to Scheetz, “All of the sections have an eschatological meaning” (154), with the Gospel references containing statements about Jesus’s identity as the Son of God. The Apocalypse makes the same point without an explicit identification of Jesus as the Son of Man. In this and other instances discussed, Scheetz sees the NT following “the pattern that is already found in the development of the Old Testament . . . where revelation and interpretation continually work together” (159).

Scheetz’s most useful contribution seems to be the first chapter, which provides a substantive and fairly readable description of the essential work that has been done in this area. Thus the chapter would be suitable for anyone doing exploratory reading for a project involving intertextual research. Chapters 3 and 4 do give detailed analysis of the texts discussed, with full citation and translation of each one, and the analyses are presented in a manner that is reasonably easy to follow,

though they could use better organization. The latter part of chapter 5 gives a good look at primary source evidence regarding the development of the Hebrew canon. Demonstrations of the thematic connections between the Old Testament and the New Testament such as those Scheetz seeks to give in chapter 6 always are helpful.

In other respects, the book could use some improvement. Scheetz has a tendency to write long paragraphs, most of which need to be broken up into more digestible units. In chapters 3–6, the translations of the biblical text often are intentionally very literal, but can be woodenly so and needlessly clumsy even for Scheetz’s purpose. On the other hand, citations from German works are quoted in full but not translated—something that obviously would be a help to those without reading proficiency in German. At times the analyses of verbal correspondences seem to be little more than random running comments about verses that happen to use the same expressions as other verses. There is no concluding chapter which ties everything together, explains the significance of what has been presented, and suggests issues for further study.

The most serious weakness seems to be no real explanation of the method to be employed. What exactly constitutes the dialogue inherent in the canonical text? In other words, what are the criteria for identifying intertextual usage? Is it *any* time a same or similar phrase is used by two or more texts? Further, how does one know (and show) that the latter usage is an *intentional* use of the earlier text? Undoubtedly there are cases where this is obvious, such as NT uses of OT texts (cf. the “Son of Man” terminology noted previously). Within the OT canon or even a book, intentionality might not be as clear in a given case.

One criticism of this approach that its practitioners have struggled to answer is how to distinguish between the intentional and the incidental in similar textual usage. A good instance of this criticism would be the use of similar terms for punishing offenders in Dan 2:5 and 3:29. Scheetz calls attention to this and notes that the punishment for failing to tell the king his dream in 2:5 “is now to be the judgment against those who speak against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego” in 3:29. An appropriate observation; but is it a case of “canonical intertextuality”? Is this a case of intentional dialogue between the texts? Possibly—but is it not just as likely that bodily dismemberment, etc., is a standard threat a Mesopotamian despot might issue for failure to meet his demands and expectations?

On the balance, Scheetz’s book is substantive contribution to discussions regarding intertextuality in the Bible and canonical criticism. It needs to do a better job of explaining the principles and procedures of the method proposed. Perhaps one of its best lessons, taught

inadvertently, is that the serious Bible student does well to remember that even at its best intertextual analysis is but one aspect of sound exegesis.

DANIEL R. WATSON  
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

*Deuteronomy* by Daniel I. Block. NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012. 880 pp., \$39.99, hardcover.

Daniel Block's commentary on Deuteronomy is a most welcome addition to the scholarly literature on the book. It exhibits the author's customary close attention to the text of Scripture, as well as his erudition in matters related to the study of the Old Testament and ancient Near Eastern writings. Based firmly on historical and exegetical foundations, it is in a sense more than a commentary because it rigorously follows through the implications of its conservative stance, according to which Deuteronomy, together with Exodus to Numbers, presents the actual story of Moses and early Israel. Moses is not only Israel's lawgiver, but their "pastor," giving final instruction to the people before they enter the land he has brought them to, and adapting his own earlier laws and instructions for the purpose. If critical scholarship once re-wrote the history of Israel, Block aims to re-write the re-writing. This thoroughgoing pursuit of the concept of Mosaic authorship is one of the hallmarks of the commentary, and it is almost certainly the most significant modern defense of the position.

The NIVAC series gives the author the scope to think in some depth about ways in which the biblical book might be understood and used today. This is enshrined in the format, which for each section of text has, first the NIV translation, then sections on "Original Meaning" (exegesis), "Bridging Contexts" (canonical connections) and "Contemporary Significance" (application). The commentator is therefore bound to address the full range of issues in the interpretation of the Old Testament. As an example of interpretation according to this format, Block's treatment of the law of tithe (Deut 14:22–29) fulfills the commentary's aim admirably. This provision, he writes (under Contemporary Significance), is "a barometer of authentic spirituality" (361). To ask, "Do Christians need to tithe?" is to ask the wrong question, because what is at issue is not a matter of formal obedience, but whether we reflect the heart and mind of God in our compassionate attitude to the poor and needy (36–62). This illustrates well Block's constructive view of the Mosaic Torah in the life of the church. He has

elsewhere made important observations about how this relates to the Apostle Paul's view of the Torah in the context of "justification by faith" (Block, *How I Love Your Torah, O Lord!* Wipf and Stock, 2011).

In fact, one of the important things about the commentary is its tilt against persistent Marcionism in the church. In general Block argues that Christians should use the OT Torah positively, as "the law of Christ," rather than retreat into "interiority" (42), and so concede the fields of social ethics and policy to others, according to an Enlightenment view of the place of religion.

To do this in practice, of course, is complex. In any attempt to apply OT laws constructively to modern life, there is some degree of interplay between application to the life of the church and to society at large, and questions about how these levels of application relate. Answers to such questions tend to entail commitments about relationships between private and public spheres, law and ethics, church and state. In Block's very good treatment of the laws of debt- and slave-release (Deut 15:1–18), he makes a strong statement about the modern need for the church to show love and compassion to the disadvantaged, "to distinguish themselves from the self-indulgent Canaanites of this land" (376). This is strong stuff, but I wondered if there was any implication in it for public policy, or for the church's advocacy to government.

In dealing with issues of this sort, Block addresses meanings both in public practice and the sphere of the "spiritual." Because of his overarching view, these meanings are not in principle opposed to each other, yet the ways in which they relate are not easy to articulate. For a further example of his thinking on this, we may turn to Deut 16:18–18:22, the section that deals with the administration of the Torah in Israel. As might be expected, Block opposes the well-known critical view that Deuteronomy was written in support of Josiah's centralizing reforms, thinking that this "overloads these sections with undue political freight, at the expense of the central issues, which are spiritual and religious" (399). I agree that Deuteronomy is misread when it is seen as the document of Josiah's reform project, on the grounds that the book fits better with a program that is strongly critical of centralized monarchical power. But this is different from saying that the problem with the Josianic theory is that it makes Deuteronomy too political; rather that theory fails to understand the real thrust of the book's political theology. The exact nature of Deuteronomy's politics will remain a matter of scholarly debate, of course. However, it seems to me that Deuteronomy is thoroughly political in nature, yet this does not mean that it is not "spiritual and religious." The issue highlighted here is what kinds of human activity may come under the searchlight of Deuteronomy's

“spiritual and religious” vision. And I think political organization and decision-making are in its broad glare.

In fact Block does make important political applications. On Deut 2:2–23, in which God declares that he has given land not only to Israel but also to other peoples, he observes that God does indeed dispose over the destinies of nations: he “moves peoples around” (86). He draws the telling inference from this that God also brought the aboriginal North Americans to the continent, then the Europeans, and latterly Asians and Latinos (87). I take this to be a pointed political comment in a modern American context. It comes with a thoroughly “Deuteronomic” warning that “. . . title to the land is not unconditional. . . . There is no automatic title to God’s promises for those who refuse to serve him.” This point, which he intends to apply to nations in general, is made in the specific context of the modern state of Israel. Whereas in ancient times God gave land adjacent to Israel to Moabites and Ammonites, he has now given it to Jordanians and Egyptians. The church should encourage Israel to respect these neighbors in the way that God once demanded of its ancestors (87). This seems to me to be right and good as application of Deuteronomy.

On the particular point about Israel, however, I think the questions raised are harder than Block’s comment reveals. In what way should Israel respect its nearer neighbors, the Palestinians, whom they dispossessed, and whom, presumably, God had also brought to their land, just as he did the Jordanians and the Egyptians? If we accept as prescriptive for ourselves the Deuteronomic message about respect for neighbors across a border, should we also accept for ourselves the Deuteronomic message about driving out the previous inhabitants of a land believed to be given to us? This seems to me to be the indispensable question facing any modern interpreter of Deuteronomy. The Deuteronomic message about God’s gift of land has been adopted by many nations in the Christian era (including England and America), with at best a mixture of good and bad consequences: good in terms of the dignity and protection afforded the individual by the notion of equality under the law; and bad because, along with Joshua, Deuteronomy has frequently been taken to mandate what we now call “ethnic cleansing” (well documented by Philip Jenkins, *Laying Down the Sword*, HarperOne, 2011). This is the hard issue encountered by the project to advocate the constructive use of the Torah today. Regarding the modern state of Israel, it seems to me that an application of Deuteronomic theology to it should not begin with the assumption that the ancient promise applies to it in a different way than it does to others.

Regarding critical scholarship, Block regularly offers useful and perceptive discussions of prevailing critical opinions. For example, he

engages forcefully (and rightly) with the still common idea that in its theology of the name of Yahweh, Deuteronomy denies Yahweh's actual presence from the sanctuary (304–5). I found, however, that certain questions remained somewhat open. For example, what is the relationship between the Deuteronomic law and the Book of the Covenant (Exod 20–23)? Does Exod 20:24–26 allow for numerous places of worship, and Deut 12 only one? Does Deuteronomy actually abolish the Book of the Covenant (as B. M. Levinson argues in *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation*, Oxford University Press, 1997)? Block's take on this in general is that Moses's aim in Deuteronomy "is pastoral rather than legislative" (301). On 15:12–18, he writes that Moses "builds on" Exod 21:2–11 and Lev 25:39–46, but as a pastor he "adapts the discussion in anticipation of the people's imminent entrance into the Promised Land" (370). (In taking this line he recognizes the considerable differences between the two laws). But what then happens to Exod 21:2–11? What kind of conditions did it legislate for, and does it now become obsolete?

I am not sure that the characterization of Moses predominantly as "pastor" helps to answer questions like this. Moses in Deuteronomy is lawgiver, judge, prophet, and warrior, as well as teacher and interpreter; pastors do not lead nations into war. So for me this diverted attention from some of the hard issues of reading Deuteronomy. However, the commentary as a whole contributes in huge measure to our understanding of this great book. It is a massive pastoral and scholarly achievement, and deserves to be widely used in the classroom and the pulpit.

GORDON MCCONVILLE  
University of Gloucestershire

*First and Second Samuel: A Commentary* by A. Graeme Auld. OTL; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2011. xxii + 686 pp., \$75.00, hardcover.

Graeme Auld is former professor of Hebrew Bible and former chair of the Hebrew Bible and Old Testament department in the School of Divinity at the University of Edinburgh. Auld spent more than 15 years studying various aspects of the Former Prophets. His contribution to the field of biblical studies can be traced through his commentaries, monographs, edited works, and journal articles. In many ways, the commentary under review is the culmination of Auld's extensive



research in the Former Prophets. From the outset, Auld explains that the purpose for writing his commentary is to develop a variety of proposals concerning the literary development of not only the Samuel corpus but also the Kings corpus. This complex purpose symbolizes Auld's *tour de force*—his “The Book of Two Houses” (BTH) hypothesis, introduced in the 1990s. For Auld, the BTH and, subsequently, the Samuel corpus is “about David” (1–2). In short, his BTH hypothesis builds on the assumption that an extant text once existed. This text contained the common materials in both Samuel–Kings and Chronicles. The BTH, according to Auld, describes the “old story of the house of David and the house of Yahweh, from the death of Saul till the fall Jerusalem” (9). With his reconstruction of the Samuel–Kings corpora, Auld argues for the literary origin of the BTH in Judah and a date no earlier than the sixth century BCE. Further fragmenting the Samuel–Kings corpora, Auld suggests that the common materials between Samuel–Kings and Chronicles forms the major source of the David story, which is easier to identify in 2 Samuel than in 1 Samuel.

Thus, Auld suggests that 1 Samuel was created as “a wholly fresh introduction” to the inherited David story (9). Of the common materials, Auld contends that Chronicles is the more conservative. According to Auld, the literary history of the Samuel corpus occurred in three stages. The older story of David began with the death of Saul. Next, the older story of David was transformed into a new version that began with the introduction of Saul (1 Sam 9). The final developmental stage of the Samuel corpus introduced Samuel, the man responsible for anointing both Saul and David (1 Sam 1–8). Thus, Auld argues that the composition of the Samuel corpus was written from the end to the beginning. In an effort to substantiate his claims, Auld outlines the synoptic parallels of the source material, which were shared by 1 Chronicles and 2 Samuel. In addition, he outlines new material that was added in block format to the narrative of 2 Samuel.

In a nutshell, the BTH hypothesis controls Auld's understanding and interpretation of the Samuel corpus. The artistry of 1 Samuel—the people of Israel in conflict with Samuel, Saul in conflict with Samuel, and, at times, Samuel in conflict with Yahweh—merely functions as “the prequel to the David story” and is interpreted with minimal significance (12). Auld's approach to the text(s) of Samuel corroborates his BTH hypothesis. He provides readers with a literal rather than idiomatic translation of *his* reconstructed biblical text from the Masoretic Text, the Septuagint, and selected fragments from Qumran. The overarching rationale for adopting his reconstruction of the biblical text is his BTH hypothesis. Additionally, Auld's translational layout consisting of sporadically placed parallel columns, italics, and brackets is problematic.

The culmination of texts with layout/stylistic details makes reading and understanding his translation difficult. Even though his reconstruction of the biblical text is unconvincing, if not untenable, he is able to highlight some insightful linguistic parallels and similarities within the Samuel corpus (e.g., the discussion on the verb “to take” in 1 Sam 4:11).

