

## REVIEWS

Bill T. Arnold and H. G. M. Williamson, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2005. xxiii + 1060 pp. \$50.00 (cloth). Reviewed by William D. Barrick, Professor of Old Testament.

*Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books (DOTHB)* continues IVP's excellent *Dictionary of the Old Testament* series, which started with *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, edited by David W. Baker (2003). New Testament companion volumes include *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (1992), *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (1993), *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments* (1997), and *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (2000). For *DOTHB*, 122 contributors present 161 entries covering almost everything someone might want to know about the historical books (Joshua–Nehemiah, minus Ruth) from "Agriculture and Animal Husbandry" (1-20) by Gerald A. Klingbeil to "Zion Traditions" (1019-25) by J. Alan Groves. Apparently a different volume will include the Book of Ruth (989), but the editors in their preface give no warning or explanation for Ruth's omission (ix-xi). In the front and back materials the editors provide all the aids that will enable readers to get the most out of the volume: "How to Use This Dictionary" (xii-xiii), "Abbreviations" (xiv-xix), "Transliteration of Hebrew" (xx), "Contributors" (xxi-xxiii), "Archaeological Periods" (1026), maps of Palestine and the Ancient Near East (1027-28; some maps also occur with entries, 37, 319-27), "Scripture Index" (1029-46), "Subject Index" (1047-59), and "Articles Index" (1060). Five levels of cross-references enable serial reading of connected topics: (1) alphabetical insertion of topics often leading to subdivisions of articles, (2) asterisks marking key topics included in the entries, (3) parenthetical cross-references to articles, (4) cross-references at the end of an article (just ahead of the bibliography for that entry), and (5) cross-references to companion volumes in the IVP *Dictionary* series (both OT and NT).

Each article concludes with a select bibliography pertinent to that entry's topic. These vary in length and detail. Amelie Kuhrt's ("Persia, Persians," 768-82) is perhaps the lengthiest and most helpful (778-82). On the other end of the spectrum, one of the most disappointingly thin bibliographies concludes J. Andrew Dearman's "Moab, Moabites" (705-7). Bibliographies for the biblical books themselves (e.g., "Samuel, Books of," [866-77] by Bill T. Arnold) are divided into

two sections: "Commentaries" and "Studies" (876-77). In addition to the valuable bibliographies, several charts display details on a variety of studies. The following is a partial listing: "Ratio of Caprines/Bovines in Religious Contexts in the Historical Books" (10), "Implicit Comparisons: 'Signs' of Blessing and Cursing" (174-75), "Lists of David's Sons" (214), and "Distribution of Elements Throughout Major-Judges Accounts" (583). More charts could have enhanced the volume further.

Reading *DOTHB*, this reviewer was struck by the number of significant contributions. He has inserted bibliographic references to most of these entries into his own course bibliographies and recommends the articles to his students. Such readings include the following: "Aramaic Language" (50-60) by Jerome A. Lund, "Assyria, Assyrians" (97-105) by A. Kirk Grayson, "Chronology" (181-88) by Kenneth A. Kitchen, "Faith" (296-300) by Peter Enns, "Forgiveness" (301-4) by John N. Oswalt, "Genealogies" (309-16) by John H. Walton, "Geographical Extent of Israel" (316-28) by Frederick J. Mabie (TMS M.Div. graduate, 1999), "God" (336-55) by Daniel I. Block, "Hebrew Inscriptions" (366-80) by Judith M. Hadley, "Innerbiblical Exegesis" (502-9) by William M. Schniedewind, "Linguistics" (657-69) by Cynthia L. Miller, "Omri Dynasty" (755-64) by Joel E. Drinkard, Jr., "Scribes and Schools" (884-88) by David W. Baker, "Sources, References to" (935-41) by Kevin L. Spawn, "Text and Textual Criticism" (954-60) by Al Wolters, "Women" (989-99) by Mary J. Evans, and "Writing, Writing Materials and Literacy in the Ancient Near East" (1003-11) by Alan R. Millard.

The editors purposely avoided the inclusion of entries on every named character in the historical books, opting instead to group them into entries treating a dynasty or family (e.g., "David's Family" [211-15] by Steven L. McKenzie, and "Omri Dynasty"). The results of this policy have been "fresh insights which would not have emerged had each family member or each king in a dynasty been treated separately" (x).

Two grouped topics deserve special attention: "History of Israel" and "Non-Israelite Written Sources." In the former the editors have provided a multi-authored and ordered history of Israel handily collected into one section of the volume. Eight separate articles divide the history according to its major periods: "Settlement Period" (425-34) by Sam A. Meier, "Premonarchic Israel" (434-42) by Mark W. Chavalas, "United Monarchy" (442-52) by Andrew E. Hill, "Division of the Monarchy" (452-58) by McKenzie, "Assyrian Period" (458-78) by Brad E. Kelle and Brent A. Strawn, "Babylonian Period" (478-85) by Paul-Alain Beaulieu, "Persian Period" (485-93) by Tremper Longman III, and "Postexilic Community" (493-97) by Peter R. Bedford. The second grouped topic provides a reading in non-Israelite written sources without having to look under the separate language headings. Five entries cover the major corpuses: "Assyrian" (724-30) by Grayson, "Babylonian" (730-35) by David B. Weisberg, "Egyptian Aramaic Papyri" (735-39) and "Old Persian and Elamite" (739-43) by H. G. M. Williamson, and "Syro-Palestinian" (743-50) by Simon B. Parker.

Due to the significance of the interpretation of history in the historical

books of the OT, one would expect an entry for maximalists and minimalists (or, maximalism and minimalism). However, the reader is left to track down definitions, adherents, and discussion by appealing to the subject index, where “minimalists” has twelve references but “maximilists” is totally absent. Craig G. Bartholomew (“Hermeneutics,” 404-5) and Carl S. Ehrlich (“Philistines,” 786) include brief discussions of these two contrasting positions. Hill (“History of Israel 3: United Monarchy,” 445) provides a bit more detail, including the addition of the medialist position (similarly, Kelle and Strawn in “History of Israel 5: Assyrian Period,” 460). However, the fullest discussion occurs in “Quest of the Historical Israel” by Robert D. Miller II (832-33), which still leaves much to be desired. The topic deserves more specific and extensive attention, since it represents one of the key ongoing debates in historical studies. As it is, the absence of a separate entry might prove the old saying that a reference book is one in which the reader can quickly find what it does not contain.

Some of the entries were disappointing due to the writers’ weak support for biblical accuracy and integrity. For example, in “Oral Tradition and Written Tradition” (764-67) Richard S. Hess ignores the option that God Himself most likely re-revealed Jeremiah’s prophecies after King Jehoiakim had destroyed the original document (see Jeremiah 36). He concludes that the reproduction of the prophecies merely “demonstrates the memory capacity of an oral culture to recreate the written text after it has been destroyed” (766). An example of the inclusion of differing viewpoints in the volume appears in the handling of large numbers by David M. Fouts’ “Numbers, Large Numbers” (750-54) through a hyperbolic approach and Baker’s contrasting insistence that, “when figures are recorded in this context of a military muster (e.g., Num 1-2; 1 Sam 14:14; 2 Sam 8:1-14), we should assume their accuracy” (“Scribes and Schools,” 887).

*DOTHB* should be in the library of every Bible student and teacher, as well as every institution engaged in biblical education. IVP’s series of dictionaries stands as a landmark accomplishment for biblical scholarship. The reviewer looks forward to the future completion of the OT series.

Graham A. Cole. *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2007. 310 pp. \$30.00 (cloth). Reviewed by Andrew V. Snider, Assistant Professor of Theology.

Professor Cole’s book is the fourth volume in the Foundations of Evangelical Theology series and, all things considered, it is that series’ fourth quality contribution to evangelical theological literature.

The book is laid out in four parts. After introductory comments, the study begins with “Part I: The Mystery of the Spirit.” Parts II and III contain the OT and NT perspectives on the Holy Spirit, respectively. Part IV is simply Cole’s four-page

conclusion. A basic but helpful glossary follows, along with a Scripture index and general index.

In his introductory comments the author begins with a typically evangelical commitment to Scripture as the ultimate authority for judging the truth of doctrinal formulations, while listening humbly also to the work of the Spirit in the Christian tradition. For the reader expecting an immediate plunge into the biblical material on the Spirit, Part I seems like a continuation of the introduction, albeit with a focus that narrows from theological method in general to a standard survey of certain issues in theology proper. These include a discussion of the elusiveness of the Spirit (i.e., the incomprehensibility of God) and the Trinity.

The extensive introductory material is one of the few but important weaknesses of the book—this reviewer feels that Cole is traversing territory covered thoroughly in Feinberg's (*No One Like Him*) or Clark's (*To Know and Love God*) contributions to this same series. While much of Part I is good—even excellent—it does not contribute much to Cole's study of pneumatology.

Part II of the book focuses on the Spirit's ministry in the OT, beginning with the Spirit's relationship to creation. The author engages in an exegetically and theologically sensitive discussion of Gen 1:2 that avoids facile conclusions but not difficult questions. This reviewer also appreciated the distinctly evangelical tone to the discussion, as Cole consulted with such stalwarts as Feinberg, Ferguson, Gromacki, and Packer on this topic.

The Spirit's ministry to Israel and OT saints in general comprises the remaining chapters of Part II. Cole considers the Spirit's ministries of care, governance, communication, and presence with the nation Israel under the OT economy. Of special emphasis, of course, is the OT theme of the hope of Israel in which the Spirit plays an important part. This is explored in some detail. The author, who is not of a dispensationalist bent, nevertheless expresses his admiration for the dispensationalist's commitment to taking Israel's role in the redemptive plan of God seriously (138 n.34). Finally, in an excursus on regeneration in the OT, the author takes a traditional position that the Spirit regenerated but did not indwell OT believers.

The largest division of the book, unsurprisingly, is Part III, in which the Spirit's NT ministries are addressed. The author first explores the relationship of Christ and the Spirit. His unique approach is to consider the pneumatological relationship of each of the major "Christological moments": incarnation, baptism, temptation, transfiguration, mighty works, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. In all but two of these (the transfiguration and ascension), Cole finds some compelling pneumatological significance.

Though the Spirit was the empowering force in Christ's incarnate ministry, Cole goes on to emphasize that the Spirit continues the ministry of Jesus after the ascension. At this point in the book, the author's exposition of the NT ministries of the Spirit begins in earnest. Choosing to leave Jesus' name for the Spirit untranslated, Cole focuses on the ministerial functions of the Paraclete, which include

comfort, advocacy, and teaching, among others to be examined later in the book. Above all in this chapter, Cole seeks to preserve the vital connection between Christology and pneumatology against the recent ecumenical and interfaith trends which seek to separate these two in order to find a way of salvation through other religions by means of the Holy Spirit.

The last two chapters deal with the Spirit's relation to the church and the NT believer. Beginning with Pentecost, Cole works his way through the NT literature to explain the benefits of the Spirit which come to those who are "in Christ." A particularly compelling strength of this book is seen in these two chapters, as the author emphasizes rightly the corporate ministries of the Holy Spirit. All those who are "in Christ" and members of his body are united by partaking of the one Spirit—so the baptism, indwelling, sealing, filling, and gifts of the Spirit are intended to benefit the body as a whole, not just the individual members. This is an emphasis that is sometimes lacking in conservative evangelical thought and practice.

The author's discussion of spiritual gifts and the issue of cessationism/continuationism is somewhat disappointing. His position, which he calls "Open but Discerning," is not adequately defended against the cessationist views—he simply does not go into the arguments for either side in adequate detail. It is true that many books have been written on this issue alone, but it seems appropriate to expect a book of this scope on pneumatology to present a more thorough treatment of various views on this issue.

Finally, and unfortunately, the book ends with a rather perplexing discussion of the illumination and internal testimony of the Spirit. In the end, the reader is left wondering just what Cole understands these ministries to entail. The various positions on illumination and internal testimony are presented, but the argument Cole constructs seems to be left without a conclusion.

These closing criticisms aside, this book is indeed a welcome contribution to the discussion of the doctrines of the Holy Spirit. On the whole, Cole has provided an exegetically minded, theologically nuanced, historically sensitive exposition of the key areas of biblical pneumatology. Although drawing on a broad base of research that ranges from Ryrie to Barth to Pinnock to John Paul II, Cole manages to produce a distinctly evangelical and biblical pneumatology. Extensive footnoting provides a clear path into a wide array of sources, which makes the book of great value to theological students, pastors, and educated laity.

