

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Theology of the Book of Amos* by John Barton. Old Testament Theology. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. xx + 216 pp., US \$26.99, softcover.

There certainly exists no famine of words written on the book of Amos. Yet, the Old Testament Theology series seeks “to bridge the gap between the too-slim theological précis and the too-full commentary where theological concerns are lost among many others” (p. xiv). The latest addition to this series comes from John Barton, the Oriel and Laing Professor of the Interpretation of the Holy Scripture at Oriel College, Oxford. This book sets out to uncover the underlying theology of the book of Amos throughout its “compositional stages,” eventuating in a message with continuing relevance for contemporary readers. Regarding the text itself, Barton suggests that an understanding of the redactional elements of the book allows one to see how later interpreters modified the text for subsequent generations.

Chapter 1 begins by addressing critical issues in the book of Amos. For Barton, this step is integral to a proper understanding of its message, both original and secondary. Following a brief introduction to “authentic”/“inauthentic” material, he surveys four major compositional views of the book. On one end of the spectrum is the view that the whole of Amos originates with the prophet himself. On the other end of the compositional spectrum, Amos was nothing more than a wholesale fabrication constructed to project a Deuteronomic picture of prophecy into the eighth century. Though Barton ultimately rejects both extremes, he does affirm the necessity of discerning later material in the book. He concludes the chapter with three distinct subsections: 1) Amos in relation to the “Book of the Twelve Hypothesis;” 2) Amos in relation to the historical figure; and 3) A catalogue of supposed redactional insertions in the book.

Chapter 2, based upon a critical reconstruction, describes the religious beliefs and practices in Amos’s day. Such beliefs included, for instance, an *unconditional* relationship with YHWH. This purported belief would stand against any notion of covenant tradition as the foundation for the prophet’s criticism. Moreover, Barton states that the standard of morality employed by Amos is universal in scope. This is evident, says Barton, in the oracles against the nations in Amos 1–2.

Amos does not use a covenant document as the basis for judgment (except in later additions), but rather grounds his critique on social norms in the ancient Near East.

Chapter 3 distills the theology of the material ascribed to the prophet Amos and his immediate circle, in distinction from later additions. Barton states that “a central pillar of Amos’s theology may be called the *non-election of Israel by YHWH*” (p. 74, italics original). The prophet, as Israel’s first theologian, did not preach a message of hope, but of doom. The larger concern for Amos was to justify the indiscriminate judgment of YHWH. It would be later redactors who would insert hope for a remnant after a refining judgment.

Chapter 4 supplements the preceding discussion by presenting the isolated theology of the later additions in the book of Amos. The material in this section will doubtlessly sound familiar, as it echoes traditional interpretations of the book before the rise of the redactional enterprise. Characteristic of these additions is an eschatological perspective that embodies Davidic hope, as well as an expectation of the transformation of the natural world. Though there may be some overlap between the prophet and his redactors, Barton states that the latter is “far removed from that of Amos of Tekoa” (p. 131). The historical prophet was concerned exclusively with the immediate situation, not the distant future.

Chapter 5 assesses three predominant approaches to the theology of the book of Amos. These include 1) redaction criticism; 2) a holistic approach; and 3) canonical criticism. After summarizing each view, Barton identifies the major proponents and interpretative framework employed by each. At this point, the reader can more clearly discern Barton’s own methodology, which constitutes a modified redactional approach.

Chapter 6 turns to the reception of the theology of Amos throughout various periods in history. From Qumran and the early church, to the Reformation and later liberation theology, the book of Amos has been reappropriated to accommodate differing (and very diverse!) situations. One example that Barton notes is the church fathers’ use of Amos to combat Gnosticism. Many forms of later interpretation, says Barton, miss the original message of the prophet, which again, is a message of devastation.

In chapter 7, Barton attempts “to take the theology of Amos and his book, as far as [he] can reconstruct them, and ask how they might be assimilated or challenged in light of more recent theological insights” (p. 182). Aware of the circularity of his task, Barton sets forward two options: a canonical reading, and a “relatively uncommitted examination.” Due to the parameters of both approaches, the results of

each differ dramatically. Though Barton does not explicitly reject the canonical approach, his methodology is, in essence, incompatible with it. He states that a canonical reading cannot address certain issues in contemporary theology. One example is YHWH's use of a nation to execute judgment upon another nation, for no one today would look upon the current global situation with such a perspective of direct divine agency. Thus, for Barton, the justice of God becomes a problem that no canonical model can adequately resolve.

Barton's monograph presents a host of fascinating insights into the text, theology, and reception of Amos. There are numerous benefits of the book that deserve mention, but my comments must be limited to two particular features. First, Barton's careful textual analysis is evident as he seeks to stratify the material in the book and display its continued significance for later generations. Rather than making generalizations, Barton guides the reader through his exegetical process at each phase of his presentation. Of course, readers have come to expect such careful work from a scholar of Barton's caliber.

Second, Barton's interaction with related secondary literature is helpful. Largely due to the comprehensive scope of his task, Barton surveys the gamut of research on the book of Amos. This culminates in an itemized index for further reading at the end of the book. Though the index itself is selective, Barton includes the major commentaries and studies on the text. Those with knowledge of German will particularly benefit from Barton's bibliographic references.

For all of its strengths, the book does raise various methodological issues that will doubtlessly be problematic to select readers. For instance, at the outset Barton draws a line between material traceable to the prophet (and his circle), later additions, and material belonging to the book's final completion. Within this framework he predicates the subsequent theology of Amos. The question arises of what criteria one should use to determine "authentic" and later material. While there are many points of agreement, there is no plumb line in contemporary scholarship. One example is the polemic found in Amos against idolatry. While some scholars almost *a priori* dismiss these as later additions, others are more open to the possibility of their eighth-century origin.

This methodology is no small issue as with each new addition to the "authentic" corpus, the theology of the updated book is itself modified, and in some cases may radically differ from preceding material. Thus, we can no longer speak of the *theology* of Amos, but only the *theologies* of Amos. While this approach may appeal to some, others may question the legitimacy of such a project. Since the final form of the book is the only solid evidence available to us, it may be preferable to

derive theology from the final form, not alleged redactional stratum (for an excellent example, see Shalom M. Paul, *Amos: A Commentary on the Book of Amos* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991]).

Finally, the problems Barton raises against the canonical model do not ultimately pose as great a challenge as he seems to suggest. Of course, the boundaries of theological interpretation are largely dependent on one's theological tradition. A Jewish reader could offer a resolution radically different from that of a Catholic or Protestant interpreter. Yet, a canonical reading allows other biblical texts to raise a supplementary voice. Amos does not stand on its own. Rather, it contributes to a prophetic corpus that itself is in dialogue with a larger collection of biblical literature.

In the final analysis, Barton is to be greatly commended for this fresh study of the theology of Amos. For being such a concise work, this book covers a wide range of material. Though some may question the larger methodology of his task, both students and scholar alike will certainly benefit from Barton's presentation.

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*Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* edited by Richard Bauckham, James R. Davila, and Alexander Panayotov. Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2013. xl + 808 pp., US \$90.00, hardcover.

The "Old Testament pseudepigrapha," as the term is now commonly used, are ancient books that claim to be written by a character in the Old Testament or set in the same time period as the Old Testament and recount narratives related to it, but which do not belong to the Jewish, Catholic, Orthodox, or Protestant biblical canons. They include apocalypses (angelic revelations to prophets and sages such as Enoch, Moses, and Ezra); magical, oracular, and mantic works attributed to prophets and sages such as Solomon, the Sibyl, and Jeremiah; testaments put in the mouths of Old Testament characters such as Job and the twelve sons of Jacob at the end of their lives; songs and poetry attributed to Old Testament characters, especially David; "rewritten scripture" that retells stories known from the Old Testament from the fall of Adam and Eve to the deaths of the Maccabean martyrs; legends and tales set in the Old Testament period and usually, although not

always, involving Old Testament characters; and various other obscure and intriguing works. This volume is a new collection of Old Testament pseudepigrapha" (p. xvii).

This latest work on pseudepigrapha that contain writings from Jewish, Christian, and polytheistic origins is the culmination of a project of the University of St. Andrews headed by Bauckham and Davila. It is intended to be a continuation of the monumental work by James H. Charlesworth, hence the title similarity and the forward by Charlesworth himself. Richard Bauckham is the recently retired Professor of New Testament at St. Andrews. James Davila is Professor of Early Jewish Studies at the University of St. Andrews and has taught, written, and lectured on pseudepigraphic writings for nearly 30 years. Alexander Panayotov is a researcher at the University of Cambridge where he specializes in Jewish history, epigraphy, and archaeology. The work is inclusive of the efforts of some 50 contributors from the international community who edited more than 60 complete manuscripts and approximately 35 fragments.

Following the lead of Charlesworth's two-volume *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, the book's organization is fairly straightforward. It is comprised of two major sections: "Texts Ordered According to Biblical Chronology" and "Thematic Texts." Each contribution begins with a thorough introduction addressing matters of text, original language, date, provenance, historical importance, theological importance, relation to canonical books, relation to apocryphal books, and cultural importance. However, given the nature of the material covered, not every chapter is able to address all of the above points. Nevertheless, the authors do an excellent job with the information they have. The introduction is followed by a new translation of the text in question. Given that the texts are comprised of works written in a variety of languages such as "Arabic, Judeo-Arabic, Aramaic, Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopic, Greek, Hebrew, Manichean Iranian, Old Irish, Iron Age Jordanian (Northwest Semitic), Latin, Phoenician, Church Slavonic, Syriac, and Manichean Turkic" (James R. Davila, "Practical Challenges in Publishing the More Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Project" [paper presented at the Society of Biblical Literature Meeting, New Orleans, LA, November 23, 2009]), the translation efforts of these scholars are a significant benefit for those desiring access to such works.

The field of pseudepigraphic study is experiencing renewed interest in recent years. In fact, while it has been almost entirely connected to the field of biblical studies from its earliest publication by Fabricius (*Codex pseudepigraphus Veteris Testamenti* in 1713), it is rapidly becoming a stand-alone discipline. However, the question looms

as to the benefit of such work for evangelicals.

While some will quickly recognize the benefits of these writings, many evangelicals will question the investment of time and energy into such an enormous corpora of material that has very little direct impact upon the understanding of the biblical text. One significant point to consider is that these writings represent the theology and historical record of various indigenous faith groups within the period and vicinity of the biblical world. The more information that is available about the peoples and ideologies of the intertestamental world, the better the understanding of the backdrop of the biblical text.

Certainly the value of some works will present itself much more quickly than that of others. In the forward, Charlesworth states that while there was tremendous diversity throughout the region surrounding Jerusalem during the Second Temple period, there were many things that were common to all, such as: a shared promised land, Decalogue, ethnicity, purity concerns, monotheism, *Shema* and others. Many of the apocryphal works better aid scholarship in perceiving of a “shared Judaism” within the midst of such radical diversity (p. xiii). His forward is helpful in understanding the relevance for such a book to biblical scholarship. Nevertheless, the editors also note in their introduction: “certainly no one should imagine that all these texts are important for reconstructing the world of the Righteous Teacher, Hillel, Jesus, Paul, Gamaliel, Johanan ben Zakkai, and the Evangelists” (p. xv).

Of greatest significance to evangelicals will be Davila’s chapter on “Quotations from Lost Books in the Hebrew Bible” with an excursus on quotations within the New Testament (pp. 673–687). While the subsequent translation by Davila includes only those texts he has judged as having had the greatest possibility of existing as independent works, within his introduction he notes all quotations given within the Old and New Testaments—something of significant worth for the evangelical, whether scholar or minister. Those Old Testament portions impacted by these works are primarily the Pentateuch, books of the putative Deuteronomistic History (i.e., Joshua, Judges, 1–2 Samuel and 1–2 Kings), and Chronicles.

Within this same chapter, Davila addresses *The Book of the Righteous*, also called *The Book of Jashar*. Discussion surrounding the references in Josh 10:12–13, 2 Sam 1:17–18, and possibly 1 Kgs 8:12–13 have been substantial in recent days. Davila gives a solid, non-technical explanation of the relevant data while not engaging in speculative conjecture. He notes, “a number of compositions in the Middle Ages and later have been published under the name of the Book of the Righteous (The Book of Jashar), but they have no connection with the original Book of the Righteous cited in the Hebrew Bible” (p. 676).

While the work has much to commend itself to the scholarly community, the reader will need to consider the value gleaned from the smaller portions directly related to the biblical text compared to the suggested retail price of the book. For some, this will be the type of book best viewed in a library due to budgetary constraints. Some will find the massive amount of material covered within the volume a bit intimidating and even overwhelming. The practicality of the work, especially for those whose primary purpose is to enhance a pulpit ministry or small group Bible study, is wanting. This is certainly no reflection upon the scholarship surrounding the book; rather it is a matter of pragmatics. Yet for those willing to spend some time and effort in better understanding the available literary accomplishments of this period, the benefits will be substantial.

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*Obadiah: The Kingship Belongs to YHWH* by Daniel I. Block. Hearing the Message of Scripture Commentary Series. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013. 128 pp., US \$29.99, hardcover.

Daniel I. Block is the Gunther H. Knoedler professor of Old Testament at Wheaton College. His broad interest in the Old Testament is reflected not only in this commentary but in his numerous other works such as *The Gospel According to Moses: Theological and Ethical Reflections on the Book of Deuteronomy* (Cascade, 2012), two volumes on Ezekiel in the NICOT series (Eerdmans, 1997 and 1998), and Judges and Ruth in the NAC series (Broadman & Holman, 1999). Block is also the editor of the new series of which his commentary on Obadiah is the first volume, and he spends several pages to introduce the series. The goal of the series is to enable modern readers “to hear the messages of Scripture as biblical authors intended them to be heard” (p. 10). This entails much attention to the rhetorical strategy of the biblical author. What theological points does the author want to make? How does the writer make those points? And “[w]hat significance does the message of the . . . text have for understanding the message of the biblical book within which it is embedded and the message of the Scriptures as a whole” (p. 10).

In keeping with the guidelines of the series, Block has made his own translation of the entire book of Obadiah. When referring to the Hebrew he gives it in transliteration, and more technical comments are mostly confined to footnotes. Block strives to represent idioms in

modern parlance (e.g., “he has no clue” for the literal “no understanding in it,” v. 7). Contrary to some recent suggestions about reading the Minor Prophets “as an intentional literary composition,” Block argues instead that interpretation of each book individually gives “a more important control for the interpretation of the books than their location in the canon” (p. 22). He settles on a date for Obadiah’s ministry in the mid-sixth century B.C., but he also raises the possibility of an editor in the Persian period. If so, then “the oracles contained therein come from an earlier time” (p. 23). Even so he rejects both the idea of a mid-fourth century B.C. date as well as alleged late additions to the book.

Of special interest is that Block refers to archaeological data to support “that the Edomites were indeed poised to mock the Judeans as they fell to the Babylonians and to encroach on their territory” (p. 26). The people left in the land in Jerusalem and its environs after the Babylonian captivity form the audience of Obadiah’s book. The prophet’s “rhetorical aim” was then “to rebuild his audience’s hope in the eternal promises of God” (p. 35). The message is that YHWH’s justice and fidelity “will prevail” in light of his covenant promises to the ancestors. The “rhetorical strategy” is two-fold. First, the book is written in “a style that is rhetorically emphatic and transparently passionate” (p. 35). Second, the author frequently appeals “to higher authorities” (p. 37). These “authorities” include YHWH himself, “a celestial angelic figure” (p. 37; see v. 1), and “the voice of YHWH through his professional predecessors” (p. 38). Block derives a five-part structure from the book centered around the term “day”—the “day” of Esau’s doom (vv. 2–10), the “day” when Esau committed crimes against Judah, the “day of YHWH” against the nations, and the restoration of “Jacob” on that same “day of YHWH.” The introduction of the first verse sets “the Stage for the ‘Days’” (p. 43). The first and last divisions, however, do not actually use the term “day.”

One notable discussion concerns the rhetorical effect of verse seven as it mentions the enemies of Esau/Edom. First, they are “all the men of your covenant,” with the Hebrew using three words. Then they are “the men of your peace,” using two words. And finally they are “your bread,” using only a single word. In this way Block shows how the rhetoric helps to underscore the textual integrity of the word “your bread.” Block’s translation of verses 12 to 14, however, misses an important rhetorical feature. He rightly rejects “you should not have” of the NRSV (cf. KJV), but his own “you should not” doesn’t seem less future looking than “do not.” The Hebrew negative with a second person imperfect begs to be interpreted as prohibiting the action negated. The use of rhetorical prohibitions lends to the passion of the prophetic speech, perhaps even a note of sarcasm. Such a usage is all the more



appropriate when considering, as Block argues, that Edom was only the “hypothetical” audience for the message (p. 30).

Block takes seriously some major intertextual issues, and that is a strength of this commentary. He discusses in detail the obvious connections between Obadiah and Jer 49, but he also brings in connections or parallels with Isaiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Amos, and Zephaniah, among others. He even discusses YHWH’s response to Edom and making concrete the images in Hannah’s prayer (1 Sam 2:1–10) and Mary’s Magnificat (Luke 1:46–55).

The new series that this commentary inaugurates (Hearing the Message of Scripture) promises to be a valuable help for pastors, students, and the proverbial “educated layman.” Many helpful charts or diagrams bring out the significance of intertextual connections, the structure of the book, and the flow of the argument. In fact, the layout of the book with translations, transliterated Hebrew, and charts makes it easy to follow Block’s argument throughout the commentary. The goal of enabling modern readers to hear the message of Obadiah as the author intended it to be heard could never be accomplished fully, but Block has come about as close as one can come. This useful volume on Obadiah will surely whet readers’ appetites for the next volumes to appear.

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*Reading Genesis 1–2: An Evangelical Conversation* edited by J. Daryl Charles. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2013. xxi + 240 pp., \$24.95.

*Reading Genesis 1–2: An Evangelical Conversation* presents the proceedings of a symposium that took place under the auspices of Bryan College in Fall 2011. The organizers of the symposium intended to bring together evangelical scholars with varying interpretations of the creation account(s) in Genesis to delineate their views openly and charitably. The latter adverb should not be overlooked; some evangelical debates on creation in recent years have been conducted in a less than edifying manner, and the consequent focus on fostering “irenic dialogue” (p. viii) was appropriate. Judging from the book, the symposium succeeded in achieving this goal.