The overall success, or failure, of Auld’s commentary is related directly to his BTH hypothesis. His commitment to the BTH hypothesis actually creates more questions than answers. For example, the theological tension of 1 Sam 15 has drawn much scholarly attention. The rejection of Saul as king plays a prominent role in the larger literary framework of the Samuel corpus. Auld’s primary concern for this chapter is to espouse his theory that a literary and thematic parallel exists between Yahweh’s “relenting/repenting” in 1 Sam 15 and 2 Sam 24. His perpetual positioning of the BTH hypothesis allows him to ignore (dismiss?) the linguistic parallels that do not substantiate his thesis. For Auld, 1 Sam 15 plays several roles in the Samuel corpus: it offers a “fresh reading” of 2 Sam 24 and a “fresh perspective” on the David story (175–81). That 1 Sam 15 provides a “fresh perspective” on the David story cannot be denied; however, an equally convincing linguistic connection can be made between Samuel’s words to Saul in 1 Sam 15:1 (“listen to the voice of Yahweh”) and Yahweh’s mandate to Samuel in 1 Sam 8:7 (“listen to the voice of the people”). In other words, Auld, at times, highlights the linguistic parallels and similarities that defend his BTH hypothesis and ignores other literary connections that would discredit his thesis.

Thus, readers must know that his reconstruction of the Samuel corpus provides an alternative theological reading to the biblical text. Most Evangelicals will not accept Auld’s theological reconstruction of Samuel corpus or his handling of specific texts (e.g., the Persian dating of aspects within the David and Goliath materials [1 Sam 17:1–18:5; 2 Sam 21:15–22]). More disheartening is Auld’s repudiation of some of David’s more notable accomplishments: the defeat of Goliath with a slingshot, the deliverance from the lion and bear, the increasing popularity in contrast to Saul, and the large number of foreskins used as a bride-price. In conjunction with the BTH hypothesis is yet another weakness of the commentary—Auld’s lack of interaction with other scholarly literature. This critique, however, should be tempered by Auld’s personal delimitation that secondary sources would only be consulted to assist with translation (xvii). In other words, Auld is more concerned with establishing a viable argument for his BTH hypothesis than with interacting with the text-critical, form-critical, or thematic/kerygmatic questions of other scholars (e.g., the Deuteronomistic History, the “Ark Narrative,” the pro-monarchical/anti-

monarchical speeches of Samuel, the “Historical Rise of David,” and the “Succession Narrative”).

In sum, Auld is more concerned with *his* reconstruction of the Samuel corpus and biblical text than providing a commentary that examines and explains the textual-critical and theological issues related to the Masoretic Text of the Samuel corpus. Thus, Auld’s commentary provides limited value for pastors and clergy from a translational, literary-historical, and theological perspective. Even though his reconstruction has limited value, Auld has provided Hebrew-proficient readers with valuable linguistic analysis and parallels in places. The valuable insights must be viewed, in most cases, within the framework of Auld’s BTH theory, which in its present form is unconvincing. Only time will tell if Auld’s BTH hypothesis will supplant other attempts at describing the literary nature of the Samuel corpus (e.g., “rise of the lowly, fall of the mighty,” the “reversal-of-fortune motif,” “a crossing of fates,” and a “riddle of kingship”). At this time, Auld’s chronological realignment of the Samuel corpus is neither convincing nor theologically acceptable.

JEFFREY G. AUDIRSCH  
Brewton-Parker College

*From Paradise to Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch* by T. Desmond Alexander. 3rd Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012. xxii + 360 pp., US \$29.99, softcover.

T. Desmond Alexander is the Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies and Director of Postgraduate Studies at Union Theological College in Belfast, Ireland. His *From Paradise to Promised Land* reflects an expertise on the Pentateuch gained from many years of studying and teaching it to others. The fact that it is now in its third edition after nearly twenty years is evidence of this volume’s lasting value. Its stated goal is to “(1) guide the reader through the maze of modern approaches to the Pentateuch, and (2) focus on the main themes of the Pentateuch, viewed as a unified literary work” (xiii). The book is divided into two sections corresponding to these two objectives: Part 1, “Pentateuchal Criticism,” and Part 2, “The Main Themes of the Pentateuch.”

In Part 1 Alexander introduces readers to the history of modern research regarding the composition of the Pentateuch. The majority of Part 1 is an explanation and evaluation of the Documentary Hypothesis. Beginning with the Enlightenment, Alexander introduces source, form

and traditio-historical criticism, showing how each one modified the Documentary Hypothesis. After tracing the rise of the Documentary Hypothesis, he explains how it entered a period of crisis in the late twentieth century. Recent works have questioned the theory's validity (e.g., Whybray) because it "rests on unacceptable presuppositions, inadequate criteria for distinguishing the different sources, and a method of literary composition for which there is no analogy elsewhere" (62). Alexander admits clear gains from the Documentary Hypothesis, such as the discovery that the Pentateuch was composed of earlier sources; however, it is impossible to "unravel" those sources unless further evidence arises (63).

Alexander concludes that the diachronic approach has increasingly atomized the Pentateuch in pursuit of hypothetical sources. Ironically, "adherence to the Documentary Hypothesis has prevented scholars from observing the main compositional features of the text" (81). For all of the above reasons the Documentary Hypothesis should be abandoned. In its place he recommends a synchronic approach that recognizes the literary unity of the Pentateuch. This sets the stage for Part 2. If Part 1 is an argument against a diachronic approach to the Pentateuch, Part 2 is a positive contribution showing some of the results of a synchronic approach.

The purpose of the thematic studies in Part 2 is to familiarize students with the contents and internal logic of the Pentateuch. Interaction with secondary literature is deliberately limited to footnotes in Part 2, ensuring accessibility to a wider audience. Although each chapter focuses mainly on how a given theme is paradigmatic to a particular book (e.g., the blessing of the nations in Genesis), there is also attention given to how that theme is found in the remaining books of the Pentateuch. This significantly furthers Alexander's thesis that the Pentateuch is a unified composition. Additionally, each chapter concludes with a survey of how the theme is renewed in the NT.

Obviously a thematic approach cannot provide exhaustive knowledge of the Pentateuch, but the topics chosen are all arguably "Main Themes of the Pentateuch," as the section heading claims. Those themes are: "God's Temple-City" (Eden and beyond), "The Royal Lineage in Genesis," "The Blessing of the Nations," "Paradise Lost" (e.g., leaving Eden, Cain, the flood), "By Faith Abraham..." (God's covenants with Abraham), "Who is the LORD?," "The Passover," "The Covenant at Sinai," "The Tabernacle," "Be Holy" (holiness, purity, impurity), "The Sacrificial System," "The Clean and the Unclean Foods," "Toward the Promised Land," "Murmurings," "Love and Loyalty," and "Why Israel?" (election and responsibility).

Obviously, many of the concepts in the Pentateuch are entirely foreign to modern readers, separated as they are—both chronologically and culturally—from the original setting of the Pentateuch. Therefore, these thematic studies work to explain the original significance of the given topic as well as to offer a theological interpretation in the context of the book and the Pentateuch. These chapters are a goldmine for theological students, pastors, and others interested in understanding the Pentateuch.

What is new about the third edition? The three major changes are 1) an entirely new chapter in Part 2, “God’s Temple-City,” a study of earth and Eden as a divine sanctuary and the reversal at Babel and beyond; 2) a significant enlargement of the concluding chapter in Part 1, “The Future of Pentateuchal Studies”; and 3) an entirely rewritten conclusion to Part 2, “The Pentateuch and the Biblical Metanarrative.” The rest of the work has been “revised to varying degrees” but not more than two pages of new material have been added to any chapter.

The expanded conclusion to Part 1, “The Future of Pentateuchal Studies,” offers more detailed conclusions on *the date of composition* of the Pentateuch: the exile may be the catalyst for final composition/editing, but this does not rule out partial Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. This expansion was copied from another of Alexander’s publications and therefore duplicates material on the “Recent History of Scholarship” (85–87) that was covered in Chapter 2, “The Rise of the Documentary Hypothesis.” However, the overlapping material is much condensed in the second presentation and may perhaps be a helpful review to students.

Other important changes are the addition of a useful “Subject Index” (7 pages long), the correction of scattered minor errors in the footnotes, and an update to the “Bibliography” and “Recommended Further Reading” list. Additionally, relevant studies that have been published since the release of the second edition are included in the footnotes and, in some cases, are referred to in the text. This book ably fulfills its goal of introducing the Pentateuch by 1) preparing readers to interact with the secondary literature and 2) orienting them to the metanarrative and main themes of the Pentateuch itself.

PARKER LANDIS  
Covenant Theological Seminary

*The Gospel according to Moses: Theological and Ethical Reflections on the Book of Deuteronomy* by Daniel I. Block. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2012. vii + 369 pp., US \$43.00, softcover.

Daniel I. Block is the Gunther H. Knoedler Professor of Old Testament at Wheaton College. For three decades Block has produced new and fresh perspectives on Old Testament narratives. His commentaries on Judges/Ruth (B&H, 1999) and Ezekiel (Eerdmans, 1997, 1998) are considered standards among evangelical scholarship. His most recent commentary on Deuteronomy (Zondervan) was released in 2012.

*The Gospel according to Moses* is a collection of nine essays concerning the broad hermeneutical and theological issues raised in the book of Deuteronomy. The contents include essays from 2001–11 that Block has either previously published or presented at the Evangelical Theological Society annual meeting. The companion volume, *How I Love Your Torah, O Lord!: Studies in the Book of Deuteronomy* (Cascade, 2011), which will not be reviewed here, contains essays on specific texts of the same book.

The articles in the present volume are connected thematically and conceptually, yet diverse enough so that each is able to stand alone. Block argues that the overall theme of the book of Deuteronomy is that the Israelites should be faithful to the covenant while in the land, in response to the grace that God has lavished on them (14). Thus, “grace” (or, “gospel,” as he puts it) is the key emphasis. He explores the transmission of the text from oral to written proclamation (“Recovering the Voice of Moses,” 21–51), and seeks to answer the question of how the Torah, and particularly the book of Deuteronomy, came to be viewed as the “Book/Law of Moses.” Block also analyzes the ministerial function of Moses’s role in his three speeches, or sermons. In his view, Deuteronomy is not law per se (100–101), nor is it a political manifesto intended to govern Israel’s behavior (103). Above all, Deuteronomy is “a pastoral manifesto for a community of faith” (103). Thus, Block calls on interpreters (scholarly and pastoral alike) to move beyond trivializing the presentation of OT law in the Pentateuch.

Block’s articles are intentionally modern in scope, interacting with the many political and social issues that preoccupy today’s news while avoiding careless anachronisms. The fifth chapter, for instance (“A Study in Deuteronomistic Domestic Ideology”), is based around the programmatic command, “you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife,” and touches on issues of feminism, patriarchy, and human rights. In another chapter Block seeks to recover the Deuteronomistic theology of animals, arguing that in Deuteronomy the human disposition toward the treatment

of animals is a matter of covenant righteousness (182). Therefore, Christians will do well to imbibe these principles in caring for the creation as God's vice-regents.

There is also material in the volume with a more general focus that is not particularly geared toward Deuteronomy. Block discusses, for instance, the biblical disposition of Yahwism to other religions and gods in the OT, and also tries to answer the questions of what it meant to bear the name of Yahweh in a polytheistic world ("No Other Gods," chapter eight), and how the Mosaic vision of worship might regulate or inform our contemporary practices ("In Spirit and in Truth," chapter nine).

The difficulty in reviewing a collection of essays from a single author is the variegated merits of each chapter. But in this volume, the general feature for all of Block's essays is that he provides up to date research and offers lucid and convincing arguments. Further, Block is not erratic in dealing with ancient Near Eastern complexities, showing consistently that the biblical authors possessed contextual as well as a covenantal worldviews in presenting their material in written form (cf. Block's discussion of Deuteronomy 12 and the "name theology" of comparative literature, 237-71). Moreover, Block maintains the historical character of the text over against the form-critical perspective.

Additionally, far from solely a scholarly endeavor, *The Gospel according to Moses* offers practical implications in every essay. Thus, Block's concern is not only for accuracy in scholarly interpretation, but also for accuracy in the pulpit. There is, rightly, a Christian, forward-looking purview in Block's writing, which is especially evident in the conclusions.

There are only a couple of places where one might disagree with Block or suggest an alternative. First, the phrase "gospel of Moses" is a little misleading since it creates the comparison (unnecessarily, in my opinion) with the New Testament's "gospel of Jesus" or "gospel of the kingdom." For Block, the term "gospel" is limited to the concept of God's grace. And while Block argues fervently for "grace" as the main theme of Deuteronomy, one cannot accept it as the primary emphasis for every speech of Moses. Later biblical texts continue to refer to the Torah as the "law" or "instruction" of Moses, and this point is, perhaps, underemphasized in these articles. Thus, Block's assertion that "grace" is the center of the book seems to me to be an attempt to make Deuteronomy more palatable and readable to the contemporary church. The attempt is not without merit, and needed.

Grace is certainly fundamental to the Israelites self-understanding of their origins and way of life, which Block is especially keen to reveal in the first chapter on the theology of Deuteronomy. But grace alone cannot explain the whole of Deuteronomy because grace as a

conceptual notion is too broad. James M. Hamilton's modified proposal, that God's presence among the Israelites is what motivates their obedience and not solely his grace, is perhaps an alternative (cf. *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, Crossway, 2010). In Hamilton's view, the goal of Deuteronomy is to imbue a deep sense of God's glory through his gracious acts of salvation for the Israelites, while not denigrating his character and justice as articulated in the rule of law.

Second, while Block admits in the introduction that there is some repetition in his book (xiii), the reader is not prepared for such large amounts of it. This is not a complaint, since most will not read the book cover-to-cover as I have done, and since the articles stand on their own. But that pages 125–7 is repeated verbatim in pages 234–6 is a little startling. Further, Block has a penchant for correcting the same common misconceptions about “law” in nearly every essay, such as the origin of the misleading title, “Deuteronomy,” the bad rapport Moses receives from Paul in the NT, or the (in)accuracy of labeling God's rules as the “Ten Commandments” instead of the “Ten Words.” Although these are minor criticisms, the work would be strengthened if it is modified partially to accommodate the format. The companion volume, *How I Love Your Torah, O Lord!*, has similar features.

Having read the majority of Block's papers and commentaries, this reviewer has found them to be a treasure trove of biblical exegesis and theology. The present book is no different, and serves as a solid introduction to the thematic and theological material in Deuteronomy. Block is a first-rate scholar and thinker, and the value of his work is self-evident. We are indebted to him for his clarity of argumentation—and notably Christian perspective—of some of the more difficult books (Judges, Ezekiel, Deuteronomy) and concepts (law, ethics, eschatology, etc.) of the OT.