C. John Collins. *Genesis 1–4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary*. Philippsburg, N.J.: P & R, 2006. xiv + 318 pp. \$17.99 (paper). Reviewed by William D. Barrick, Professor of Old Testament.

C. John Collins is Professor of Old Testament and department chairman at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. He also authored *The God*

of *Miracles: An Exegetical Examination of God's Action in the World* (Crossway, 2000) and *Science and Faith: Friends or Foes?* (Crossway, 2003). As a Bible translator he served as chairman of the Old Testament Committee for the English Standard Version and contributed "What the Reader Wants and What the Translator Can Give: First John as a Test Case," in *Translating Truth: The Case for Essentially Literal Bible Translation* (Crossway, 2005).

*Genesis 1-4* is an exegetical commentary that "includes a literary-theological method informed by contemporary discourse analysis" (1). Collins describes this method as seeking "to read the text the way a competent reader in the original audience would have done, to the best that we can reconstruct that competence" (5). Collins penned a portion of his second chapter (5-32) as a response (9 n. 6) to Robert L. Thomas, "Modern Linguistics versus Traditional Hermeneutics," *TMSJ* 14/1 (2003):23-45. Using 1 Samuel 3 and Matt 4:1-11, Collins illustrates his methodology based upon a series of nine questions (18-30).

In Chapter 3 the author places *Genesis 1-4* in its literary context (33-37) before embarking on four chapters exegeting the text's four pericopes: 1:1-2:3 (39-100), 2:4-25 (101-47), 3:1-24 (149-88), and 4:1-26 (189-220). In each chapter Collins identifies the boundary of each pericope, its structure, and its genre. Then he provides an essentially literal translation richly footnoted for syntactical and exegetical details before commencing the main treatment of the text. The remainder of each chapter deals with "Extra Notes," which are expanded discussions of key interpretative elements of the text. For example, these "extra" notes for 1:1-2:3 display the following headings: "Genesis 1:1 and creation from nothing" (50-55), "The proper rendering of the refrain" (55-56), "The fourth day" (56-58), "The meaning of kind" (58-59), "Genesis 1 and the Trinity" (59-61), "The image of God" (61-67), "The use of the words *create* and *make*" (67-68), "Genesis 1:28 and environmental ethics" (68-69), "The goodness of creation" (69-70), and "The unusual seventh day" (70-71). Next comes a literary-theological exposition (71-83, for 1:1-2:3), followed by what the author terms "Other Reverberations" (83-100, for 1:1-2:3) dealing with references to the text in other OT and NT texts.

After presenting the characteristics of 1:1-2:3, Collins concludes that the genre is "exalted prose narrative" (44). He understands "created" in 1:1 to refer to an event preceding the storyline that follows (43, 54). Interestingly, he seems to impose the Western concept of "day and night" on "And there was evening and there was morning, the *n*<sup>th</sup> day" by making the "evening" refer to the end of the day and the "morning" refer to the end of the night—resulting in day followed by night rather than the traditional night followed by day (56). In what may have been an oversight, no reference to 1 Cor 11:7 occurs anywhere in Collins' discussion of the image of God (61-67), and his treatment of 1 Cor 11:7-12 with regard to Gen 2:4-25 (141-42) does not provide an explanation. Making certain to distinguish his view from that of Meredith Kline, Collins opts for a literary framework interpretation of the days of *Genesis 1* (73-74). In his opinion the framework theme does not require the reader to do away with the sequential nature of the days (74, 111). However, he takes a

“broadly sequential” view that allows for the creation week to be “some years long” (129). For the seventh day, he opts for an ongoing creation Sabbath that did not end like the previous six days (74-75, 92-93, 125).

In Gen 2:15-17 Collins identifies an Adamic covenant, but not a covenant of works (112-14). As for the location of the Garden of Eden, he believes that “the flood could not have obliterated” (120-21 n. 65) the clues for identifying its location. On the issue of the length of the days of Genesis 1, he associates himself with the analogical days view that holds that the days’ “length is neither specified nor important, and not everything in the account needs to be taken as historically sequential” (124). In a disarmingly transparent statement regarding harmonization of the Bible and science, he declares, “my sympathies are with the harmonizers. But I hope that I am honest enough to change my mind if the evidence leads elsewhere” (124).

In Collins’ opinion, God has not revoked the creation mandate for man to fill the earth and subdue it (130). In fact, he bases his system of biblical ethics upon this mandate. Thus, the Ten Commandments cannot be done away with, since they are rooted in the creation ordinances (131-32) and keeping those commandments is restorative and evangelistic (132). According to Collins, Gen 3:15 is messianic in the sense that it envisions a champion who engages the dark power that uses the serpent. Therefore, “we may say that Genesis fosters a messianic expectation, of which this verse is the headwaters” (157, 176). Due to the syntactical specificity of the text for an individual as the offspring of the woman, he sees no need to resort to some sort of *sensus plenior* (158).

In his eighth chapter Collins takes up the matter of the sources, unity, and authorship of the Pentateuch and Genesis 1–4 in particular (221-35). He warns that writing an obituary for the Documentary Hypothesis probably might prove premature (224). He concludes that “Moses is the primary author of the Pentateuch as we have it” (235). Chapter 9 discusses the communicative purpose of Genesis 1–4, taking into consideration the ANE background, the Pentateuch as a whole, and life in Israel (237-47). Reluctant to describe Genesis 1–4 as a polemic, Collins takes it as an alternative to the ANE stories—an alternative that corrects the pagan versions of events and provides the true interpretation (242-43). Chapter 10 tackles questions of history and science (249-67). It is in this chapter that the author most clearly identifies himself as an adversary of a literalistic reading of Genesis 1–4, of young earth creationism, and of creation science. The final chapter (269-78) considers “how Genesis 1–4 can shape our view of the world today” (269).

This book concludes with a fairly extensive bibliography (279-98) that lacks adequate reference to key creation science and young earth creationist sources (e.g., those written by Henry M. Morris and John C. Whitcomb). Two indexes round out the volume (biblical and extrabiblical references, 299-308; subjects and names, 309-18).

Collins’ volume ought to be read by anyone seeking an exegetical treatment of Genesis 1–4. The detail with which he pursues its text and its implications

theologically is unmatched in the usual commentaries. As the title claims, this is a linguistic, literary, and theological commentary. This reviewer teaches a seminary course on Genesis 1–11 in which he takes issue with a number of Collins' interpretations. However, this volume will be required reading for all future course offerings.

Hubertus R. Drobner. *The Fathers of the Church: A Comprehensive Introduction*. Trans. Siegfried S. Schatzmann. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2007. 632 pp. \$49.95 (cloth). Reviewed by William Varner, Professor of Biblical Studies at The Master's College.

This volume is the eagerly anticipated English translation of the author's well-known German volume, *Lehrbuch der Patrologie*, published in 1994. Perhaps the title of the English should have been a straightforward translation of its German title: "A Textbook of Patrology." The English subtitle creates difficulty for this reviewer. "A Comprehensive Introduction" is something of an oxymoron and does not represent what the book intends to communicate. After a review of what the volume delivers, a decision of whether or not the subtitle is an adequate description of the book will be possible.

Hubertus Drobner, Professor of Church History at the University of Paderborn, Germany, surveys post-canonical literature from the late first century through the seventh century. Though his treatment progresses in a generally chronological manner, he organizes the men and their messages by grouping them according to the themes which they share. Thus, under "Theological Controversies of the Fourth Century," he discusses Nestorius, Cyril of Alexandria, Theodoret, and Leo the Great. He also tends to group Greek Fathers with Latin Fathers.

One of the great strengths of the English translation is the addition of a twenty-four page "Supplementary Bibliography" prepared by William Harmless, S.J., a professor at Creighton University. The bibliography consists of mostly English works on Patristics published since 1994, including a few from before that date that were not included in Drobner's German edition. In this reviewer's opinion, the extensive bibliographies found throughout the volume provide the greatest value. They direct to the published original language texts of the Fathers' works, published biographies of them, and monographs and articles about their role and significance. In this regard it is a veritable goldmine for the researcher who wants to go beyond what Drobner himself tells about each of the Fathers whom he treats. It is in just that area—the actual description of the Fathers and their writings—that the English subtitle is misleading and the volume a bit disappointing. How can a work that includes only one or two pages (apart from the bibliography) about the lives and works of the majority of individuals included be in any sense "comprehensive"? It could be called an "introduction," but it is in no way a "comprehensive introduction." For

Augustine, Drobner assigns sixty pages, while Jerome merits twelve pages, and Origen has eight pages of treatment. But is one page for *First Clement* and two pages for the seven letters of Ignatius sufficient? For this reviewer and other writers who have invested so much interest in the *Didache*, how can one be satisfied with two short paragraphs about this important little work that has spawned huge discussion since its discovery in 1873?

Furthermore, Drobner's treatment has some omissions that are hard to comprehend. Two glaring examples will suffice. Where is any discussion of the life and works of the great Didymus of Alexandria, more commonly known as "Didymus the Blind"? Now that the Greek commentaries of Didymus on various OT books, discovered at Thoura, Egypt in 1943, are fully published, this relegation by Drobner to four scattered references is quite perplexing. Though Drobner's two pages on the *Shepherd of Hermas* are compact and helpful, it is disappointing that he makes no mention of the new chapter numbering system for *Hermas* suggested by Molly Whittaker. This is especially problematic because her system is being adopted by many scholars as an improvement over the complex system used for many years.

The impression should not be that this reviewer questions Drobner's scholarship or his familiarity with his subject. His enormously detailed bibliographies, supplemented by Harmless, indicate that he is fully informed about this vast and complex area of study. His volume will become THE source to be consulted for "further reading" about the Fathers. But if the reader is looking for an introduction to the thought of the Fathers that may justify that word "comprehensive," he can be better served by the classic five-volume set by Johannes Quasten, titled simply *Patrology*. And if he wants an up-to-date treatment, he should consider the recent two-volume work by Moreschini and Norelli, *Early Christian Greek and Latin Literature*. The recent publication by evangelical Bryan Litfin, *Getting to Know the Church Fathers*, is helpful although he includes only ten of these great worthies, even omitting the giant Jerome in the process.

Perhaps the problem with this book can simply be traced to the publisher's assigning of such a misleading sub-title that raises expectations too high.

R. T. France. *The Gospel of Matthew*. In the New International Commentary on the New Testament. Ed. Gordon Fee. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007. 1167 pp. \$60.00 (cloth). Reviewed by William Varner, Professor of Biblical Studies, The Master's College.

The long awaited volume on Matthew in the New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT) has finally arrived. This venerable commentary series was launched over a half century ago under the editorship of Ned Stonehouse (1947-1962), followed by that of F. F. Bruce (1962-1990), and is (hopefully) being brought to completion under Gordon Fee (1990 -). The series was launched with a

team of international scholars sympathetic to the Reformed faith from the U.K., the U.S., South Africa, and the Netherlands. The commentary has been around long enough for replacements of some of the original volumes to appear (e.g., Luke, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, James, and the Epistles of John) and revisions by the author of some of the originals to be issued (e.g., John, Acts, Thessalonians, Hebrews, and Revelation).

In light of the long history of the NICNT, one may wonder why it took so long for the Matthew volume to see the light of day. From an examination of old dust covers, one can see that the Gospel of Matthew was originally assigned to Stonehouse, but his untimely death caused a switch to Robert Guelich. For some reason, it was then assigned to Herman Ridderbos who for whatever reason did not complete it. In his preface to this volume, editor Gordon Fee reveals that during his tenure since 1990 he had contracts for the Matthew volume returned to him by two "very capable" younger scholars. Fee says that one day he asked a fellow member of the Committee on Bible Translation (NIV/TNIV), Dick France, if he would take the commentary project, and what we have is the result.

For those familiar with Gospel studies, France is no stranger, having written a smaller commentary on Matthew for the Tyndale NT series, a separate book on Matthew's teaching, and a commentary on Mark in the NICGT series. France has also contributed scholarly articles on Matthew, Jesus, and the Synoptics. No one seems more qualified to step into the gap, and France does not disappoint with this volume.

Sadly, most commentaries from scholars of this caliber are a series of technical word studies somehow strung together, or they become a commentary on other commentaries, or they suffer from the unholy union of both those characteristics. France avoids both the pedantry of the first method (the one totally word based) and the endless lists of different interpretations characteristic of the second method (those who comment on other commentaries). He does this with constant attention in every individual pericope to how this section fits into the larger section in which it appears and how everything fits into Matthew's larger strategy. He avoids the danger of simply providing a digest of others' interpretations by referencing other authors in the footnotes and majoring on telling what he believes Matthew is saying. No one can accuse him of ignoring scholarly opinion on Matthew. For example, his bibliography of books, commentaries, and journal articles covers thirty-five pages! He interacts with other views, but majors on a fresh interpretation of the text.