The main substance of the book is a series of five essays, by the five panelists at the symposium. In the first essay, Richard Averbeck (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School) presents a view that “has affinities with the so-called ‘framework hypothesis,’ but also varies from it in

major ways” (p. 31). Interacting primarily with comparative material from the ancient Near East and other Old Testament texts, especially Ps 104, Averbeck proposes an “analogical or, if you wish, anthropomorphic” (p. 27) view of Gen 1, suggesting that the seven-day week is a schematization patterned on the ideal Israelite week of six days of work and one of rest. He argues that it was never intended to be read literally, even by the ancient audience. On the other hand, Averbeck reads Gen 2 literally, depicting historical humans in a historical garden.

Next, Todd S. Beall (Capital Bible Seminary) furnishes a standard young earth creationist interpretation. Using a question-and-answer format, he submits that (a) one should apply a consistent (literal) hermeneutic to all of Genesis and not arbitrarily dehistoricize Gen 1–11; (b) in terms of genre, “the inescapable conclusion is that Gen 1 is narrative prose” (p. 49), suggesting a literal meaning; (c) Gen 1–11 “stands apart from the ANE worldview in every respect” (p. 52) and thus should not be interpreted like other ancient Near Eastern texts; (d) “Jesus and the apostles saw Gen 1–2 and Gen 1–11 as historical fact” (p. 56), so the New Testament witness also supports a literal reading; and (e) evangelicals who support nonliteral readings of Genesis unnecessarily concede the validity of Darwinian evolution, which Beall holds very much in doubt.

C. John Collins (Covenant Theological Seminary) reads the text similarly to Averbeck, as both scholars acknowledge. Collins understands the days of Gen 1 to be analogical. Also like Averbeck, he reads Gen 1 and 2 harmonistically; with special emphasis on the fulcrum of Gen 2:4, he focuses on demonstrating that the two chapters do not provide separate creation accounts but “Gen 2 elaborates the events of the sixth day of Gen 1” (p. 82). Collins labels the account in Gen 1 “exalted prose narrative” (p. 86), but it morphs into “ordinary historical narrative” (p. 83) in Gen 2. Although he declares the entire complex to be historical (p. 91), I remained uncertain what precisely he means by that in light of the analogical days.

The overarching point of Tremper Longman III (Westmont College) is that Gen 1–2 is true in what it intends to teach, but what it intends to teach is *that* YHWH, the “LORD God,” is responsible for creation; the text never intended to address *how* creation happened. Longman categorizes the genre of the text as “theological history” (p. 110) and appeals to the variations in sequence between the accounts in Gen 1 and Gen 2, as well as differences between Gen 1–2 as a whole and other Old Testament creation texts, to argue that the biblical authors were more concerned with the theological messages of creation than with providing a literal account. He concludes from this that Adam’s existence as an historical individual is not necessary to the Bible’s

truthfulness, nor does he hold that the New Testament authors necessarily thought of Adam as historical.

In the final main essay, John Walton (Wheaton College) encourages “competent” and “ethical” readings of Gen 1–2 (pp. 141–47). By competent he means that readers must be attuned to the ancient Near Eastern cognitive environment in which the text was born as well as the genre of the text; by ethical he means that “we must undertake to read with the text rather than against it” (pp. 141–42). He devotes most of his essay to describing the cognitive environment, which he proposes points to a “functional ontology” (p. 157)—“material objects are not the interest of the writers” (p. 151). Instead, in the ancient world “creation” was defined primarily by granting functions. Walton is not compelled to attempt to harmonize Gen 1 and Gen 2 because the first deals with creation of sacred space on a cosmic level and the latter with sacred space on a terrestrial level. Moreover, Walton views Adam and Eve as a representative couple; their importance derives not from their historicity but from their archetypal statements about mortality, marriage, etc. He does not take a strong stand on their historicity, averring that their “archetypal identification does not resolve the question of historicity because archetypes *may* also be historical individuals” (p. 167, emphasis mine).

Each essay is followed by responses from the other four panelists; the volume thus has the feel of the Counterpoints series from Zondervan. The book also includes an introduction from Victor P. Hamilton (Asbury University, emeritus), and reflective essays by Kenneth J. Turner and Jud Davis (both of Bryan College). I will restrict my comments primarily to the main essays and the responses, but this is not to diminish the value of the auxiliary material—for example, Davis’s contribution, which is essentially a *précis* of why he believes in young earth creationism, provides an excellent, concise treatment of this issue.

One critique that I would level against the original symposium and, by extension, the subsequent book, is that while the editor, J. Daryl Charles, writes in the foreword that the scholars included are “Broadly representative of wider evangelicalism” (p. viii), this does not seem to me to be the case. I was surprised to see Longman, a supporter of theistic evolution, invited to speak at Bryan College, but the panel still did not include a single scholar who accepts the basic tenets of source criticism, which are the consensus in most non-evangelical biblical scholarship and, more importantly, are accepted by a large and growing number of evangelical scholars. For example, although Longman makes no attempt to harmonize Gen 1 and Gen 2, he does not protest the chapters’ Mosaic authorship (p. 99), which a growing number of evangelicals find untenable. I submit that whatever one makes of mainstream source

criticism, the volume would have been better served by having a proponent of this position in place of, for example, either Averbeck or Collins (I write this not at all as a criticism of either of their contributions, but simply in acknowledgment of a large degree of redundancy in their positions). I hesitate to draw inferences from the omission of such a scholar on the panel without knowing how the panelists were chosen, but I do consider it a noticeable lacuna.

Those familiar with recent evangelical discussions of Gen 1–2 will infer from the summaries above, correctly, that there are no surprises in this volume. The one possible drawback of inviting a quintet of established, prolific scholars is that many are already familiar with the views presented here. This is my main caveat for those considering reading the book. Another critique is that although the response sections are generally quite helpful for the reader, the writers occasionally lapse into simply restating their positions instead of engaging their interlocutors. For example, the contributors repeatedly talk past each other on the subject of genre, leading to such unhelpful comments as “In fact, as I have demonstrated in my essay, Gen 1 is written in historical narrative. Its genre is narrative” (p. 132, Beall’s response to Longman). An outside reader (especially one familiar with genre theory) realizes that the scholars are bringing to the table entirely different understandings of what genre is, but they fail to examine this. The contributors also sometimes resort to hobbyhorses, such as Collins quoting a long section of his own earlier review of a Walton book (pp. 180–81), despite the fact that the subject was something Walton never addressed in his essay for this volume.

These critiques aside, there is much to commend the volume. The authors have done us a service in providing distillations of their broader arguments in article length, in a single volume. All of the essays and responses are carefully presented. The breadth of the views and the quasi-dialogical style also yield one excellent advantage to the volume, namely, it allows the reader to see what aspects of interpretation hold the most (and the least) weight for the various interpreters with some clarity; that is, this book helps the reader understand *why* the scholars have such differences of opinion. For example, Walton’s focus on the ancient Near Eastern cognitive environment in which the Old Testament writers lived shapes his entire exegesis. But this holds little weight for Beall, who rejoins, “Walton’s reliance on his view of ANE thought is excessive, to put it mildly. Our interpretation of the OT should rely first on what other biblical texts say, since it is the Bible that is authoritative, not ANE texts” (p. 173). This gets directly at the heart of why the scholars disagree: Beall largely dismisses comparative evidence because to him the Bible is fundamentally other by virtue of being the word of God; he

leaves little room for divine accommodation to the human authors. Walton, meanwhile, appeals to comparative evidence because it helps one understand the human authors' worldview. He privileges this over the New Testament authors' interpretations because the latter, although inspired, wrote from an entirely different cognitive environment. With more space I could discuss several other issues that become clear upon reading the interactions in this volume. That is not to say that each issue is resolved—the opposite is true, if anything—but the reader can see the essence of the debate: the status of Gen 1:1 as an incipit (see especially the essays and pertinent responses by Averbeck, Collins, and Longman), the nature of the fulcrum verse Gen 2:4 (Collins, Longman), the relationship between Gen 1 and Gen 2 (Averbeck, Collins, Longman, Walton), the role of science in shaping our views of Gen 1–2 (Beall, Longman), and more. But for these one must read the book.

One final note seems pertinent in light of the role that Bryan College played in the creation of this volume. Unrelated to the publication of *Reading Genesis 1–2* (so far as I am aware), in February 2014 the Board of Trustees of Bryan “clarified” the institution’s Statement of Belief so that it now overtly requires all professors to declare their belief in the historical Adam and Eve and to disavow evolution. The move restricts the faculty’s freedom of interpretation of the biblical story of creation, and is at odds with a comment made by Kenneth Turner—a Bryan College professor—in one of the book’s concluding essays: “Bryan College’s belief statement on creation allows faculty to hold a variety of positions. . . . Bryan College both supports a specific view of creation (through CORE) and allows a measure of flexibility concerning its regular faculty” (p. 187 n. 1). This not only highlights the ongoing significance of the opening chapters of Scripture for the evangelical community, it also lends a certain disconcerting irony to the volume—the symposium suggests that those at Bryan College want to encourage dialogue about the interpretation of Gen 1–2, but the modified Statement of Belief seems to stifle such dialogue. Perhaps the greatest contribution of *Reading Genesis 1–2* lies in its demonstration that devout, knowledgeable people of faith, within the notoriously fuzzy confines of evangelicalism, can have serious disagreements about the understanding of creation without ultimately threatening the gospel. I hope that this message spreads and finds affirmation both among individuals and within evangelical institutions.

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*Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs* by Edward M. Curtis. Teach the Text. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013. Pp. 178., US \$29.99, softcover.

*Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs* is a new volume in the Teach the Text Commentary series published by Baker. This series is designed to aid preachers and teachers in the preparation of their sermons and lessons. The content is not overly technical, and the commentary is organized around pericopes that are a manageable size for preaching and teaching.

The commentary has a helpful organization for preaching and teaching. Each manageable pericope has its own chapter organized around “Understanding the Text”; “Teaching the Text”; and “Illustrating the Text.” The first of these has the subsections: “Historical and Cultural Background”; “Interpretive Insights”; and “Theological Insights.” This format suits the purpose of the series. Curtis does not offer new insights into the interpretation of Ecclesiastes or Song of Songs, but he does make some common interpretations accessible for the preacher and teacher. He does not offer an interpretation of every verse in such a short volume, but there is commentary on a selection of important verses. In this sense the book gives an overview that should be supplemented by more in-depth study.

This book is well presented and includes color images on most pages. These images are not randomly placed, but serve to illustrate aspects of Ecclesiastes or the Song of Songs. For example, there are illustrations of the Epic of Gilgamesh, Nut swallowing the sun, the rafters of a house, jewelry, and an ancient lock (pp. 9, 12, 94, 146).

Curtis begins with Ecclesiastes and, overall, his interpretation is optimistic. Even though pleasure in life is limited, “Qoheleth points his readers to a path of God-centered living” (p. 7).

The author’s own theology is seen in the introduction to Ecclesiastes where on page 3 he identifies “human disobedience in the Garden of Eden” as a reason for the chaos in life (see also p. 30). This is not the theology of Ecclesiastes, however, and Curtis admits that “Qoheleth never does more than obliquely allude to these theological ideas.” Curtis later offers Qoheleth’s allusions to Genesis in support of this interpretation (p. 8). He makes his approach explicit when he observes that Qoheleth makes little or no mention of common themes from the Old Testament, so that “if his readers are to explicate the message and application of Ecclesiastes the ideas will have to be brought in from outside the book” (p. 5). This seems like an attempt to bypass the message of Ecclesiastes itself, although Curtis later warns against moving too quickly to New Testament ideas (about death, p. 23).

Curtis deals with the contradictions of Ecclesiastes by suggesting that Qoheleth is forcing his readers to think (p. 35). Acknowledging the innate complexity of life, Curtis writes that Qoheleth “draws us into the struggle” (p. 38). He also has a longer treatment of this subject in one of the interludes which is titled “Additional Insights” (pp. 68–69, see also pp. 60–61).

The second half of the book deals with the Song of Songs. Curtis approaches the book as descriptive of an ideal relationship between two fictional characters, a man and a woman who represent all lovers (p. 117). Curtis mentions the “shepherd hypothesis” (three main characters) but does not give details of this approach or reasons for his rejection of it.

Curtis sees Song of Songs as a portrayal of the kind of ideal relationship that Genesis describes as “one flesh” (p. 119). The themes that Curtis emphasizes in his interpretation are: passion and delight, mutual commitment, mutual praise, and persistence. The format of this commentary series is designed for preaching and teaching, and Curtis draws these themes into advice for romantic relationships.

Curtis does not offer a definition of love in the biblical usage or his own. Love in the Song of Songs is obviously romantic love, but also a commitment, as Curtis recognizes. However, he seems to distance “love” from “commitment” in his own usage in which love is apparently an emotional affection. He juxtaposes love and commitment when he writes of arranged marriage as “a commitment rarely based on love but which would hopefully blossom into love” (p. 130. See also p. 138). A word study on the biblical vocabulary for love would be appropriate here, such as the helpful and nuanced definition that Curtis gave for *hebel* in the Ecclesiastes section (p. 11).

Curtis could also strengthen the cultural background of his commentary by explaining the close connection between engagement and marriage in ancient Israel. Instead, by characterizing Song 3:6–11 as the marriage scene of the lovers and juxtaposing courtship and marriage, he leaves the reader with the impression that these categories were the same in ancient Israel as they are in modern society (pp. 117; on p. 134 Curtis admits that the marriage scene of Song 3:6–11 is not specifically connected with the lovers in the Song).

He often draws a connection with Egyptian love poetry and his analysis leads him away from dependence. Instead, he suggests that the similarity is due to “universal human experience rather than literary or cultural borrowing” (p. 126, but see p. 143 where he admits the borrowing of the language of love poetry).

Curtis deals adequately with the verses on wealth and Solomon’s “thousand” in Song 8:7 and 8:12. However, he fails to connect these with

the wider theme of wealth in the book, or to explore the poem's critique of Solomon's attitude toward wealth and love.

Pastors and teachers will find this volume at least a good starting point for researching their presentations on Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs. These are challenging books for preaching and teaching, and Curtis has made them more accessible with his labors.

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*1 & 2 Chronicles* by Louis C. Jonker. Understanding the Bible Commentary Series. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013. xiv + 338 pp., US \$22.99, softcover.

Louis Jonker is professor in Old Testament at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. He has written extensively on Chronicles, publishing articles as well as editing and contributing to numerous volumes. As part of the newly released Understanding the Bible Commentary Series, Jonker offers his work along with the tenets of the series: that of "believing criticism." In this respect, Jonker combines a critical approach to modern scholarship along with an ardent belief in the Bible's authority for the church. This work seeks to bridge a gap that may appear between academy and church when either institution focuses too heavily upon the critical elements of the text or the uncritical theologizing of a passage. The intention is to provide the theology and message of Chronicles for readers today.

To begin, the book itself can be broken into five sections that coincide with the major units of Chronicles: introduction, family lists, David, Solomon, and the kings of Judah. The main sections include a brief introduction as well as a final summary. Each main section is further divided into subsections that also contain a brief introduction. Notes can be found at the end of each subsection that will facilitate further interaction with articles and monographs. At the end of the commentary, Jonker provides a brief bibliography of works that have appeared since 2000.

Jonker approaches his commentary from a rhetorical perspective. This approach is based upon the results of the history of Chronicles interpretation, which Jonker briefly overviews through the use of three broad lenses beginning in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. While scholars have approached Chronicles to ascertain the historical authenticity of its account, which often led to either Samuel-Kings or



Chronicles being “more” historically accurate, other scholars, perhaps “under the influence of the disillusionment with ‘objective history’” (p. 3), began to approach Chronicles in order to understand the nature of the composition (i.e., What is Chronicles?). Following the attempts to understand the literary nature of Chronicles, a rhetorical approach has emerged as of the last quarter of the past century that seeks to understand the intention of the work. From this viewpoint, Jonker proffers the use of Chronicles as pivotal in terms of social identity theory. The argument is that Chronicles is not a conclusion of who Israel was, but rather that the “very construction and composition of Chronicles were part of a dynamic process of identity negotiation” (p. 4).

This, in turn, relates to Jonker’s date for the composition of Chronicles, which he argues is sometime during the fourth century B.C. (prior to the invasion of Alexander the Great in 322 B.C.). While Jonker admits that editing may have occurred during the Hellenistic period, Chronicles itself is “suffused” with the atmosphere of the late Persian period (p. 8). Using the theories found within social psychology, Chronicles can be understood as a witness to identity formation for the inhabitants of postexilic Yehud.

Rather than attempting a verse-by-verse commentary (which is well beyond the scope of this series), the text is commented on by following blocks of verses containing a message that Jonker feels the Chronicler was attempting to convey. Jonker compares the text in Chronicles, more often than not, to its major source as found in Samuel–Kings. He does, however, provide a caveat that caution must be exercised when comparing the Chronicler’s source texts, as the source text itself has undergone its own history of growth and composition. Such is the tempest of Chronicles scholarship. Perhaps the better way to view the commentary is in terms of a “final form” or canonical approach. The genealogies and other texts of Chronicles are compared to other points in the canon and while the term “source” is used, the text is essentially the MT. To be fair, Jonker does occasionally include text-critical comments when deemed necessary. In the end, Jonker is seeking to understand the rhetoric (i.e., message) of the Chronicler as it exists for readers today.

Aside from the issue of “sources,” Jonker provides a consistent comparison as to the differences that Chronicles and Samuel–Kings has provided in the texts we have today. In doing so, Jonker provides numerous possibilities in terms of understanding the community of Yehud during the Persian period from a text-pragmatic perspective. For instance, the genealogies are recommended as being read not as a family list of individuals, but rather as a social identity map—their purpose is to “promote the influence and extent of these different sections of society

but also shape their supposed interrelationships” (p. 43). Jonker also proposes that by drawing upon the larger aspect of the place of the tribe of Benjamin and its historic role, the Chronicler is able to establish an “All-Israel” identity. Benjamin was required, with its mixed history, as a means to emphasize the relationship between the North and the South. As a result, the Chronicler’s rhetoric then becomes clearer in its distinctive variance from the Deuteronomistic History. While the Saul narrative in the DH provides a foil for the “shining star” of David, the Chronicler also utilizes the Saul narrative as part of the larger discourse about Benjamin and the unification of “All Israel” (p.94). Thus, a reason is posited for both the inclusion of the Saul narrative as well as the specific mention of the tabernacle in Gibeon, the latter being altogether absent from the account in Samuel–Kings.