JOSHUA M. PHILPOT

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

*He Has Shown You What is Good: Old Testament Justice Then and Now* by H. G. M. Williamson. Cambridge: Lutterworth, 2012. 115 pp., GB £15.00, softcover.

H. G. M. Williamson tackles in this book a topic of enduring human interest—social justice. This is a descriptive project in as much as the primary goal is to understand how the Old Testament understands and promotes justice. But Williamson further aims to make possible for the



Old Testament to inform and promote justice in our own day for those “who share the belief that, when properly interpreted, the Bible is still of relevance to the framing of Christian beliefs and lifestyle” (7).

Williamson's approach in the book is to begin by focusing on texts where the words “justice” and “righteousness” (צדקה and משפט) appear together; these “suggest more or less what we mean by social justice” (12). As chapter 1 seeks to demonstrate, what constitutes justice and righteousness is not immediately apparent in every text; it requires broad and detailed analysis of the Old Testament and its ancient Near Eastern context. Williamson later proposes that to study this subject widely, one should “start with passages where the subject is explicit and then from that reasonably firm basis . . . move on to others where the vocabulary may be absent but where the content seems naturally to fit” (48).

The second chapter, “Divine Justice and Natural Justice,” sets the stage for the kind of justice we can expect to find in the Old Testament—a justice that Williamson argues belongs not to a people to whom it was independently revealed as divine law but to a set of shared values of “humane as well as pragmatic thinking in the ancient world” (23). These are not immutable values, as Williamson maintains, but they respond to the “changing historical and political circumstances” of the times during which the Old Testament was being written. This chapter also highlights the role that class distinctions within ancient Israelite society should factor in this discussion.

Having established natural notions of justice as the norm for what readers should expect from the Old Testament, the third chapter, “The Individual and Social Justice,” aims to describe “the normal expectations on individual members of society in regard to social justice” (44). The chapter ends up being a sustained analysis of the book of Proverbs, its language for social justice, and the potential ideologies of the divide between and advice concerning the rich and poor. The biblical material is described by Williamson as a theological vision of how creation works, how the principles of justice God establishes in creation that are observable to all humans are those with which the wise will align their lives.

The eighth-century prophets—Isaiah of Jerusalem (Isaiah 1–39), Amos, Hosea, and Micah—represent for Williamson a diverse group whose common social interests develop what is the object of study in the fourth chapter, “Prophetic Justice.” Focus in this chapter lies primarily with Isaiah and Amos, more specifically with the basis and rationale for their prophetic judgment about matters related to society and justice. In keeping with the tenor of the argument established in chapter 2, Williamson describes the prophetic notion of justice as rooted in

“rational reflection” (72) and as something that should be “obvious to any right-thinking person who takes God seriously” (75), where negative behavior is “self-evidently offensive” (82) and “the concerns of social justice are somehow instinctively known” (86).

In the fifth chapter, “Messianic Justice,” Williamson focuses primarily on two texts, Ps 72 and the Isaianic servant songs, to develop how he understands the Old Testament to envision the role of God and the execution of divine judgment by human exemplars. The ideal of an Israelite king, realized or anticipated, reflects God's role in establishing and maintaining justice. The final chapter, “He Has Shown You What is Good,” offers concluding thoughts on the subject matter.

Books of such brevity in our field can easily fall into the trap of oversimplifying the subject, often by way of ignoring the issues that are raised by critical readings of the biblical text. This book commits no such errors. Without becoming bogged down by matters too technical for introductory study, the discussion moves briskly from the biblical text, the critical insights it raises, the ancient Near Eastern context that both complicates and enlightens the discussion, and back to the biblical text. The results do not lend themselves to final answers on the questions concerning justice in our day—as though the Old Testament, much less this little book, can function as some kind of magic 8-ball for contemporary social matters faced by the church or interested readers. Rather, this book ably guides its readers, presumably those who are not specialists in biblical studies (7), into the Old Testament and the issues concerning justice that occupied Israel/Judah and that occupy us still today.

While the book is effective at demonstrating the role of natural law as a basis or rationale for the concerns of justice in the biblical text, the degree to which legal texts in the Old Testament end up being marginalized in this discussion concerns me. Williamson ends up portraying Sinai and the Old Testament legal corpora as a problem for a vision of justice rooted in natural law (104–5). This may be the natural inclination of some readers, especially non-specialists. After all, the biblical narrative does record these laws as written and/or dictated by God and entrusted to Israel from her origin as a people. But, as Williamson recognizes, the legal strata that exist in these texts betray a history: “change in law over time, either to reflect different historical circumstances or, more likely, to reflect developing ideologies, is the obvious conclusion to draw” (38).

In chapter 4, Williamson identifies the prophetic concerns of social justice being advanced precisely through such changes (e.g., the late introduction of the concern for the “resident alien” in Israel's history; 87–89), despite any narrative complications this creates (for example,

with Exod 12:47–49). While Williamson is correct to point out that Proverbs, the prophets, and certain messianic ideals are not rooted in Sinai (63, 71, 75, 86, 98), they do share certain social concerns with Sinai. That Sinai should be elided because it is difficult to date the various strata (104) or because we want to avoid the trap of legalism (43) is simply unfortunate, especially if we are concerned with the “then and now.” Just as law—however naturally derived—contributed to the ideas of social justice in ancient Judah, much of what has been achieved in the areas of social justice in recent history can be attributed in part to contemporary laws. To suggest that law be a part of this discussion is not to argue for its centrality (105) but to recognize its presence in the biblical text and thus its importance for the church.

It should be clear from the preceding discussion that some evangelicals will find aspects of Williamson’s treatment inconsistent with their own theological moorings. However, what will prove frustrating to some evangelicals will prove liberating to others who desire a critical focus on the biblical text that remains sympathetic to its theological visions for justice in our world.

JOSEPH RYAN KELLY

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

*In God’s Shadow: Politics in the Hebrew Bible* by Michael Walzer. New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2012. 256 pp., US \$28.00, hardcover.

Michael Walzer, a political theorist and professor emeritus at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, analyzes the perceptions of political life expressed in the Hebrew Bible. He frames this evaluation as an exercise in political theory that seeks answers to questions such as “How is political society conceived? How should political power be used? How is authority described, defended, and challenged? When is it right to go to war? What is the implicit or explicit understanding of hierarchy? What are the obligations/duties/tasks of ordinary citizens or subjects? How is political space delineated? How is time understood, the past used, the future imagined . . . What can we learn from this book, these writers?” (ix). Walzer, however, also goes beyond the realm of political theory when he seeks to understand politics in the Hebrew Bible in relation to the omnipotent God of Israel.

Walzer addresses several questions through the analysis of major concepts within the Hebrew Bible. The book is comprised of twelve

chapters. The first eleven chapters correspond to specific biblical concepts, historical events, or specific traditions. The final chapter provides a summary of Walzer's investigation and offers some implications of his analysis as a whole.

Each of the chapters in *In God's Shadow* offers insights that will benefit students of the Hebrew Bible. For instance, Walzer notes the use of explanation in conjunction with specific legal texts, discussing the role these explanations may have played in the life of ancient Israel. Though he is unable to come to firm conclusions, Walzer's discussion of "justified laws" highlights the covenantal character of Israelite law, as well as pointing to a fruitful area of study beyond the normal distinctions between casuistic and apodictic laws.

Walzer's treatment of the prophets also offers several helpful insights, though his discussion is primarily oriented around the social vision of the prophets. He concludes the chapter on the prophets with the suggestion that "politics lies just beyond prophecy, but the biblical prophets, judging from their texts, did not go there" (88). This understanding seems to underestimate the political role of the prophets and the political import of their social vision. The prophetic call to morality and justice, or to trust in the Lord rather than in political alliances, is, in and of itself, a statement of political allegiance identifying God as the One atop Israel's hierarchy and pointing to the manner in which power is to be exercised. Rather than a social or moral vision, then, the prophets offer a theological vision that is founded on God's position as King in Israel. Despite these difficulties, Walzer's analysis of the prophets is impressively nuanced and provides a helpful discussion of the relationships between the prophets and Israelite royalty.

Walzer takes a similar stance in the chapter on the exile, suggesting that in exile Israel lost collective authority, so the locus of action shifted to individual Israelites. While this manner of describing the situation is certainly appropriate, it would have been interesting for Walzer to have applied his political inquiry to a category like the remnant, which might be construed as a dispersed polity over which God sits as King. The political import of this is certainly available in the text as God continues to act on behalf of those faithful to him despite their domination by foreign rulers.

The treatments of the prophets and the exile highlight one of the difficulties in performing an analysis such as Walzer attempts. Though it is certainly possible to glean insights concerning Israelite culture from reading the Hebrew Bible, it is difficult to separate such insights from the theological contexts in which such insights are given. The more strictly human political machinery is most often available in disobedience,

whereas the true politics of the Hebrew Bible are those aligned with the Lord.

Overall, Walzer has produced a perceptive study of the Hebrew Bible that provides a number of impressive observations and suggestions that could certainly spur on additional research concerning the conceptions of the political in the Hebrew Bible. His treatment represents one that is truly interdisciplinary. Walzer's ability to address the questions of political studies without dismissing all of the Bible's theological character offers a potential paradigm for the synthesis of multiple fields. *In God's Shadow* is a well-reasoned, well-written discussion of the intersection of politics and the Hebrew Bible.

The book's strength lies in the unique insights that Walzer offers as a student of politics rather than a student of the Hebrew Bible. His perspective, which originates outside of the discipline of biblical studies, raises a number of new questions while addressing oft-treated aspects of the Hebrew Bible from a new perspective. Walzer's brief discussion of his method of analysis and the questions upon which his study is based were also extremely helpful in orienting the study. In spite of the critiques noted above related to certain theological lapses in Walzer's treatment, Walzer does preserve the theological character of the Hebrew Bible in a number of instances. His assumption of the Documentary Hypothesis presents some difficulties, but he ultimately attempts to locate the Hebrew Bible in relation to Israel's God rather than treating the Israelite political system from a humanistic perspective. This work is compelling and, ultimately, makes a useful and unique contribution to the field of biblical studies.

JAMES SPENCER  
Moody Bible Institute

*Introducing the Old Testament: A Short Guide to its History and Message* by Tremper Longman III. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012. 192 pp., \$14.99, softcover.

Tremper Longman III is the Robert H. Gundry Professor of Biblical Studies at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California. He is the author or co-author of numerous articles and over twenty books, including *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (with Raymond B. Dillard; Zondervan, 1994, 2006). This new 192 page paperback is an abridged and simplified version of his 528 page hardcover text, with chapters that average 5–6 pages each.

In the two page introduction, Longman states that this book is written *for Christians*, those who consider the Old Testament to be the Word of God. According to Longman, although knowledge of the Old Testament, “deepens our understanding of Jesus and the gospel,” and “studying it can enrich our spiritual life and knowledge of God,” many Christians find it “long, strange, and difficult” (9). The book is written to help remedy this problem. It is a book-by-book study that follows the English Bible order of the Old Testament books, and is written, “to provide the literary, historical, and theological background to the reading of the individual books of the Old Testament” (9), with each chapter discussing content, authorship and date, genre, and connections to the gospel. In addition, there is a short excursus on the genre of theological history in a later chapter. Each chapter ends with a short list of recommended intermediate resources, along with a handful of questions for review and discussion that are intended to help readers and bible study groups further engage with the contents of the book.

Since the chapters are laid out in a consistent fashion, an analysis of Longman’s chapter on Genesis will serve as a representative of the whole. Because of its length and importance, Longman allots nine pages to his discussion of Genesis. He describes it as the prequel to the story of the Pentateuch, made up of three parts: primordial history (Gen 1–11), the patriarchs (Gen 12–36), and Joseph (Gen 37–50). He believes that the account of creation is, “written using highly figurative language that bears similarity and contrasts with other ancient Near Eastern creation accounts from Mesopotamia” (11). After naming a few of these, he pointedly claims that the main point of the Genesis creation account was not to explain *how* God created, “but to proclaim that it was Yahweh rather than one of the other creation gods of the ancient Near East” who created (11). This account also explains how Adam and Eve’s rebellion led to sin and death’s entrance into the world, with the evil in the world today having nothing to do with God’s original creation (11–12).

Longman employs a chart to provide a summary of the following themes through Gen 1–11: 1) sin, 2) God announces judgment, 3) a token of grace, a sign of God’s continued involvement, and 4) the execution of judgment. He then discusses the patriarchs and issues of author and date. Although the latter is a polarizing topic, Longman points out that the Pentateuch as a whole is technically anonymous. Moses is described as writing down some of its contents and the later books of the Old Testament, and New Testament do look back on these as the books of Moses, but this does not mean Moses had to have written it in its entirety, as there are clearly some texts that he could not have written (e.g. the account of his death in Deut 34). Longman goes on to discuss the Documentary Hypothesis and to outline its founders and basic tenants

in a page and a half, before finally describing the more recent scholarly return to a focus on the final form of the text.

In his discussion of genre, Longman identifies Genesis as a work of history, but with figurative language that interacts extensively with ancient Near Eastern literature. Therefore, “it is an error to read these chapters to discover *how* God created the universe” (17). He notes the shift in narrative style that begins with Abraham, as time slows down and the scope of the narrative radically narrows. Finally, in his section on connections, Longman links Rom 5:12–21 to creation, with Christ as a second Adam, Gal 3:15–22 and Paul’s exploitation of the collective singular “seed” in the New Testament with the Abraham narrative, and Acts 2:22–24 and God’s use of evil for good at the cross with the Joseph narrative. Recommended intermediate resources by Duguid, Longman, Waltke, and Walton, along with six discussion questions, round out the chapter.

In the final analysis, Longman has clearly achieved his goal of providing Christians with an accessible introduction to the Old Testament while also offering a bridge to more in-depth study. He writes in a clear, simple style, and he touches on the major issues without getting bogged down in technical jargon or extended debate. He is concise, and even the typeset and layout of the book are attractive and welcoming.

The chapters are akin to the biblical book introductions typically found in a good study Bible, aiding the reader with tools for interpretation, before sending them *into the text*, to wrestle on their own, and then into other recommended resources for further study. The chapters are simple to read but not simplistic, as major interpretive issues are discussed. The book will appeal greatly to Longman’s target audience, Christians who view the Old Testament as the Word of God, but for whom it is also long, strange, and difficult.