Another refreshing aspect of France's treatment is that he places his emphasis on discovering what the canonical text of Matthew is teaching. He does not follow the endless bypaths of source and redaction critics which mar many modern commentaries on Matthew. One thinks of the magisterial work of Davies and Allison, filled with insights both exegetical and theological, only to be marred by statements that this or that word/phrase is the work of a redactor. How can one know that when no text of Matthew indicates such redaction? France tells what the text means and does not get bogged down on questions of whether this verse was in Q or

M, or if it is the result of a final redaction of those two or more sources. This also makes his commentary much more valuable for the preacher and teacher.

France explains briefly the two dominant views about the structure of Matthew's gospel (2, 3). The first is the fivefold division based on the repeated statement, "And Jesus finished the sayings," (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). The second is the threefold division based on the repetition of "From that time Jesus began to . . ." (47; 16:21). He opts for seeing the similar way in which Matthew follows a geographical procession of Jesus, as is in Mark. Thus he suggests the following overall outline: I. Introducing the Messiah (1:1–4:11); II. Galilee: The Messiah Revealed in Word and Deed (4:12–16:20); III. From Galilee to Jerusalem: Messiah and His Followers Prepare for the Confrontation (16:21–20:34); IV. Jerusalem: The Messiah in Confrontation with the Religious Authorities (21:1–25:46); V. Jerusalem: Messiah Rejected, Killed, and Vindicated (26:1–28:15); VI. Galilee: The Messianic Mission is Launched (28:16–20). Thus, to France, semantic content trumps literary features in a book's structure. This approach may be more valuable to the preacher, but it neglects the possibility that Matthew may have intended those distinct literary characteristics to communicate his structure. Whether the features favor a fivefold or a threefold division, this reviewer believes that Matthew had a literary design that he intended the reader to understand.

On the other hand, France is best when he is interpreting an individual pericope or even a set of related pericopes. For example, he displays his very capable interpretive skills in his deft handling of the five pericopes in the Matthew nativity account (1:18–2:23). He recognizes the controversial way in which Matthew employs the OT quotations there and arrives at very satisfying conclusions which maintain the hermeneutical sanity of Matthew over against his modern detractors and critics. At this point one might wish to explain specifically how he does that, but space constraints mandate leaving that delight to be discovered by the reader who will not be disappointed by France's insightful method and his conclusions.

Reviewers of a commentary will usually issue the expected caveat that they do not accept every interpretation in the commentary. That is, of course, the same situation with this reviewer's approach to France's commentary. But rest assured that France has considered all views and presents cogent arguments, whether one agrees with them or not. In that regard, I must demur from France's treatment of the Olivet Discourse. He argues for Jesus' answering the first of the disciples' questions ("When shall these things be?") in 24:4–35 before he answers the second question ("What shall be the sign of your coming and the end?") in 24:36–25:46. He views the first section as describing the events leading up to and including the fall of Jerusalem. The rest of the discourse he sees as describing the events related to the "eschaton." Though France studiously avoids millennial terminology, his approach seems to be a form of realized eschatology that views the events of A.D. 70 as fulfilling most of the prophecies traditionally taken as describing Jesus' second advent. Again, the limits of a review do not allow interaction with France in detail. Such a comment is only to alert the reader that in the reviewer's opinion France has

not made a compelling case for his view. Yes, problems exist with whatever view one adopts, but France's approach raises more problems than he solves. For a more traditional and a better handling of the issues, the commentary by Stanley Toussaint, *Behold the King*, (Multnomah, 1980) is recommended.

France's commentary should take its place among the best on Matthew. Will it dislodge the commentaries by Davies and Allison and Luz that are at the top of scholarly commentaries on Matthew? Probably not. But it should be one of the finest ones used to find out not only what is being said about Matthew, but to find out what Matthew is saying.

Mark D. Futato. *Interpreting the Psalms: An Exegetical Handbook*. Handbooks for Old Testament Exegesis. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007. 234 pp. \$20.99 (paper). Reviewed by William D. Barrick, Professor of Old Testament.

Futato's volume is the second in Kregel's new Handbooks for Old Testament Exegesis series, edited by David M. Howard, Jr. First to be published was Robert B. Chisholm, Jr.'s *Interpreting the Historical Books* (2006). Forthcoming volumes include *Interpreting the Pentateuch* by Peter T. Vogt, *Interpreting the Wisdom Literature* by Richard L. Schultz, *Interpreting the Prophets* by Michael A. Grisanti (TMS professor), and *Interpreting Apocalyptic Literature* by Richard A. Taylor. Futato is professor of Old Testament at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida. He is best known for his user-friendly *Beginning Biblical Hebrew* (Eisenbrauns, 2003). His studies on the Psalms include *Transformed by Praise: The Purpose and Message of the Psalms* (P&R, 2002) and *Joy Comes in the Morning: Psalms for All Seasons* (P&R, 2004).

Most students for whom this series is intended (13-14) will find Futato's introduction to the basics of Hebrew poetry refreshingly lucid ("Appreciating the Poetry," 23-55). Where necessary, he provides the Hebrew text (25, 30-31, et al.), but many examples are adequately represented by English translation. Definitions of key terms are simple and precise. Dealing with the issue of parallelism, for example, the author focuses on the concept of correspondence in grammar and meaning (33-34). A helpful three-step analysis forms the core treatment of imagery in Hebrew poetry (48-49). However, discussion of mythopoeic imagery fails to provide a methodology for evaluating and interpreting it (53-55). Futato correctly emphasizes that mythopoeic imagery does not mean that myths are present in Scripture (54) and does not indicate that the writers believed the myths (55).

Following his general introduction to Hebrew poetry, Futato presents a survey of the major themes in the Book of Psalms ("Viewing the Whole," 57-116). In order to interpret any individual psalm properly, the reader must grasp the overall purpose of the Psalter (59-72) and the message or theme of the book (72-95). Futato identifies the Psalter's dominant theme as "the kingship of God" (72), developing it

under the headings “Our God Is King” (73-76), “Our Destiny Is Glory” (77-80), and “Our King Is Coming” (80-95). Under the first heading he rightly explains that Psalm 2 cannot refer to an actual historical Davidic king, “since there was never a time when God ruled all nations of the earth through the Davidic monarchy” (75). Thus, Psalm 2 is “profoundly eschatological” (76). Discussion under the second heading is disappointing because of its brevity and lack of substance. The third heading is developed in greater detail. However, the reader finishes the section frustrated at the lack of guidance for determining whether the kingdom as presented in Psalms is consistent with amillennialism, premillennialism, or postmillennialism. The neutrality that the series seeks to maintain actually works against completing the interpretative process. Readers are not even referred to pertinent hermeneutical works that represent those millennial viewpoints. If the kingship of God is the dominant theme, this *Exegetical Handbook* fails to guide through the process of answering the greatest question the theme raises in inquiring, theologically oriented minds. “Other Themes of the Psalms” (95-116) highlights the metaphor of refuge (96-103) and the blessing of the nations (103-16).

In his third chapter (“Preparing for Interpretation,” 117-37) the author sets the stage for his recommended interpretative process. He takes the position that the psalm titles “are canonical although not necessarily original” (119), so he does not allow information from the psalm titles to play a major interpretative role (121). He never mentions James Thirtle’s theory regarding psalm superscriptions and subscriptions. Lack of adequate historical background for the psalms, in Futato’s opinion, “results in increased ease in applying the text to contemporary life” (123). As far as textual criticism of the Psalms is concerned, Futato concludes that the process of textual critical analysis can “at times provide a better understanding of a particular text” (129), but no major doctrine is affected by text-critical decisions in the Psalter. The chapter concludes with lists of resources available for interpreting Psalms (130-37).

The treatment of psalms according to their categories (defined as “a group of writings that have characteristics in common with each other,” 140) occupies the fourth chapter (“Interpreting the Categories,” 139-82). Futato poses the question, “Why do you need to know about the various categories in Psalms?” (141) and then explains how categories guide expectations (142-44) and provide another level of context (144-45) for the interpretative process. Basic categories include hymns (146-50), laments (150-58), songs of thanksgiving (158-60), songs of confidence (160-65), divine kingship songs (165-71), and wisdom songs (171-73). To obtain insights with regard to Christ’s relationships to the psalm categories, Futato recommends reading a psalm “both as being spoken by Christ and as speaking about Christ” (174). Such advice might result in a good deal of *eise*-Jesus, since he is not limiting this practice to psalms that are either Messianic in content or at least cited with reference to Christ’s life, work, or experiences in the NT. Noticeable is an absence of adequate instruction regarding how to identify the difference between Messianic fulfillment, Messianic implications, and Messianic application for interpreting

individual psalms. An excursus on royal psalms concludes the discussion of psalm categories (181-82). Glaringly absent is any reference to imprecatory psalms. Such psalms have proven to be a challenge in the exegesis of the Psalms. Omission of imprecatory psalms in an *Exegetical Handbook* on Psalms diminishes the volume's value and usability.

Exposition is the topic in "Proclaiming the Psalms" (183-207). Futato describes four steps that the expositor should follow in preparing to preach from Psalms: get oriented to the text's contexts and structure before diving into the details of exegesis (185-92), focus on the exegetical details in the text (192-97), shape the expository presentation outlining the logic and the language of the text (197-204), and reflect on the text and its application to life by asking the big question ("So what?") and the "covenant questions" (204-7). Unfortunately, Futato's "covenant questions" do not relate to identifying meaning as related to specific biblical covenants. Instead of asking what the relationship might be to covenants like the Abrahamic or Sinaitic covenants, they consist of merely asking, "(1) What does this text teach me to believe? (2) What does this text teach me to do? (3) What does this text teach me to feel?" (206). As a set of general guidelines, Futato's four steps are beneficial to some preachers, but are not sufficiently detailed to satisfy those who want a more finely tuned set of guidelines. In defense of the chapter, however, one might point out that this is an *Exegetical Handbook*, not an expositional handbook.

The final chapter ("Practicing the Principles," 209-29) applies the content of preceding chapters to an analysis of Psalm 29. Choosing Psalm 29 unfortunately brings to the fore the reviewer's earlier observation concerning the absence of a methodology for evaluation and interpreting mythopoeic imagery (53-55). Perhaps in keeping with Futato's background in climatology, he ties everything to a severe rain storm (e.g., 216, 227). This enables him to make a direct connection to the Canaanite storm god Baal and to conclude that Psalm 29 is "clearly a polemic against the worship of Baal and for the worship of Yahweh" (220). He also shows a preference for David borrowing a hymn to Baal rather than composing the psalm from scratch (219). This reviewer appreciates Futato's pointing readers to Peter Craigie's serious set of arguments against the Canaanite origin of this psalm (220 n. 21). In this reviewer's opinion, much more should have been said about the theophanic core of Psalm 29. The author nearly misses it, finally noting that the repetition of "the voice of the LORD" indicates "a manifestation of the praiseworthy presence of God" (221). He perseveres in making the psalm more a psalm of creation (natural revelation) than of special revelation.

A beneficial, though limited, glossary closes the volume (231-34). Absence of any kind of indexes runs contrary to the intent that this series might be employed "as textbooks for graduate-level exegesis courses" (14). Students and teachers alike expect a good handbook to be utilitarian—to be a tool as a reference work. The reader is left without the means to track down specific biblical references and treatments (e.g., Psalm 18), or to look for every topic (e.g., lament) wherever it is mentioned in the volume. Overall, the volume is a good place to begin a simplified

introduction to exegesis of the Psalms, but omits too much for it to become a standard graduate-level textbook. Pastors who are years removed from Hebrew course work, rather than seminarians, will find the volume beneficial.

Simon J. Gathercole. *The Preexistent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006. 357 pp. \$32.00 (paper). Reviewed by Trevor P. Craigen, Professor of Theology. 357 pp.