One of the dangers of simplifying the structure of Chronicles, which is necessary for any commentary, is the potential to skew the message of the Chronicler. By utilizing a chapter division such as “David, the First King,” which clearly encapsulates a major portion of Chronicles, the subtler literary craft enacted in the text may be overshadowed. While Jonker makes the comment that David is seen as the ideal king (and with the Chronicler’s treatment of Saul only including a narrative surrounding his death, David is indeed arguably the “first” king of Israel), the point is also made that much of the David narrative is in service to the cultic institutions (i.e., the temple is more central than the king throughout the narrative; see also the Subsection headings: “David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem”; “A House for YHWH and for David”; “A Place for the Temple”; “David Orders Solomon to Build the Temple”; “David Organizes the Cultic and Secular Officials”; “Final Arrangements for Building the Temple and Transfer of the Kingdom to Solomon”). Furthermore, in the section of the commentary concerning Josiah, the point is made that Josiah “walked in the ways of his father David” as opposed to the rendition in 2 Kgs 22:2 that says Josiah “walked in *all* the ways of his father David” (italics mine). Jonker makes the point that the Chronicler may here be distancing some of the deeds of David from Josiah, as the Chronicler has portrayed David as “having too much blood” (p. 288). In so doing, Jonker implicitly makes the point that David is in fact not a fully “ideal” king.

While this commentary does not contain gratuitously detailed notes or lengthy engagement with the scholarship surrounding contentious aspects of Chronicles’ studies, Jonker does manage to selectively fill his notes with a depth well beyond most other volumes in the commentary series. One minor issue is in regards to the bibliography of commentaries appearing since 2000. While Mark J. Boda’s commentary (*1–2 Chronicles*; Tyndale, 2010) is listed within the notes of

Jonker's commentary (p. 23), it is absent from the final summarized list (p. 319). Jonker certainly utilizes and references many recent studies and often relies upon and repeatedly points readers to the works of Gary Knoppers (*1 Chronicles 1–9*; *1 Chronicles 10–29*; Doubleday, 2003, 2004) and Ralph Klein (*1/2 Chronicles: A Commentary*; Fortress, 2006, 2012). Acknowledging the depth provided by these studies, Jonker is able to take his readers on a journey alongside someone who has studied and written extensively on Chronicles himself and offers them the fruit of his many insights into one of the most complex corpora of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament.

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*Writing Up Jeremiah: The Prophet and the Book* by Jack R. Lundbom. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013. xii + 187 pp., US \$23.00, softcover.

Jack R. Lundbom is currently Distinguished Visiting Scholar at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. Most recently he has written a massive commentary on Deuteronomy (Eerdmans, 2013), but more relevant to the book under review is Lundbom's magisterial three-volume commentary on Jeremiah in the Anchor Bible (Doubleday, 1999, 2004), without doubt one of the very best commentaries available on Jeremiah today.

*Writing Up Jeremiah* is an eclectic collection of twelve diverse essays and one poem on Jeremiah taken from Lundbom's earlier published works and lectures, including journal articles, published essays, and excerpts from his Anchor Bible commentary, the Anchor Bible Dictionary, and his similar collection entitled *Jeremiah Closer Up* (Sheffield, 2013). These essays are entitled: 1) Haplography in Jeremiah 1–20; 2) Haplography in the Hebrew *Vorlage* of LXX Jeremiah; 3) Baruch, Seraiah, and the Scribal Family of Neriah; 4) Baruch, Seraiah, and Expanded Colophons in the Book of Jeremiah; 5) Jeremiah and Scroll-Making; 6) Rhetorical Criticism and the Biblical Book of Jeremiah; 7) Glossary of Rhetorical Terms in Jeremiah; 8) Writing an Anchor Bible *Jeremiah* Commentary; 9) I Brought You into a Garden Land (Jer 2:7); 10) Jeremiah 15:15–21 and the Call of Jeremiah; 11) Walking is Something You Do: Jeremiah and the Walk of Faith; 12) O Jerusalem: A Poem; and 13) Jeremiah's New Covenant for the Church and the World. Lundbom writes in a very clear and engaging manner,

and apart from the appendix style charts and lists of data he adds occasionally, the book is very readable.

Although Lundbom has published most of the material in this book before, there are two extremely important contributions to the field of Jeremiah studies that Lundbom makes in his three-volume Jeremiah commentary that are so significant that they warrant a separate volume such as this just to highlight those issues and to help popularize his view. Indeed, Lundbom's argument for haplography in LXX Jeremiah (chapters 1 and 2), along with the description of his insightful and effective rhetorically-oriented, yet eclectic exegetical method (esp. chapters 6 and 8), make this short book well worth the price.

The MT text of Jeremiah and the LXX text of Jeremiah differ in content and order more so than in any other book of the OT (except perhaps 1–2 Samuel). Based on J. Gerald Janzen's *Studies in the Text of Jeremiah* (HSM 6; Cambridge, MA: HUP, 1973), and championed by esteemed text-critical scholars such as Emanuel Tov, over the last forty years the view that gives priority to the Hebrew *Vorlage* of LXX Jeremiah over the MT (considered a later expansion) has achieved a near consensus among Old Testament scholars. Lundbom challenges this view, arguing that the Hebrew *Vorlage* of LXX Jeremiah suffered numerous errors of haplography (i.e., eye mistake copyist errors). Thus Lundbom argues that the MT Jeremiah is more original and accurate than the *Vorlage* reflected in LXX Jeremiah. Having tracked evidence of haplography (and other "eye" mistakes) throughout his three volume commentary, Lundbom then compiles and summarizes that data in this book, also providing examples and additional documentation. Everyone will not agree with his proposal, but on the other hand it is not easy to dismiss someone of Lundbom's erudition and the data he presents.

Likewise, the other powerful and significant contribution that Lundbom makes to the study of Jeremiah is in the area of exegetical method. Evolving from Muilenburg's proposed "rhetorical criticism," Lundbom blends a careful poetic structural analysis (*inclusio*, *chiasm*, etc.) with traditio-historical material and essentially carries out a careful and insightful discourse analysis. He writes, "I want to know how figures function in discourse. I am also interested not simply in style, but in structure, argumentation, and all the other components of suasive discourse. And I seek to determine, as far as possible, the impact of biblical speech on its audience—the original audience, and later audiences impacted by it" (p. 95). Lundbom's three-volume commentary on Jeremiah is a remarkable achievement of this goal. I know of no other commentator that can dissect and then put the poetic pieces of Jeremiah back together again as Lundbom does in his Jeremiah commentary. He

describes and explains this effective exegetical method in chapters 6 and 8 of *Writing Up Jeremiah*.

Obviously with someone as skilled as Lundbom, there are numerous other helpful insights and viewpoints scattered throughout the book. For example, he suggests that Baruch (in Egypt) was responsible for the final form of the text that led to the proto-LXX, while Seraiah (in Babylon) was responsible for the final ordering of the proto-MT text (pp. 85–86). Lundbom also argues for a two-stage call of Jeremiah, thus dismissing any need for an early Scythian “foe to the north” (pp. 76–79, 148) and allowing the Babylonians to fulfill that role.

Toward the end of the book, Lundbom reveals a pastoral side of his scholarship. He includes a church lecture that explores Jeremiah’s personal walk of faith (chapter 11). In the final chapter Lundbom undertakes a biblical theology approach as he analyzes Jeremiah’s New Covenant. He views the New Covenant as truly being “new,” and not just a renewal of the old covenant. He writes, “but a time came, finally, when the covenant had become so completely broken that renewal was no longer possible” (p. 164). The New Covenant, Lundbom continues, finds fulfillment in the New Testament through Jesus Christ. It is refreshing to see a Christian OT scholar like Lundbom make the connection between the OT and the coming of Christ, and to proclaim the deep theological implications that Jeremiah’s New Covenant has for Christian faith today (see esp. p. 171).

So, in conclusion, I heartily recommend this book. Although I already had several of these essays in other works of Lundbom’s, I did find it helpful to have them all pulled together in an accessible and affordable paperback. As mentioned above, the articles on haplography are worth the price of the book.

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*Rediscovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context* by Carol Meyers. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. 312 pp., US \$24.95, softcover.

Carol Meyers’ first edition of *Discovering Eve* was published in 1988. The second edition, *Rediscovering Eve*, includes extensive revisions and the results of anthropological and archaeological scholarly research, feminist biblical scholarship, and views presented by social scientists. According to the author, the “book is similar in structure and goals to its

predecessor but also differs in many ways” (p. ix). Its purpose is “not only to examine the Eve of the Eden story but also to bring to light the lives of Everywoman Eve, the ordinary women of ancient Israel” (p. 4). From the beginning, Meyers challenges stereotypes that have devalued, discredited, and dehumanized women in the Bible. Through a thorough analysis of biblical and extra-biblical literature, Meyers uncovers the enormously meaningful roles women played and shows how their active participation within and outside the household shaped Israelite society.

Meyers begins her book by identifying Eve as a literary figure and the Eden narrative as a cultural tale in chapter 1, “Eve and Israelite Women: Understanding the Task.” Meyers asserts that a serious disconnect exists between the women of the Hebrew Bible and the lives of real Israelite women of biblical times. In her opinion, Eve was studied for centuries through the “distorting lenses of male-dominated, Judeo-Christian tradition” (p. 4) and consequently, the Eden narrative has been interpreted erroneously through an out-of-context hermeneutic, attributing solely patriarchal domination to ancient Israel. The major waves of feminist biblical scholarship along with research in the social sciences have brought to light new aspects of the Eve narrative. Over the last century, biblical feminists have focused primarily on women-centered and political issues while biblical scholars have engaged the social sciences (e.g., sociology, anthropology) in order to understand better gender roles and family dynamics in the biblical world.

Meyers notes three evolving strands related to feminist biblical scholarship: (1) feminist scholars “who reject the Bible outright as an authoritative text” (p. 8); (2) the majority of feminist biblical scholars who attribute biblical authority to Scripture and examine the text through historical, cultural, or theological lenses; and (3) the reformists who “claim that difficult texts are largely descriptive rather than prescriptive” (p. 8). The various approaches used by these schools of thought include mainly the historical-critical method and the literary study of biblical texts—the latter now dominating feminist biblical scholarship.

As regards social science methods, feminist scholars have for the most part shied away from them. The methods have been linked to biblical studies where the historical and social settings of biblical stories have been highlighted in order to present a picture of biblical characters and their stories.

In chapter 2, “Resources for the Task,” Meyers seeks to answer the question, “how can we proceed with the task of increasing the visibility of Israelite women in the Bible” (p. 17). She applies an interdisciplinary approach—(1) study of ancient texts [Bible and extra-biblical]; (2) archeology; and (3) anthropological research—in order to attempt a description of “Everywoman Eve.” Identifying the Hebrew

Bible as a problematic yet invaluable source (p. 24), Meyers notes that male authors—"a literary elite, a tiny and unrepresentative minority" (p. 18)—wrote primarily for elite male audiences in an urban context. In her opinion, this causes a significant problem in interpreting correctly biblical stories, especially where they relate to female characters. Since most extra-biblical literature was composed by elites for the upper class in Egypt and Mesopotamia, Meyers places limited value for understanding the Israelite woman on the information provided by this extra-biblical textual evidence (p. 26).

According to Meyers, archaeology provides little help in portraying "Everywoman Eve" since "archaeological enterprise has generally favored the 'macro' level [e.g., monumental architecture, fortification systems, palaces, temples] of human society with its large-scale political and religious institutions. Of less interest is the 'micro' level, the settlements and structures representing small-scale life processes" (p. 28). Furthermore, she notes that most relevant artifacts are decontextualized and described in non user-friendly publications. Meyers advocates for "household" or "gender" archaeology as a means through which gendered aspects of daily Israelite life can be identified.

Regarding the field of anthropology, Meyers focuses primarily on two aspects: (1) ethnographical studies in which comparisons between material practices and social patterns of a known culture are made with those of "an ancient culture with a similar set of environmental conditions" (p. 32) in order to determine division of labor, family size, gender roles in the household and the community, etc.; and (2) feminist anthropological studies in which women, including those "who are rendered invisible, silenced, or otherwise misrepresented in traditional approaches" (p. 35) are the subjects of the analysis.

In chapter 3, "Setting the Scene: The Ancient Environment," Meyers addresses the roles of women in Israelite society and the conditions and constraints of their physical environment (e.g., life in urban vs. rural settings, availability of natural resources such as water, pastoral vs. agricultural life, inclement weather). Meyers notes that in the highland settlements, Israelites lived either in large walled cities, walled settlements, tiny hamlets, or farming communities. Since the Israelites were dependent primarily on agriculture for their survival, good environmental conditions in Canaan were crucial for their survival. The main ingredients of the Israelite diet consisted of agricultural products, water, fertile soil, fodder, and clement weather. These were necessary for their long-term survival. Meyers notes that although "the land flowing with milk and honey" (e.g., Exod 3:8; Jer 11:5) connoted agricultural bountifulness, "studies of the topography, climate, and ecology of Palestine indicate that the imagery of a bountiful land reflects an ideal

more than the reality” (p. 43). Living in the land of Canaan was arduous and consequently, “women (and children too) were thus a vital part of the labor force of Israelite households, especially at harvest time. Women and men may have performed different tasks in the harvesting process, but all participated according to ethnographic data collected from Mediterranean societies before harvesting was mechanized” (p. 51).

Meyers notes nutritional and health problems Israelite women faced—food shortage and lack of water during wartime and drought, dietary deficiencies for pregnant and lactating women, life-threatening infectious diseases in the household, etc. These contributed to the harsh life and struggle to survive in an environment that was often quite unfriendly.

In chapter 4, “Eve in Eden: Genesis 2–3,” Meyers addresses the first Eve—the protagonist in the garden of Eden—who represents the Israelite women during the Iron Age period (p. 68). She points out that the “Eve tradition” (the idea that Eve was the “temptress” and “deceiver” responsible for sin) develops late in Jewish tradition, during the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical periods (e.g., in Tobit, Ben Sira), eventually making its way into the New Testament (e.g., 1 Tim 2:13–14), rabbinic literature, and Christian literature (e.g., Tertullian’s comment that Eve “persuaded” Adam [*Or.*8.8]; Augustine’s misogynist view of women because of Eve’s sin [*City of God* 14.13]). Unfortunately, Meyers does not provide specific rabbinic sources for the Eve tradition. These would have been helpful here. Meyers points to several literary and linguistic features in Gen 2–3 to show “the procreative imperative of sexuality” (p. 76) and the egalitarian nature of the relationship between the man and woman of Gen 2.

In chapter 5, “Eve out of Eden: Genesis 3:16,” Meyers addresses the second Eve—Eve as Everywoman, the “life-giver”—who underlines “the maternal potential of all women” (p. 83). Meyers comments on ancient and modern renderings of the Hebrew text of Gen 3:16 (e.g., LXX, Vulgate, KJV, Jerusalem Bible, NAB, NJPS, NRSV, NIV, NLT) and concludes that these are problematic and “consistently have God assign childbirth pain and subordination to Eve and thus to all women” (p. 87). Meyers’ careful examination of the language, structure, and poetic devices of Gen 3:16 provides a fresh translation that neither condemns women to painful childbearing nor to their subjugation by men. She translates the passage as, “*I will make great your toil and many your pregnancies, with hardship shall you have children. Your turning is to your man/husband and he shall rule/control you [sexually]*” (p. 102).

In the sixth chapter, “Eve’s World: The Household,” Meyers presents a partial but realistic picture of the physical and social world of ancient Israelite ordinary women (Everywoman Eve), acknowledging



that “reconstructing the experiences and roles of women in their households is hindered not only by our distance in time and space from ancient Israel, . . . but also by more subtle impediments” such as “the temptation to project what we know about our own world onto the past” (p. 117–18). Based on Meyers’ interpretation of the data, the Israelite *household* was comprised of two main components: (1) the “material one” (e.g., dwelling, land, animals, wells, burial places); and (2) the “human one” (family members, relatives, servants, slaves, sojourners). Both the *בית אב* (“father’s house/household” where the father was the patriarch of the family) and the *בית אם* (“mother’s house/household” where the mother held major familial responsibilities) are mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, the most common expression being the *בית אב*.

In chapter 7, “Woman and Household Maintenance, Part I: Economic Reproductive, and Sociopolitical Activities,” Meyers highlights the complexity of a woman’s life in an agrarian society where the household was the hub “for most economic, social, educative, political, and religious aspect of life” (p. 125). In addition to their biological functions, women performed “maintenance activities” that included not only “meeting the physical needs of its members through the provision of food and clothing; it also involves care of the young and the ailing, the socialization and education of children, the organization of household space, the fostering of linkages with kin and neighbors, and the performance of household rituals” (p. 126). Household economic contributions by women included food processing (e.g., grinding, baking), textile production (e.g., spinning wool, weaving, sewing), and the making of vessels (e.g., clay jars, weaving baskets). Reproductive activities were expected of women, and so was the raising and educating of the children. Socio-political activities “were carried out in the company of other women” (p. 139) who provided a formal or informal social networks in the community.

In chapter 8, “Women and Household Maintenance, Part II: Religious Activities,” Meyers focuses on the Israelite woman’s engagement in household and community religious practices (e.g., household shrines, temple sacrifices). She challenges the common view that women engaged in the religious cult of the community. Archaeological discoveries however reveal that familial religious activities took place within the home. Ritual objects such as incense burners, amulets, and libation jugs have been found in ancient Israelite dwellings. Furthermore, the Hebrew Bible mentions frequently the use of sorcery, magic, physical representations of gods (e.g., idols, statuettes). Meyers discusses in detail the relationships between healthcare, reproduction, feasts and festivals, food preparation and rituals, and women’s involvement in household religion.

In “Excursus: Professional Women,” Meyers asserts that in addition to serving as wives and mothers, women played “professional” roles in society, especially in large or urban settlements. According to Meyers, approximately twenty different roles (including prostitution) are attributed to women in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., perfumers, cooks, bakers [e.g., 1 Sam 8:13], servants, herbalists for health care, textile producers [e.g., Prov 31:13, 19, 24], midwives [e.g., Gen 35:17; 38:28; Exod 1:15–21], nurses, temple attendants [e.g., קדשה (“cult prostitute”) in Deut 23:18 in HB], prophetesses [e.g., Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Noadiah, Isaiah’s wife], judges [e.g., Deborah], professional mourners [e.g., Jer 9:17–20], musicians [e.g., Miriam], heralds [e.g., Ps 68:11 in EB; Ps 68:12 in HB], business women [e.g., Prov 31], queens [e.g., 2 Kgs 24:15–16]). Meyers points out that “most professional roles involved expertise. Women had to learn appropriate technologies, techniques, songs, dance moves, laments, chants, divinatory procedures, or sapiential materials. And those involved in performance had to practice their skills” (p. 178). Furthermore, group functions required rehearsals and group meetings. Many women were involved in the training of novices for important roles in society.