Most of the time Longman either reports critical viewpoints without taking a firm position (e.g. how much of the Pentateuch Moses wrote), or openly confesses his evangelical presuppositions (e.g. the Pentateuch rests on God’s authority; 15). However, there are also a few places where Longman chooses to make pointed statements with which at least some evangelicals will disagree. For example, he describes the account of creation as written in “highly figurative language” (11), he plainly states that although Joshua is a work of history, this “does not necessarily imply that everything is presented accurately” (44), and that it is impossible to be dogmatic regarding the issue of the book of Jonah’s historicity (163). If he is speaking as an evangelical and to evangelicals, and if he works in most places to be either unbiased or broadly

evangelical, Longman would have done well to acknowledge that many evangelicals take varying positions on these issues.

This point aside, Longman's book is a welcome addition to the field of Old Testament studies. Pastors will want this book for their church library, and Bible study leaders will do well to consider it for group study. Because of its length and accessibility, Professors will also find the book attractive as a textbook because it leaves room for other companion texts that may move beyond issues of standard introduction and into Old Testament theology for first-year undergraduates. I highly recommend this excellent book for personal and group Bible study, as well as classroom reading.

IAN J. VAILLANCOURT  
Wycliffe College

*An Introduction to the Psalms* by Alastair G. Hunter. T & T Clark Approaches to Biblical Studies. New York: T & T Clark, 2008. vii + 158 pp., \$110.00, hardcover.

Alastair Hunter is an Honorary Research Fellow in the Theology and Religious Studies section of the University of Glasgow's School of Critical Studies. Prior to this current position he held the post of Senior Lecturer in Hebrew and Old Testament Studies at the University of Glasgow. Hunter is no stranger to the field of Psalms studies. In 1999, Routledge published Hunter's work on the Psalms in which he dealt with the problem of translation and a programmatic approach to reading the Psalter. Hunter sees the current work as a "companion" to his 1999 work (17). The current work under review is a fine example of Hunter's broad knowledge of critical scholarship related to the Psalter.

Publishers continue to produce a copious amount of introductions related to every area of OT studies. The Psalms have witnessed no shortage of introductions, commentaries, and specialty studies. Numerous introductions require an OT scholar to develop a sense of selectivity. The popularity of the study of the Psalter, in one sense, requires new introductions. Considering the multiple narrow focuses found in the area of the Psalter (e.g., linguistics, literary approaches, shaping of the Psalter, liturgical approaches, etc.) one would be somewhat naïve to believe they could keep up with the totality of the field. Within this atmosphere updated introductions to the Psalms will always have a place. But, they must still offer some type of benefit. Hunter begins by reminding the reader that ideas thought to be



“‘modern’ can be found in the work of scholars a couple of generations or more in the past” (vii). By reflection on past and modern works Hunter offers multiple benefits in his *Introduction to the Psalms*.

The book is divided into seven chapters followed by a bibliography, an index of topics, and an index of modern authors. Within this short introduction Hunter seeks “to provide a helpful overview of the current state of the academic study of the Psalms without ignoring the work of past scholars” and to offer his own “idiosyncratic, take on the subject” (136). Chapter 1 is divided into two sections. In the first section, “Why study the Psalms?” Hunter briefly discussed the influence of the Psalter in the Jewish and Christian religion. One of the important highlights of this section is the observation that the Psalms had a major influence on individuals and communities before the rise of critical approaches. This observation, though simple, is profound in that it highlights the emotion of the Psalms—an emotion that runs the risk of being lost when one subjects individual Psalms to critical scrutiny. The second section introduces the different techniques and critical methods. Hunter saves the details and critiques of critical methodology for chapter 3.

Chapter 2, “The Diversity of Collections of Psalms,” addresses the headings without a historical context. Hunter understands these headings as “defining a small group of psalms” (17). He observes that the differences found between the traditions of the MT, the LXX, and the DSS suggest a living and developing corpus in which “relevance is continually renewed as the communities to whom they belong develop and change” (18). Hunter acknowledges that some of this quest is speculative but at the same time the quest may shed some light on the relationship of the Psalter with other parts of Scripture. In the remainder of the chapter he discusses the Psalms of Ascent, the Psalms of Korah and Asaph, Books III and IV, the Psalms of David, the Qumran Psalms, and Syriac Psalms. In a discussion of the sections within the Psalter he comments on their placement in the Psalter and their possible links with the rest of Scripture.

Chapter 3 addresses “Historical-Critical Approaches.” In this chapter Hunter discusses the structure of the Psalter, redaction, form criticism, and reception of the Psalms. The bulk of the chapter focuses on the work of Gunkel and responses to Gunkel’s work. This chapter presents very little new information and contains standard material. Hunter is convinced that the Psalter is “both in form, and to a large extent in substance, a post-exilic composition” (43).

Chapter 4, “The Psalms as Literature,” addresses issues such as translation, poetic features, and the translation of Psalms from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. The discussion related to the poetic

features of the Psalms includes parallelism, metaphor, and metonymy. Translation of Hebrew poetry is a particular interest of mine. I found his discussions on translation and the examples offered to be insightful and worthy of consideration. However, I would note that some of these discussions are mundane and outside the scope of a basic introduction.

Chapter 5, “Liturgical Approaches,” is the longest chapter. This chapter, along with chapters 4 and 6, seems to be the idiosyncratic approach that mentioned in chapter 7. In this chapter Hunter discusses the possible uses of the Psalms in the liturgy of Israel. He incorporates the aforementioned ideas related to the headings, possible parallels, and quotations of psalms in the OT, festivals and liturgies in the ANE, references of groups of psalms in the Mishnah, and possible liturgical uses of the Psalms in the growth of the Christian tradition in the NT. Despite the lengthy discussions and multiple examples the conclusion is not so helpful. He concludes that the Psalms were certainly used liturgically but it is unclear “as to what that use might have been” (107).

Chapter 6, “Theological, Philosophical, and Anthropological Reflections,” addresses the themes of messianic hope, personal piety, lament, vengeance, unmerited suffering, the hiddenness of God, and salvation. Hunter’s discussion of these themes points to the necessity and relevance of the Psalms for all generations. In chapter 7 Hunter summarizes his work and offers suggestions for the future of Psalms studies.

Among the benefits of this work are the discussion of groups of psalms within groups, translations of Psalms, and possible liturgical usage of the Psalms. Not all will benefit from these discussions. Hunter’s work would be adequate as a text for upper-level undergraduates to graduate students. The majority of works in this series are not suitable for lower-level undergraduate students.

JOSHUA E. STEWART

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

*Isaiah 40–66: A Commentary* by Shalom M. Paul. Eerdmans Critical Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012, xii + 714 pp., \$68.00, softcover.

Professor Paul, Yehezkel Kaufman Professor Emeritus of Bible at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, has given us a very fine example of the genre “critical commentary.” It exhaustively plumbs the depths of the historical, linguistic, and literary basis for understanding this particular

biblical text. No stone is left unturned in terms of historical background, Hebrew grammar and syntax, inner-biblical exegesis, linguistic affinities, literary structure and style, etc. What one will not find is theological exegesis. Thus, one who wishes to understand this part of the book of Isaiah as a literary and historical artifact will be richly rewarded. But one who wishes to understand the significance and meaning of the theological assertions of one of the greatest pieces of theological thinking in the world will be disappointed.

This is not to say that there is no discussion of the theological implications, but simply that such discussion tends to be limited to the obvious. Here is a random example from Isaiah 46:7: “*they must hoist it on their shoulders and carry it*—the idol worshippers have to carry the heavy weight of their idols on their backs and shoulders. . . . This is yet another jab at the idols’ impotence: They must be carried whereas God bears Israel tirelessly.” All that is certainly the correct understanding of the text, but it seems as though the lengthy analysis of Hebrew terms, ancient linguistic commentary, and possible allusions to other biblical passages that surrounds these statements should yield more fruit than this.

The first part of the book (1–72) contains an introduction which takes it as a fact that chapters 40–66 were not written by Isaiah of Jerusalem. The argument for the independence of the material is well-mounted, making use especially of linguistic and literary evidence. A weakness of the argument is that the author makes no attempt to address arguments for the unity of the book. Paul argues against the hypothesis of a “trito-Isaiah” contending that one author is responsible for all of the material from 40–66 and that the natural break is between 40–48 (Babylon) and 49–66 (Jerusalem), with the material having been written during the late exilic and early return periods. Other topics addressed are connections with other parts of Scripture, notably Jeremiah, the Servant Songs, connections to ancient Near Eastern thought, and Qumran.

Readers will find a wealth of material presented in a straightforward and dispassionate manner. A translation of Isaiah 40–66 appears on pages 73–125 and the commentary on pages 127–632. The remaining pages of the volume are devoted to an extensive bibliography (633–656), and to indices of authors, subjects, sources, and Jewish commentators (657–714).

In the commentary proper it is typical for each chapter to be introduced with a discussion of the structure of the chapter and some mention of the key points addressed in it. These discussions may vary from a page to two or three pages. There is virtually no discussion of any larger structural units going across conventional chapter lines. What discussion there is of such structuring is found in the introduction, (as for

instance, the arguments that 49–66 are united by their focus on Jerusalem), but they tend to be minimal.

It is of interest that while Professor Paul mentions in the introduction that he takes the servant to represent Israel, he does not mount an argument for that interpretation. In his discussion of 52:13–53:12, he merely rehearses, quite briefly, the variety of opinions that have been put forth and leaves the matter there. He is to be commended for recognizing that the chapter speaks of the servant as suffering for others, something that many commentators have been at pains to deny.

In sum, one cannot help but be awed by both the amount and the quality of work that the author has expended on these 27 chapters. Critics and scholars will find much to ponder and profit from here. But those who wish to understand more fully how this material functions to express profound, lyrical theology will have to look elsewhere.

JOHN OSWALT  
Asbury Theological Seminary

*The Fate of Saul's Progeny in the Reign of David* by Cephas T. A. Tushima. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2011. xxiii + 347 pp., \$50.00, softcover.

Cephas T.A. Tushima is acting director of the PhD program at Jos ECWA Theology Seminary in Nigeria. His work, *The Fate of Saul's Progeny in the Reign of David*, is a revision of his PhD dissertation undertaken at Westminster Theological Seminary. Tushima's study analyzes the story of David in order to determine how the fate of Saul's progeny is to be understood. Specifically, he is interested in "whether these tragedies were due to continuing divine retribution, pure happenstance, or Davidic orchestration" (xi–xii).

In the first three chapters Tushima takes on introductory material. In the first chapter he situates the books of Samuel within the Deuteronomistic History, discusses the literary unity of the books, and justifies his expansion of the Succession Narrative to include 2 Sam 21. The second chapter surveys the history of interpretation of the books of Samuel where he interacts with book-length works and monographs on this subject. In the third chapter Tushima discusses the methodology of his study, which is narrative criticism. In this chapter he surveys some literature on narrative criticism and devices used within narrative criticism upon which his study focuses.

In chapters 4 through 6 Tushima provides the body of his argument. In chapter 4 Tushima evaluates the civil war found in 2 Sam 2–4. In doing this he specifically looks at the deaths of Abner and Ishbosheth and concludes that David was most likely not complicit in either. The fifth chapter looks at the interactions between Michal and David and concludes that David had no affection for Michael and only used her for a claim to the throne of her father. In the sixth chapter he looks at David's dealings with Mephibosheth, concluding that David's actions are devious and not charitable as has been assumed by many.

In the seventh chapter Tushima integrates his research. First, he looks at his findings by comparing David's actions to the Deuteronomic code, showing that David did not act in accordance with these stipulations. In this section he looks at this text within a Deuteronomic context of exile. Second, he focuses on the biblical and theological implications of his findings. Here he attempts to understand both Yahweh's choice of David and why other biblical writers are fascinated with him.

There are several admirable features of this work. First, Tushima gives a close reading to the texts that he covers. This is important because many of these texts that are dealt with contain atrocious acts of violence that many have simply ignored or overlooked. Tushima identifies these texts for what they are: heinous acts that go against the Deuteronomic standard. This leads into a second admirable feature of the work, which is the comparison of David's acts with the law. This comparison shows that David's actions disregarded biblical stipulations for justice at times for his own gain. As Tushima notes, much of the present literature views the books of Samuel as an apology for David with some critique, but this does not go far enough. As Tushima shows the negative portrayal of David, especially in his failure to live up to the Deuteronomic standard is more than a minor critique. A third admirable feature is his desire to discuss the deep flaws in the "superheroes" of the faith that so often go unmentioned. Tushima provides a framework in which to understand why biblical figures can be presented as severely flawed in one book of the Bible and praised in others. These positive elements do not mark all of the admirable features present, but do give a sense of the well-roundedness of this work.

While there are several admirable features, there are a couple of aspects of this work that deserve critique. First, some of Tushima's conclusions seem to be more influenced by proving his thesis than by the biblical presentation. This is the case with his discussion of Michal's childlessness. Tushima advances that 2 Sam 6:23 does not mean that Michal was childless, but that she did not have any children after a certain time. He then contends that 2 Sam 21:8 should be read that the

five sons who were handed over to the Gibeonites were Michal's sons from her other Marriage (David's stepsons). There is clearly a difficulty between these two texts, and the vast majority of scholars have favored a reading of Merab for Michal in 2 Sam 21:8. It seems that this reading should be favored for two reasons. First, 2 Sam 21:8 identifies the husband of the woman who lost her five sons as Adriel. Also, 1 Sam 18:19 notes that Adriel was the husband of Merab, not Michal. It seems more likely that scribal confusion would have happened by mixing up the names of Saul's lesser known daughter with the more well-known daughter than with the addition of an incorrect name of the husband. Second, Tushima's reading argues that the events of 2 Sam 21 occurred before the notice of Michal's childlessness in 2 Sam 6:23. While it is difficult to know how much time elapsed, it seems chronologically unlikely that Michal could have borne five sons (especially considering that she likely would have had multiple girls along with these five sons) between 1 Sam 25:44 when David loses Michal to Paltiel and 2 Sam 3:15 when they are reunited. Even if it were chronologically possible these children would have been extremely young. Tushima, however, does not discuss issues of chronology, but only linguistic issues. While David's actions are abhorrent either way, Tushima's reconstruction seems to be more concerned with casting the harsher light on David than the biblical text intends.

A second critique is that some of Tushima's conclusions are somewhat idiosyncratic. One example of this is his largely unsubstantiated claim that a form of charismatic monarchy is what was in effect in early Israel. In advancing this he seems to misunderstand the sociological roots of this term. This is most clearly seen in his insistence that it necessitates the role of the spirit of the deity (285). In his discussion of this he interacts with neither the main proponent of this view, Alt (*Essays on Old Testament History and Religion*, Doubleday, 1967 [171–237]), nor the main opponent of this view, Ishida (*The Royal Dynasties in Ancient Israel*, de Gruyter, 1977). Some more thorough research and discussion would be beneficial on this particular issue.