Displaying a familiarity with a considerable amount of material, in English, French, German, and Latin, Simon Gathercole, Senior Lecturer in New Testament at the University of Aberdeen, has put forth a thought-provoking study on a subject of as much interest to the NT scholar as to the systematic theologian. The preexistence of Jesus Christ takes the study of the Son of God back to before Bethlehem and before conception in the womb of the Virgin Mary. Final answers to questions of where He was and what He was doing prior to His incarnation, and more so, prior to the creation of the universe would be nice to have in one's grasp, but that is unlikely. Certainly, a careful and in-depth exegetical study is never out of order. Gathercole, however, candidly acknowledges that he is in pursuit of proving a controversial point, namely, "That the preexistence of Christ can be found in the Synoptic Gospels" (1). A controversial point, because critical scholarship had long held that Jesus could not have regarded Himself as preexistent (4). A thumbnail sketch accompanies the names of each of the eleven proponents who concurred in their skepticism of either Matthew, Mark, or Luke presenting evidence of preexistence. The most well-known of these is James D. G. Dunn, and his *Christology in the Making* (5). Two influential names associated with the "New History of Religion School" have paragraph descriptions of their views as well. Noteworthy is the author's acknowledgment that he paid scant attention to questions of tradition, history, sources, and the relationship between the canonical Gospels and *Thomas* or the elusive Q (17).

The introduction sketches out the four stages of argument being made to establish the plausibility of preexistence, to propose that the "I have come . . ." sayings are the clearest indication in the Synoptic Gospels of a preexistent christology, to look at how the proponents of Wisdom christology interpret certain portions of the Gospels, and finally to determine if preexistence inheres in terms such as Messiah, Lord, Son of Man, and Son of God (18-19).

In Chapter 1, "Preexistence in Earliest Christianity," Gathercole briefly conducts his readers on a tour through various passages in Paul's epistles to the Philippians, Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans, concluding that the apostle assumed it without finding it necessary to argue for it. Similarly so with Hebrews and Jude. In fact, given the wide spread influence of the apostle Paul, the burden of proof now falls on those whose search for early Christian groups which either did not

accept or did not know about Christ's preexistence (43).

Chapter Two treats extensively Christ transcending both the heaven-earth divide and the God/creation divide. The chapter's conclusion is followed by two pages of comment on two intriguing sayings in which Jesus is described as transcending space, one in Matt 18:18-20 and the other in Matt 28:18-20, one pre- and one post-resurrection. Part II, "The Advent and Mission of Jesus," embracing five chapters and two excurses is a well-documented section which first deals concisely with the ten "'I have come' + Purpose Formula" sayings. Then the next chapter introduces the false perspective on these sayings. Angelic usage of the "I have come..." sayings, is the nearest parallel usage, the author contends, after having looked at material from the OT, the Apocrypha, Targums, Midrashic texts, later Rabbinic tales, the tradition of the coming of Elijah, and some angelophanies. Unlike Christ's sayings which turned out summarizing His whole existence, the angels' sayings are oriented to that particular visit. Preexistence is clear, whether it be the words of Jesus or those of an angel speaking. A study of the "sent" sayings is also carried out and concludes that the "sent" sayings by themselves would not necessarily prove preexistence, but in the light of the "coming" sayings (189) then the coming and seeking imagery and His heavenly identity, show that His being sent is not like the sending of a prophet.

Part 3, "Jesus, the Incarnation of Divine Wisdom," comes online with attention given to Matthew 23 and Christ in the history of Israel. It finds no serious obstacle to the portrayal of Jesus as a figure who transcends the generation into which He was born. The titles of Jesus make up Part 4, in which "Lord," "Son of Man," and "Son of God" all merit separate informative and instructive chapters, as does "'Messiah' *Anatole*." The conclusion is the same as that which has been offered at the end of practically every chapter and certainly at the end of each of the four parts, namely that sufficient evidence and indications have highlighted undeniably the preexistence of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels.

The reader becomes aware of those of differing theological persuasions who probably would leave behind the evidence from these Gospels, pockmarked by their denial and amendment. One thing became clear and urgent for the seminary student of today: "Nail down that NTI course! Know well the book, *The Jesus Crisis!*"

Now, this is not a book to sit down and read in one or two sittings, just tripping along with the words. It is definitely not light reading and will require concentration. It will be referenced by students doing research in the Synoptics or reading more deeply into the whole mystery of Christ's preexistence, which, in turn, ends up challenging the thinking of theologian and exegete alike, as they seek to compose an extended definition and description of exactly what can be known of Him and His activities and responsibilities before His incarnation. If you have a few moments to spare, pick it up and glance through the Table of Contents.

Victor P. Hamilton. *Handbook on the Pentateuch*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005. 468 pp. \$34.99 (cloth). Reviewed by Michael A. Grisanti, Associate Professor of Old Testament.

In the new edition of this very helpful book, Hamilton offers an expanded and revised treatment of the Pentateuch, not so much as a verse-by-verse commentary, but as a chapter or section-by-section overview, highlighting key details along the way. Hamilton is a clear writer who makes numerous helpful observations, noticing key structural features and dealing with controversial issues throughout the Pentateuch. He is succinct without being vague. Although Hamilton sometimes takes a view that is only moderately conservative, his work will enhance any reader's understanding of and appreciation for the message of the Pentateuch.

The bibliographies at the end of each section are significantly expanded with references to works published since the first edition. The new edition includes a helpful subject index, but for some reason did not retain the name and Scripture index of the first edition. Even if a person owns the first edition, this volume would be a welcome addition to someone's library.

Michael A. Harbin. *The Promise and the Blessing: A Historical Survey of the Old and New Testaments*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005. 681 pp. \$49.99 (cloth). Reviewed by Keith Essex, Assistant Professor of Bible Exposition.

The purpose of *The Promise and the Blessing* is to survey the whole Bible as a unit. The book is designed "to provide a general framework, showing how pieces [of the Bible] fit together. This framework is derived from the Bible itself and developed through a historical perspective" (23). The author, Michael Harbin, is chair of the biblical studies, Christian education, and philosophy departments at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana. The volume is based on his more than thirty years of teaching the Bible in two courses, Old Testament survey followed by New Testament survey. The result is this textbook that the author envisions will be used in either a one-semester or two-semester course(s) in Bible survey (24).

His work has a definite textbook approach in its structure and content. An introduction and twenty-eight chapters have the same structure. Each begins with a page that includes an overview and study goals for the material that follows. The material itself is then presented on two different levels. The text is written so that the reader can follow the flow of the general argument. The text is amplified in sidebars in the chapters and endnotes at the back of the book (609-51) that explain points in the text in more detail, evaluate alternate views, and/or direct the reader to other sources for further information. Review questions on the text material conclude the introduction and every chapter. Throughout the book, the author includes numerous visuals, including pictures, twenty-three maps, and fifteen charts.

A helpful six-page glossary of significant terms (595-600), a bibliography detailing works the author has found valuable in writing this book or helpful in proving a different perspective (601-6), and an index of people and topics in the text (653-81) complete the volume. Since the author takes a historical approach in his presentation, in his introduction he defends the traditional view that accepts the biblical documents against the modern view which approaches the biblical documents as suspect at best (27-40). Part One, entitled "The Promise," surveys the OT in sixteen chapters (41-346). Part Two, "The Blessing," surveys the NT in twelve chapters (347-593).

Harbin's historical approach, developing the Bible according to its chronological sequence, puts a spotlight on his interpretation of biblical history. This reviewer was encouraged with the author's conclusions, especially since this textbook is directed to the beginning Bible student. The historical creation, fall, and global flood are affirmed. The early date for the birth of Abraham in 2166 B.C. (90), based upon the date of Exodus around 1446 B.C. (135-38) is argued for by the writer. The Bible's account of the Conquest, Judges, Monarchy, Exile, and Return is also affirmed as historically accurate. The author equally supports the historical veracity of the NT. Theologically, Harbin views the OT as preparatory, declaring the "promise" of the Messiah upon which the NT bases its claim concerning the person of Jesus (347) and the resulting "blessing." Though not overt, a premillennial perspective underlies the biblical presentation.

In a volume that has so many positives, the reader needs to be aware of some weaknesses. First, with an historical approach, a time-line, either developed in parts throughout the text or as a full-scale chart in an appendix, would have been helpful for the beginning reader. Second, the literary structure of most of the biblical books is ignored. For example, the content of the four Gospels is blended together into a description of the life of Christ. The unique literary, theological development of each Gospel is overlooked. Third, because the endnotes many times amplify and clarify what is written in the main body of the text, it would be more helpful to have them on the same page as the material to which they pertain.

Overall, *Promise and Blessing* is a valuable survey of the Bible for the beginning student. It is a good introduction to a basic biblical theology with a good discussion of historical issues. It can be read along with a resource like the introductions to the biblical books in *The MacArthur Study Bible*, which orient the student to the literary structure of the individual books. Along with this help on the literary structure, *Promise and Blessing* provides an adequate foundation for further biblical study.

Allan Harman. *Isaiah: A Covenant to Be Kept for the Sake of the Church*. Focus on the Bible. Geanies House, UK: Christian Focus, 2005. 472 pp. \$17.99 (paper). Reviewed by Michael A. Grisanti, Associate Professor of Old

## Testament.

This volume represents Harman's third contribution to the "Focus on the Bible" series (*Psalms*—1998, *Deuteronomy*—2001). In writing this commentary, Harman sought to avoid simply distilling the ideas of other commentaries. In fact, he focused on grammar and syntax volumes, lexicons, and theological dictionaries in the early stages of writings and did not reference secondary literature until a later stage of writing. Harman strongly argues for Isaiah of Jerusalem as the author of the entire book. The volume ends with helpful subject, person, and Scripture indices.

Just a few comments about some key passages will illustrate the author's approach. Harman works through various interpretations of the Immanuel prophecy in chapter 7 and advocates an exclusively messianic understanding of Isaiah 7:14. In commenting on chapters 24–27, Harman refuses to identify the chapters as apocalyptic. He identifies certain apocalyptic tendencies, but also regards these chapters as prophetic as well. He does not believe that apocalyptic replaced prophetic literature, but that it supplements biblical literature. When dealing with passages that look to distant rather than near fulfillments, Harman is not clear on whether he sees these events taking place in a literal millennial period or in the present church age. He refers to a regathering of exiles, but emphasizes that this regathering is spiritual. However, when commenting on the return mentioned in chapter 49, Harman seems to regard this as a literal return to the land of promise.

Except for the ambiguity on the eschatological significance of certain passages, Harman is a clear writer and provides a helpful exposition of the text of this great book of Isaiah.

Jonathan Hill. *Zondervan Handbook to the History of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007. 560 pp. \$39.99 (cloth). Reviewed by Gregory H. Harris, Professor of Bible Exposition.

The *Zondervan Handbook to the History of Christianity* covers a broad scope, tracing Christianity from Acts up to the modern times. It is very readable and contains much valuable content about historical matters that ultimately affected Christianity in different ways, whether good or bad. For instance chapter eleven, "Reason to Revival," contains subheadings of "The Dawn of Modernity" (312-14), "Enlightenment in North America" (319-20), and "The Great Awakening" (328-34). Very good historical information helps explain what was happening in the world at large as well as trends in how people perceived what was truth. Also a section deals with some Christian developments in Africa (275-83), which often seems to be overlooked in many other books about the history of Christianity.

However, some elements within the book should be read with the understanding that they are at odds with the TMS doctrinal statement. Many things

contrary to sound doctrine are included. For instance, the book definitely has a European flavor to it, with the vast majority of contributors coming from England (538). Not that this in and of itself makes it bad, but they do write from this vantage point. When tracing the development of the church, they are writing about “The New Israel” (32). But even beyond that, they include such people as Mother Teresa, and after noting some controversy about her standard Roman Catholic views forbidding contraception, they make this assessment of her: “The fact that such arguments tended to coalesce around the figure of Mother Teresa is perhaps testament not so much to any especially controversial character of her work or personality as to her remarkable prominence as *the* most visible and famous representative of Christian ‘good work’ in the modern world” (475; emphasis in the original). A lumping together of any and everything calling itself Christian characterizes the book, so the reader has to know this when reading it. In other words, the definition of “Christian” is quite broad.

Sadly, beyond this there is more. Though *Zondervan Handbook to the History of Christianity* is a history book and not a theology book per se, nonetheless it is a history book shaped by the theology that it brings to the text. Tragically, one single word emerges that should make one read the entire work as a Berean Christian. In proposing that the relevance for Christ’s death was in line with historic Judaism, Hill writes, “Certain key passages of scriptures were now understood as prophecies about Jesus (even passages not previously regarded as prophecies at all). Psalm 22, which Jesus *apparently* quoted at the moment of his death, was seen as a prophecy of his death and the circumstances around it” (32; emphasis added). Both Matt 27:46 and Mark 15:34 state that “Jesus cried out with a loud voice” in reference to Psalm 22. If Hill is correct, readers should, first, write in the word “apparently” into the two verses in their Bibles, and second, strike through the words “cried out” and replace them with the word “quoted.” If one so greatly misses the significance of what was transpiring at Christ’s death or casts “Indeed has God said?” questions about the accuracy of the biblical account, especially an account so vital to true Christianity, how can he hope to present an accurate portrayal of what is truly Christian? Thus, everything in the book has to be read very circumspectly, hoping that the author is “apparently” quoting the truth in other matters related to the church which Jesus Christ Himself founded and purchased with His own blood.