In chapter 10, “Gender and Society: Reconstructing Relationships, Rethinking Systems,” Meyers addresses head-on the erroneous assumptions of biblical scholars who propagate negative stereotypes about women in ancient Israel and promote male supremacy in all aspects of Israelite society. She reconstructs the identity of women and exposes their high value in society. Meyers discusses the intricate and complex inter-dependent and complementary relationships that existed between men and women in daily life. She maintains that the roles of both genders were vital and indispensable for the maintenance and furthering of Israelite society. Meyers addresses the misuse of the word “patriarchy” in biblical studies and proposes a helpful “heterarchical” model “that does not eliminate hierarchies but rather recognizes that there can be a variety of hierarchies that may or may not intersect with each other. . . . A heterarchical society can be composed of various social units—including individuals, households, guilds of professionals, village communities, and kinship groups—that are involved in multiple horizontal as well as vertical relationships” (p. 197).

In her conclusion, “Beyond the Hebrew Bible,” Meyers revisits her discussions on the “Eve of Eden” (chapters 4 and 5) and “Everywoman Eve” of the agrarian Israelite society (chapters 7, 8, and 10) and concludes that “Eve” was “hardly a subservient, passive, and inferior housewife” (p. 203). She highlights representations of “Eve” in Jewish rabbinic literature—a primarily restrictive view of Eve—and in Christian sources where Eve is commonly depicted in a negative light.

She notes that, although the Bible was the most important religious text for the Jewish and Christian communities, interpreters have often overlooked its socio-historical context and profoundly shifted the way the roles and values of biblical women—and consequently all women—are understood in modern societies.

In conclusion, Meyers' revised work is rich in content, well documented, and a welcome addition to her earlier contribution (1988) on this important topic.

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*Jeremiah among the Prophets* by Jack R. Lundbom. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2012. 164 pp., £17.50, softcover.

This slim volume contains a condensed and popular version of Lundbom's substantial research on the book of Jeremiah which is found in his three-volume Anchor Bible commentary. It is aimed at "students, adult Bible study classes, and people anywhere who want to learn more about Jeremiah" (p. ix). As such, there are no footnotes and only a very short bibliography. Its outlook is clearly Christian, as indicated by the frequent references to the New Testament (see, e.g., pp. 3, 4, 12, 78, 113, 126, 129), yet the focus of the book remains at all times with the text of the Old Testament and with the character of Jeremiah. In a few cases, Lundbom also refers to the writings of the church fathers (e.g., p. 48) and to Jewish interpretative traditions (e.g., pp. 27, 105).

The volume falls into 20 short chapters of roughly equal length. Lundbom progresses systematically through the book of Jeremiah and endeavours to create a chronological picture of Jeremiah from the time of his prophetic calling to his release from Jerusalem after its destruction in 586 B.C. While some of the chapters are devoted to a particular event in Jeremiah's life, others emphasize key theological concepts found in his writings. Lundbom often connects Jeremiah's experiences with those of other biblical characters. Jeremiah's call to become a prophet, for example, is compared with that of Ezekiel. Likewise, Lundbom often discusses the theological concepts which he encounters in the writings of Jeremiah within their wider pan-biblical context. In his discussion of Jer 5:1–9, for instance, Lundbom draws attention to the textual allusions to Gen 18–19 and emphasizes their significance when seeking to understand the message of the Jeremianic text.

Lundbom frequently writes about the literary aspects of the book of Jeremiah, such as its poetic form or the structure of its pericopes. These discussions are easily accessible to the lay person and useful also for the more academic reader. Lundbom's description of Jeremiah as being engaged "in pure romanticism" in his description of Israel's past (pp. 9, 11), for instance, is a good way of describing literary hyperbole. Lundbom also draws attention to the frequent changes from third- to second-person speech in the divine oracles in the book of Jeremiah and highlights how this can be understood as a rhetorical move to "make the message more immediate and direct" (p. 30). Lundbom further offers an insightful discussion of the juxtaposition in Jer 34–35 of the story of the faithful Rechabites with the story of the faithless people of Judah (pp. 105–10). In a few cases, Lundbom ventures into more complex literary discussions. In his chapter on the temple oracles in Jer 7 and 27, for example, he offers an in-depth discussion of their literary composition and how it is preferable to read the text as three self-standing oracles rather than as one (inconsistent) "temple sermon."

Lundbom regards the text of Jeremiah as a window into the events of the sixth century and into the life and character of Jeremiah, the prophet and the author of the book bearing his name. Throughout his volume, Lundbom speaks of Jeremiah as a historical person and he connects nearly all oracles to specific historical events. For example, the lament in Jer 9:17–19 was uttered shortly before or after 586 B.C. (p. 41), while the sequence of laments in Jer 14:17b–15:3, as well as the "Lebanon-cedars" poem in Jer 22:20–23, presupposes and addresses the situation in Jerusalem in 597 B.C. (pp. 44, 68). Along similar lines, Lundbom confidently dates the oracles against Kedar-Hazor in Jer 49:28–33 to the year 599 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar attacked desert Arabs (p. 86).

He also explains literary features in the book of Jeremiah in view of the prophet's (presumed) habits. For instance, Lundbom states that a typical oracle from Jeremiah "was very brief, lasting no more than a minute. The prophet would most likely speak a cluster of oracles, two or three in succession, and then follow with other oracles or oracle clusters. . . . The prophet could [. . .] repeat himself, since this audience was constantly changing. The same oracles would be repeated on subsequent days, with new oracles being added from time to time" (p. 8).

This approach has pros and cons. On the one hand, the book of Jeremiah was not created in a vacuum and it is important to consider the *Sitz im Leben* of a given oracle and to seek to discern what historical matters helped in creating the book. On the other hand, there is a certain amount of speculation involved in this approach. We do not have access

to the historical Jeremiah, only to the words in the book bearing his name.

Lundbom's historical approach is presumably tailored to fit the intended audience of his book. Even so, it might have been useful to discuss the fact that even a faithful portrayal of the deeds of a historical person is, still, a piece of literature. Even if the prophet wrote the entirety of the book, he nevertheless chose to report certain aspects of his life whilst remaining silent about others. This selection and the ensuing literary depiction fill a theological purpose and it is important also for laypeople to be made aware of this.

On this same topic, some of Lundbom's discussions are problematized by his historical approach. For example, Lundbom relates to Jeremiah's sign-acts as actual actions which Jeremiah carried out (rather than, as some scholars would argue, a kind of street theatre). Lundbom speaks of Jeremiah's journeys to Parah to bury a loincloth and his subsequent retrieval of the same item as actual physical journeys (p. 7). More difficult, Lundbom appears to claim that Jeremiah "took the cup from Yahweh's hand and made the nations drink it" (Jer 25:15–29; p. 79) as a historical event. It is only on p. 93 that it becomes clear that Lundbom understood this to have taken place in a vision.

The book ends with a fairly technical discussion of the composition of the book of Jeremiah, focusing on the scribes who wrote down Jeremiah's preaching. Lundbom postulates four editions of the book, all composed relatively shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. He designates Baruch as the editor of the first two editions and his brother Seriah as the editor of the second two.

I enjoyed reading this book. It is well written and eminently accessible. It manages to give a chronological and coherent outline of Jeremiah's life, an accomplishment indeed given the structure of the book of Jeremiah. In a few cases, though, Lundbom may expect too much background knowledge of his intended readers. For instance, the book refers to political events in the ancient Near East rather matter-of-factly (e.g., p. 18). It might have been useful to include a brief summary of the international politics of the sixth century B.C. in the form of an appendix for readers who are unfamiliar with the Neo-Assyrians and the Neo-Babylonians. Likewise, in his discussion of Jer 2:1–4:4 Lundbom appears to assume that the intended readership is familiar with the biblical use of sexual and marital metaphors (p. 16). He further mentions in passing text-critical matters related to the Dead Sea Scrolls (p. 59).

Finally, a few of the statements in the book are, in my opinion, problematic. In particular, I found Lundbom's claim that the Israelite prophets "had become international figures" in the ninth century B.C., on the basis of 1 Kgs 19:15 and 2 Kgs 8:7–15, difficult to agree with. I was

also somewhat disconcerted by the fact that Lundbom gives Jeremiah “a happy ending.” According to Lundbom, Jeremiah is released from prison (Jer 39:11–14; 40:1–6) and “ends up going to Gedaliah and others who are residing at Mizpah” (p. 131). That is true, yet the story of Jeremiah does not end there. Instead, as every reader of Jer 43–44 knows, Jeremiah ends up being forced to go to Egypt where he also presumably dies.

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*La alegría en Isaías: La alegría como unidad y estructura del libro a partir de su epílogo (Is 65–66)* by Miguel Ángel Garzón Moreno. Asociación Bíblica Española 55. Pamplona, Spain: Editorial Verbo Divino, 2011. 526 pp., €36.88, softcover.

Miguel Ángel Garzón Moreno, professor at Centro de Estudios Teológicos de Sevilla, proposes in *La alegría en Isaías* that the theme of joy within the epilogue of Isaiah (Isa 65–66) served as a point of departure for shaping its final form. The first section (composed of four chapters) provides an exegetical and theological reflection of Isa 65–66. In Chapter 5 (the second section), Garzón Moreno explores how Isa 65–66 is said to function as a literary epilogue for the whole book of Isaiah. Readers will be most interested in Chapters 6 and 7 (section three), which draw on the exegetical and theological analysis of the first two sections to demonstrate how the theological theme of joy unifies Isaiah in its final form.

Chapter 6 reads much like a theological dictionary where the author provides an exhaustive and rich synthesis of vocabulary, metaphors, images, and gestures that express joy or sadness within the book. Here, Garzón Moreno takes great care to show that the study of any one theological theme is incomplete without paying equally close attention to its polar opposite (e.g., images of sadness/despair).

Chapter 7 demonstrates the author’s commitment to read Isaiah as an ideologically unified prophetic vision. Quite contrary to approaches that emphasize opposing theological perspectives within Isaiah, Garzón Moreno’s approach is characterized by a sense of ideological continuity. Chapters 1–12, for instance, indicate a general thematic move from sadness to joy. Moving along sequentially, Isa 13–23 highlights the theme of joy by surrounding an announcement of salvation (Isa 19:18–

25) with seven oracles of judgment on either side (Isa 13–19:17; Isa 20–23).

Literary and thematic connections between Isa 1–12 and Isa 13–23 show how the theme of joy or lament was employed to unify subsections within Isaiah. While in Isa 1–12 people rejoice in the harvest (Isa 9:2), chapters 13–23 express lament given the loss of the harvest (Isa 16:9; 17:5–11; 18:4–5). The theme of joy also links Isa 1:19 to the end of the oracles against the nations in Isa 23:18 where people are satisfied with food and fine clothing. The use of song is, moreover, instrumental in underscoring the thematic unity of the book. Whereas Isa 1–12 ends with a song of joy for the saved, Isa 13–23 ends with a song of irony for the damned. Likewise, the little apocalypse (chs. 24–27) also highlights the importance of joy. While Isa 24 expresses the loss of joy due to the fading of creation, images of the divine feast (Is 25:6–10; cf. 1:19) and song (Is 27:2) mediate visions of joy.

The next major section of Isaiah (Iss 28–32) is bracketed by similar poems that begin with an announcement of the end of joy and conclude with images that restore joy (28:1–6; 32:9–20). Chapter 33 takes up this contrast by mediating expressions of despair (33:1–14), followed by images of restoration, fertility, and water (33:15–24). Then, Isa 34 reverts to the theme of lament due to punishment while Isa 35 mediates expressions of eternal joy.

Finally, the theme of joy binds the larger sections of Isaiah in different ways. Themes of goodness form an *inclusio* for Isa 1–39 (1:19; 39:8). In Deutero-Isaiah the theme of joy is developed *vis-à-vis* metaphors of joy found in the prologue (40:1–11), the epilogue (55) and also at key literary junctures (40:12–48; 49–54). Trito-Isaiah's unique vision of universal joy is linguistically mediated by means of a concentric structure (base levels = Isa 56:1–8 and 65–66; climax = Isa 60–62) that places the theme of joy at the pinnacle (Isa 61). Moreover, all three sections are noted for their invitations to realities that produce joy: an invitation to eating (Isa 1:19); an invitation to comfort (Isa 40:1–9); and an invitation to become part of the new community (Isa 56:2–7). Furthermore, all three sections are concerned to show the subjects of joy: the king rejoices in Isa 39:8; the alienated and hungry rejoice in Isa 55:1–2, 12–13; both God and the nations rejoice in Isa 65–66. In effect, these themes indicate that the theme of joy was used to connect the various sub-units of the book of Isaiah in its last phase of production.

At first glance, the reader will likely charge Garzón Moreno of using far too broad of a term. After all, nearly everything within Isaiah could fall under the rubric of either joy or lament! However, the author's careful inner-Isaianic analysis does demonstrate the pragmatic value of an organizing semantic field (e.g., joy) in order to enter into the bi-polar

world of the book of Isaiah. The exhaustive treatment of semantic networks and the innovative analysis of Isaiah's surface structure, moreover, will dismiss any charge of reductionism or claims that any one theme has been separated from any number of other themes. Given, however, that the author's thesis draws so heavily upon the literary placement of themes of joy within the traditional tripartite junctures of the text, a more critical assessment of these divisions would have strengthened or nuanced the author's thesis. In sum, while Garzón Moreno's treatment of Isaiah does not attempt to satisfy historical curiosities regarding the text of Isaiah, it is perhaps the most thoroughgoing synchronic treatment of an Isaianic theme available in the Spanish language. Moreover, redaction critics may find themselves persuaded that Isaiah ends on a happy note.

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*God's Word Omitted: Omissions in the Transmission of the Hebrew Bible* by Juha Pakkala. Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 2013. FRLANT 251. 418 pp., US \$95.00, hardcover.

*God's Word Omitted* targets practitioners of "hard core" redaction criticism (*Literarkritik*) whose working model assumes that "all the pieces of the puzzle" have been preserved under sequential redactional layers, and that intentional omissions did not occur during the texts' development. This present work aims to undermine that axiom, not simply because such reconstructions are overly hypothetical or speculative, but because, Pakkala maintains, they favor overly conservative reconstructions of Israelite history and religion that overstate the continuity of the past with later religious and historical developments in Judaism and Christianity. Pakkala is a lecturer in Theology at the University of Helsinki, Finland, and has written a number of books and articles on the redactional history of Genesis–Kings and Ezra–Nehemiah.

The first chapter, "Omissions in the Hebrew Bible?" comprises nearly a fifth of the main content. Pakkala recounts the history of diachronic, critical scholarship, its methodological assumptions, and much of the extant evidence for how texts developed or were changed. The chapter ends with a helpful discussion of types of authority and how methods of rewriting may or may not relate to the editors' conception of the authority of the text edited.



Chapters 2 and 3 examine the Samaritan Pentateuch and Jeremiah, respectively, demonstrating what Pakkala calls “conservative” transmission, meaning that the text has been altered only by expansions without any identifiable, intentional omissions.

Chapter 4, “The Development of Laws in the Pentateuch,” traces changes evident in parallel laws of the Covenant Code, Deuteronomic Code, Holiness Code, and finally the *Temple Scroll*. Pakkala states that “omissions and radical changes are commonly acknowledged to have taken place when a new text was used as a source for a new composition” (p. 117) and that appears to be the case in the examples discussed. How conservatively or how radically a text was edited is connected to how closely the editor and the text shared a common ideological or theological paradigm.

Chapters 5 and 6 address the book of *Jubilees* and the *Temple Scroll* (TS), respectively. Pakkala spends a considerable proportion of these short chapters arguing that *Jubilees* serves as a supplement to its source, while TS is written as a total replacement of its source (similar to Chronicles). The TS is upheld as a good model of “general compositional process” (cf. Chronicles). The author of TS had such familiarity with the problems of the legal codes and such facility in reworking them that Pakkala suggest he may have been an “insider” with access to the texts, experience copying them, and likely even past experience redacting them.

Chapter 7, “Omission as a Means of Ideological or Theological Censorship,” is one of the most important chapters of the whole book as, in at least some of its examples, it clearly demonstrates the book’s central claim that intentional omissions occurred within transmission. Pakkala claims not simply that various words were omitted, but that important words dealing with Israel’s historical and religious reality were consciously changed by later editors who found them embarrassing or contrary to their later understandings. References to a temple in David’s time or to David building a temple are frequent examples. The most controversial examples include the claim that the earliest layer of 2 Sam 5:24 referred to YHWH and Asherah working in tandem to rout the Philistines (pp. 212–13) or that the earliest stage of 1 Kgs 8:12–13 identified YHWH as a sun-god (224–31). Though courting sensationalism in some examples, this chapter does demonstrate that omissions (usually replacements), especially of theological or ideological concepts, did at times occur within the transmission of the books of Samuel and Kings.

Chapter 8, “Chronicles,” brings to the fore one of Pakkala’s major contentions, namely, that “radical” revision typically occurs in conjunction with a change in theological or ideological paradigm, usually

following a major catastrophic or influential event (e.g., 586 B.C.). Thus, Chronicles reflects a change in paradigm vis-à-vis Kings as the former writes from a postexilic perspective reflecting the centrality of the Second Temple in the Persian period, while the latter stems from the exile when the temple and Davidic monarchy were of much less importance (p. 293). Chronicles is one of Pakkala's favorite models of "redaction," yet the book is clearly an example of the composition of a new text out of an earlier one. It is unclear why Chronicles is not discussed earlier in the book together with *Jubilees* and the TS, with which it manifests many similarities. This chapter contains some of the most complicated synoptic charts of the whole book, so it should not come as a surprise that it exhibits more formatting errors in the Hebrew text than other portions of the book.

Chapter 9 compares 1 Esdras with Ezra-Nehemiah and documents changes evident between the two. The majority of changes are to be found on the side of 1 Esdras, and most of them are "compositional" (pp. 297, 303, 315), that is, related to major changes to the source text used to compose 1 Esdras, and most of the ideological changes appear to have occurred at the level of the *Vorlage*. Repeated comparisons with Esther (pp. 297, 298, 300, 301, 310, etc.) make one wonder if the chapter was originally written to come after the current chapter 10.