*The Fate of Saul's Progeny in the Reign of David* is a valuable addition to research on the books of Samuel and the person of David. It serves as a great complement to other major studies on the person of David including the works of Bodner (*David Observed: A King in the Eyes of His Court*, Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008), Brueggemann (*David and His Theologian: Literary, Social, and Theological Investigations of the Early Monarchy*, Cascade, 2011), Gunn (*The Story of King David: Genre and Interpretation*, Sheffield, 1978), and Halpern (*David's Secret Demons: Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King*, Eerdmans, 2003). It would be a beneficial resource for the advanced student or scholar interested in

David, the books of Samuel, or the use of narrative criticism within Old Testament studies.

DANIEL S. DIFFEY  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

*Job* by Tremper Longman, III. Baker Commentary on the Old Testament: Wisdom and Psalms. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012. 491 pp., \$44.99, hardcover.

While the primary users of this general series are scholars, ministers, seminary students and other educators, this particular commentary has been written primarily for ministers and seminary students. The commentary consists of an original translation with exegetical discussion, exposition, and forty-four reflective essays. The leading ideas are developed in each section, but because of repetition within *Job*, it is not always the dominant motif. The pastoral orientation is especially evident in the essays, which address the kinds of questions that often challenge faith: divine sovereignty and the role of the accuser; the possibility of human innocence; is God unjust?

One of the most instructive aspects of the commentary is the assessment of genre and the influence this has in the interpretation of the whole book. Longman declines discussion of the many suggestions of genre of *Job*, as they are inevitably limited to capturing only particular elements of the composition. He also rejects the description of *sui generis* because it is misleading; understanding is always dependent on the previous experience of the reader (30). It is also unhelpful in that every composition has its own level of uniqueness; differences with other writings are always a matter of degree. *Job* must be classified as wisdom (32) along with Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, with the distinct contribution of denying that sages are the source of wisdom. God alone is the source of wisdom. The book of *Job* tempers the aphorisms and instruction of Proverbs, which encourage wise behavior by connecting (though not guaranteeing) rewards with wise behavior.

Longman accepts the structure of *Job* according to the traditional form found in the canonical text. He outlines the book as preface (1–2), complaint (3), debate (4–27), *Job*'s monologue (28–31), Elihu's monologue (32–37), Yahweh's speech from the whirlwind (38:1–42:6) and epilogue (42:7–17). His concept of the flow of thought is found in an introductory discourse on the theological message of the book of *Job* (51–66). His analysis of the thought flow in this section should be

reviewed by every pastor and educator seeking to understand Job as revelatory literature. Longman wisely avoids the subjective literary critical reconstructions of the end of the debate which try to make Job consistently resist retribution theology and re-create speeches for Bildad and Zophar. The debate is about wisdom; wisdom is a practical category (55). Wisdom is not knowledge of facts so much as ability to know how to live life to maximize success and avoid problems. While the focus of the debate is suffering, the substance of the debate is the question of who is wise.

Longman concludes, “Job’s suffering is the foil that allows a discussion of wisdom” (66). The one chapter he finds most difficult in his structure is the independent poem on wisdom in chapter 28. The problem is that this chapter expresses thoughts that would lead to the resolution of Job’s problem (327). Longman explains this chapter psychologically; sufferers can experience a momentary calm in the midst of the storm. It would have been helpful to have had further discussion on the possible function of this chapter on the theme of wisdom rather than the development of the narrative. If this is the beginning of Job’s monologue, this chapter functions literarily as a parody on the wisdom of the friends. They claim they have wisdom; Job asserts that only God has wisdom. This does not answer the problem of suffering, but suffering is indeed the foil that demonstrates the limits of wisdom. As the opening volley of Job’s response it fulfills the genre of the narrative as Longman describes it.

The psychological element Longman refers to is present in the narrative, and might have been developed further. Job has moments of triumph, as his declaration of 19:25, made famous by Handel in the Messiah. Longman has a most helpful discussion of this in his exposition, but especially in his theological assessment (262–3). In the narrative Job has the ultimate solution to his problem, but this does not serve as a solution to the sufferer.

An original translation generally requires extensive philological discussion for a book like Job, but in the commentary this is kept to a minimum. This is understandable, for not many pastors will make the time to follow philological arguments, and many are not well equipped to evaluate the evidence in any case. Longman has relied on the philological information in the commentary by Clines for his own translation; in his three volume work, Clines has amassed all the linguistic and textual data for another generation. This reliance on Clines is evident in the footnotes of the present commentary, but there is no reliance on the translation of Clines or on his exegetical and expositional conclusions. Longman has provided us with a refreshing analysis of the composition of Job in both translation and theological thought.



There are occasions where the reader will observe significant differences between translations, which can have influence on the interpretation of a passage, but are not discussed in the commentary. An example would be Job 16:20: "My friends scorn me, and my eye drips tears to God." The only footnote to this verse does not discuss the critical question as to whether the reference is to friends that scorn or to a friend as an advocate. The participle requires interpretation; it could be from the word for "mock," but the word might refer to an "advocate," the meaning that we find 33:23. It is a homonym in this form. While it is evident in the exposition of the commentary that the translation "my advocate is my friend" does not facilitate Longman's line of thought on the passage, there is no indication as to why some translations can choose the word "advocate." There is no information to evaluate what the impact of this philological data might be for the interpretation of the passage, which is 'difficult to translate with absolute certainty' (239). It is pointed out in the commentary that Job calls for an advocate at 9:33, noting that this is an important motif (176). Though Job describes God as his adversary, his faith also drives him to God as his advocate. This kind of inconsistency might be leading Elihu to propose that he will be the advocate for Job in 32:12. The form of the word translated "reproof" in the speech of Elihu is identical to that of 9:33, which is a call for an advocate. While Elihu mercilessly condemns Job, he might well regard himself as the mediator who corrects both Job and the friends. The poetry of Job welcomes and often requires such word associations. A large part of the mystique of the book is the way in which ideas are held in creative tension: two contradictory assertions both seem to be affirmed.

One of the goals of the commentary is not to encumber the reader with technical discussion, so it is obvious that in a book like Job there must be a very limited selection of such discussion. Job 13:15 is an example where such discussion deals very helpfully with contrasting translations (207–8). Most pastors will derive significantly more benefit from theological discussions, like those on creation in relation to the speeches of God (443–56). The various analogies from ancient Near Eastern background will prove very informative. The commentary is remarkably succinct in dealing with the complex philological and literary questions of Job, avoiding distracting detail, but thorough enough that it will be one of the most valuable resources a pastor can have in grappling with the message of this profound work.

AUGUST H. KONKEL  
McMaster Divinity College

*Law, Power, and Justice in Ancient Israel* by Douglas A. Knight. Library of Ancient Israel. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011. xxi + 305 pp., US \$40.00, hardcover.

Douglas Knight currently holds a double appointment as Drucilla Moore Buffington Professor of Hebrew Bible and Professor of Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt, indication of his scholarly accomplishments and credentials for writing on the beliefs and practices of ancient Israel. Three decades ago, Knight edited an essay collection celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of the Society of Biblical Literature. The book's title, *Humanizing America's Iconic Book* (Scholars Press, 1982) reflects a central aim of the SBL—understanding the Bible in its human context. Knight has now produced another book addressing the human context of the Bible, this time exploring the relationship between law and power in ancient Israel.

While the enterprise of assessing ancient Israel's law is hardly new in biblical studies, Knight offers fresh assessment by reading the Hebrew Bible through the lenses of legal and social anthropology. And herein lies the book's strong contribution to the field. Knight's theoretical framework enables him to develop an engaging argument that ancient Israel's laws, like most laws, arose gradually in response to circumstance. Through seven coherent chapters, Knight weaves a compelling tapestry of legal and social theory to show that ancient Israel functioned like other ancient peoples: laws emerged from custom and conviction to establish power relations and to maintain justice between various strata of society.

This theoretical framework fills chapters 1 and 2, as Knight draws copiously from sources outside biblical scholarship. His aim is not merely to introduce the reader to models for interpretation; he also intends to convince that, as a human institution, ancient Israel's law requires contextualization within the broader world of anthropology. This understandable conclusion pushes Knight to distinguish between Israelite law—the practices of ancient Israel, and biblical law—legislation enshrined in Scripture. The remainder of the book assumes this distinction and endeavors to show how numerous portions of Scripture provide access to Israelite law.

In chapters 3 and 4, Knight explores the intersection of Israelite law and power in Israelite society. By virtue of their societal prestige, power holders became lawgivers and thus societal architects. Knight considers five legal spheres: villages, cities, states, empires, and cult as he explains that all strata of society participated in crafting law. However, some marshaled greater clout than others. For ancient Israel, as also their ancient neighbors, the balance of power fell to those with the

greatest capacity to enforce their power across generations. The rise of writing facilitated this project, and Knight navigates the intricacies of legal vocabulary and forms, as well as likely scenarios regarding literacy in ancient Israel, in order to show the ubiquity and power relations of law in ancient Israel.

The final three chapters (5–7), which account for more than half the book, examine laws pertaining to the five spheres posited in the previous chapters. Here Knight's theoretical spadework pays dividends. While earlier chapters provide numerous examples of Knight's research, the reader's expectation of rigorous analysis finally finds immense support as Knight demonstrates the legitimacy of his thesis.

This volume deserves commendation for its readable style and breadth of research. From a scholar of Knight's caliber, one would expect little less. As with all research, of course, one discovers quibbles with the author. For example, Knight opens by claiming that his book's "starting point is not the biblical text but the social world of ancient Israel" (1). Yet he then proceeds to discuss the contrast between Israelite law and biblical law by engaging the Hebrew Bible. The reader accustomed to distinguishing between text as Scripture and text as artifact will doubtless understand Knight's subtlety, but a more precise claim might aid in creating a readerly sympathy.

Knight writes for the initiated—scholars and students who accept the premise that the Old Testament may be read for its human elements while its religious components are sidelined. Granting this premise, Knight's logic is sterling, and his overarching endeavor successful. Some readers, however, may resist his strong distinction between Israelite law and biblical law. While the Hebrew Bible reflects practices of ancient Israel, separating actual practice from its literary hull requires more finesse than Knight admits since, by definition, an injunction recorded in the Bible has become a biblical law.

Further, in order to succeed at parsing Israelite from biblical law, Knight needs recourse to literary analysis rather than mere historical research. But, having forsworn the former, Knight limits the success of the latter. A notable example is his reflection on the troubling announcement in Ezek 20 that Yahweh gave his people "bad laws." Forsaking a nuanced literary treatment of the passage, Knight concludes that Israel's law partially lacked morality, but, in its context, Yahweh's odd assertion is nothing of the sort.

Knight's conclusions are unlikely to settle disputes, but, set within the social world of ancient Israel, they provide grist for productive conversation regarding the human elements of law, power, and justice in relation to the practices of ancient Israel, particularly as recorded in the

Hebrew Bible. This has long been the goal of biblical studies, and Knight has once again contributed to its success.

CHRISTOPHER R. BECHTEL  
Evergreen Presbyterian Church, Salem, Oregon

*The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible: History, Politics, and the Reinscribing of Tradition* by Daniel E. Fleming. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013. xxii + 385 pp., US \$32.99, softcover.

The quip that history is written by the winners does not apply to the history found in the Bible. Sometimes, the losers relocate, accumulate their own history, and pass it on to others who can then use it as a model for future generations. Specifically, Daniel E. Fleming argues in *The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible* that Israelite scribes who survived the fall of Samaria relocated to the border town of Bethel and amassed a collection of Israelite history that was eventually repurposed and incorporated as Judah's own history. Fleming successfully uses Judah's absences in its own-recorded history, as in Judges (174), as well as its dominant presence in other books like Joshua (135), to isolate an Israelite history that is distinct from a southern Judahite history. He also reveals social organizations and political traditions that are incompatible with those in Judah during the ninth through sixth centuries, including: a permanent occupation of Israelites in the Transjordan (142f.); an understanding of the herding life in the wilderness (167ff.); and the early history of Judah before David (176).

Fleming, Professor in the Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at New York University, employs his previous work in cuneiform studies and second-millennium BC Syria to inform his interpretation of the ancient Israelites as a people and as a polity. Without his prior work on the ancient cities of Mari and Emar and their peoples associated (see *The Installation of Baal's High Priestess at Emar* [Scholars, 1992], *Time at Emar: The Cultic Calendar and the Rituals from the Diviner's House* [Eisenbrauns, 2000], and *Democracy's Ancient Ancestors: Mari and Early Collective Governance* [Cambridge University Press, 2004]), Fleming's new work would lack vital political exemplars upon which to base his reconstruction of Israel and from which he believes many of the Israelites culturally and linguistically descend (206). His primary exemplar is the *Binu Yamina*, Amorite pastoralists associated with Mari, who lacked a unifying king and only

united for war (213), and whose name is the Akkadian equivalent of Benjamin, literally, “Son(s) of the Right (i.e., south).”

Fleming divides his book into four parts. The first part, “Introduction: Israel and Judah,” explores Israel and Judah as two distinct polities and two distinct origins for the historical narratives that are eventually compiled in the Torah and Former Prophets. Whereas Judah’s political memory revolves around the Davidic Dynasty’s palace and temple, both of which were in Jerusalem (25), each of Israel’s political dynasties established a new capital (until Jehu maintained the Omride Samaria) that was not identified as a cult center (26). Fleming concludes this part of the book with an insightful reflection on the Bible as history:

If we begin with the historical questions, rather than simply asking whether the biblical narrative is “historical” or has a high “historicity” quotient, it remains to be considered whether the Bible provides usable historical evidence in any terms. I conclude that biblical narrative can be useful for historical reconstruction in fresh ways if we focus on the settings for the production and transmission of texts, and on how these settings allow older traditions to remain in continuous circulation. (32)

Upon accepting that history has been revised by the winners, or at least the survivors, we can gain a greater understanding of Israel’s experience of its own history as peoples who collaborated in times of need rather than conclude that Judah’s version of history is not “historical” because of its southern bias.