*iVocab Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic & Professional, 2007.

\$32.99. Reviewed by William D. Barrick, Professor of Old Testament, and Tom Drion, TMS M.Div. student.

Most seminary students would *love* a new video iPod or cell phone to play with—and what better excuse to justify the expense than the thought of an easy way to do Hebrew vocabulary? Prior to making a purchase, however, one needs to take

a few things into consideration. For this review, the authors italicized the iPod Classic 80GB that Apple sells for \$249.

*iVocab* is software providing audio and visual flashcards for use on iPods, video cell phones, MP3 players, and computers. This software arranged vocabularies by chapters, and covers the following popular elementary Hebrew textbooks: *Basics of Biblical Hebrew*, 2d edition, by Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt (Zondervan, 2007), *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew* by C. L. Seow (Abingdon, 1995), *Introducing Biblical Hebrew* by Allen P. Ross (Baker Academic, 2001), and *Invitation to Biblical Hebrew* by Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi (Kregel, 2006). The pronunciation is typical modern (European) Hebrew pronunciation. The printed forms of words that appear in the video display are clear and legible. The use of a *raphe* (horizontal line above the accented syllable) is not nearly as attractive as the normal employment of the *'oleh* in most printed vocabularies.

Selecting a full list of vocabulary for a particular textbook chapter or section is simple. For example, “FC3” represents the 15-word vocabulary provided in Fuller and Choi’s Chapter 3. The program goes through the words displaying each Hebrew word and pronouncing it. Following the pronunciation there is a 5-second delay before the English gloss flashes on the display and it, too, is read. After going through the entire list for that section, one may select the individual word (e.g., “FC3v15” for the final word in “FC3”). For reasons unknown to the reviewers, the final word entry in some vocabulary lists would not come up — after a few seconds of a blank display the iPod would return to the vocabulary menu. This glitch might be due to either hardware or software problems.

There are some attractive advantages. *iVocab* provides the facility to both see and hear the words as one learns them. It is handy to have one neat little iPod rather than bulky stacks of tatty looking cards to flick through. In addition, the iPod has plenty of room for one’s music and sermons, once the 2,100 flashcards have been compressed into a mere 50MB of disk space. Two thousand traditional cards would not fit into a wallet quite as neatly as a new credit-card sized iPod. Before reaching for that real credit card to make the purchase, a few questions are to be asked.

Does *iVocab* actually provide the vocabulary you need to learn biblical Hebrew? This is crucial. If one of the Hebrew grammars listed above is the required textbook, *iVocab* might prove worthwhile. The simple reality is that the lists of vocabulary for next week’s test or quiz are all there—neatly in order and easily accessed. If the required grammar is different, the student may well find himself as frustrated as the co-author of this review, fiddling fruitlessly with the alleged facility to sort the cards into new playlists within iTunes, only to give up in dismay at the inordinate waste of time. Added to this frustration, was the sad reality that the list of English glosses for each Hebrew word did not always match the required textbook’s glosses.

Does *iVocab* meet each student’s need? For the audio learner and the visual learner, this software might be a boon. However, for kinesthetic learners, writing out

vocabulary cards and laboriously forming the words enhances recognition and learning. For this latter group, *iVocab* might prove nothing more than another electronic toy.

Do you already own hardware compatible with the software? The professor participating in this review owns only an original iPod Nano—the software was not accessible even in audio despite following all the installation procedures. Even though the software is apparently compatible with audio-only hardware, the full potential can be realized only with hardware having video capability.

For students with hectic schedules, *iVocab* can prove to be a significant aid simply because of the speed with which the vocabulary can be called up, the ease with which the information can be accessed, and the handy size which eliminates having to carry the textbook to work breaks and family outings during which some study time needs to be redeemed.

Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher, eds. *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*. Trans. Daniel P. Bailey. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004. xxvii + 520 pp. \$45.00 (paper). Reviewed by William D. Barrick, Professor of Old Testament.

Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher both teach at the University of Tübingen in Germany. Janowski is Professor of Old Testament and Stuhlmacher is Professor Emeritus of New Testament. Seven of this volume's ten essays were presented in Professor Martin Hengel's graduate and faculty seminar in the summer semester of 1991 at Tübingen (vii). The seven presented in the seminar are: "The Fourth Servant Song in the Context of Second Isaiah" by Hans-Jürgen Hermisson (16-47), "He Bore Our Sins: Isaiah 53 and the Drama of Taking Another's Place" by Janowski (48-74), "The Effective History of Isaiah 53 in the Pre-Christian Period" by Martin Hengel with the collaboration of Daniel P. Bailey (75-146), "Isaiah 53 in the Gospels and Acts" by Stuhlmacher (147-62), "The Fourth Servant Song in the New Testament Letters" by Otfried Hofius (163-88), "The Servant of Isaiah 53 as Triumphant and Interceding Messiah: The Reception of Isaiah 52:13–53:12 in the Targum of Isaiah with Special Attention to the Concept of the Messiah" by Jostein Ådna (189-224), and "Jesus Christ as a Man before God: Two Interpretive Models for Isaiah 53 in the Patristic Literature and Their Development" by Christoph Marksches (225-323). The remaining three essays are: "The Conception and Prehistory of the Idea of Vicarious Suffering in the Old Testament" by Hermann Spieckermann (1-15), "'Our Suffering and Crucified Messiah' (*Dial.* 111.2): Justin Martyr's Allusions to Isaiah 53 in His *Dialogue with Trypho* with Special Reference to the New Edition of M. Marcovich" by Bailey (324-417), and "Isaiah 53 in the *Sefer Hizzuk Emunah* ('Faith Strengthened') of Rabbi Isaac ben Abraham of Troki" by Stefan Schreiner (418-61). As the length of some of the

essays testifies, some could be books by themselves.

Two years after the German edition of this volume was published (Mohr Siebeck, 1996) the translator, Daniel P. Bailey, contributed an essay ("The Suffering Servant: *Recent Tübingen Scholarship on Isaiah 53*") to *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*, edited by William H. Bellinger, Jr. and William R. Farmer (Trinity Press International, 1998) reviewed in *TMSJ* 13/1 (Spring 2002), 103-5. He plays a major role in the publication of the current volume, since he translated the German essays, composed the summaries introducing each essay, expanded many of the footnotes (sometimes significantly lengthening them), collaborated for Hengel's essay, authored an appendix ("Isaiah 53 in the Codex A Text of 1 Clement 16:3-14," 321-23), and updated "A Classified Bibliography on Isaiah 53" by Wolfgang Hüllstrung and Gerlinde Feine (462-92). Two indexes complete the volume ("Primary Sources," 493-510, and "Modern Authors," 511-20).

These essays were prepared for doctoral candidates or professors. Aimed at specialists, the volume is heavy reading. The theological milieu of the authors is decidedly non-evangelical, since humanistic thinking permeates the contributors' offerings. For example, Spieckermann declares that the Servant Songs, with the exception of only a part of the last one, are neither prophecy nor prophecies of Christ (46). Yet, this collection of essays contains a number of discussions of great interest to evangelical theologians and exegetes. Spieckermann examines the potential origins of the concept of vicariousness or vicarious suffering that is linked to Isaiah 53 and concludes that the prophet attempts to say something new, though not completely new (44). Janowski insists that the real suffering Servant was the prophet Second Isaiah (48) and that Philip in Acts 8:34-35 did not claim that Jesus fulfilled Isaiah 53 (74). Hengel concludes that messianic interpretations of Isa 52:13-53:12 existed prior to the Christian era, but that they may have applied to an individual like Onias III (146). Stuhlmacher, however, argues that the Servant simultaneously represents the corporate people of God (161-62). Continuing the line of thinking that separates the NT interpretation of Isaiah 53 from the OT meaning, Hofius declares, "we may safely conclude that there is not a single passage where the fourth Servant Song has been taken up in its original sense" (188).

In actuality the majority of this volume deals more with various interpretations (ancient and modern) of Isaiah 53, rather than with the exegesis of the Hebrew text itself. Its primary focus is on the concept of vicarious suffering. Although evangelical readers will be disappointed by the presuppositions and conclusions of these essays' authors, an occasional concept arises that would merit evangelical attention and study. An example is Hermisson's observation that the sin borne by the suffering Servant was "the sin of not turning to Yahweh, of unbelief" (41).

Walter C. Kaiser and Duane A. Garrett, with Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. *Archaeological Study Bible: An Illustrated Walk Through Biblical*

*History and Culture*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005. xxvii + 2306 (cloth). \$49.99. Reviewed by Dennis M. Swanson, Director of the Seminary Library.

One of the more anticipated new works to appear recently was the *Archaeological Study Bible* by Zondervan. There was a significant amount of pre-publication publicity (more than any new book in several years by this reviewer's observation) and clearly a significant budget had been allocated for both the production and presentation of this new study Bible.

Much excitement accompanied the release of this work. The layout of the book is excellent. This study Bible is perhaps one of the finest productions to date from a publishing point of view. The publisher has printed high quality color pictures on thin "Bible" type paper. The attention to "eye appeal" in the detail is excellent. The only negative in the layout is the use of the "red letter" format in the Gospels (and elsewhere) for the words of Jesus. This now quaint formatting does not read well on the parchment effect and color of the pages (and it continues to neglect that many, like this reviewer, are color blind to one degree or another which makes the "red" lettering often more difficult to decipher). To keep the size of the Bible from expanding even more than it did, the publisher also opted for a very small font size in the biblical text, which also affects the readability.

The work has a very useful subject index to the call-out articles and (perhaps less useful) an abbreviated concordance, a glossary of archaeological and historical terms. The book comes with an interactive CD which is functional, but perhaps limited by the publisher's use of their in-house software systems rather than an industry standard like Libronix for Windows or Accordance for Macintosh.

The illustrations are well conceived and useful. The photography of artifacts and small scenes is one of the highlights of the work. As noted in the front matter of the book, TMS graduate Todd Bolen, who teaches at The Master's College IBEX extension campus in Israel and operates his own ministry ([www.bibleplaces.com](http://www.bibleplaces.com)) is one of the contributors of photographs.

Notations to the text are the main purpose of the study Bible. In general, the "call outs" (specialized articles on particular themes or subjects) are useful and flow with the overall purposes of the work. The call outs are categorized under a few different headings, such as "Ancient Peoples, Lands, and Rulers"; "The Reliability of the Bible"; "Cultural and Historical Notes," Many of the call outs very helpfully add notes to see other call outs on related subjects. Smaller call outs called "Ancient Voices" in which quotations from other Ancient Near Eastern texts are included in the OT (e.g., 2 Chron 26, 651). The NT has fewer of the "Ancient Voice" call outs (e.g., Aristotle on Logos, for John 1, 1720). Most of the time those texts are useful as either illustration or comparason; occasionally, though, they appear to be simply filler material.

The strong point of the "call outs" is also unfortunately one of significant weaknesses of the book. The placement and verse attachment of some of the call outs is, to put it bluntly, extremely odd. A few examples will suffice. The call out

for the city of “Sepphoris” is, for reasons that are entirely mysterious, placed under Mark 6. The text for the call out then begins by stating, “The city of Sepphoris (modern Zippori) is mentioned nowhere in the Bible” (1638). How this call out will assist the reader in understanding Mark 6 more precisely is not stated. At Psalm 107 a call out on “Ancient Texts and Artifacts” has an excellent picture and description of the Gezer Calendar (discovered in 1908). However, while attached to Psalm 107, the article gives no indication of how this discovery might help in the understanding or interpretation of this Psalm.

At Luke 8 under the rubric of “The Reliability of the Bible,” the call out is entitled “The Synoptic Problem and ‘Q.’” This placement is entirely random and, even more oddly, is illustrated with a picture of an Armenian text of one of the Gospels (ca. 1435), with no explanation as to what the graphic has to do with the article. Though the call out is generally useful information and does not take a definitive stand, even on the existence of “Q,” it seems simply to have been “dropped in” a place where nothing else archaeologically or culturally was worthy of discussion.

This is a general issue with this book. The call out articles begin with a Scripture text where the article has been placed, which often has little or nothing to do with the article itself or is not the most significant text in regards to that subject. Or, the call out is appropriate for the biblical book it is found in but terribly misplaced, such as the call out “Who Wrote Revelation” (2060), which is attached to Revelation 10.