Chapter ten covers major differences between MT and LXX of Esther. The direction of dependence is more complicated in the examples here than in the previous chapters, which is likely the reason for its placement at the end. Pakkala identifies only two brief ideological "omissions" from the MT of Esther (9:4 and 10:2) where the omitted words have been replaced by others, in this case elevating Mordechai.

The conclusion synthesizes the larger discussion, and expands many of its arguments. The analysis is a double-edged sword because (1) the data show evidence of diachronic change, but (2) they undermine many of the main assumptions of *Literarkritik* (even more than Pakkala admits). Diachronic reconstruction cannot be abandoned, Pakkala claims in his apology, because "without a diachronic approach of the texts, we do not have a historical source in the Hebrew Bible" for any specific period (p. 376).

For this reviewer, the biggest surprise of the book came in the concluding chapter. While the first chapter had rejected the idea that

transmission . . . should be divided into two stages: The early stage when the original composition was written by the original author using older sources as resource material and when radical

processes were possible, and the later stage of transmission by redactors when everything was preserved. (p. 18)

Yet, the conclusion summarizes the evidence as showing “the division of the textual transmission into two fundamentally different types of editorial stages”—namely the “radical” and the “conservative.”

What is shocking is that the examples of “radical” change cluster around Chronicles, the TS, *Jubilees*, *1 Esdras* and other examples where a new text is being made out of an older one! The “conservative” examples occurring within copies of the same book (e.g., manuscripts of Jeremiah). The charts on pp. 291 and 361 show fairly clearly that “radical” revision lines up with the creation of a new composition.

The book’s sub-title refers to “omissions in the transmission of the Hebrew Bible,” and if “the transmission of the Hebrew Bible” means the copying of the individual books or texts, then only chapters 7 and perhaps 10 discuss this in detail. The majority of omissions occur not “within the book” (from *Vorlage* to new copy), but from source to new work. We thus see evidence of changes within transmission (text-critical evidence) and composition (earlier source in later book).

At the end of the book Pakkala continues to maintain that the methodology of *Literarkritik*, like that of the Göttingen School, that reconstructs numerous redactional layers (*Schichten*), is compatible with the evidence of the study. The study is successful in bearing out that many changes, including omissions, can be seen between parallel and related texts. However, neither the examples of changes during composition (from source to new work) nor transmission (from *Vorlage* to new copy) resemble such imagined literary strata. Heavy-handed ideology that spans a whole text in scope and includes frequent omissions is found in the examples of composition—but it is these very examples where the textual clues and seams have vanished in the “radical editing.” The text-critical (and “conservative”) examples, where often the tools of *Literarkritik* functioned best, are all very limited in scope, lack dramatic abridgment (i.e., they replace words or a verse instead of leaving out whole chapters), and if one can identify a *Tendenz*, it is very simplistic and hardly akin to a Nomistic or Prophetic stratum.

Pakkala’s book is aimed at refining and critiquing “hard-core” redaction criticism focused on historical reconstruction, and while it makes many contributions in this regard it provides value for other readers too. In the wake of Peter Enns’ *Inspiration and Incarnation* (Baker Academic, 2005) and Kenneth Sparks’ *God’s Word in Human Words* (Baker Academic, 2008), there has been new space cleared for discussing how the human elements of the text are to be understood within an evangelical doctrine of Scripture. This book provides much

food for thought and many of its examples may be a positive stimulus for reflection on the nature of Scripture's textual history.

Errata:

- p. 236 οὐκ ὑν ἐκεῖ should be οὐκ ἦν ἐκεῖ (see also p. 374 n. 33)
- p. 262 כ should be ג (2 Chr 21:2).
- p. 263 עה should be עשה (2 Chr 21:11).
- p. 272 Two lines are out of order (2 Chr 23:1b).
- p. 279 The Hebrew is out of order (2 Chr 23:18).
- p. 280 A space is needed between words in תאמךס.
- p. 280 There is a letter ם missing in “to the cities” (2 Chr 24:5)
- p. 281 אא should be אש (2 Kgs 12:17)
- p. 281 כ should be ג (2 Kgs 12:19)
- p. 340 “Verse 4 is puzzling and it [is] not immediately clear . . .” appears to be missing an “is.”
- p. 374 n. 33 οὐκ ὑν ἐκεῖ should be οὐκ ἦν ἐκεῖ (see p. 236)

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*Die Nachtgesichte des Propheten Sacharja. Eine einzelexegetische Untersuchung zur Bestimmung ihrer Eigenart* by Zoltán Rokay. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2011. 160 pp., US \$48.95, hardcover.

The introduction to this volume on Zechariah's famous “night visions” begins with a somewhat meandering narrative of its own pre-history, which originated with a lecture on postexilic prophecy and apocalyptic given in 1971–72 and then was subsequently reworked at various times as new publications on Zechariah appeared (e.g., Beuken, Amsler, Gese, Seybold, Jeremias). This extended period of research and revision culminated with a doctoral dissertation at the University of Innsbruck in 1989, which forms the basis of the present volume. For this 2011 publication, however, the author has attempted to revise his work to take into account more recent research that has appeared in the intervening decades. To be sure, the author has added some important newer studies (the contributions of which are surveyed on pp.11–16) and he interacts regularly with Hanhart's fine commentary on Zech 1–8 (Neukirchener,

1998). Other than that, however, the updating seems to consist primarily of the addition of enormous (and distracting) footnotes at the beginning of chapters (e.g., pp.17–18 n. 2, 69 n. 193, 78 n. 212, 91–92 n. 249, 111–112 n. 336, 117–118 n. 353). Indeed, what perhaps stands out the most about this “updated” version is the number of significant works *not* included in the revision (e.g., monographs by Bič, Petitjean, Schöttler, Butterworth, and Love, to say nothing of the periodical literature). The author makes an attempted apologia for his limited use of recent research by a fairly cavalier assertion that very few new findings are to be expected from it (p.11), but this is unconvincing to say the least. The end result is that the book has a distinctly dated feel from the start.

The author focuses entirely on Zechariah’s visionary material, thus leaving the introductory oracle of 1:1–6 and the “coronation” of Joshua in 6:9–15 out of consideration. Chapters 1–7 discuss textual and exegetical details in the various night visions. The consideration of each vision concludes with an analysis of its intended message (*Aussageabsicht*). Throughout these concluding sections the author explores questions of how or if Zechariah’s visions relate to apocalyptic prophecy and to other earlier prophetic traditions and themes (e.g., Zion theology) and literary sources (e.g., the Priestly material). Despite the limitations mentioned above, the detailed textual work in these chapters is competent and workmanlike. Although one will not encounter any strikingly new exegetical proposals here, they do provide a useful summary of important interpretive issues in the night visions.

Chapter 8 (pp.131–151) draws together many of the observations from the preceding chapters and considers five key theological problems (*Schlüsselprobleme*) pertaining to the night visions in a more sustained manner: (1) Zechariah’s relationship to Ezekiel and the Priestly tradition (the author argues that a close relationship exists and questions the notion that “P” is fundamentally non-eschatological in nature); (2) Zechariah and prophetic traditions (the night visions’ similarities not only to Ezekiel but also to, e.g., Deutero-Isaiah establish it as a bona fide prophetic work); (3) Zechariah’s visions and Old Testament Wisdom traditions (a question debated since von Rad’s attempt to derive apocalyptic prophecy from Wisdom); (4) extra-biblical (particularly Persian) elements in the night visions; and (5) the differences between Zechariah’s visions and prophecy (especially the prophet’s inability to interpret his visions, necessitating the presence of an *angelus interpres*) and the night visions’ links with apocalyptic. The latter relationship is one of the most difficult to articulate. Indeed, despite the author’s stated intent to provide an answer concerning what apocalyptic really is (p.146), ultimately he is unable to define the term with any precision (p.151). Such a negative conclusion was somewhat disappointing, though

not entirely unexpected. In any event, while the precise origin of apocalyptic remains obscure, it is nevertheless obvious that the night visions incorporate a number of its distinctive features, whether or not one wishes to label the work as a whole an “apocalypse.” A short conclusion (pp.153–154) seeks to summarize the book’s findings.

This book obviously represents a significant amount of labor and research, but given the dated nature of its scholarship it will be of limited appeal to most readers. The research is not flawed in any substantial way, but neither does it noticeably advance the state of Zecharian studies.

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*Jesaja 1–23* by Konrad Schmid. ZBK. Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2011. 164 pp., US \$48.00, softcover.

This commentary provides the opportunity for Konrad Schmid, professor at Universität Zürich, to write a non-technical commentary on the prophetic book of Isaiah. He restricts himself to the first 23 chapters in this brief work. Readers will not find the typical detailed footnotes or long excurses dealing with well-known issues. The format of the commentary keeps the non-specialist in mind.

Schmid spends nearly one-third of the commentary with front matter discussion. He argues for the necessity of reconstructed history of the text. This position, he claims, is not merely a historical one; rather, it has theological implications. Schmid’s understanding of history presented in Isaiah is far from a maximalist position; however, he does not espouse a minimalist position either. Schmid brings the latest research tools for the literary prophets to the writing of this commentary.

Throughout the commentary Schmid attempts to see the additional supplements made by redactors to the book of Isaiah. From these observations, he hopes to be at a place where he can see inner-biblical exegesis. Schmid claims that someone recorded the prophetic speech, but others followed faithfully in that line of speech to continue a needed message. The point for Schmid is not to isolate various voices of the text. He wants to view the text as a unified whole, while still noting the literary growth (and its concomitant historical context). He goes on to illustrate his point with Jer 36:32, noting the important agentless concluding phrase “and many similar words were added to them.” For Schmid it is not odd to think that prophetic writing occurred in the vein of the prophet’s message well after the prophet himself.

Schmid explicitly notes one important influence for his scholarship—Odil Steck. One may see Steck's influence in this work and the work of scholars all over the world (e.g., J. Nogalski and R. Kratz). Schmid, similar to others, pays close attention to the canonical placement of Isaiah; in so doing, he considers the possible meanings of the literary placement. Looking at Isaiah, which begins the writing prophets section of the canon, Schmid calls the book the "leading voice" of the prophets.

He notes the diachronic distinctions of the so-called three-part book of Isaiah. He, however, does not stop there in terms of analysis for interpretation. For example, he finds textual associations between chapters 1 and 66 that constitute a final redactional layer. Within this large prophetic book is an overview that stretches from the Assyrian empire all the way to the new heavens and new earth. By covering several time periods, this "leading voice" finds a similar voice in the Book of the Twelve (i.e., Minor Prophets). The redactors, Schmid claims, connect the span of time periods in an intelligible way.

Schmid succinctly discusses a few theological emphases within the book of Isaiah: salvation and judgment; Zion; kingship of God; and Messiah. He argues that one should view these themes as having been woven skillfully throughout the entire book. He, therefore, encourages caution in delineating what Isaiah the prophet actually wrote.

Using Isa 11 as a point of departure, one can see how Schmid handles an important passage in Isaiah. He begins this section of the commentary by noting that the literary context of 11:1–10 is the promise of a new kingdom of peace. This text brings Isa 10 to completion of thought by combining the gift of the Spirit and the fear of God in a king. These two themes connect to Isa 1 and form an entire unit, Isa 1–11, by focusing on justice. The new David, as it were, would have the ethical and legal obligations of a king, but also he would care for the neglected. Schmid thinks the unit of 11:1–5 is pre-exilic in origin. 11:6–9, however, likely comes at a later time. It is 11:6–9 that develops a vision of comprehensive peace. The same vision of peace, especially among animals, appears in Isa 65:25. Noting the peaceful vision in 11:6–9 reflects Gen 1, Schmid finds the idyllic 11:6–9 in tension with 11:1–5. The latter text assumes wickedness, whereas the former does not. In viewing this tension, Schmid avers that the two textual units grew separately. He, however, does not surmise accidental accretion; he sees 11:6–9 as a supplement to 11:1–5. This supplement provides a pacifist correction to the earlier unit. To be sure, 11:6–9 constrains the meaning Isa of 11:1–9. Schmid then notes that 11:10 is global in its meaning. Moving forward, Isa 11:11–16 concludes this unit by showing the peace between Ephraim and Judah. Schmid ends his discussion of this textual unit by observing that the messages from Isa 11 are from different

periods of time. More important for Schmid's reading of Isaiah, however, is how the different texts within Isa 11 now work together.

Whether one agrees with Schmid on the history of composition of Isaiah (as the current reviewer does not), the student of Isaiah will benefit from this commentary in several ways. First, the introduction contains a succinct, up-to-date discussion on how contemporary scholars begin their study of prophetic texts. Second, readers can see in a brief way how a redactional reading strategy plays out when one exegetes the text (i.e., not just discussing hermeneutical theory.) Third, the commentary is very accessible. Readers, therefore, can easily review a pericope in Isaiah without wading through pages of footnotes or excurses. Fourth, this commentary serves students of prophetic texts well by giving access to an influential scholar's understanding of a challenging prophetic book. In sum, Schmid's work here complements his earlier, more detailed studies that have helped shape the field of Old Testament studies.

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*Warfare in the Old Testament: The Organization, Weapons, and Tactics of Ancient Near Eastern Armies* by Boyd Seevers. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2013. 320 pp., US \$34.99, hardcover.

Seevers serves as professor of Old Testament studies at the University of Northwestern St. Paul. He lived in Israel for eight years, and participated in archaeological digs. According to the "Acknowledgments" (p. 18), this volume expands his 1998 dissertation, "The Practice of Ancient Near Eastern Warfare with Comparison to the Biblical Accounts of Warfare from the Conquest to the End of the United Monarchy" (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School). Seevers has authored *Hidden in Plain Sight: Finding Wisdom and Meaning in the Parts of the Bible Most People Skip* (Bethany House, 2012), and co-authored with William Marty *The Quick-Start Guide to the Whole Bible: Understanding the Big Picture Book-by-Book* (Bethany House, 2014). He contributed "Joshua" and "Daniel" in *What the Old Testament Authors Really Cared About: A Survey of Jesus' Bible*, edited by Jason S. DeRouchie (Kregel, 2013), as well as 128 articles in the *Baker Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, edited by Tremper Longman III (Baker, 2013).

The chapters develop the topic of warfare by nationality: Israel (chs. 1–2), Egypt (chs. 3–4), Philistia (ch. 5), Assyria (chs. 6–7),



Babylon (ch. 8), and Persia (ch. 9). To capture the reader's attention, the discussion of each nation commences with a fictional biography of a soldier that provides a glimpse into military life. The fictional stories consume about 53 pages total. Next, a summary of the historical background places the nation at hand in its ancient Near Eastern context. The sections entitled "Military Organization" address subjects like military recruitment, training, officers, infantry, cavalry, navy, the role of the king, and the role of God (or gods). The author then examines the "Weapons," whether short range, medium range, or long range. The discussions of "Strategy and Tactics" treat the matters of motivation, the season for war, marching and encampment, food and logistics, sieges, plunder, rewards, and the aftermath. A few instances even touch upon the psychological aspect of warfare (pp. 139, 197, 199, 239–41).

The numerous visual aids take the form of line drawings, sketched by the author's son, Josh. Endnotes facilitate readability but cause inconvenience. The back matter consists of a selected bibliography organized by nation ("For Further Reading," pp. 299–304), a "Figures and Map Index" (pp. 305–9), a "Subject Index" (pp. 311–19), and a "Scripture Index" (pp. 321–28).

The issue of holy war in the OT exceeds the scope of this study. For that topic, readers can consult works like *Show them No Mercy: 4 Views on God and Canaanite Genocide*, by C. S. Cowles, et al. (Zondervan, 2003).

Since the large numbers associated with OT warfare seem unrealistic, Seevers opts to reduce them by viewing  $\eta\lambda\alpha$  as a "unit" rather than a "thousand" (pp. 53–55, 167). Such numbers include Israel's 600,000 plus troops (Num 1:46; 26:51), Joshua's 30,000 ambushers of Ai (Josh 8:3), Samson's 1,000 victims (Judg 15:15), Saul's 330,000 troops (1 Sam 11:8), Philistia's 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen (1 Sam 13:5), and David's 1,300,000 troops (2 Sam 24:9). The author does, however, acknowledge two significant difficulties of this approach (p. 55).

Seevers suggests that the walls of Jericho fell by a "divinely directed earthquake" (p. 43 n. 14). While this explanation is possible, it does not give enough credence to the type of wall used at Jericho. Since the Canaanites lived in an earthquake prone region, they engineered the casemate wall, an anti-earthquake wall consisting of two parallel walls with periodic perpendicular braces, thus creating individual cells (casemates), much like the shape of a cinder block. Builders could fill the casemates with dirt and debris for additional stability. During an earthquake, an individual casemate could collapse without creating a domino effect, thereby pulling down the rest of the wall. In order for

Jericho's walls to fall by earthquake, it would require an earthquake of enormous magnitude to level the entire city wall—every single casemate—save Rahab's. Alternatively, the purely supernatural explanation satisfies other scholars.

According to the author, a soldier could throw a javelin (with a looped cord for proper spin) 87 yards (p. 60), almost the length of a football field. If not farfetched, that distance is quite impressive. By comparison, the 2013 men's record for the javelin throw was ninety-seven yards.

Seevers (p. 64) distinguishes the two different kinds of Israelite shields: the larger standing shield for full-body protection and maximum security (צננה), and the smaller arm shield for greater mobility in hand-to-hand combat (מגן). How might the choice of one word over the other carry potential exegetical significance in cases where God is portrayed as the believer's shield? On this point Seevers bypasses an opportunity to elaborate.

At times the author states or infers that some biblical passages describe an ancient scenario, whereas other interpreters expect those scenarios to play out in the end times. Examples include Ps 2 (pp. 112–13), Isa 10:12–13 (pp. 224–25); 19:18 (p. 41 n. 3), and Zeph 2:13–15 (p. 263). For Seevers, the name "Philistines" and the place name "Dan" in Genesis exemplify textual updating (p. 156, 178 n. 14). He omits Edward E. Hindson's *The Philistines and the Old Testament* (Baker, 1971).

This study of military mechanics and hardware best suits pastors, churches, and Bible colleges. For many readers this accessible and informative volume will illuminate the OT Scriptures.

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*Job 1–21: Interpretation and Commentary* by C. L. Seow. Illuminations. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013. xxviii + 971pp., US \$95.00, hardcover.