In the second part, “Israelite Content in the Bible,” Fleming isolates and examines several portions of Genesis–2 Kings that he argues originally circulated in the north. In doing so, he reconstructs the political landscape of those peoples, villages, and regions before and during the rise of the Israelite monarchy as one that remained essentially decentralized. Also in this section, Fleming separates Benjamin from the other Israelite peoples and sons of Jacob. As a people, he notes their unique geographical position, which allowed them to belong to both the larger polity of Israel and, later, achieve a special status in Judah (144, 160). Benjamin’s birth narrative in Gen 35 is markedly different from those of Jacob’s other sons in chapters 29–30, which he persuasively interprets as evidence for the fact that the people of Benjamin were a later addition to Israel (77). The wars between Israel and Benjamin in Judg 20–21 and Benjamin’s absence in the Song of Deborah (Judg 5) serve as further compelling evidence for this argument (149, 157).

In the third part, “Collaborative Politics,” Fleming provides the comparative background to support the idea presented in part two that the transition from a confederation of peoples to a unified polity is not necessarily binding upon the individual constituent peoples. Each people determines whether a new would-be successor is to be recognized as its king. Even if the successor is the son of his predecessor, each people could advance a new king as successor or decide whether it will exclude itself—as opposed to rebel—from the larger polity. Fleming’s examples range from ancient Mesoamerica to pre-Viking Denmark (194–201), but his evidence concerning the Amorite and Aramean peoples of second- and first-millennia Syria is the most compelling, both because of their geographic and chronological proximity to Israel and because of the common heritage as pastoralist societies (206, 220).

The fourth and final part, “Israel in History,” retraces Israelites history and royal politics from a point of view unobstructed by Judahite scribes writing after the fall of Israel in the late eighth century. As informed by part three, Fleming argues that Israel began as a decentralized confederation of peoples and towns—much like the situation described in Judges—and it remained a decentralized polity comprised of peoples and towns through the reigns of Saul, David, Omri, Jehu, and their heirs until its destruction by Assyria in 720 (294f.). In contrast, Judah exercised its right to reject Jeroboam I as king and excluded itself from Israel, subsequently establishing the strictly dynastic and centralized southern polity known as the House of David (298f.).

Throughout, Fleming effectively reconstructs the political realities that distinguished the northern, decentralized polity Israel from its southern, centralized counterpart. In the process, he also presents modern takes on the compositional histories of Genesis–Kings. Fleming typically allows for late compositional dates for the traditional J, E, P, and D sources for Torah and approves of the current generation of scholars’ “abandonment of the notion that key biblical collections were created in the tenth century” (9). Despite this denial of any golden age of writing during Solomon’s reign or even the next two centuries, Fleming maintains the maximalist position that a historical David did, in fact, reign over all of the people of Israel. However, he simultaneously argues that references to a United Monarchy “creat[e] the false impression of a separate political phase” that would disrupt Israel’s continued decentralized nature (293f.) and notes that “David’s particular relationship to Judah appears to be secondary, as later writers reassured Judahite audiences that their royal founder kept a special place for Judah” (98). However Judah re-envisioned its history and relationship to David, any student of the Bible interested in either the modern debate about the composition of Torah and the Former Prophets or the Iron Age

Levant's geopolitics will find that this book leaves the reader ready to reconsider anew history from the perspective of the losers.

SPENCER L. ALLEN  
ROGERS, ARKANSAS

*Logos 5*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2012.

*BibleWorks 9*. Norfolk, VA: BibleWorks, LLC, 2011.

There are three primary Bible software systems that are currently competing for the hard-earned dollars of pastors, students, and scholars: *Logos*, *BibleWorks*, and *Accordance*. Unfortunately, the latter of these three is only available to Mac users, and so will not be reviewed here. Both *BibleWorks* and *Logos* recently launched the newest installment of their products, each with significant upgrades to the interface and usability. Each of the products has the basic features that one would expect in Bible software: search capabilities and access to various grammars and lexicons. However, in terms of available resources, user interface, and overall ease of use, the two differ considerably.

I have been a BibleWorks user since I began my graduate studies some years ago. I have always found the tool very useful for studying the Hebrew Bible because of the ability to look at various grammars and lexicons with relative ease. Having a lexical entry one click away is much better than thumbing through a lexicon to discover a word's various uses. The ability to quickly see every occurrence of a word in the Hebrew Bible is also very beneficial when trying to determine its meaning in a particular context. In this regard, *Logos* far surpasses its competitor. Performing a word search with either of these tools is relatively easy, but the presentation of the material and options available are far superior in *Logos*. For example, right-clicking a word in *Logos* pulls up a window that allows you to view a color-coded pie chart with all of the word's occurrences and how it is translated in your selected version, a list of all the word's occurrences, perform a search on either the form of the word or its lemma, search within the particular resource you are currently using, and search within your entire library (to name a few options). *BibleWorks* has similar features, but they are much less intuitive to use and it has nothing in the way of graphic representation.

Available resources and hypertexting is where *Logos* shines the most. While *BibleWorks* has a mechanism for allowing readers to view the other works in one's library, their available resources are eclipsed by the volume of resources available through *Logos*, which include both

books and a dizzying array of journals. The interface for accessing these resources is also much more user-friendly in Logos, which allows users to search their entire library at the click of a button. Not only that, but Logos has built in a feature that links works cited in one source to the source cited, even if one does not own that particular resource. Footnotes and citations are hyperlinked in Logos so that one only has to click on a link to pull up the source referenced. If that resource is not owned, then the reader will be shown a preview of the resource with the option of purchasing the full book for instant download. This feature alone makes Logos worth purchasing.

Both programs feature maps and other multimedia, but once again the Logos maps and multimedia features are superior to BibleWorks. I found the BibleWorks maps to be difficult to manipulate, whereas the Logos maps were intuitive and easily navigable. Logos also features a vast library of pictures of ancient artwork that relate to the biblical world. These are also available with only a few clicks and users can configure their settings so that these appear automatically in a separate section of the screen. Logos also features well-designed and easy-to-use timelines that put biblical people and events in their larger context.

A final important distinguishing feature between the two platforms is the community that each offers. BibleWorks hosts forums on its website where users can post questions and answers for other BibleWorks users. This platform is helpful for both learning how to use BibleWorks and interacting with others who may be using the software for similar projects. Logos also hosts community forums on its website where users can interact with other users. However, Logos also features a blog that highlights various uses of Logos along with other information that its users may find helpful or interesting. The blog posts show up on the home screen of Logos upon launching the program, increasing the ease with which users can access it. Logos also uses this platform to tell its users about upcoming software releases and various sales. Again, the usability and variety of features on the Logos platform far exceeds that of its competitor.

When I received review copies of each of these platforms, I was a diehard BibleWorks user and had been for nearly a decade. With its variety of resources, usability, and intuitive interface, Logos has won my devotion. After working with Logos for the past few months I cannot imagine using different software for research and writing. I am certain that some people will still prefer to use BibleWorks, but I will be recommending Logos to all of my students, especially those who serve in



the majority world where the cost of shipping often prohibits them from purchasing hard copies of books.

RUSSELL L. MEEK  
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

*Pentateuchal Traditions in the Late Second Temple Period: Proceedings of the International Workshop in Tokyo, August 28–31, 2007* edited by Akio Moruya and Gohei Hata. Leiden: Brill, 2012. xv + 299 pp., US \$144.00, hardcover.

The essays in this collection are drawn from the International Workshop of the Pentateuch with Special Emphasis on Textual Transmission History in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods held in Tokyo in August of 2007. The conference was sponsored by the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science and included seven Japanese scholars and nine from other countries. This collection was published first in Japanese by the Kyoto University Press in 2011. Two chapters appear only in the Japanese edition (Gohei Hata, “The Ruins of Leontopolis Temple: Bubastis Polis and Another Jewish Temple” and Atsuhiko Asano “Paul’s Intent in Retelling of the Abraham Story [Galatians 3–4]”). The collection is divided into four parts with at least one Japanese scholar addressing the theme.

Part One concerns Pentateuchal Traditions. In “The Doctrine of Creation *ex nihilo* and the Translation of *tōhû wābōhû*,” Toshio Tsumura surveys occurrences of the phrase *tōhû wābōhû* in the Hebrew Bible and examines how the LXX and Targumim translated the phrase. He argues that there were two streams of interpretive tradition, one standing behind the Greek translation, which understood the phrase to mean “formless,” and a second tradition behind the Aramaic translations, which understood the phrase as “a waste.”

Yuichi Osumi (“One Decalogue in Different Texts”) compares the two versions of the Decalogue in Exod 20 and Deut 5 in the MT and LXX along with several other “versions” of the commands (Hos 4:2; Jer 7:9; Mark 10:19; Matt 19:18–19; Luke 18:20; Rom 13:9). He argues that there was not one “original” Decalogue that accounts for the variations, but rather it was intended to be recited “without perfect unity of wording and ordering of the commandments” (24).

Eugene Ulrich compares the MT, Samaritan Pentateuch, and several texts in Exodus appearing in the DSS in order to trace the development of the Pentateuch (“The Evolutionary Growth of the

Pentateuch in the Second Temple Period”). While the evidence is sparse, Ulrich argues that there were several revised “editions” of Exod 35–39. There are other variations within the Pentateuchal traditions in the Second Temple period, including isolated commentary, textual variants, and orthographic differences. Some of these variants were included in the MT (Exod 39:21, for example).

Emanuel Tov observes that scribes copied and transmitted the Pentateuch very carefully from the first century BCE on. His article examines the evidence for this careful copying process prior to that time (“The Scribal and Textual Transmission of the Torah Analyzed in the Light of Its Sanctity”). There is some evidence from the DSS that the Pentateuch was given a higher priority (the use of Paleo-Hebrew script and special *de luxe* scrolls). Yet there are “copious scribal interventions” and harmonizations (72). Tov concludes that the popularity and sanctity of the Torah ironically encouraged more changes than other biblical books.

In Part Two there are several essays on Hellenistic Judaism and the Pentateuch. Gohei Hata contributes “In the Beginning was a Greek Translation of Genesis and Exodus.” Hata’s contention is that the motivation for the initial translation of the books of Genesis and Exodus was to demonstrate the antiquity of the Jewish faith in the Hellenistic world. He observes that descriptions of God in Genesis such as El-Shaddai are not transliterated, but translated into similar Greek terms. Place names are interpreted, so that Negev became “land of the south” (Gen 20:1) and the meanings of Hebrew names were sometimes explained (Gen 11:9, “Babel” is explained as “Confusion”). Occasionally measures of length and weight are translated into more familiar Greek terms. But as Hata points out, these changes were probably not enough to make this “history of the Jews” readable for more Greeks. In Alexandria there was no literary compiler who would retell the history in a way that would appeal to the Greek world. For Hata, that task fell to Josephus in his *Antiquities*.

Gregory E. Sterling examines evidence in 26 biblical texts found in *Legum allegoria* in order to determine whether Philo had a different text of the LXX (“Which Version of the Greek Bible Did Philo Read?”) He concludes that Philo did indeed have a different text that was a “more idiomatic translation” than we have, and that “a later copyist aligned the text with a more literal translation” (111). Philo was aware of variations in his Greek Bible, but he was unconcerned since he valued the words of the text as sacred and his hermeneutic allowed him to treat the words without alteration.

Steve Mason argues that Josephus advocated a senatorial aristocracy throughout the twenty books of *Antiquities* and in doing so,

“wade[d] quite deeply into Roman affairs” (153). Mason’s article, “The Importance of the Latter Half of Josephus’s *Judaeae Antiquities* for His Roman Audience,” is not particularly connected to the theme of this collection of essays in that it does not address Pentateuchal traditions directly, but it does show how one Hellenistic Jewish writer attempted to show his readers that the Jewish view of the world was attractive to the Roman world.

Part Three collects three essays on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Pentateuch. Although his article is entitled “The Interpretation of Genesis in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” John J. Collins focuses on Adam and Eve and the origin of sin. After a short synopsis of 1 Enoch and Jubilees, Collins shows that Ben Sira’s view of the origin of sin differs from the Genesis account. There is no prohibition or fall; rather, God himself gives humans knowledge and shows them both good and evil and humans are to exercise free will to choose the good (Sir 17:1–12). Collins then describes a number of texts from the DSS that indicate that the writers of the scrolls shared similar ideas.

James VanderKam examines how the book of Jubilees interprets the early stories in the Pentateuch to show that the patriarchs kept the Law well before it was given (“Exegesis of Pentateuchal Legislation in Jubilees and Related Texts Found at Qumran”). The writer of Jubilees retells stories from Genesis and cleverly blends them with legal material to show, if a story is read correctly, that the patriarchs did live in accordance with the Law. For example, how does Reuben escape the death penalty in Gen 35:11? Jubilees 33:1–20 expands the story (possibly by drawing details from the David and Bathsheba story) to show that the death penalty in Lev 20:11 or Deut 27:20 do not apply to Reuben’s actions.

Akio Moriya’s article, “The Pentateuch Reflected in the Aramaic Documents of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” focuses narrowly on the *Genesis Apocryphon* (1Q20). He compares Gen 12:8–9 to the relevant section in the scroll and makes several observations concerning how the writer used the biblical text. While there is a respect for the biblical text, the writer is free to expand and rearrange it if the writer had different ideas (212). It is possible that the writer of 1Q20 made use of 1 Enoch or Jubilees as well as the biblical text.

The Fourth Part of the collection includes three essays on the New Testament and the Pentateuch. Migaku Sato argues that the cliché “the LXX is the Bible of early Christianity” cannot be fully maintained (“The Septuagint and the Translation of the Gospel Traditions”). He examines five examples of quotations from the Old Testament in the Synoptic Gospels and concludes that the LXX was not fully utilized until

the end of the first century or the beginning of the second, when Jewish people were no longer the majority of the church.

Adela Yarbo Collins argues that the greatest commandment saying in Mark 12:29–31 indicates that the Evangelist’s view of Torah was “deeply influenced by the transformation of the substance of the Hebrew Bible” (242) as it was read and interpreted in by Diaspora Jews (“The Reception of the Torah in Mark: The Question about the Greatest Commandment”). As such, the growing influence of the Gentile mission meant that the commands of the Torah needed to be summarized in terms more familiar to Greek teaching on virtue.

Harold W. Attridge explores the use of the Pentateuch in early Christianity as it was interpreted in homiletic contexts in order to shape and guide communities (“Creation and Sacred Space: The Reuse of Key Pentateuchal Themes by Philo, The Fourth Evangelist, and the Epistle of Hebrews”). He offers examples of midrashic exegesis in Hebrews and John that only work in the text of the LXX. He compares these techniques to examples drawn from Philo. All three writers are applying the Greek Pentateuch to new situations and “playing with it in a larger textual environment” (255).