The greatest problem with the “study Bible” approach to this material is long stretches of Scripture where little or nothing, archaeologically-speaking, is said. On many pages rather non-descript notations about one or two verses occur that have nothing to do with archaeology or geography (whether physical or cultural), but are notes one might rather find in any useful study Bible. Sometimes the editors clear desire to stay “prophecy neutral” in their opinions hurts the overall work. For example, in Ezekiel 40–42 the description of the Temple receives no illustrative help, help which could have included at least a diagram or, better, some comparative information on the size and dimensions of Solomon’s Temple or the Second Temple and even Herod’s enlargement of that Temple. What the reader receives is a minimal set of rather self-evident notations.

Though this work is clearly a publishing achievement (as illustrated by its recent Gold Medallion Award from the Evangelical Publishing Association), one wonders how many people will want to buy a 2,300 page, four plus pound study Bible? It is a study Bible that centers itself on a discipline that witnesses a regular change in both the amount of material and the interpretation of that material. Since the book was released (a little less than three years ago), several significant archaeological discoveries and issues have rendered material in the book either obsolete or entirely erroneous (e.g., The Tomb of Herod at the Herodium was recently discovered and is being excavated; *vis a vis* the call out on Herod, 1627). The James Ossuary and the discovery of the correct location for the Pool of Siloam

(contra, 1739) are other examples of a fluid discipline. One of the sayings in archaeological work is that “in archaeology absolute truth is good for about five years.” Without a plan for reprinting and updating the text, this work is already half way through that time frame and will become less valuable as time progresses.

In short, this work is a spectacular achievement in terms of the mechanics of publishing. The written notes are by and large helpful in terms of information, but not always helpful in assisting to interpret a passage. The volume suffers from an attempt to do too much in terms of content by taking a specialized subject that does not lend itself well to a “study Bible” format. Some might find it useful; but other specialized works on biblical archaeology will serve student and layman with greater satisfaction.

Paul Lawrence. *The IVP Atlas of Bible History*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2006. 188 pp. \$40.00 (cloth). Reviewed by Michael A. Grisanti, Associate Professor of Old Testament.

This volume is part of a growing collection of helpful reference works produced by InterVarsity Press. Its purpose is to present the broad sweep of biblical history, based primarily on written sources. After a few introductory pages covering the big picture, 104 pages focus on the OT, 12 on the Intertestamental Period, and 45 deal with the NT. Interspersed throughout the atlas are almost 100 superb maps, over 140 color photographs, 20 site plans and reconstructions, various chronological charts, and drawings of recent historical and archaeological finds. The book concludes with a one-page glossary and bibliography, a subject and Scripture index, and a gazetteer (of locations).

The atlas works through OT and NT history, allotting about 2 pages for each topic, event, or issue in that history. All pages have clear photos, maps, artistic reconstructions, or charts. In addition to the methodological overview of biblical history, a number of special studies (on different colored paper) are interspersed throughout the book: languages of the Bible, the geography of Canaan, the climate of Canaan, agriculture of Canaan, writing, neighbors of Israel and Judah, warfare and fortification, trade of Tyre, the Romans, amulets and scrolls, Jerusalem in NT times, Rome, archives and libraries in the ancient world, and travel in the Roman world.

Although this volume does not offer the same coverage as a dedicated atlas, it serves as a very helpful companion volume for a study of biblical history. It combines an overview of biblical history with numerous maps, photos, and charts.

John MacArthur. *The Truth War*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007. 224 pp. \$22.99 (cloth). Reviewed by Gregory H. Harris, Professor of Bible Exposition.

The Bible reveals some future drastic changes in mentality regarding God's Word that has already begun and will progressively grow worse before the Lord's return. In his death-row epistle, in what would become the final chapter he ever wrote, the apostle Paul both charged, instructed, and explained the necessity of what his beloved Timothy—and any other future beloved Timothy—must do. Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 4:1-4:

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.

Several crucial matters from this final epistle of Paul are significant. First, the "they" (4:3) who will not endure sound doctrine refers to people who call themselves Christians; atheists have never endured sound doctrine. Second, the Bible clearly states that, contrary to what some may claim, "sound doctrine" does exist, otherwise they could not turn away from it. Third, coupled with this, those who turn will know at least the corpus of what the Bible presents as sound doctrine; that is, though they may never have held it personally, they certainly abandon previously held orthodox theology. Fourth, and perhaps most important in understanding this mindset, "they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires (*epithumia*, used regularly in the NT for the word "lust," such as a cognate verb used in Matt 5:28). In other words, the order is important: their lusts will already have been established; they will then go out, literally in the Greek, "to collect" teachers who support and justify their own lusts, which they most likely will not acknowledge. Fifth, in a summary statement of how God views this, such people "will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths." Sadly, this is an accurate description of what many today call evangelical Christianity; this phenomenon is the basis for John MacArthur's *The Truth War*.

The introduction alone (ix-xxvii) should convince the reader that contending for truth is not an option for those who take God, His Word, and their own walk seriously. A foundational question to be addressed at the beginning is "What is truth?" MacArthur repeatedly calls the reader not only to define truth biblically, but also repeatedly emphasizes its all-encompassing significance, since establishing what is and is not truth determines eternal destinies. MacArthur argues, "Here is a simple definition drawn from what the Bible teaches: *truth is that which is consistent with the mind, will, character, glory, and being of God*. Even more to the point: *truth is the self-expression of God*" (2, emphasis in the original). He remains true to this definition throughout the book.

If one is not alarmed by the end of the second chapter ("Can Truth Survive in a Postmodern Society?"), he most likely will neither finish nor like the remainder of the book. New theologies spring up (especially the Emerging Church), and their

proponents think they have stumbled upon some new and vibrant teaching. MacArthur shows that it is simply rather a repackaging of previously held false doctrines and agrees with The Preacher of Ecclesiastes that “nothing new under the sun” (1:9) exists. The author traces the quest of secular human philosophers to define and explain truth (4-9), and how this led to “Modernity” that was characterized by accepting only what can be proven by the scientific method (9-10). He shows reasons why Modernity should be followed by “Post Modernity” (10-16), which in spite of how it defines truth is at its core agnostic. In a section entitled “Uncertainty Is the New Truth,” (16-23) MacArthur traces some previous heresies that afflicted the church in the past (thus the nothing-new-under-the-sun scenario), and then draws the reader into its modern application with “War in the Church” (23-26). The last section is important in that much of what happened *outside* the church (in essence 1-15) gradually creeps *inside* the church (16-26), but comes in subtly and unannounced to all but those who are biblically diligent.

It is a sign of the times that a book such as *The Truth Wars* is needed. The book would be most beneficial for individuals or groups studying the books of Jude or Second Peter. It will also be beneficial in responding to the author’s repetition of Jude’s appeal, “that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).

Nicholas Perrin. *Thomas: The Other Gospel*. Louisville: WJK, 2007. 160 pp. \$19.95 (paper). Reviewed by William Varner, Professor of Biblical Studies, The Master’s College.

In the first decade after its 1945 discovery amid the sands of Egypt, the *Gospel of Thomas* was overshadowed by over a dozen other ancient texts discovered near the Dead Sea. Now that the storm over the long-unpublished texts from Qumran has passed, scholarly attention turned afresh to the most famous of the Coptic texts known as the Nag Hammadi Library. The so-called *Gospel of Thomas* (GT) has emerged as the darling of the “lost Christianities” crowd of alternative American scholars, many of whom are associates of the (in)famous Jesus Seminar. Certainly this text, consisting of 114 sayings of Jesus supposedly preserved by the apostle Thomas, has been a source for a large number of best-selling books, especially Elaine Pagels, whose popular works on GT have appeared on the best-seller lists for over a decade. Her current one is entitled *Beyond Belief*. The popularity of the GT among scholars in the Jesus Seminar stems from the fact that a sayings Gospel like GT appears to be similar to the hypothetical “Q” document that was supposedly a sayings Gospel as well.

Many evangelicals have tended to stay away from this discussion, even contemptuously casting the whole matter aside. But it is not evangelical books that are on the best seller lists—it is Pagels, Karen King and Bart Ehrman who command

a large readership today. They often present an apparently cogent argument for a first-century date for this document—a fact that Nick Perrin allows. But he is not willing to let this assault on traditional views of Jesus to go unnoticed any longer. He has taken the battle to them with a hard-hitting and scholarly satisfying work that weighs the most popular forms of Thomas scholarship, and finds them wanting.

Nicholas Perrin teaches at Wheaton Graduate School and once served as N. T. Wright's research assistant after receiving his doctorate from Marquette University. His dissertation was on the GT and was published as *Thomas and Tatian* (Brill, 2002). This new book is a more popular work that examines the most recent writings of three GT authors: Stephen Patterson, Elaine Pagels, and April DeConick, as well as a host of others influenced by the Bultmannian school (e.g., Helmut Koester, James Robinson).

Perrin's work is a model of thorough, painstaking scholarship expressed in a felicitous style. He is eminently fair to those with whom he disagrees, even pointing out the valuable arguments of the three Thomas scholars and acknowledging when their observations are correct. But Perrin mounts a withering attack on the supposed first-century date of the GT, and brings his considerable knowledge of both Coptic and Syriac to bear on the questions of both the dating and the conceptual world in which the author of the GT lived and wrote. One surprising observation is that Perrin does not see the GT as part of the Gnostic movement of the second century. He does place it, however, within an ascetic movement that was prevalent in Edessan Syria at the end of the second century.

In this reviewer's opinion, he has established beyond doubt that the author of GT drew on the first Gospel harmony, the *Diatessaron* by Tatian, which was completed in Syria around A.D. 173. He does this by a painstaking comparison of some Jesus sayings in Tatian's *Diatessaron* with how they are expressed in GT. The sayings are closer to the *Diatessaron* than to the canonical Gospels. He also illustrates that the aberrant theology of Tatian, a mix of Hermeticism and anti-Jewish mysticism, can be clearly discerned in GT.

The conclusion is simple. If the GT was penned after A.D. 173, it does not derive from the first century and its value as another source for understanding the "real" Jesus is sorely diminished! Furthermore, though it may be a valuable source for understanding Syrian Christianity in the late second century, it pales in value before the eyewitness testimony of the canonical Gospels, each of which dates from the first century.

Perrin's painstaking search for the "real" Gospel of Thomas reads like a scholarly detective story. After he has finished his scholarly destruction of the first-century date for GT, Perrin has some perceptive comments about the Jesus that emerge from the document. He is a teacher who does no miracles, who does not die and rise again, who has shed all his Jewish context, and who provides no objective salvation for anyone, but points people to know themselves from within. His personal comments at the end of his own search are quite perceptive.

"Somehow, I suspect, we have heard this message before. Somehow we

have met this Jesus before. The Gospel of Thomas invites us to imagine a Jesus who says, 'I am not your saviour, but the one who can put you in touch with your true self. Free yourself from your gender, from your body, and any concerns you might have for the outside world. Work for it and self-realization, salvation will be yours—in this life.' Imagine such a Jesus? (a veiled reference to a John Lennon song?) One need hardly work very hard. This is precisely the Jesus we know too well, the existential Jesus that so many western evangelical and liberal churches already preach. Perhaps the original Thomas community was pleased to have a Jesus who could be divested of his Jewish story and domesticated to their way of seeing things. Perhaps too the early church fathers rejected this sayings collection because they had little patience for anyone or anything that might confuse their hope of a new creation with something approaching a Christianized self-help philosophy" (139).

We owe Nicholas Perrin a great debt for his meticulous research and for sharing the results with readers in a most understandable manner. I wish this work a widespread readership. It is highly recommend for those who may be unduly impressed with a writing that well-deserved its rejection by the church in the third and fourth centuries.

Klyne Snodgrass. *Stories with Intent. A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008. 845 pp. \$50.00 (cloth). Reviewed by James E. Rosscup, Adjunct Professor of Bible Exposition.

The writer supplies a "resource book" to help people, in many settings, be "fully informed" (xi). He orients preachers and teachers (3). A vast steeping in literature fuses help for parables from many ancient sources (37-59). Copious examples enrich comments as he averages about fifteen pages each on thirty-two parables (61-564). He devotes more space to some, such as thirty-three pages on the sower; on others he is brief, as in five and a half pages on the pearl.

Snodgrass is on the faculty of North Park Theological Seminary, and invested several years to think through and craft this prolific project.