Readers familiar with Seow's excellent commentary on Ecclesiastes for the Anchor Bible series will understand the high expectations with which I opened his commentary on the first half of Job. Those expectations were for the most part met, although I found some aspects of his interpretation of the book unconvincing, Seow's painstaking attention to the history of interpretation of the book (Seow's preferred term is "History of Consequences") and his detailed comments on textual,

philological, grammatical, and poetic matters are both extremely helpful and interesting.

The commentary begins with an introduction stretching for 248 pages. The first 100 pages cover the usual matters of textual history, setting and provenance, genre, structure, theology, and so on. The rest of the introduction gives as thorough a history of the book's presence and influence in later traditions as one could ask for: from the Second Temple period through to the twentieth century, every major Jewish, Christian, and Muslim interaction with Job is discussed. Even examples from the visual arts and music are included.

The commentary itself gives two sections for each chapter of Job. The first, "Interpretation," translates the chapter, lays out its structure, gives a brief "History of Consequences" section specific to that passage, and then interprets the passage (Seow's close study of the Hebrew of Job is the main factor here). This first section is intended for a general audience and keeps interaction with ancient languages and other scholarship to a minimum. These first sections close with a "Retrospect" which briefly reflects theologically on the chapter's main themes and questions. The "Commentary" is then given, with extended textual, philological, and grammatical notes.

It is these "Commentary" sections which form one distinguishing strength of Seow's work. Seow has spared himself no pains in investigating the minutiae of the Hebrew of Job. His skill in canvassing the versions, discussing different dimensions of Hebrew grammar, bringing other relevant OT passages to bear, and showing the implications of different interpretative decisions is both impressive and enjoyable to follow. The other strength which sets Seow's work apart is his attention to the history of interpretation. Seow's comprehensiveness on this subject is little short of amazing. I was already familiar with the reduction and simplification of Job to a mere questioner in early Rabbinic writings (as opposed to someone protesting God's injustice) and to a figure of patience in early Christian interpretation. But it was eye-opening to read summaries of post-Holocaust Jewish reflections on Job (such as those by Buber, Wiesel, Bloch). I am not aware of any other commentary on Job which is so extensive in this regard.

Having praised Seow's attention to the history of interpretation, perhaps I could add that the rationale behind the all-encompassing comprehensiveness in the history of consequences was not entirely clear to me. For instance, Seow lists some 36 classical and contemporary pieces of music inspired by Job (pp. 238–39). Similarly, the "king of terrors" from 18:14 appears in Poe's *The Pit and the Pendulum* in a line which is itself quoted in the metal band Symphony X's song "King of Terrors." The breadth is impressive, but one is not instructed in how

these pieces interact with Job or how Job reads differently after listening to them. They are listed and the survey moves on. And surely many of them used the book of Job as a relatively loose source of inspiration—i.e., the “history of consequences” shows only a very general and sometimes incidental consequence. In other words, the history of interpretation is not always brought to bear on Seow’s interpretation of the book.

Perhaps part of the rationale for this comprehensiveness is found in the commentary series’ stated goal not only to investigate the text’s ancient context and (likely) original meaning, but what it has come to mean. This is an important goal, but the introduction to the commentary series overgeneralizes when it states that “the Bible is always encountered as it has come to mean.” Similarly, we are told that “Job is more than the biblical book. It is a tradition” (p. 1). It is the word “always” in the first quote which raises questions, as does the simple equation between the biblical book and the traditions which look back to it in the second. While of course we always encounter later traditions as we study the Bible, is there really no distinguishing between a text and good and bad readings of it? And again: “the interpretations and retellings of the Joban tale . . . shape our perception of what is surely one of the most captivating but unsettling stories ever told” (p. 2). While this may be true in a general sense, comprehensive lists of commentators or novels do not demonstrate how they shape perception of the primary text.

But even if these points are granted, Seow’s assiduous attention to the ancient text, paired with what are sometimes the briefest of notices about later texts or paintings or pieces of music which somehow connect to Job, ironically help to show that the ancient text and its history of interpretation are often separable. I wonder if a discrete section could have been set aside for the listing of consequences which do not greatly affect the interpretation of the book, and the commentary proper could exclusively concern itself with more decisive “consequences” of Job?

There were also aspects of Seow’s interpretation of Job as an ancient text which I found unconvincing. Two examples will suffice. First, Job makes some apparent statements of hope in the midst of his protest (e.g., 6:10; 16:18–22; 19:23–27), so that many interpreters see faith and hope mingling with protest in Job’s speeches. In contrast, Seow reads these passages as supporting Job’s protests: when Job says he “has not suppressed utterances of the Holy One” (6:10, Seow’s translation), Job means only that he has “never refrained from speaking true words about God” (p. 90), i.e., Job is not silent in criticizing the deity. The witness of 16:18 is taken to be a personification of Job’s outcry against God (p. 739) to which God may not listen (p. 805). Similarly, the redeemer of 19:25 does refer to God, but in an ironic way, since Job does

not believe God will act like a redeemer for him (p. 805). It is a way of reminding God of a role he has abandoned and must again take up (p. 806). According to Seow, Job 1–21 shows its hero in unmitigated, unrelenting protest.

Seow's engagement with these passages is complex and would require a longer article for a satisfying answer. Perhaps in this context I could raise the question as to whether Seow has made Job too consistent. Job will, after all, contradict himself in other areas: in 9:3, 14 he questions whether he could answer YHWH's cross examination—but in 13:16–22, he imagines a scenario in which he could proceed with his case (v. 21 may mitigate without removing the contrast between these passages). Another example is found in ch. 9: on the one hand, Job is certain he is blameless and has done nothing to provoke this terrifying divine attack (vv. 15, 20); on the other, he says he is guilty (Qal of *רָשָׁע*, v. 29; the other uses of this pattern of this verb speak of sinning or acting wickedly [2 Sam 22:22/Ps 18:22; 1 Kgs 8:47; 2 Chr 6:27; Qoh 7:17; Dan 9:15]). Seow reads this as Job's certainty that he would be condemned regardless of his merits (p. 551), but the Hiphil of the verb would be expected for that (as in v. 20). In Job's terrifying new vision of an amoral universe run by an unjust tyrant, it appears as if Job, without admitting any sin, cannot consistently apply the category "blameless" to himself. But if Job's shocking and daring protest against divine injustice contains understandable inconsistencies, could his protest also be mixed with hope? Could a desire for reconciliation with Job's opponent occasionally surface? After all, in human relationships, vitriolic lament over wrongdoing is sometimes mixed with a shocking desire for reconciliation with the wrongdoer.

Seow's reading of Job's speeches as consistent protest against God's injustice creates a problem when we read YHWH's (admittedly perplexing) statement that Job spoke rightly about him (42:7). Seow is aware of this and points to the preposition *אֵל* in that verse, as opposed to *עַל*; he takes it to mean that, while the friends only theorized about (and thus reduced) God, Job spoke directly to him in protest. Thus he is vindicated. While *דָּבַר* with *אֵל* most often does denote the person spoken to rather than the content of the speech, there are other uses of the idiom where this distinction seems blurred (e.g., Job 40:27; Gen 12:4, 24:50; Exod 1:17; Jon 3:2). But even if YHWH says that Job only spoke to him, I am not sure this adequately explains God's vindication of a servant who has spent the book portraying him as an amoral monster. The verse is admittedly surprising, but I do not know what else Job is vindicated for except that, in his speeches, Job never cursed God or turned his back on him, but had some measure of faith and hope even as he protested.

Surprisingly, Job hopes for reconciliation even as he protests. A more complex Job better accounts for some of the book's later surprises.

One more interpretative disagreement will have to suffice: Seow rightly locates the Adversary's question in 1:9 as central to the book because it raises the issue of unconditional loyalty in humans. But Seow then wonders, "What if God is as arbitrary and vulnerable as the experience of Job suggests?" (p. 263). But God's permission to the Adversary to inflict unimaginable suffering on Job shows not God's arbitrariness but God's determination to establish Job in the only kind of relationship which will save Job. As Michael Fox writes, God "breaches his own justice to make" unconditional loyalty possible—"[i]xplicable suffering has a role in the divine economy, for it makes true piety possible" ("Job the Pious," *ZAW* 177 [2005], 362–63).

These criticisms are not in any way meant to detract from Seow's achievement. Even when I found myself disagreeing, Seow's arguments are engaging and weighty. I strongly recommend his commentary.

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*Wisdom and Torah: The Reception of 'Torah' in the Wisdom Literature of the Second Temple Period* edited by Bernd U. Schipper and D. Andrew Teeter. JSOTSup 163. Leiden: Brill, 2013. 340 pp., US \$148, hardcover.

This collection of 14 essays originated in a symposium at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin in 2011. The meeting gathered a group of biblical and Qumran scholars to address the development of the relationship between wisdom and Torah in "the thought and literature of Second Temple Judaism" (p. 1). The essays consider passages in books that the editors believe to have arisen in the Second Temple period: Proverbs, Qohelet, Psalms 19 and 119, Baruch, Ben Sira, Wisdom of Solomon, and various sapiential texts from Qumran. Central to the collection as a whole is the recognition that Torah and wisdom are not one-dimensional, static concepts, but ways of speaking to a complex and developing set of pedagogical, revelatory, ethical, and interpretative issues in Israel's life-world. For reasons of space, this review only comments selectively on the essays.

In "The Blinded Eyes of the Wise: Sapiential Tradition and Mosaic Commandment in Deut 16:19–20," Reinhard Müller takes up

Moshe Weinfeld's landmark thesis in *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Clarendon, 1972), that Deuteronomy originated in the sapiential tradition. Noting the limitations in Weinfeld's exegesis and his inattention to issues of social history, Müller focuses on a careful exposition of Deut 16:19–20 to demonstrate the sophisticated ways wisdom is handled in Deuteronomy's redaction history. The argument is difficult to follow at points and sometimes question-begging. Müller makes much of the fact that the description of the "wise" in Deut 1:15–16, in comparison to similar language in Gen 41, Num 11, and 1 Kgs 3 offers no clues as to where these wise judges obtained wisdom. He concludes that the judges' wisdom in Deuteronomy must have arisen from personal experience rather than through sapiential study or a divine gift. But the silence in Deuteronomy on this point in no way forbids these men from having gained wisdom in these, or any number of other, ways. Such a method of singling out conspicuous passages in an effort to support a pre-conceived social history is typical of this essay and of several of the essays in this collection. It is, unquestionably, a preferred fashion in biblical scholarship today, but it is also, nonetheless, narrowly focused.

Thomas Krüger's "Law and Wisdom According to Deut 4:5–8" largely provides a commentary on the recent German scholarly interpretations of wisdom in Deuteronomy and 4:5–8 in particular. The essay has some insightful comments, but says little new on the whole. Like many other essays, it is driven by the need to assign Deuteronomy a provenance in the Persian period. I failed to understand how Krüger could claim of Deut 4:8 that, "It is not the Torah that determines what is just and righteous, but rather Torah is judged and evaluated by the scale of justice," and then, sentences later, that Deuteronomy is among other texts that "seem to define righteousness and justice on the basis of Torah."

"When Wisdom Is Not Enough! The Discourse on Wisdom and Torah and the Composition of the Book of Proverbs," by Bernd U. Schipper essentially condenses arguments from two of his previously published monographs. He begins with the "consensus" view that Proverbs presents "different concepts of Wisdom" (p. 55), especially in chs. 1–9, 10–29, and 30–31. On this point, "concept" is too vague and "consensus" too strong to represent accurately the wide range of scholarly opinions on these issues. Schipper then presents a study of Proverbs in the light of parallels with Deuteronomy to flesh out the contours of a postexilic "theological discourse" about wisdom and Torah that explains the editorial shaping of Proverbs. Schipper has a keen eye, but he finds "sharp" contrasts in too many places in Proverbs, especially given the poetry of the language, which by its nature resists sharp

delineations. Still, his arguments on the shaping of Prov 1–9 are noteworthy and will undoubtedly influence future research in Deuteronomy and Proverbs.

In “Job in Conversation with the Torah,” Markus Witte examines attitudes towards unjust suffering as a way of commenting on the attitudes of the Joban author(s) towards Deuteronomy. His presentation of Job’s complicated redaction history is meant to illustrate shifting attitudes towards Torah prior to the Hellenic era.

In “‘Fear God and Keep His Commandments’: Could Qohelet Have Said This?” Stuart Weeks considers the conspicuously positive attitude towards Torah in Eccl 12:13–14 and challenges the consensus view that these verses were added by an anonymous epilogist, either to rebuke Qohelet or else to authorize the book as wisdom despite its many unorthodox statements. The epilogist, Weeks demurs, neither rebukes nor agrees with Qohelet, but instead invites us to read the monologue with utmost seriousness. As I will restate below, Weeks’ self-awareness of his limitations and biases as an interpreter are underrepresented in this volume.

Two essays are devoted to the Psalter. Karin Finsterbusch, in “Yahweh’s Torah and the Praying ‘I’ in Psalm 119,” considers the variety of legal terms in the light of the various life situations and perspectives of the singular praying “I” in Ps 119. She concludes that the Psalm is a product of its author(s) collecting views of Torah from legal, prophetic, and sapiential texts to portray a “multiperspectivity” of Torah that appeals to any and all Israelites. In “Half Way Between Psalm 119 and Ben Sira: Wisdom and Torah in Psalm 19,” Anja Klein argues that Ps 19 stands as a bridge in the history of postexilic conversations about wisdom and Torah between earlier views and final developments in Ben Sira, who “succeeds in integrating the historical election of Israel into the universal [creational] concept of wisdom.”

In “Torah and Sapiential Pedagogy in the Book of Ben Sira,” Benjamin G. Wright III reflects on the way Torah and wisdom are brought together in Ben Sira. He concludes that, for Ben Sira, Torah was a source for pedagogy alongside sapiential teachings and observation of creation. He further notes that Torah was understood as Mosaic Torah but not limited to what we call the writings of the Pentateuch.

Sebastian Grätz argues in “‘Wisdom’ and ‘Torah’ in the Book of Baruch” that, given the likely provenance of Baruch in the Hellenistic period, Baruch serves to refocus Israel on the one true wisdom, which is grounded in a study of the Torah—a specifically Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic Torah.

In “Wisdom and Torah at Qumran: Evidence from the Sapiential Texts,” William A. Tooman explores the only two Qumranic texts that



explicitly mention Wisdom and Torah: *4QBeatitudes* (4Q525) and *4QSapiential Admonitions B* (4Q185). His study fills in some of the history of the development of wisdom and Torah in Israelite thought, showing that these concepts developed after Ben Sira, particularly in their shared contention that virtue and piety are the true mark of Hebrew wisdom.

D. Andrew Teeter contributes a chapter entitled, “Torah, Wisdom, and the Composition of Rewritten Scripture: *Jubilees* and 11QPs<sup>A</sup> in Comparative Perspective.” His study is particularly helpful in noticing the macro-level questions that stand over any consideration of wisdom and Torah in Qumranic documents. Focusing on two technically non-wisdom documents, he explores the process of rewriting Scripture (Genesis in *Jubilees* and Psalms in 11QPs<sup>A</sup>) as a window into the developing relationship between wisdom and Torah. The words “Torah” and “Testimony” in *Jub.* 1 stand together to represent the “unifying content” of scriptural tradition both in its divine origins and its interpretation for future living as the people of God. Torah and wisdom function similarly in 11QPs<sup>A</sup>, which rewrites portions of the Psalter with David as the archetypal reader of Torah in search of wisdom that leads to piety and salvation.

Reinhard G. Krätz writes in a similar vein in “Rewriting Torah in the Hebrew Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” where he explores the rewriting of the Covenant Code and Deuteronomy in *Serekh ha-Yachad* and the *Damascus Document*, respectively. Krätz, however, is less concerned with wisdom and Torah than he is with the process of rewriting and a reassessment of over 150 years of historical critical analysis of rewritten texts in light of rhetorical and literary questions. Rewriting, according to Krätz, was not an updating of older traditions, but something more organic: “Rewriting establishes the tradition and keeps it going, and thus is responsible for the [sic] both aspects of tradition, *traditum* and *tradio*” (p. 280). Moreover, rewriting is a “literary technique with hermeneutical purposes.”

In the penultimate essay, “*Νόμος* and *Νόμοι* in the Wisdom of Solomon,” Joachim Schaper argues that the use of *νόμος* and *νόμοι* in Wisdom serve a universalizing function akin to wisdom. Furthermore, wisdom and Torah are “intertwined” in Wisdom (p. 305), but they are not equated or amalgamated as in Ben Sir and other later texts.

Bernd Schipper provides a concluding essay, “Wisdom and Torah: Insights and Perspectives.” Schipper rightly, I think, situates all of the essays within the framework of Krätz’s “rewriting” as a kind of scribal hermeneutic, such that each scholar in this volume explores not simply a literary development of texts, but the social and intellectual development of wisdom and Torah in Israel’s postexilic history. Torah—

Deuteronomic Torah in particular—gradually “amalgamates” with wisdom as Israel seeks to understand her tradition in new, multicultural settings.

The essays are excellent overall and the editors have successfully gathered a wide range of scholars with expertise pertinent to their investigation. But the editors overreach in their claim to have achieved “interdisciplinarity”; this is more of an “inter-specialty” project. A truly interdisciplinary study of these subjects would consider literary and canonical development, hermeneutical and philosophical perspectives, and alternative views of Israel’s social history. In this way, the volume’s perspective on “social history” and textual layers in the Hebrew Bible are somewhat hegemonic. In reality, the provenance and literary development of these books are merely hypotheses, as Krätz’s essay alone acknowledges; one could—and others have—just as easily explain these literary features in other ways.

In this light, Krätz, Weeks, and, to a lesser extent, Teeter are the only authors that show any sort of meta-interpretive perspective—that is, putting the reading scholar under the same microscope as the studied text. How might our presuppositions and “givens,” as they are often called here, learned over the last 150 years, be leading us down wrong paths or obscuring other important questions? Schipper hints at this kind of question in the conclusion, but not emphatically or broadly enough.

I should finally add that Anglo-American scholars will benefit from the way in which this volume makes contemporary Continental scholarship of wisdom and Torah so accessible in English. Given our frequent tendency of reading within familiar circles, this volume represents a welcome invitation to explore. Almost any scholar, pastor, or seminarian will benefit from this collection.

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*Jonah: God's Scandalous Mercy* by Kevin J. Youngblood. Hearing the Message of Scripture: A Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013. 186 pp., US \$29.99, hardcover.