The final chapter of the book is a “special contribution” from Yutaka Ikeda that seeks to find points of contact between Japanese culture and the world of the Hebrew Bible. Ikeda recognizes that Japanese biblical scholars are *en-naki-shujo*, “outsiders” to the world of the Bible. But so too were the Hellenistic readers of the Hebrew Bible in the Second Temple period. They too sought “points of contact” with the Hebrew world. For example, in LXX Exod 22:28 the Hebrew *elohim* is read as plural, “gods.” Ikeda sees this translation as urging coexistence with other gods. Other areas of contact include the emphasis in the Hebrew Bible on creation and nature and proverbial wisdom literature.

Overall, the essays in this collection are impressive. Each section features top experts in their respective fields who would be considered key contributors in another collection. A few of the articles seem loosely related to the topic of the conference. Sato on the LXX, for example, does not address the reception of the Pentateuch in the Gospels. I would have appreciated more Japanese scholars represented in the collection. Nevertheless, this is an excellent contribution to the discussion of how the Hebrew Bible was used in the Greek and Roman world.

PHILLIP J. LONG  
Grace Bible College

*Revisiting the Days of Genesis: A Study of the Use of Time in Genesis 1-11 in Light of Its Ancient Near Eastern and Literary Context* by Bryan C. Hodge. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011. xxvii + 172 pp., US \$23.00, softcover.

In recent years, there have been numerous scholarly books and debates regarding the Genesis creation accounts in light of ancient Near Eastern (hereafter ANE) culture and context. Among them are John H. Walton's *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (IVP, 2009), as well as its academic version, *Genesis One As Ancient Cosmology* (Eisenbrauns, 2012); C. John Collins's *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist? Who They Were and Why You Should Care* (Crossway, 2011); and Peter Enns's most recent book, *The Evolution of Adam: What The Bible Does And Doesn't Say About Human Origins* (Brazos, 2012). Bryan C. Hodge's volume likewise discusses the Genesis accounts in the context of ANE culture. Hodge boldly explores this perennial issue, particularly the time periods of Gen 1–11.

Hodge's book consists of two major sections: the introductory section (introduction and chs. 1–2) and the main section (chs. 3–7 and conclusion). In the introductory section, Hodge differentiates between the real events and their ideological presentations in literature (ch. 1) and discusses the time references in Gen 1–11 and their history of interpretation (ch. 2). The author proposes that Gen 1–11 should not be read literally (describing the specific details of an historical event) but rather literarily, since it was written to convey a theology of God, creation, humanity, and chaos to the original audiences by using "ideological or theological presentations" (xx) which were commonly accepted at that time. Thus Hodge comments, "The real event is described in mythic terms. There is, therefore, a vast difference between a completely mythic view of Gen 1–11 and a view that would ascribe the use of myth in these chapters to literary description (i.e., a form of symbolic language) within a highly theological presentation of what the author and his readers consider real people and events" (3).

The main section discusses several topics related to the time references, such as the seven-day structure and the cosmic temple of Gen 1 (ch. 3). He discusses the meaning of *bēyôm* in Gen 2:4b (ch. 4), the punishment of the primeval couple (ch. 5), the genealogies of the two seeds (ch. 6), and the days of the deluge (ch. 7). In chapter 3, following J. Levenson and J. Walton's theory, Hodge suggests that Gen 1 describes the creation of God's cosmic temple purified (from the Hebrew word בָּדַל) from an already existing chaotic state in order to sustain human life, and also suggests that the motif of "seven days" in Gen 1 might be a tradition shared with the seven-day structure of ANE texts, which was

used in a temple purification setting. Chapter 4 provides an exegetical discussion on *bēyôm* in Gen 2:4b. Hodge argues that *bēyôm* in the same passage should be taken to be “a literal description of a day” upon which the creation event occurred, but this time period is used as a “literary symbol representing the time of origins for the purposes of narration” (92) since the day in Gen 2:4b is unknown to the Genesis author.

Perhaps the most innovative and thought-provoking chapter in the main section is chapter 5, which considers the Garden of Eden as a symbolic temple and the expulsion of Adam and Eve from it as entering into the sphere of chaos. Chapter 5 is in fact a combined theory of G. Wenham’s sanctuary symbol of the Garden of Eden and *chaoskampf* theory. As Wenham well explains, the similarities between the Garden of Eden and the temple are quite obvious. Hodge, however, goes further, even to the matter of serpent in the field (שׂוֹרֵק). He considers the field as the uncreated/chaotic condition like the netherworld, while the garden (גַּן) is the created/ordered condition.

In chapters 6 and 7, Hodge proposes that the numbers in the genealogies of Gen 5–11 and the deluge should be treated literarily because of the literary structure of these two events, for example, the palistropic structure of the flood account in Gen 6–8.

Although the author offers very helpful and detailed discussions about the use of time in Gen 1–11 in light of ANE culture and its literary context, his discussions are not without problems. The first and foremost problem in Hodge’s methodology is that he attempts to make an item-by-item correspondence between the biblical texts and ANE creation texts. Some items are well matched, but some are far-fetched. For instance, Hodge suggests that the repetitive use of the Hebrew verb בָּדַל (“to separate”) in Gen 1 supports the characteristic of the Priestly writings related to cultic purification (62). It is true that this Hebrew verb is used in a cultic purification setting, particularly in Leviticus. In Gen 1, however, this verb refers to physical separation, rather than cultic separation between clean and unclean. Moreover, Gen 1 never uses any word or connotation relating to “consuming fire,” which often appears in the ANE temple purification texts.

Another problem is that Hodge tends to consider the time period literarily in any passages with literary devices. For instance, he treats the days of the deluge as literary because the passage exhibits a nice chiasm structure, and the seven days of waiting and 40 days of flooding are symbolically significant in an ANE setting. But how should we treat the 150 days of prevailing, symbolically or literally? This number never appeared in the ANE texts. Moreover, the literary device of chiasmus can be found everywhere in the Bible. Accordingly, Hodge seems to ignore the distinctiveness of the creation accounts in the Bible by making every

effort to set up a one-to-one correspondence between the biblical texts and the ANE creation texts. It is true that the authors of ancient Israel did not simply borrow from or were influenced by ancient cultural settings, but rather they lived within ancient ANE context shared with other peoples surrounding them. However, this does not mean that every point in the Bible shares its tradition with other ancient cultural contexts. Finally, there are quite a few typographical errors such as wrong Hebrew spellings (e.g., 80) and misalignment (e.g., 103). Consistent transliteration of ancient texts is also needed.

In spite of these drawbacks, Hodge provides a nice discussion about this complicated issue of the creation account and shows a great deal of sensitivity to the ANE texts and their implication. This volume will be a valuable source to those who desire a deeper appreciation of Gen 1–11 in light of ANE context.

SUNG JIN PARK  
Hebrew Union College

*The Senses of Scripture: Sensory Perception in the Hebrew Bible* by Yael Avrahami. LBHOTS 545. New York: T&T Clark, 2012. xvi + 312 pp., US \$140.00, hardcover.

It is easy to forget that the Bible is an artifact from an actual living culture and that it was written by real people in a real world. Even as an inspired text, it is very much the product of the human mind. Thus, part of understanding the text is understanding the mind whose expression is preserved in it. How did it experience the world and how did it think about the world? In *The Senses of Scripture: Sensory Perception in the Hebrew Bible*, Yael Avrahami seeks to answer part of this question by describing the “sensorium” of the Hebrew Bible—that is, the human senses. This involves questions of anthropology and epistemology, all in an attempt to determine the way in which the Hebrew mind thought about the senses, their function, and their purpose.

Studies on this topic have tended to apply modern (or, at least Western) paradigms to the ancient Hebrew culture and discover a less sophisticated mind. Avrahami works from a different direction. Instead of creating a theoretical and prescriptive paradigm by which to determine the number and function of the human senses in the Hebrew mind, Avrahami’s methodology seeks to understand the senses in their cultural context—how they were understood and expressed in their own culture,

within the corpus of the Hebrew Bible. As opposed to an approach that is theoretical and deductive, Avrahami has chosen to adopt one that is descriptive and inductive.

She does this by studying the associative patterns that exist between words and concepts, based on their usage within the text. Such associative patterns are created not only by common word pairs and clusters, but also by the way certain terms often fall within the same context. Avrahami reminds us, “[i]n a cultural context, a word is never just a word: words evoke other words, idioms, images, feeling, memories” (55). For instance, certain senses often are used within the context of learning and investigation, which “implies that part of the definition of the sensorium would be ‘a vehicle of learning and investigation’” (61). By studying these associative patterns, Avrahami hopes to identify the senses of Hebrew epistemology and “create a holistic description of our understanding and usage of the senses as reflected in the biblical text, with all its inherent complexity and diversity” (64).

*The Senses of Scripture* is adapted from Avrahami’s doctoral dissertation at the University of Haifa (where she is a member of the Department of Biblical Studies). As would be expected, her first chapter addresses the history of research on the subject and methodology. Chapter two identifies the senses she has drawn from the associative patterns in the Hebrew text. While admitting the problematic nature of the endeavor, due primarily to the fact that there is no explicit reference to the term (or concept) for “sense,” Avrahami argues that there does seem to be “sensory itemization” in three passages, thus offering a starting place for inquiry: Ps 115:4–7; Ps 135:15–17, Deut 4:28. From these passages she draws her preliminary categories to argue that instead of the modern pentasensory model, the Hebrew text reveals a septasensory model: sight, hearing, kinesthesia, speech, taste, olfactory, and touch.

In the third chapter, Avrahami seeks to define the sensorium specifically by examining in greater detail the contextual patterns present in the text. From this, she concludes that the senses in the Hebrew Bible are “primarily a somatic experience” (113). By this she means that the sensory experience is associated with a bodily organ that controls it. Here she identifies six body parts associated with the senses: eye, ear, nose, mouth, hand, and foot. Additionally, she determines that the senses are linked to specific derived meanings based on their contextual patterns. For instance, the action of seeing is often associated with control and ownership, which can be used for either help or harm (also, e.g., knowledge and understanding). Avrahami does not argue for a single correlation, but notes that several senses could be connected to the same



contextual subject (so both seeing and hearing can be linked to knowledge), and that senses could fall within different contextual groups (so seeing is used for both control and knowledge, among others).

In chapter four Avrahami examines the theology of the senses, arguing that they are portrayed as divinely given. She also demonstrates a contrast between how senses are used to express such skills as knowledge, ability, and independence (among others) and how the lack of those skills is often expressed via metaphors of sensory disability.

The fifth chapter narrows her focus to a single sense that plays a central role in the Hebrew text: sight. It should be noted that in so doing, she is not arguing for a hierarchical structure in which sight is considered the most important of the senses—indeed, she concludes that there is no evidence of such a hierarchy. However, what she does accomplish is to successfully demonstrate that sight plays a much more significant role in the Old Testament than is usually thought, and she here attempts to trace in much more detail the way it is used and its contextual connections. This chapter has the effect of creating essentially a sub-thesis within the larger work, and her valuable study on this topic is well appreciated. Moreover, this chapter serves well as an example of how each particular sense could be further explored in much more detail.

It should be noted that her approach is essentially synchronic and does not take into account the way in which the concepts may have shifted over time. This may create the false impression that Hebrew epistemology was static. This is not a serious weakness—as a diachronic study may get bogged down into the quagmire of source-critical questions and assumptions that are constantly shifting and ultimately unprovable—but an examination of diachronic epistemology along the lines she has established here would be of value. Further, Avrahami does not address the question of genre. Does narrative, for example, utilize the sense of sight in a different manner than poetry (or, does Wisdom literature use hearing differently than the Prophets)? Additionally, it should be noted that Avrahami limits her investigation to the corpus of the Hebrew Bible. For a more complete picture of ancient anthropology, the study would need to be expanded to include relevant extra-biblical data. Avrahami makes a conscious decision to avoid the study of the expression of other cultures (64). Such a decision is a bit surprising. There is no reason to believe that Hebrew epistemology would have differed so radically from, say, Canaanite, such that a comparative study would not have value. In fairness to the author, the purpose of her study is limited to senses as expressed in the biblical material, so methodologically she is on safe ground. However, the limited nature of her inquiry severely hinders the scope of the application of her findings. What we ultimately discover here is not the understanding of the senses

in the Hebrew mind, but rather the understanding of the senses in the biblical mind.

*The Senses of Scripture* is not an easy book for the uninitiated. Its focus on epistemology will likely turn away most readers who are not themselves interested in the topic. However, this is not to say that Avrahami's contribution is without great worth. On the contrary: *The Senses of Scripture: Sensory Perception in the Hebrew Bible* serves the field well because it disconnects the question of Hebrew epistemology from the Western paradigm by which it has been wrongly judged. By attempting an inductive examination, Avrahami places the investigation in its rightful place: the Hebrew court, judged by the Hebrew evidence in its intended context. While the scope of her conclusions may be limited, her findings have significant implications for the study of the biblical text. Grasping the associative patterns that connect the senses will help the student of the Bible better understand the message of the text and the epistemological tools it is using to express itself. Yael Avrahami has provided a strong standard by which to build further study on this topic in the fields of cultural epistemology, exegesis, and theology.

WILLIAM K. BECHTOLD III  
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

*Sex, Wives, and Warriors: Reading Old Testament Narrative with its Ancient Audience* by Philip F. Esler. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2012. Pp. xi + 408, GB £27.50, softcover.

Esler's book represents a unique blending of literary, social-science perspectives, and ethnographic studies. In this way, Esler presents a scathing critique of both literary approaches that unconsciously read modern assumptions back onto the biblical text and social-science perspectives that err in not properly discerning significant literary features of biblical texts and their resonance with universal patterns of literature throughout the world, past and present. The book is, thus, a *tour de force*, often brilliant and original, always illuminating, though Esler himself succumbs sometimes to his own warnings against letting preconceptions (literary and ethnographic) distort one's reading of the ancient biblical text.