Six pages of abbreviations at the outset show immersion in a wide variety of sources—commentaries, journals, church histories, early church writings, the Babylonian Talmud, archaeology, lexicons, translations, Dead Sea discoveries, the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, Josephus, Jewish history, Bible versions, theologies, and theological dictionaries.

Here is much for meticulous interaction. The work ranks with and often has longer discussions than standout evangelical contributions by such as Arland J. Hultgren (still the most direct, useful all-around commentary in this reviewer's opinion, called *The Parables of Jesus, a Commentary* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000]), Stanley Ellisen's masterful and articulate premillennial work, *Parables in the Eye of the Storm* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2001), and Simon Kistemaker's Reformed

effort, *The Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980). Until now the top general guide to the parables is Craig Blomberg's *An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus*. These works leap to vital substance while Snodgrass does it by and by, and Hultgren is verse by verse. Yet the Snodgrass book does steep readers in more views on details, and has more critiques to sift opinions.

Snodgrass exalts Jesus as "the master creator of story" (1). The work is against manipulations that foist in esoteric, allegorical whims (2). Snodgrass' zeal is to let users hear what Jesus really meant. This reviewer feels that in many cases he succeeds. Granted, one needs to wade through bogs of discussion, and not have issues pin-pointed as quickly as in other works mentioned earlier.

Snodgrass is usually clear, but some statements need reworking to remove obscurity. He sounds different notes on the time the nobleman's return (Luke 19) represents for Jesus. He denies that in this case the kingdom is to come at the parousia (539; cf. 533), yet does an about-face to have it at the parousia (542). To his credit, he is firm against views that the kingdom came when Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, or in A. D. 70. In Matthew 13 he has wheat and tares focus on the presence of the kingdom; these actually appear to teach a present-age mingling of saved and unsaved but look on to a separation at the future coming of the kingdom. He sees the dragnet as dealing with future, end-time exclusion from the kingdom. It is a strain to see consistency amid the ponderous reasoning. Though he has the kingdom present in Jesus' ministry (cf. 246, treasure and pearl), he often expects its fullness at the end of this age (514).

Wording in frequent places leaves one groping to decide the meaning (cf. 529, top two lines). The work at times bogs one in discussions that contribute light only now and then. But he is often helpful on customs and examples from relevant ancient literature that support the reasonableness of Jesus' statements. He defends against claims that details in the parables are not sensible, and rejects views forced upon details. He is often clear that while the NT teaches salvation by grace and never works, it gives a serious and valid place to godly works as leading on to future blessing.

Eleven points on "Characteristics of Jesus' Parables" (17-22) are provocative. So are his eleven guides for sensible interpretations and avoiding the foisting in of foreign notions (24-31).

Endnotes document a vast back-up of detail from incredibly ambitious research (579-770). The bibliography covers 771-815. One can lose much time seeking to turn from interpretive sections to later endnote sections to read a specific note. Hultgren, by contrast, efficiently has notes immediately on the same pages.

Occasionally one feels the writer himself gets things askew. He feels that the sower and soils deals with "sowing the true Israel in her own land" (156). The point really is about sowing the word of the kingdom (cf. Matt 13:19) in the soils of individual hearts that genuinely receive it (e.g., vv. 19, 23), in contrast to hearts that do not seriously receive it (19-22) and God's success in His kingdom program.

Snodgrass is precise in sorting out views of the workers in the vineyard

(Matt 20:1-16). He sees God's goodness and the idea that the reward God gives people, by His judgment, is not based on strict human calculation and human standards of justice. The latter arises from envy as complainers fancy by their own speculations that they are justified to receive more reward. One can find this in Matt 20:10 where the first hired thought they would have more (376-77). On the unjust steward, the writer lists sixteen views. His own idea is that the steward cheats his master to set himself up with clients; he should be seen as unrighteous by his boss, the Gospel writer, and hearers. He does not think that the view that the steward shrewdly yet honestly cut away his own profit or interest to ease the clients' payments will stand up to scrutiny. But some will not condone his dismissing of this view; they will feel that his logic is arbitrary and reasonably answered. Granted, the matter is most difficult to interpret, and variant views persist. Snodgrass, as in many cases, insightfully handles most details of the parable

For in-depth seminary and Bible college teaching, the work offers astute stimulation and perspective. For seriously diligent pastors as well, this is true, but one can debate if having the longer work is utilitarian or feasible for the budget. As stated earlier, such works as those by Hultgren, Ellisen, and Kistemaker press quite capably to main issues and make most things more readily available.

Laurence M. Vance. *Greek Verbs in the New Testament and Their Principal Parts*. Pensacola, Fla.: Vance Publications, 2006. 236 pp. \$14.95 (paper). Reviewed by Paul W. Felix, Assistant Professor of New Testament.

A book on the principal parts of Greek verbs probably does not rank high among the books to be purchased by students of the NT. Yet, proficiency in the exegesis of the NT requires that an individual learns the principal parts of selected Greek verbs. One approach to doing this is to memorize the list mechanically. Another method is to learn the principal parts with the aid of various rules that enhance the memorization process. *Greek Verbs in the New Testament and Their Principal Parts* has been written to help students, and even teachers, of NT Greek, to understand the variations in the principal parts of Greek verbs, so that the task of memorizing them is simplified. The author, Laurence M. Vance, is also a publisher, the editor of the *Classic Reprints* series, and the director of the Francis Wayland Institute.

Vance labels his work as a handbook that is much more than a book on morphology. It classifies every verb of the Greek New Testament into one of the following categories: Regular Verbs; "Second" Verbs (verbs that have alternate forms of the aorist and/or perfect); Contract Verbs; Liquid Verbs;  $\mu\iota$  Verbs; Irregular Verbs. The first five categories are the author's subdivisions for regular verbs. Each of the categories forms the six chapters of the book, with each chapter having a brief introduction of a few pages. The principal parts that actually occur

in the NT are given for each verb. At times, a brief explanation that alerts the reader to any peculiarities in the principal parts follows the listing of the verb.

This book also contains an introduction and an index. The introduction is essential reading. It informs the reader how best to use the book. In this chapter, one discovers the “rules” which apply to the various forms of the verb that aid in learning its principal parts. The author discusses principal parts, classification of consonants, augment, reduplication, compound verbs, and verb stem changes, with the purpose of laying a foundation for the rest of the book. The index is quite detailed (137-214). It provides an alphabetical listing of every verb in the Greek NT, along with its category, frequency, and principal parts.

Vance is to be commended for the effort expended in producing this work. Any book that encourages and helps the student of NT Greek to learn principal parts is a welcomed addition to the available resources for study of the Greek language. This work discusses principal parts in greater depth than most grammar books. Yet it is not as comprehensive as the recent morphology books of William D. Mounce, *The Morphology of Biblical Greek* (Zondervan, 1994) and James A. Brooks and Carlton L. Winbery, *A Morphology of New Testament Greek* (University Press of America, 1994). Possibly, due to its size and cost in comparison with standard morphological works, this book will find its way into the library of students of the Greek language.

*Greek Verbs in the New Testament and Their Principal Parts* ignores the current debate about the legitimacy of “deponent” verbs. An awareness of this controversy should be highlighted, since the intended audience of the book includes teachers of NT Greek. A glossary could make Vance’s work even more useful. That would save the user valuable time by not having to read through the introduction to each chapter to determine what is meant by “Doric future” or “Attic reduplication.” The book advertises a link to a webpage ([www.vancepublications.com/corrections](http://www.vancepublications.com/corrections)) that will contain any errors discovered in the principal parts of verbs and also a listing of answers to inquiries about why the principal parts of a particular verb differ from the ones listed in other books. When the reviewer went to the website he received “Page not found.” Even if there is no information to list, the webpage should be valid and indicate this.

Individuals who are on a limited budget and who want to focus strictly on the principal parts of Greek verbs should purchase Vance’s work. The material Vance provides can usually be found in books which focus on the morphology of the Greek NT.

Kevin J. Vanhoozer, ed. *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005. 896 pp. (cloth). \$43.95. Reviewed by Dennis M. Swanson, Director of the Seminary Library.

For the last two decades, one of the helpful trends in theological publishing has been to produce useful reference materials for the scholar, pastor, and student. Prior to this trend, many of the most important and useful reference works were 30 to 50 years out of date. The expansion of theological categories, the increased specialization, and new avenues and methodologies of exegetical investigation have also increased the need for clear and concise definitions and explanations.

The editor of the *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, Kevin J. Vanhoozer, the Research Professor of Systematic Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, has led the effort in this work to produce one of the most useful and well-conceived new reference works for biblical studies.

The general layout and formatting of the work are typical of a standard reference work. It has an excellent Scripture index and a list of articles by category and a very helpful "Topical Index" (869–77). The articles are generally longer and more detailed than in most reference works and the bibliography for each article is extensive. The generous uses of "See" and "See Also" notations are a great aid.

The articles reflect some helpful work on more recent topics of controversy, such as the "New Perspective on Paul" located in the article on "Justification by Faith" (417–19). Oddly though, some important articles that might have been included were ignored, such as the New Covenant. Each book of the Bible has an individual article with a discussion of the theological import of the book and the "theological interpretation" of the book as a whole or in significant sections.

This work has many excellent articles, to which a review such as this cannot do justice. However, several are particularly noteworthy. John H. Walton's article on "Etymology" (200-202) is excellent. The discussion of the theological and interpretative import of "Geography" by John A. Beck (253-56) is an important and often neglected or misused aspect in the hermeneutical process. Craig Bartholomew's article on "Postmodernity and Biblical Interpretation" (600-606) is quite helpful in sorting out a mass of information and the directions of this movement.

The direction for the entire work though begins with the editor's Introduction, "What Is Theological Interpretation of the Bible" (19-25). He explains what the process is and, more important, is not. He notes, "Theological interpretation is not an imposition of a theological system or confessional grid onto the text of the biblical text. . . . Theological interpretation is not simply what dogmatic theologians do when they use the Bible to support their respective doctrinal positions" (19). He states the work's main purpose:

The dictionary editors believe that the principal interest of the Bible's authors, of the text itself, and of the original community of readers was theological: reading the Scriptures therefore meant coming to hear God's word and to know God better. *DTIB* therefore aims not to impose yet another agenda or ideology onto the Bible, but rather to recover the Bible's original governing interest (22).

This work is a welcome addition to the world of biblical and theological reference. In a realm where biblical study and theological study are often done in

isolation from each other or in simplistic proof-texting, this work will prove to be a valuable resource. This reviewer recommends it highly.

Brian Vickers. *Jesus' Blood and Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Imputation*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2006. \$14.99 (paper). 254 pages. Reviewed by Trevor P. Craigen, Professor of Theology.

“Thoroughly done!” and/or “Worthwhile reading!” are probable exclamations voiced soon after starting to read Vickers’ book. Wholehearted agreement with every point, observation, and statement made, and conclusion drawn is not necessarily being signaled thereby, but the quality and depth of research done is being acknowledged and commended. Vickers may have produced one of the most detailed examinations of Paul’s theology of imputation to the present day.

His confident aim is to investigate those words of Paul which traditionally belong to this subject, namely, Rom 4:3-8 and 5:19 and 2 Cor 5:21. Other verses usually conceptually linked with these three main passages, namely 1 Cor 1:30; Phil 3:9; and Rom 9:30–10:4, also receive due consideration. The bottom-line question is whether or not the three main texts are dealing with exactly the same thing (16-17). Further, Vickers cautions against expecting too much from one text. Wisely said, since when one comes to deal with the last clause in Romans 5:12 that has been *the* problem faced by exegete and theologian alike—saying far more than the text says. Vickers is firmly committed to gaining a complete perspective and a full understanding by a synthesis of Paul’s teaching (17). Though Vickers found it necessary in places to incorporate material from systematic and historical theologies, his book is really a good example of “exegetical theology.”

The forty-six page opening chapter, “Tracing Trajectories: The History of Imputation,” introduces the reader to an historical overview of this doctrine. Mention is made of the writings and interpretations of Luther, Melancthon, and Calvin. Eight Confessions, stretching from 1559-1689 and across Europe from East to West, showed an affirmation of both negative and positive imputation (38). John Owen and Jonathan Edwards are included in the overview, as are the German biblical-theological writers, e.g., Käseman and Stuhlmacher, *inter alia*, and their variations (45-53). Under the heading, “A Covenant of a Different Color,” Vickers surveys N. T. Wright, E. P. Sanders, and James D. G. Dunn. Other recognized scholarly commentators of today are also mentioned, such as Thomas Schreiner, Douglas Moo, Leon Morris, George Ladd, and John Murray *inter alia* (62-64). Many lengthy and informative footnotes adorn the pages of the overview, and the rest of the book as well, providing details which might be of interest to those who would like to step beyond the narrow confines of exegesis only, and devote more time to the history of the doctrine. What the reader learns from this concisely written survey is that the term imputation is neither monolithic in theology, nor is it possible

to speak of it in general terms. “There are ‘views’ of imputation, not a general concept of imputation” is Vickers’ final observation (68).