Kevin Youngblood is an associate professor in the College of Bible and Religion at Harding University. His Ph.D. is from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he studied with Daniel Block. This is his first biblical commentary and it is a good one. His background in pairing

Hebrew linguistics and Old Testament theology serves him well in this intertextual and canonical interpretation of the book of Jonah.

This is one of the first volumes in a new series for Zondervan, written for “serious students of Scripture as well as those charged with preaching and teaching the Word of God.” Its goal is to help readers “to hear the messages of Scripture as biblical authors intended them to be heard” (pp. 9–10). While recovering authorial intent is always an elusive task, a sympathetic theological interpretation of the meanings of the text in their original literary, historical, and canonical settings is ever needed. The format calls for a six-fold organization: (1) Main Idea of the Passage; (2) Literary Context; (3) Translation and Exegetical Outline; (4) Structure and Literary Form; (5) Explanation of the Text; (6) Canonical and Practical Significance. This is a more refined version of Zondervan’s three-fold strategy in the NIVAC series and will stand well alongside it. The intentional focus on literary structures and rhetorical strategies as they build toward a book’s overall message and canonical meaning will be a welcome approach for pastors and teachers.

Youngblood accomplishes most of these goals exceedingly well by drawing on and integrating much of the best scholarship on Jonah. His succinct articulation of his presupposition regarding “the complex interweaving of theology, history, and literary art” simply shines.

Contemporary approaches tend to oversimplify the interaction of these three facets especially with regard to the book of Jonah. The result is a false dichotomy between the aesthetics of the book . . . which many interpreters assume to be a fictional account and the historicity of the book . . . which others wrongly assume to preclude rhetorical features and creative shaping . . . .  
(pp. 31–32)

Thus he stakes out his hermeneutical ground.

His extensive introduction (20 percent of the book) includes clearly written summaries of Jonah’s canonical context (in the Minor Prophets, as a prophet, and in the Christian Bible); historical context, which he deftly divides between the background of the narrative events (eighth century B.C.) and the background of the composition and first audience (post 538 B.C.); and literary context, including sections on genre, structure, six devices of rhetorical strategy, and Jonah’s discourse markers. This introduction functions as an introductory textbook to currently applied methods of interpretation.

The exegetical “Explanation” sections are the strongest, engaging every phrase of the book of Jonah. Many words and concepts are elucidated by short primers on their significance in the wider canon.

The Scripture Index provides evidence, for example, of 44 references to Genesis, 49 to Kings, 47 to Psalms, 44 to Jeremiah, 20 to Matthew, and 20 to Luke-Acts. In Jonah 1, the author compares Jonah and Moses' reluctances and commission narratives. He sets YHWH's omnipresence and rescue from the sea in the context of Pss 107 and 139. He outlines seven points of comparison with the ship-storm scene in the synoptic Gospels. In Jonah 2, he delineates the elements traditionally found in thanksgiving psalms (Westermann), thematic connections to Hos 6 and to Pss 18, 31, and 120. God's relenting of disaster at Nineveh (Jonah 3) is set in parallel to Exod 32 and the concern for the animals (Jonah 4) is magnified by Joel's similar concern. Isaiah's vision for the Gentiles (Isa 49:1–6) expands the LORD's logic in the final dialogue of ch. 4. The LORD's reputation vis-à-vis Exod 34:6–7 appropriately centers the dialogue about saving Ninevites. This intertextual and canonical work will be a welcome help for preachers.

Literary structures, observed by many scholars, are supplemented by the author, providing further strength to the commentary. The head of each section begins with the author's grey-scale highlighted outlines of the text, indicating the main thematic points and flow. To this he adds observed chiasms and inverted parallelisms that aid interpretation (e.g., 1:3 by Lohfink, 1:4–2:1 by Fretheim, and 3:6 by Tribble). He includes the double chiasm of Jonah 2. The result is an excellent, very close reading of the entire book.

The most valuable theme theologically is Youngblood's articulation of the LORD's wrath as a "severe mercy" (a phrase which is carried in the subtitles of 1:4b–2:1b) and "a reflex of his passionate love" (p. 87). The function of the storm at sea as mercy for Jonah, the sailors, and eventually for Nineveh gives these descriptions of God's wrath a narrative grounding, which is essentially relational. The sections culminate in the subtitle, "The Relenting Wrath of YHWH's Relentless Mercy (1:15a–2:1b)" which treats the swallowing of Jonah. To the point: "The great fish that YHWH appoints to swallow Jonah, therefore, is the perfect symbol to convey the prophetic principle of salvation not from but *through* judgment" (p. 86, n. 75, citing B. Estelle).

Perhaps the strongest contribution of this commentary for preachers is found in the "Canonical and Practical Significance" sections at the end of each literary unit. Here Youngblood demonstrates his intertextual knowledge of both testaments. Employing theological themes, motifs, allusions, and linguistic devices, he connects Jonah to Scripture's broad message of God's scandalous love.

A few questions were not fully examined. Was Jonah actually swallowed? He barely mentions this controversial claim as a miracle, but simply wraps it in God's sovereign action (p. 85). It is a short discussion,

perhaps left alone as the debate of an earlier generation. Some acknowledgement of this interpretive issue, however, would have been helpful, since it has preoccupied conversations about Jonah for the last two centuries.

My main disappointment with the book is in how close Youngblood comes to fully articulating his subtitle: "God's Scandalous Mercy." He begins well by grounding Jonah in 2 Kings and its exilic judgment and salvation of ancient Israel (p. 61). He is also aware of the "Grisly Assyrian Record of Torture and Death" (Bleibtrau; p. 55, n. 26) and therefore, the radical nature of Israel's call to forgive the violent Assyrians and the later imperial forces (Babylonians, Greeks, Romans, etc.). He fails, however, to apply this knowledge to his reading of the person of Jonah. It is unfortunate that he follows Ballentine in the "lampoon" reading of the prophet Jonah in ch. 2 and throughout the book. The author's strong background in literary techniques and a too-neat theology may forestall a serious consideration of the ancient (and present) geopolitical and personal realities of facing a violent enemy. A caricature of Jonah as a faithless prophet prevents a sympathetic and realistic perspective on the sea-change paradigm shift that the book of Jonah historically represents. Only *through* Jonah's honest lament of ch. 4 can the reader find a way forward with this God of extravagant grace.

Youngblood comes closest to a sympathetic reading of the prophet when he compares Jonah's descent into the sea with Israel's defining exodus miracle. God delivered the murmuring and helpless Hebrews through the Sea. He also offers 1 Cor 1:18–29 as an interpretive key: "God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong" (v. 29). Jonah is humbled when saved and vomited up by the fish, but the author concludes by tilting here against the idolatry of his pride rather than expounding the comedy of God's patient grace with Jonah. Like every disciple of the LORD's revelation of a new way in the world, Jonah is slow to understand. Yet he follows.

Is Jonah an idolater (p. 120)? Or is he a very ordinary prophet who is carried along by events as he struggles to understand God's love for violent and evil men? The book of Jonah is a theodicy in the form of a dialogue rather than a moral tale. The prophet serves as a character sympathetic to populations oppressed by empire. A theological critique of Jonah's reluctance and laments may undermine a reader's understanding of the process of the LORD's patient revelation and his unfolding mercy toward the Gentiles *of* the empire and also toward us. The rhetorical function of Jonah's reluctance and resistance is the genius of the story. Without it, the "God's scandalous mercy" would not be complete.

Does Jonah repent? Youngblood shows in an extended argument that Jonah does not speak words of repentance in his prayer of thanksgiving from the belly of the fish, but he may push too hard on this lacuna. (See Peter, “Simon son of Jonah” in John 21, who is also silent about his betrayal, but nonetheless faithful in action. Cf. p. 127). While the author acknowledges Jonah’s re-direction (p. 113), he may overplead the absence of words of repentance. Like the brother who said he would not go to the field but went anyhow (Matt 21:29), Jonah did the LORD’s will. The prophet *does* repent with his feet, to the salvation of a city. How does the irony of this reluctant success work rhetorically? Is it to provide fodder for our judgment of the prophet, or to highlight God’s longsuffering mercy to Jonah? Further, Jonah’s attitude may be left unresolved and indeterminate as a rhetorical device for us, the reader (cf. the original ending of Mark), since our actions toward our violent enemies matter in every generation. The scandalous mercy of God is for Jonah too, and thus for everyone called by the LORD to “salvation *through* judgment.”

Despite these few missed opportunities, this commentary is a most complete resource for serious students, teachers, and preachers of Scripture. It is lucidly written so that even the more technical bits are made accessible to a wide range of readers. I highly recommend it and offer congratulations to the author and editors of this new series.

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*David Remembered: Kingship and National Identity in Ancient Israel* by Joseph Blenkinsopp. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013. xii + 219 pp., US \$26.00, softcover.

*David, King of Israel, and Caleb in Biblical Memory* by Jacob Wright. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. x + 271 pp., US \$29.00, softcover.

King David is one of the most complex and important personalities in the biblical tradition. He directly and indirectly influenced many of the socio-political contours of ancient Israel, and his legacy helped explain the significance of Christ. Furthermore, as a man of power, ambition, opportunity, and determination, it is not difficult to understand why the history of scholarship is littered with studies devoted to his person, his rule and context, and his relevance. Somewhat ironically though,

scholars tend to be skeptical of any new volume focusing upon David. Consequently, the greatest obstacle for any academic endeavor may be securing its place within the very crowded Davidic debate. As for the recent studies of Joseph Blenkinsopp and Jacob Wright, they can be set apart from the cacophony of voices insofar as they target the legacy of King David more than the man or his immediate context. They are concerned with how his memory influenced the community's developments and decisions in the generations, even centuries, after his death.

In *David Remembered*, Blenkinsopp focuses upon Davidic messianism—a particular ideology in the complex cord of ancient Israelite ideology and messianic ideas. Driving questions include the impact of the ideology upon socio-political policies, eschatological perceptions, attempts to restore the Davidic dynasty, steps taken to fill the vacuum the dynasty left, and the dynamics surrounding future expectations of the dynasty. Blenkinsopp extracts his answers by leaning heavily, and critically, upon biblical texts, analyzing the ideology of Deutero-Isaiah, Proto- and Deutero-Zechariah, eschatological prophecy, the person of Zerubbabel, and the assassination of Gedaliah. The result is an extensive analysis of the ancient community's perception of David as it developed after the sacking of Jerusalem.

Blenkinsopp opens with a discussion of the final days of the Davidic dynasty, arguing that as Josiah represents the final viable monarch, his death essentially signals the end of the line. Blenkinsopp discusses both 2 Chronicles and 2 Kings, and, through this juxtaposition, he constructs a dynamic that permeates the remainder of the work. As the Deuteronomistic History closes by focusing upon Jehoiachin's house arrest, and Chronicles with Cyrus, there will be two fundamental perspectives that jockey for position and dominate the development of Davidic messianism through the centuries. On the one hand, there will be those who advocate a more traditional fulfillment of the dynastic promise (i.e., through a king or something similar), and on the other hand, there will be those who will respond to the historical and imperial developments and therefore understand dynastic expectations more imaginatively.

One senses this ideological dynamic within the broad but distinct dispensations that Blenkinsopp's analysis creates. First, an early dispensation, roughly defined as 586 B.C. through ca. 515 B.C. (discussed in chapters 2–5), is described wherein the most influential beliefs expected the Davidic dynasty to be reinstated in a manner comparable to things prior to the fall of Jerusalem. Indeed, there were alternative visions that began to encroach upon traditional beliefs. For example, Blenkinsopp argues in ch. 2 that the imperial landscape of the early post-

exilic period may have given Benjaminites hope for restoring the Saulide line. Also, there were the messianic ideas of Deutero-Isaiah (ch. 4). Noting the absence of David within Deutero-Isaiah (pp. 61–63), a realization of Cyrus and Persian imperial policies, and the application of Davidic titles to Cyrus (pp. 66–68), Blenkinsopp concludes that Deutero-Isaiah concedes that future political viability was to exist outside the dynasty traditionally understood. Yet in spite of these alternative views, the assassination of Gedaliah, the Babylonian client king (ch. 3), demonstrated that the sting of defeat was too strong, the past glories too fresh. While this initial dispensation was an era of critical evaluation, uncertainty, and political ambition, traditional positions held sway.

A critical point in this initial dispensation was the rise and disappearance of Zerubbabel, who is discussed at length in ch. 5. Blenkinsopp argues that the texts of Haggai and First Zechariah preserve a hope that Zerubbabel would be the one to reinstate the Davidic line. Moreover, Blenkinsopp argues that several pericopes throughout Hag 1–Zech 8 build upon each other to lead to a climactic coronation scene (Zech 6:9–15). According to Blenkinsopp, this scene clarifies the belief that Zerubbabel “will rebuild the temple and sit on the throne and rule, in other words, restore the native dynasty in his own person” (p. 101). However, the final form of these and other traditions (e.g., Ezra 6) and the historical reality of Zerubbabel’s abrupt disappearance from Yehud’s socio-political scene demonstrate that these ambitions were soon squashed. Blenkinsopp wisely offers no reconstruction for Zerubbabel’s disappearance, but he does postulate a deliberate alteration of the coronation scene as a response to Zerubbabel’s untimely disappearance. While such a proposal is by no means novel and not without debate, Blenkinsopp is correct to imply that Zerubbabel’s disappearance ushered in a new dispensation, which can be characterized by the surge of more abstract, less concrete, ideas of Davidic messianism.

But after the failed coup of Ishmael, the failure of Jehoiachin to return to king after thirty-seven years of exile, the failure of the Babylonian revolts to prevent the consolidation of the Persian Empire in the early months of the reign of Darius I, and the disappointment of expectations placed on the elusive figure of Zerubbabel, the restoration of the Davidic dynasty in the present or immediate future gave way to visions, aspirations, and dreams of a restoration of the past in a future only dimly discerned. (p. 126)

Chapters 6 through 8 discuss the development of Davidic ideology in the latter portions of the Persian period and into the



Hellenistic period. In the traditions of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles, a trend that preserved and creatively propagated Davidic ideology through genealogies and music is observed. In ch. 7, which discusses eschatological prophecy, Blenkinsopp describes Davidic messianism in its most idealized and abstract forms. Focusing upon the editorial expansions, Blenkinsopp generalizes that “the future state . . . is envisaged as a return to an idealized past . . . when David ruled over a united and prosperous Israel free from foreign inroads and subjugation to the rule of the great empire” (p. 116). Yet Blenkinsopp does not neglect specific articulations found in individual books. For example, Ezekiel foresees a dynasty with “chastened” expectations among a “complex eschatological scenario” (p. 120). Isaiah envisions a Davidic monarch defined by divinely ordained characteristics (vs. heroic actions) that will ensure wise and just rule. Chapter 8 continues the idealizing trend, but in a manner that adheres to the traditions of Haggai and First Zechariah. According to Blenkinsopp,

Deutero-Zechariah . . . may have been attached to Proto-Zechariah because it was perceived to deal with a later incident, or perhaps later incidents . . . analogous to the Zerubbabel episode in Proto-Zechariah. In both sections an eschatological perspective is combined with a focus on a historical individual, Zerubbabel in Proto-Zechariah, at least one unnamed individual presented under the image of shepherd in Deutero-Zechariah, but both in the line of David. (p. 144)

Such an idea is very interesting, but certainly debatable, particularly since the messianic texts of Second Zechariah are highly ambiguous and difficult texts.

Chapter 9 concludes the study as it discusses the developments of Davidic messianism during the latter stages of the Hellenistic period and into the Roman period. The absence of Davidic messianism in Hasmonean texts and during Hasmonean rule, the developments at Qumran, and the characteristics of other Jewish texts (e.g., Psalms of Solomon) are all entertained. Important is the historical reality that as active resistance against Rome increased there remained few Davidic allusions. An exception to this general rule was Jesus of Nazareth as all the Gospels present him through a Davidic lens, particularly in their accounts of his triumphal entry. Yet, Blenkinsopp concludes that this political imagery is marginal, more the product of early Christian factions, and is to be held in accord with other messianic images (p. 179).

Blenkinsopp’s work is typical of standard socio-historical analyses. Consequently, one’s posture toward such investigations will

likely influence the reader's reception of this work. For example, eschatological prophecies are predominately perceived as secondary.

The judgment that these preexilic prophets pass on to their contemporaries is predicted for the immediate future, to be inflicted more often than not through the agency of foreign nations, whether Assyrians or Babylonians. Prospects for the more distant and imagined future are to be sought, for the most part, in additions to the collection resulting from reading, reflection, and reinterpretation in the light of later events and situations unknown to and unanticipated by the original prophetic authors. (p.116)

If the eschatological prophecies are perceived to be non-secondary, then Blenkinsopp's scheme is affected. To what extent, however, remains to be seen. Most importantly though, Blenkinsopp's implicit suggestion that Zerubbabel represents a critical juncture in the development of Davidic messianism is commendable, perhaps the most important contribution of the work. Scholarship has long been fascinated with Zerubbabel, particularly since he quickly appears on the socio-political scene, comes to embody so many expectations, and abruptly disappears. What remains to be understood fully is how the Second Temple community wrestled with his presence, responsibility, and significance. For example, John Kessler provides a cogent analysis (see John Kessler, "Haggai, Zerubbabel, and the Political Status of Yehud: The Signet Ring in Haggai 2:23," in *Prophets, Prophecy, and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism* [T & T Clark, 2006], 102–119). Yet, Kessler's analysis can be augmented by means of a framework of inner-biblical exegesis. More discussion is needed.

Jacob Wright's monograph, *David, King of Israel, and Caleb in Biblical Memory*, offers the fruit of his research on the convergence of politics, literary composition, and ethnogenesis. Wright is dissatisfied with many aspects of the consensus surrounding the interpretation of the Davidic narratives in 1 and 2 Samuel, which largely concedes that their final form developed from an early Davidic apology. Wright rejects this popular position and offers a three-stage redactional framework as an alternative (cf. ch. 3). First, Wright argues that a History of David's Rise is the oldest stratum of text, and it spoke *only* to David's rise as Judah's King in Hebron (vs. Hebron and then Jerusalem). There was also a comparable History of Saul's Rise, which arose independently. The second stage saw the amalgamation of these two independent histories, which occurred during the late Iron Age II period in response to the needs of the post-Israel era, namely how the two kingdoms related (p.