Before Esler examines eight Old Testament narratives with his hybrid approach, he lays the framework in two chapters. The first chapter basically defends his attempt to determine what these biblical texts meant to the original audience. Drawing broadly on various fields like narrative

criticism, religious studies, hermeneutics, sociology, theology, and structuralism, Esler shows why anyone, whether religious or secular, should be interested in how the original audience understood and reacted to these stories. Esler is not interested in all types of literary criticism, just the structural version as in Propp, Greimas, and particularly Christopher Booker (31–32), who has laid out a simple schema of seven basic story-lines: “Overcoming the Monster,” “Rags to Riches,” “The Quest,” etc. This is because Esler is very intent on showing how these ancient stories resonate with moderns: how we can understand them trans-culturally.

But to do this we must attempt to avoid reading our own modern assumptions back onto these ancient stories. Chapter two, thus, lays out the basic anthropological perspective from the Mediterranean basin. Drawing on significant ethnographic studies that have focused on societies that are closer in resemblance to the biblical era than today, Esler discusses topics like honor and shame, group orientation versus individualism, in-group versus out-group, agonistic societies, village and family life, patriarchalism, elite versus non-elite, reciprocity, patron-client relationships, limited good, challenge and response, etc. Most of these terms will sound familiar to fans of John Pilch and Bruce Malina, who pioneered the use of Mediterranean ethnographic studies for understanding the biblical world.

The book is divided into three parts, wherein the eight narratives are discussed: wives, warriors, and sex. Chapter 3 begins the wives section, and Esler closely examines the story of Judah and Tamar (Gen 38). Esler’s most significant contribution to the interpretation of this story is his demonstration that it is primarily about besmirched honor that has to be avenged. Tamar offends Judah’s honor in two ways. First, she had completely bested him financially (she was nowhere to be found when Judah’s servant came to complete the transaction) in that his possessions given as a pledge were of much more value than a goat. Second, as the head of his household, Judah would have been expected to protect the women of it, including Tamar, from sexual violations. Because of these great offenses to Judah’s honor, he must respond aggressively. Esler’s explanation that being burned alive is an honor issue and not a legal one makes perfect sense.

Two small criticisms of Esler’s interpretation can be offered. First, he does not adequately address the issue of the seemingly awkward placement of this story (Gen 38) within the Joseph cycle. And why would the Judean redactors/authors include a negative story about their eponymous ancestor? Esler seems content to focus on the story itself and how the original audience would have experienced it. But would not this audience have heard it within the context of Genesis as a whole? Second,

his comparison of the story with Booker's "Rags to Riches" archetypal plot is too strained to be persuasive.

In chapter four, Esler closely reads the story of Hannah, Peninnah, and Elkanah (1 Sam 1–2). Esler again uses ethnographic evidence to show how shameful barrenness would have been for Hannah and how the relationship between Hannah and Peninnah (polygyny) would have been inherently strained. Esler argues persuasively that Peninnah and Hannah actually engage in challenge and riposte at the shrine at Shiloh over Hannah's lesser status. Eventually, Hannah emerges as the victor in esteem when her son Samuel is born, and this is explicitly referenced in her prayer/psalm of thanksgiving in chapter two. But Esler sees her psalm reaching out beyond the domestic competition to include the house of Eli, which he argues represents an oppressive elite. Booker's "Rags to Riches" schema applies well to this story.

In criticism, it is difficult to designate Elkanah and his family as non-elite, with his ability to bring animal sacrifices to the shrine and afford two wives. The broader "enemy" alluded to in the psalm appears to be the Philistines (chs. 4–7) and not the Elides, as oppressive as they were. The contempt shown for the Elides is more a pro-Zadokite polemic than an instance of social class conflict. Here again Esler appears a little myopic and focuses on the story itself and not its broader literary context.

Part two of the book treats warriors, with special attention to masculinity and honor. Chapter five concerns King Saul and his madness. Esler attempts to connect Saul's ecstatic experiences with the prophets (1 Sam 10:6, 10; 19:23)—which he argues are meant to be viewed negatively—and his bouts of madness. He explains the madness as a form of panic attack or anxiety disorder. Both attempts are largely unpersuasive. Though Esler states at the outset that he is not interested in determining the historicity of King Saul as an individual, he seems to make just that kind of move when he assumes that a *particular* ailment is in view when Saul's dark periods are described. However, Esler's comparison of the story of Saul with Booker's "Tragedy" plot seems to be more applicable than most of the preceding ones.

Chapter six is on David and Goliath and is perhaps one of the best chapters of the book. Esler shows how David and Goliath are involved in challenge and response. Goliath makes his worst mistake when he actually challenges the Hebrew God directly, from David's perspective. David defends his and Israel's honor wonderfully both rhetorically and physically. Esler also demonstrates how David suffers doubly from low status: within his own household and as a representative of his humble family in the context of the Israelite nation. David is able to invert this low status, with the help of God, and so Esler's comparison

of this story with the “Rags to Riches” and “Overcoming the Monster” archetypal plots was, as in the previous chapter, more fitting.

Chapter seven concerns David and banditry, as when he and his men flee from the pursuit of Saul. Esler uses ethnographic research to show that David was no “social bandit” who benefited the peasants whose land he trespassed. Esler shows that David’s banditry was self-serving and what ultimately enabled him to become king. Esler’s comparison of these stories with Booker’s “the Quest” plot, however, is too strained. David goes on no quest, even if understood metaphorically; rather, he simply flees from Saul.

Chapter eight finishes this part of the book with a focus on the story of Judith who slays the Assyrian general Holofernes (the cover of the book depicts this scene). Esler does a good job chastising literary critics who condemn Judith for using deception to defeat Israel’s enemy. Using ethnographic data, he shows that honesty was to be applied solely to in-group members, not foreigners! Esler rightly compares Judith with David rather than other feminine heroines like Deborah or Jael. She assumes a more masculine role in defeating the enemy leader. Esler’s comparison of this story with the “Overcoming the Monster” schema is apropos.

The last part of the book is on sex, with two short chapters. Chapter nine treats the story of David and Bathsheba, which Esler integrates into the larger story of the Ammonite dishonoring of David’s messengers (2 Sam 10). David’s weak response to this shaming is the real impetus behind the story of David’s adulterous affair, according to Esler. This is not fully convincing and neither is Esler’s comparison of the story with Booker’s “Voyage and Return” plot: Esler is forced to apply it in a metaphorical sense.

Chapter ten finishes the book with Esler treating the story of Tamar, Amnon, and Absalom. Esler does a good job in revealing why Absalom was bound to avenge his sister’s rape because he was the male responsible for a woman (his sister) residing within his household. The comparison with Booker’s “Overcoming the Monster” and “Tragedy” plots are a little strained.

The book is highly recommended to all biblical scholars, including New Testament scholars, particularly to those interested in literary and social-science perspectives. Esler has taken a necessary and sophisticated first step in attempting to bring these discrete approaches together.

MARK SNEED  
Lubbock Christian University

*Studies on the Text and Versions of the Hebrew Bible in Honour of Robert Gordon* edited by Geoffrey Khan and Diana Lipton. Leiden: Brill, 2012. xx + 436 pp., US \$212.00, hardcover.

This impressive Festschrift is a collection of twenty-seven essays to honor Prof. Robert P. Gordon, Regius Professor of Hebrew at the University of Cambridge, and his many contributions to the study of the Hebrew Bible, the Ancient Versions, and the Old Testament in its setting in the ANE. It is edited by Geoffrey Khan, the newly appointed Regius Professor at Cambridge and Diana Lipton, a former student and Reader at King's College, London. The great majority of the contributions are by friends, former students, and colleagues at Cambridge and other UK institutions; two (V. Philips Long and William Barker, both former students) are from the US; and one (Rodrigo de Sousa, also a former student) is from Brazil. The articles in this volume represent a wide range of academic interests that are loosely organized into three sections: the Hebrew Bible; Qumran and the Ancient Versions; and Rabbinic, Medieval, and modern interpretations. The volume begins with a brief summary of Gordon's significant academic career and achievements by A. Macintosh, and is accompanied by general, biblical, and rabbinical indices.

N. MacDonald argues that the two wilderness stories in Exod 17 (the spring at Massah and Meribah; the defeat of Amalek) anticipate Exod 24 (covenant making and breaking) and create loose analogies that function as "implicit commentary."

D. Lipton analyzes the "rape" laws in Deut 22:23–29 and the significance of the legal analogy (v. 26). She concludes that the analogy to murder recalls the fratricide cases of Cain's murder of Abel (Gen 4) and the woman of Tekoa's parable of her two sons (2 Sam 14).

A. Millard responds to the claims of "blatant anachronisms" in the books of Samuel. He analyzes two of the ostensible anachronisms—"coined money" (1 Sam 13:21; 2 Sam 18:11–12) and "sophisticated siege techniques" (2 Sam 20:15)—and, after reviewing the archaeological and textual data, he concludes that claims of anachronisms are unfounded.

K. Dell considers the story of Saul in 1 Sam 9–15 and its apparent incongruities and asks whether traditional historical-critical readings and holistic literary approaches are indeed incompatible. Dell suggests that the incongruities cannot be fully understood without a diachronic reading that takes into account the various layers of the text.

G. Davies explores the ethics of friendship by comparing the Jonathan and David story to ancient non-biblical narratives (e.g., the Epic of Gilgamesh and Homer's Iliad) on the theme of friendship.

H. Williamson examines the phrase “signs and portents” in MT Isa 8:18 in the light of the textual evidence (Qumran; Syr; Vul; and LXX), which, at first blush, supports the singular forms. He argues for the possibility that v. 18 was added to vv. 16–17 as redactional comment. The piece ends with some comments on the citation of this verse in Heb 2:13.

H. Barstad challenges the notion that the historical material in the book of Jeremiah is a late literary creation of the Persian or Hellenistic periods by comparing the historical details of Jer 46 to contemporary Mesopotamian and Egyptian sources.

R. Clements offers some thoughts on the intersection of the Christian Church and the academic study of the Bible in the UK by tracing attitudes and approaches to the study of the Psalter.

V. Philips Long argues for the coherency of the third dialogical cycle in the book of Job (chs. 22–27). He enumerates the perceived problems of these chapters and then provides counter-arguments to each one. Then he explores the function of Job 28 in relation to what precedes and follows and concludes that the third cycle is both coherent and serves as a logical transition to Job’s final statement case.

B. Mastin analyzes the five dates mentioned in the Aramaic portions of Ezra and Daniel in the light of contemporary cuneiform documents. He concludes that the preposition ל that is prefixed to the king’s name in Ezra 5:13, 6:3, and Dan 7:1 can be explained as a Hebraism.

J. Aitken asks whether the description of King Eglon as “a very fat man” is one of humor and parody or whether it intends to portray him positively. He analyzes the lexeme בריא “fat” in Hebrew and the renderings of it in Judg 3:17 by the Ancient Versions. He concludes that, though the story has elements of humor, the word “fat” is not humorous in this context but has a different cultural signification to our modern conception.

K. Cathcart looks at some of the earliest translations of well-known Neo-Assyrian texts relating to the Old Testament by pioneering Assyriologists, such as Hincks, Rawlinson, Oppert, and Fox. Discussed texts include the Bull Inscription, the inscriptions of Sennacherib, the inscriptions of the Philistine kings of Ashkelon, and the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III.

P. Williams explores the development of three important English terms: the Bible, the Septuagint, and the Apocrypha. Specifically, he focuses on the evolution of these terms from the plural sense to the singular to designate a collection of writings.

R. de Sousa discusses the relationship between the MT and LXX of Isa 2:6. He attributes the divergent translation in the LXX to three

factors: “intertextuality,” ideological factors, and the rendering of שפיקן on the basis of קפֿשׁ II.

J. Dines seeks to clarify the meaning of the curious term ὄπωροφυλάκιον, generally taken to mean “hut for fruit” or “hut for a garden watchman.” She examines this word in all five occurrences in the LXX and proposes an alternative meaning for ὄπωροφυλάκιον: a cultic statue set up to ensure fertility and ward off evil.

D. Clines compares the text of MT 2 Sam 22 with MT Ps 18 and 4QSam<sup>a</sup> to determine the extent to which the MT text differs to the others and argues, rather controversially, that “in tens of thousands of cases” the text of the original Hebrew Bible was different to our text today.

C. Hempel reviews recent scholarship on the social context of Qumran and offers her own perspective on the basis of texts such as 1QS6.

W. Horbury examines the relation of Melchizedek in Josephus’ account of the fall of Jerusalem and the designation of Melchizedek as *’elohim* in 11Q13.

A. van der Kooij explores the concurrences between Josephus’ *Antiquities of the Jews* and the Targums, specifically Tg Onk (Law) and Tg Jon (Prophets).

M. McNamara’s contribution focuses on the “tel-like character of Targums,” a phrase coined by Robert Gordon himself, as well as the continuum in the targumic exegetical tradition. To that end, McNamara analyzes possible links between the Targums and the NT.

R. Hayward discusses the Aramaic Targumim of Gen 36, in particular, Pseudo-Jonathan, a Targum that is rich in exegesis. He analyzes three interpretive issues in the chapter: the proper nouns mentioned in Gen 36, the mules in the desert (v. 24), and a possible reference to Rome (v. 28).

W. Barker examines the eschatological banquet text in Tg Isa 25 and the Targumist’s conception of Israel’s two great enemies and their fate (v. 7). He analyzes several possible candidates, as well as a few translation techniques employed by the translator.

J. Healey investigates some of the unique linguistic features of the Proverbs Targum, a translation that diverges significantly from the MT.

S. Reif examines the noun מַעֲשֵׂה as presented in various dictionaries, medieval and modern, and asks whether lexicographers have provided sufficient guidance as to its semantic range and various nuances.

P. Alexander surveys the history of the Christian church and how it determined which bible, whether the Vulgate, Septuagint, or Hebrew



Bible, was authoritative.

S. Gillingham discusses the Fadden More Psalter, a ninth-century Psalter recently discovered in a bog in Ireland that divides the psalms into “Three Fifties” (marked by the illuminations immediately before Pss 1, 51, and 101). She explores the possible implications of the “Three Fifties” on the literary and theological shaping of the Psalter.

G. Khan presents, for the very first time, the text of Ibn Nūḥ’s *Diduq* (a series of grammatical notes written in Arabic) on the book of Hosea, accompanied by a translation.

This volume contains many outstanding contributions on a wide range of topics by some of the best scholars today. It is a fitting, though necessarily inadequate, tribute to a brilliant biblical scholar. Those who have the privilege of knowing Robert Gordon will not be surprised that heartfelt words of gratitude are found throughout the volume.

SEULGI L. BYUN  
Oak Hill Theological College