In forty pages of densely packed detail, the author exegetically analyzes Abraham and his faith, “reckoned righteous,” imputation and non-imputation, the close connection to forgiveness of sin, and then closes off chapter 2, “The Reckoning of Righteousness: Abraham, Faith and Imputation,” with a study of Paul’s use of λογίζομαι. Chapter 3 upholds the reputation of the first two chapters by also being full of information and perhaps sporting some of the longest footnotes in the book—it is almost as though Vickers was writing two books, one in the footnotes and one in the main text! In this chapter, “The Foundation of Righteousness: Romans 5:19,” the author undertakes a meticulous study of the term καθίστημι, “to constitute,” “to make,” which is not synonymous with λογίζομαι, “to reckon,” the term Paul selected for use in Romans 4. The OT, the Septuagint, and the NT are culled for their contribution to understanding the meaning and significance of this key term in Paul’s argument. Vickers is not intimidated by having to force this term to somehow resemble λογίζομαι (122). What one is “made” depends upon one’s identification with either Adam or Christ, a profound point in that each person possesses his status as sinner or as saint, because he was made so by the actions of another. A study of the important little phrase ἐφ’ ᾧ receives much attention in determining whether or not it is to be understood and taken as causal or as relative. Grammar alone, it is determined, cannot determine the meaning of this verse (127). When it comes down to matters of sin and death, then an explanation of how Adam stands in relation to his posterity, particularly in the clause “all sinned,” just cannot be left without explanation. The differing explanations and descriptions are sorted into six interpretations, each one with a brief definition attached. Vickers issues a strong critique of the Realist position, i.e., that all humanity was in Adam (128-33). This interpretation was not his preference. That the crucial clause refers to the actual sins of individuals or to personal sins, is also unacceptable. However, the Representational view, or Federalism or Federal Headship, i.e., Adam’s sin is their sin since he is their representative head is given a favorable rating. Here the relationship of Adam to humanity is a forensic reality in which “all sinned” does not refer to personal sins (133). Federalism, as to be expected, skips a beat in exegesis, introducing a non-existent covenant into the scenario, and using terms such as “covenant-like” (150) to make God in relation to Adam fit into such a setting. This is not exactly a demonstration of exegesis as carried out elsewhere in the book.

Either it is, or it is not, a covenant. Suffice it to say that this is not the only way to deal with the Christ-Adam parallel in Paul’s teaching. In fact, with regard to Adam’s transgression and his posterity, “imputation” may very well not be the right term to use

An interesting exercise would be for Vickers to interact with David Turner’s word studies and his exegetical/theological argumentation for what could be labeled the “personal sins view” or “the unexplained solidarity view” which he so methodically presented in his 1982 doctoral dissertation at Grace Theological

Seminary. “Adam, Christ and Us: Paul’s Teaching on Solidarity in Romans 5:12-21,” was disappointingly missing from Vickers’ bibliography. Frankly, the depth of research evidenced throughout the book makes one wonder why it was overlooked. It was bound to have been found! His treatment of the aorist as gnomic in 5:12d (“because all sinned”) is most helpful, as is his lengthy and thorough word studies on *καθίστημι*, *ἐφ’ ᾧ*, and *πάντες ἥμαρτον*. “All sinned” refers to the personal individual sins of all men, which are committed due to an *unexplained solidarity* with Adam. His original sin introduced into the world as a hostile power, death, which permeated all men on the fulfilled condition that all sinned—all are caught up in the unavoidable nexus of sin and death. Turner finds no support for the doctrine of the imputation of Adam’s first sin, whether conceived representatively or realistically. Turner also observes in his concluding exposition that Adam’s sin made his people sinners, whereas Christ’s redemption made His people righteous (Turner, 280). One thought in the “unexplained solidarity view,” is a recognition that Paul is not presenting a theory in Romans 5, but is appealing to the acknowledged facts (1) that one sinned and so all sinned, and one died so all died, and (2) that the acts of two men had an impact upon their people. Those aware of Turner’s dissertation may feel the urge to check it out and think it through again.

No specifically clear reference that sins are reckoned to Christ or that Christ’s righteousness is reckoned to believers, can be found in the text (159). With that being said, Vickers tackles the chapter, “The Provision of Righteousness: 2 Corinthians 5:21,” and conducts a study of the phrase, “made to be sin.” The OT background provided by Leviticus and Isaiah, and the language of vicarious sacrifice, atonement, and forgiveness, reconciliation, and the role of the Suffering Servant therein, all point to a sacrificial interpretation for “God made him who had no sin *to be sin* in 2 Corinthians 5:21” (170, 190). The end result is clear: a synthesis of Pauline writings finds that Christ’s righteousness is imputed to believers (232). Vickers concludes too, as he opens chapter 5, “The Imputation of Christ’s Righteousness: A Pauline Synthesis,” that Paul is not saying the same thing in different ways in the three main texts examined, yet the same basic subject of what it means to be right with God is in view in all three passages. These texts must be read together, in what he calls “a synoptical reading” (192), because read by themselves they do not present the whole story of how a man can be right with God. However, common elements prevail too. The most noticeable common contextual feature of these verses is the reality of “God doing something in or through Christ that applies to the believer.” Another is, “a distinct absence of any sort of personal contribution toward a righteous standing before God” (194). Note what is observed about each text read by itself: “in each text it is God acting in and through Christ on behalf of sinners undeserving of God’s grace, who by faith in Jesus have their sins forgiven, are reconciled to God, and declared righteous” (195). What is with the synoptical reading then? To get the whole story? Practically, though, the whole story is expressed in each of these texts, but comparison of them will note diversity of vocabulary and context, which might very well provide a fuller perspective (192).

At this point, as the secondary level of verses begins to be surveyed, the reader perhaps gains the impression that the book is already over, for nothing new will be brought forward. The short, concise section on the obedience of the Second Adam does show He is undoubtedly qualified to be the spotless Lamb of God, the perfect sacrifice for sin. Quietly, one might say here, Vickers leaves the matter of active and passive obedience on the side, not as though he had not treated it before (115, 133, 146-48).

The strength of the book is its seemingly unending stream of information at every turn, so that, frankly, at times the reader feels quite overwhelmed, drowning in the details, so to speak. Reading it might be heavy going at first, but a disciplined reading will bear fruit in the thinking of exegete and theologian alike. The reader having done with Vickers book may wish to read again Leon Morris' *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, which received favorable comment although he uses the traditional language with hesitancy, "or in language more nuanced and without the same detail" (65) as traditional Reformed theologians, but whose conclusions are the result of careful exegesis. *Jesus' Blood and Righteousness* is fully deserving of another slower reading and worthy of being an assigned text with which to interact weekly in a postgraduate seminar.

Bruce A. Ware. *Father, Son, & Holy Spirit: Relationships, Roles, & Relevance*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2005. 173 pp. \$14.99 (paper). Reviewed by Cliff McManis, TMS Alumnus and Associate Professor of Theology, The Cornerstone Seminary.

Professor Bruce Ware teaches systematic theology at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. This work is the by-product of a lecture series given at a pastors' conference in March, 2004 (11). In chapter one he delineates eleven reasons why Christians should study the doctrine of the Trinity (13-22). Eight of those eleven emphasize the *functional* inner-workings of the Trinity, in keeping with the subtitle of the book that accentuates "relevance."

In chapter two, Ware chronicles three foundational axioms of the Trinity with a cursory overview of what the early church believed. The first is *Scriptural Monotheism* (24-28), emphasizing the biblical truth of only one true God. Here he invokes standard passages like Deut 6:4, 1 Kgs 8:59, Isa 45:5-6, John 17:3, 1 Tim 2:5, 1 Cor 8:6, and others. The second axiom he labels *Scriptural Trinitarianism* (29-35). Here he shows from the NT that Jesus is deity and equal to the Father in status, yet distinct from the Father in identity. He summarizes the unique relationship between Jesus and the Father with the adage, "Identity and distinction, equivalency and difference" (31). Distilled exposition of standard texts include John 1:1, 14; 8:58; Mark 2; and Hebrews 1. The third and final axiom is, *Scriptural Trinitarianism: The Church's Formulation* (35-42). Here he surveys the Arian heresy, the

importance of the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325 and implications of the Council of Constantinople in 381. From the three above axioms Ware posits his formal version of an orthodox definition of the Trinity which is as follows: “The doctrine of the Trinity affirms that God’s whole and undivided essence belongs equally, eternally, simultaneously, and fully to each of the three distinct Persons of the Godhead” (41).

The next three chapters are dedicated to functional relations among the three Persons of the Trinity (43-130), with a chapter emphasizing each of the three respective Persons. Here Ware ardently argues the case of eternal subordination of the Son and the Holy Spirit within the Trinity. Detractors of his view are repeatedly labeled “egalitarian” (72, 80, 88, 138, 143). The three Persons of the Trinity have clearly demarcated roles, with an inherent eternal hierarchy of authority and submission—with the Father as preeminent. This irrevocable order of authority and submission that exists within the Trinity, Ware calls *taxis*, a technical term he wields at least fifteen times (72-73, 77, 85, 96, 122, 151, 153, 156-58). Chapter three addresses the Father, where the author asserts seventeen times that “the Father is...supreme within the Godhead.” The theme of chapter four is “that Jesus’ submission to the Father extends from eternity past to eternity future” (84). Chapter five highlights the Holy Spirit’s inter-trinitarian role, which entails advancing “the work of the Son, to the glory of the Father” who “embraces eternally the backstage position in relation to the Father and the Son” (104); who “assists” the Father (105); who takes “a backseat to the Son and the Father” (125), in eternity past, in time and in eternity future.

The last chapter is dedicated to explaining ten practical applications that Christians are to assimilate in daily living after the model of the eternal inner-workings of the Trinity (131-58). Paramount among these is the principle of “authority and submission” (137). This resonates with Ware’s overarching theme that weaves through every chapter: “The Father is supreme in authority, the Son is under the Father, and the Spirit is under the Father and the Son” (131).

The late Carl F. H. Henry wrote in 1982, “American evangelical theology has not on the whole contributed significant literature to the current revival of trinitarian interest” (*God, Revelation and Authority*, V:212). He may have spoken too soon, for since then many notable works have been generated, including Demarest and Lewis, *Integrative Theology* (1987); Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (1994); White, *The Forgotten Trinity* (1998); Erickson, *Making Sense of the Trinity* (2000); Feinberg, *No One Like Him* (2001); Geisler, *Systematic Theology* (2003); Culver, *Systematic Theology* (2005). And now, most recently, Ware’s work can be added to the list.

One strength of Ware’s book is that it is Scripturally-driven—the book is saturated with biblical texts. This is in stark contrast with many other standard works on the Trinity, like Rahner’s *The Trinity* (1967), which is totally void of Scripture. Ware’s allegiance to biblical terminology might explain his conspicuous avoidance of typical trinitarian words like “economic,” “immanent,” “ontological,” and “*perichoresis*” that abound in other works (although he champions the word *taxis* to

an extreme). Like a growing number of theologians (e.g., Erickson, Feinberg, Geisler), Ware frowns upon the phrases “eternal generation of the Son” and “eternal procession of the Spirit” as historically understood because they are “highly speculative” and not biblical (162). The greatest strength of the book is his emphasis on practical application. He makes a convincing case for the relevance of the doctrine of the Triune God in the daily life of the believer—examples abound. His writing style is also lucid, systematic, logical, and accessible to the average lay person.

As for weaknesses, the reader might frequently be confused by Ware’s strong “subordinationist” perspective. He seems to make no clear distinction between trinitarian subordination within the economic Trinity versus the immanent Trinity. Orthodoxy has always affirmed *functional* subordination within the Godhead, but has rejected *ontological* subordination. Clarity on his position would have proved helpful.

Any serious Bible student who wants to delve into trinitarian studies should add Ware to the list as a must read. But it can’t be read in isolation—his “eternal subordinationist” slant needs to be ameliorated by the contemporary works of Erickson, White, and Feinberg, who argue for temporal subordination. In addition, reference is also warranted to the classic articles on the Trinity by Carl F. H. Henry and B. B. Warfield, both of whom cautioned against overly aggressive eternal subordinationist interpretations.