47). Furthermore, this amalgamation “created the many episodes in which Saul seeks David’s life . . . [and communicates] a concern not only to show that David and Judah are part of Israel, but also to assert David’s solicitude for Saul and his ascendancy—morally and politically—over him” (p. 47). The final stage was postexilic, and its intention was to massage further the Davidic tradition as a vehicle for a new political vision as to how a nation can survive the absence of statehood and political autonomy.

Such a redactional scheme has important implications, the biggest of which is divorcing the composition of the narratives from the historical vicinity of King David. Quite simply, in Wright’s scheme much of the biblical content is composed centuries after the king’s death. Consequently, if the numerous episodes and details surrounding the exploits of David are not indicative of reality and the writer’s historical proximity to David, then what is the purpose of so many episodes and intricate details? According to Wright, the details of the narratives are an exercise in what he calls war commemoration. Having previously published on the concept, Wright utilizes this ancient and modern literary convention as a hermeneutical lens. According to Wright, war commemoration both celebrates military valor and recounts disgrace *by means of narrational details* in order to make a sociological point. This is an intriguing concept, particularly as it thrusts to the forefront the convergence of social politics and literary composition. However, it is significant that the comparative evidence marshaled is largely modern and Greek, versus ancient Near Eastern (pp. 25–27). In fact, Wright admits “[W]e have a very difficult time locating parallels in ancient Western Asia, what is commonly called the ‘ancient Near East’” (p. 26). Nevertheless, the result is a fresh analysis of the Davidic narratives that, among other things, will force one to consider the intersection of textual composition and social politics.

Chapters 4–10 apply the concept of war commemoration to strategic episodes throughout the Davidic narratives. The range of targets are geographic (towns, regions, and territories), ethnic (clans, tribes, and people groups), and sociological (guilds and professional groups). In every case, the narratives either celebrate assistance to the king, or they smack of treachery in order to make a socio-political statement about the geographical, ethnic, and sociological referents. Of particular interest are the episodes of Uriah and Ittai, both which are understood to provide commentary on the necessary balance for a proper state. While Uriah’s account functions as a critique of the unchecked ambitions of statehood, the Ittai episode demonstrates the necessary allegiance a state needs. Together, these episodes admit that “the relationship between state and nation is inevitably a vexed one . . . [they] demand that the state serves

the interest of the nation” (p. 115). Also, Wright provides a nuanced but interesting understanding of the Chronicler’s historiographic *Tendenz*. Targeting strategic passages, Wright ultimately concludes that the Chronicler’s concern was not to portray David as a pietistic dynastic founder so much as it was to characterize David as the founder of national unity.

Chapters 11–13 switch gears, discussing Caleb and the traditions associated with him. Wright argues that the Caleb traditions evolved to communicate that Caleb, and by extension his descendents, enjoyed a privileged position within the Judahite community. Wright also argues that the traditions evolved in accord with the dynamics of the time. For example, if the Calebite territory came into question, territorial allotments became a point of emphasis in the tradition. If Calebite lineage was questioned, genealogies were emphasized and composed. As for the association of Caleb in a monograph devoted to David, according to Wright, postexilic scribes invoked the memory of Caleb to root their collective memory in an individual whose importance for Judah predated David, whose dynasty was enduring a period of critical re-evaluation. In other words, scribes evaluated Caleb as an alternative to the heroic dynastic founder to ensure leverage. “It ensured that Judah and Hebron would be in a position of preeminence vis-à-vis the rest of Israel long before his throne” (p. 228).

Wright’s work is intelligent and lucid. It is thought-provoking, challenging, and innovative. Yet, particular points will resonate negatively with evangelicals. First, Wright’s understanding of the text’s historicity, which can be discerned vividly from ch. 3, will not mesh well with traditional evangelical positions. Wright interprets the archaeological data differently than most evangelicals (pp. 48–49) and also argues that characters, including David, at times are *symbolic* of historical reality. For example, the erratic behavior of the Keilahites toward David reflects the historical reality that Keilah periodically shifted political allegiance (p. 50). There is very little concern for whether the Keilahite actions with respect to David recounted in Samuel actually happened in real space and time. While the idea of symbolic historiography appropriately encourages one to consider any potential claim of historicity in a sophisticated and nuanced manner, the disconnect between Wright and evangelical convictions appears substantial. To say that episodes that are presented as past events may be a symbolic commentary on a later socio-historical context suggests something significant about one’s assumptions of ancient Israelite historiography. In fact, this same point can also be detected through a number of other ideas advocated by Wright in ch. 3 and throughout the work. If Hebron was the only capital of David’s kingdom, if Jerusalem

became a national focal point only later, and if the “Israelite” identity is historically owed to the Omride dynasty (pp. 141–46), then one is compelled to question whether an antiquarian interest, accurately communicated, had any foundational role in ancient Israelite historiography. Such an assumption is one that evangelical scholarship has traditionally held.

Wright’s presentation also hammers the conviction that politics and ideology were the predominant force behind the composition of the Davidic narratives. On the one hand, Wright is correct to emphasize socio-political factors during the composition process, and evangelicals will do well to consider these things when formulating the applicable paradigms. On the other hand, politics and ideology cannot suffocate revelation and truth as a driving force in the composition process. There must continue to be a realization and a confession that the texts of Scripture are God’s authoritative word to humanity, not merely a socio-political powerplay of a particular group or groups. A balance ultimately needs to be struck.

Taken together, these works provide an often underappreciated angle to engage the Davidic debate. Archaeology and historical discussions currently hold the lion’s share of press and publication, but understanding the legacy of this great person is both worthy and necessary for exhaustively understanding one of the greatest characters of the Old Testament. Furthermore, these works push to the forefront conversation-worthy issues. I mentioned Blenkinsopp’s emphasis upon Zerubbabel as an important hinge in the development of Davidic messianism. In addition, Wright’s work forces one to consider the role of socio-political concerns in the compositional and revelatory process. Simply put, one’s understanding of revelation must accommodate the socio-political concerns that were influencing the composition of the biblical text. Moreover, Wright’s work challenges his readers to revisit the fundamental dynamics of historiography and the grounds for invoking historicity. I recommend these works, particularly for courses or seminars devoted to David, messianism, or 1 and 2 Samuel. At the very least, Blenkinsopp’s work is one that offers a vast amount of data in one location, and Wright’s work is a fascinating read that will challenge.

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*Deuteronomy: A Commentary* by Jack R. Lundbom. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013. xxx + 1034 pp., US \$80.00, softcover.

In many ways, scholars have anticipated Lundbom's commentary on Deuteronomy. A gifted scholar in prophetic writings (e.g., Jeremiah) and rhetorical/literary structure, the book of Deuteronomy appeared to be a logical progression in Lundbom's career. Given the scope of his other writings, it should not come as a surprise that the commentary is monumental, especially regarding its length—it is over 1,000 pages. Reviewing such a large volume is no easy task. Thus, the review will highlight the overall structure of the commentary followed by some critical reflections.

From the outset, it should be noted that Lundbom's commentary is unlike many recent volumes in Old Testament studies. In essence, his work is a throwback to the older, classical commentaries. What does this mean? He begins his commentary with a 97-page introduction, which is followed by a 47-page bibliography. Within these initial pages, Lundbom provides a thoughtful and critical (=classical) introduction to the book. He divides the introduction into ten sections: name and canonicity, texts and versions, date, composition, authorship, ANE treaties, ancient Hebrew rhetoric, Deuteronomy and the prophets, Deuteronomy and wisdom, theological ideas in Deuteronomy, evolution of Deuteronomy, and Deuteronomy and the New Testament.

Several elements of the introduction are noteworthy. First, jettisoning other scholarly assessments, Lundbom interprets the *Numeruswechsel* within the confines of "the celebrated Deuteronomic rhetoric," meaning the singular "you" is to be understood corporately and the plural "you" is an emphatic reference to each individual—"each and every one of you" (p. 10). Second, he continues to develop his theory that the "book of the law" discovered in the temple during Josiah's reign (2 Kgs 22–23) was the Song of Moses in Deut 32 (see "Lawbook of the Josianic Reform," *CBQ* 38 [1976]: 293–302). He concludes, after examining the rhetorical and literary similarities between the two texts, "the identification is thus complete: *Deuteronomy 32 is the law book Hilkiah found in the temple in 622*" (p. 16, emphasis his). That the Song of Moses is the "book of the law" described in 2 Kgs 22–23 is interwoven throughout the commentary and culminates into an excursus on the "History of Interpretation into the Song of Moses" (pp. 13–18, 90–92, 852–57).

Third, Lundbom uses the rhetorical elements in Deuteronomy to reconstruct the evolution of Deuteronomy (pp. 25, 73–92). He suggests the "First Edition" of the book (Deut 1–28) was written in Judah as early as the reign of Jehoshaphat or as late as the reforms of Hezekiah. Amidst

the uncertainty concerning the exact date of the “First Edition,” he emphatically states that the edition existed “long before” the discovery of the “book of the law” in 622 B.C. (p. 74). Drawing on the works of S. R. Driver (*Deuteronomy* [T & T Clark, 1895]) and Ernest Nicholson (*Deuteronomy and Tradition* [Basil Blackwell, 1967]), he suggests the “First Supplement” (Deut 29–30) was added to the “First Edition” between Hezekiah and Josiah (pp. 25, 89, 800, 803). Finally, the “Second Supplement” (Deut 31–34) was added after the discovery of the “book of the law” (i.e., the Song of Moses) in 622 B.C. (pp. 25, 90–92). The completed Deuteronomy was conjoined to the Deuteronomistic History (DtrH) in the early exilic period (p. 25).

Fourth, he highlights fifteen “theological ideas in Deuteronomy” (pp. 59–73). The “theological ideas” are not exhaustively treated, but they do provide readers with the basic meaning(s) that aid in understanding Deuteronomy. The only glaring omission in this section is the theological idea of centralized worship. Fifth, the inclusion of “Deuteronomy and the New Testament” is helpful to the broader study of the Bible. He divides the section into seven subcategories related to the New Testament canon (pp. 93–97). Lastly, he structures the bibliography according to reference/primary sources, commentaries, and books/monographs/articles.

Moving to the body of the commentary, Lundbom provides readers with clear direction and layout. Each textual section begins with a translation devoted to the rhetorical and literary style of the Hebrew. This translational approach separates his commentary from the others on Deuteronomy. Following each translation, Lundbom structures the remainder of his work under three headings: rhetoric and composition, notes (i.e., exegetical remarks), and message and audience. Naturally, the value of his work is found in the “rhetoric and composition” sections throughout the commentary. It is here that Lundbom’s expertise in rhetoric and literary structure adds a contemporary and needed new voice. Of interest, Lundbom admits that both Hittite and Assyrian vassal treaties influenced Deuteronomy, yet he gives more emphasis to the Decalogue structuring of the Deuteronomic Code (pp. 20–21, 76–86, 416–22).

That being said, the work does have shortcomings and areas of weakness. One of the greatest weaknesses to the book is actually related to its greatest strength. Given his affinity for all things rhetorical, Lundbom ignores scores of scholarly advancements in Deuteronomic studies. Below is a sampling of omitted advancements. The first, and most obvious, critique is Lundbom’s unconvincing argument that the “book of the law” is the Song of Moses. By locking in on this interpretation, he overlooks (ignores?) the recent trends in DtrH studies,

especially the redactional critics in Europe. Even with the rhetorical connections between the two texts, the reader is left unconvinced of his theory.

When discussing the Deuteronomic “name theology,” Lundbom consults the works of S. R. Driver, Gerhard von Rad, and Moshe Weinfeld, yet omits two major contributions in the works of Dean McBride (“Deuteronomic Name Theology” [Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1969]) and Sandra Richter (*The Deuteronomistic History and the Name Theology* [De Gruyter, 2002]). Also related to the “name theology” is the role of centralization in Deuteronomy. Here, Lundbom prefers a rhetorical/literary structural approach (particularly Deut 12) over and against an overarching rhetoric of obedience and worship as it relates to centralization in Deuteronomy (e.g., Peter Vogt, “Centralization and Decentralization in Deuteronomy,” in *Interpreting Deuteronomy* [Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2012], 118–38 and *Deuteronomic Theology and the Significance of Torah* [Eisenbrauns, 2006]). Also related to the issue of centralization, Lundbom ignores the literary, compositional, and redactional arguments posited by many scholars (e.g., Carmichael, Halpern, Lohfink, Reuter, Rofé, Römer, and Chavel).

Throughout the commentary, Lundbom reiterates that the Deuteronomic Code builds on the Covenant Code in Exodus. This may be the case, however, many Deuteronomic scholars adhere to, or at least interact with, the seminal work of Bernard Levinson (*Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* [Oxford University Press, 1997]). Yet, Lundbom never explicitly interacts with the aforementioned work nor its overarching argument that Deuteronomy radically revises the Covenant Code by innovating the sacrificial worship of YHWH to a centralized location. Building on the previous critiques, another issue can be raised concerning the sources used by Lundbom. In some areas he relies heavily on dated sources. For example, his reliance on the dated works of David Daube (e.g., “The Culture of Deuteronomy,” *Orita* 3 [1969]: 27–52 and “Repudiation in Deuteronomy,” in *Neotestamentica et Semitica* [T & T Clark, 1969], 236–39) in the section “Deuteronomy and Wisdom” ignores the progress made in wisdom studies over the last 20 years (e.g., see pp. 44–45, 47, 54–58).

The final critique relates to a personal preference. Throughout the expansive commentary, Lundbom only employs three excurses: (1) “Centralized Worship in the Reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah,” (2) “Divorce within Judaism and Early Christianity,” and (3) “History of Research into the Song of Moses.” In at least two places, Lundbom discusses the Israelite concept of הָרָם and its relationship to contemporary issues within modern day Judaism and Christianity (pp. 66–



68, 332–34). An excursus on the topic of אֱלֹהִים and people of faith would have provided a valuable voice to a difficult topic, especially given the recent growth in interest on the topic (e.g., Thomas, et al, *Holy War in the Bible* [IVP, 2014]; Gundry, *Show Them No Mercy* [Zondervan, 2010]; Siebert, *Disturbing Divine Behavior* [Fortress, 2009]; Earl, *Reading Joshua as Christian Scripture* [Eisenbrauns, 2010]; Copan, *Is God a Moral Monster?* [Baker, 2011]; Lamb, *God Behaving Badly* [IVP, 2011]; and Hofreiter, “Genocide in Deuteronomy and Christian Interpretation,” in *Interpreting Deuteronomy*).

In closing, the specific critiques outlined above should not overshadow the value of this commentary. Lundbom unashamedly approaches the book of Deuteronomy from a rhetorical and literary perspective, sometimes at the expense of scholarly interaction. Although this is a serious shortcoming, the rhetorical elements unearthed in the book outweigh the negatives. In many ways, this commentary might actually position the study of Deuteronomy on a new path, that is, a focus on the rhetorical message of the text.

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*The Old Testament and Ethics: A Book-by-Book Survey* edited by Joel B. Green and Jacqueline E. Lapsley. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013. 216 pp., US \$19.99, softcover.

This little volume on Old Testament ethics presents an encyclopedic-like treatment of the subject in an affordable and convenient package. The book primarily consists of independently authored articles that present “the ethics of each of the books of the Old Testament” including deuterocanonical/apocryphal books (p. xvii). Additionally, this volume includes sections that cover selected topics in Old Testament ethics (e.g., Biblical Accounts of Creation, Ethics of Priestly Literature, Ten Commandments, etc.) as well as three introductory chapters, “Ethics in Scripture” by Allen Verhey, “Scripture in Ethics: Methodological Issues” by Bruce C. Birch, and “Old Testament Ethics” by M. Daniel Carroll R. That the treatment is *encyclopedic-like* is no accident as its contents were first published in an encyclopedia: *The Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics* (ed. Joel B. Green; Baker Academic, 2011). I find it difficult to disassociate my opinion of the former from its filial relationship to the latter.

The editors of the *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics* articulate their purpose for this larger volume. They aim to “locate and orient conversations about the relation of Scripture and ethics,” hoping that the dictionary “will become a useful, indeed essential, resource to which students, pastors, and scholars turn for orientation and perspective on Scripture and ethics” (p. 2). They lament the divide that exists between Scripture (or biblical studies) and ethics (or moral theology), intending to create a resource that unites these too often disparate disciplines. The genius of the *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics* is the disciplinary communion that takes place within it. To provide one example, readers who consult the article on Exodus might stumble across the subsequent article on Exploitation. While the former article raises important questions about the use of violence for the sake of social justice, the latter article provokes readers to analyze the power differential among moral agents related to one another. These kinds of juxtapositions create the opportunity to develop a deep and integrated understanding of Scripture and ethics, and they occur throughout the work because the editors made the intentional decision to unite in one volume a broad array of discussions that relate Scripture to ethics and vice versa.

It is for this reason that I find the re-production of a discipline-specific selection of the material from the *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics* ethically puzzling. If this larger resource is intended to address the problem of relating to one discussions of the Bible and those of moral theology, what is the point of repackaging this material in piecemeal form? This repackaging in the form of the book under review divorces Scripture from ethics, not to mention Old Testament from New. (See also *The New Testament and Ethics: A Book by Book Survey* [ed. Joel B. Green; Baker Academic, 2013].) There is an obvious and understandable incentive in taking an unwieldy 7 x 10 inch hardcover volume and condensing it down to more manageable 6 x 9 inch softcover volumes. Changes were necessary to market this resource as a textbook. But students who acquire both Old and New Testament volumes save a mere \$20 over the cost of the original dictionary when purchased direct from the publisher. (This savings margin entirely disappears when the larger volume is purchased from Amazon or Christianbook.com.) Moreover, this division of the disciplines reinforces the problem that originally gave rise to this material. Marketing this volume as a textbook for courses that disentangle or ignore the relationship of Scripture and ethics undermines the original rationale for assembling this content.

The article on “Capitalism” in the *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics* draws attention to evangelical and reformed Protestant critiques of the economic theory supporting capitalism, in particular the “alternative motivations for economic action beyond the maximization of profit or

utility” (p. 117). While I recognize that editors and publishers must make wise economic and utilitarian decisions, my idealism about the legitimacy and importance of the earlier project leaves me questioning these decisions as they relate to *The Old Testament and Ethics*. I can recommend the contents of this work. Generally speaking, I find the material fairly represents the state of biblical studies scholarship and its major ethical discussions as they relate to the biblical books. But I would encourage those interested in utilizing this material, especially those teaching courses on Old Testament ethics, to avoid *The Old Testament and Ethics* and opt instead for *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*.

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