

REVIEWS

Craig G. Bartholomew. *Ecclesiastes*. Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009. 448 pp. \$39.99 (cloth).
Reviewed by William D. Barrick, Professor of Old Testament.

The commentary series of which this volume is a part targets primarily the needs of “scholars, ministers, seminary students, and Bible study leaders” with clergy and seminary students most in mind (9). It is confined to *Song of Songs* by Richard S. Hess (2005), *Proverbs* by Tremper Longman III (2006), *Psalms* (3 vols.) by John Goldingay (2006, 2007, 2008), *Job* (unpublished), and *Ecclesiastes*. Bartholomew is H. Evan Runner professor of philosophy and professor of religion and theology at Redeemer University College in Ancaster, Ontario.

A lengthy general introduction (17-99) opens the volume, providing readers with discussions of *Ecclesiastes*’ canonicity (18-20), history of interpretation (21-43), authorship and date (43-54), social setting (54-59), text (59-61), genre and literary style (61-82), structure (82-84), reading *Ecclesiastes* in relationship to *Proverbs*, *Job*, and the Torah (84-93), message (93-96), and its relationship to the NT (96-99). Each section’s commentary consists of three sections: “Translation” (Bartholomew’s own with technical footnotes providing detailed explanation regarding textual criticism, grammar, translation, and literary devices), “Interpretation” (supported by both bibliographical and technical footnotes), and “Theological Implications.”

As Bartholomew reminds his readers, “Very few scholars nowadays defend Solomonic authorship” (39), and he does not choose to depart from that modern view (47)—primarily due to what he views as Greek influence on *Ecclesiastes* (54). However, he admits that precision in dating the book “will depend on one’s interpretation of *Ecclesiastes* as a whole and of its social setting” (53). While psychoanalytic and sociological readings (41-42) of *Ecclesiastes* appear to dominate recent treatments of *Ecclesiastes*, this commentator avoids that approach—at least until his postscript in which he states that “*Ecclesiastes* cries out for a psychological reading” (377). Bartholomew also evades interpreting the book as pessimistic (67). Instead, he believes that ultimately “Qoheleth affirms joy, but not of course cheap joy” (95). In addition, he identifies the narrator and implied author as one and the same person (79).

“Vanity” (KJV, *hebel* in Hebrew) stands as one of the key words in Ecclesiastes. Commentators and translators alike have struggled to express its meaning in English. Laying aside such options as “absurd,” “meaningless,” “useless,” and “a puff of breath,” Bartholomew settles on “enigmatic” (93-94, 105-7). His suggestion has real potential, since the same concept seems to be expressed by the image of grasping at the wind. It is not that life does not have meaning, it is just that its meaning too often cannot be comprehended or grasped (106).

In his discussion of “Ecclesiastes and the New Testament” (96-99), the author observes that one of the messages of the book is exactly “what the Reformed tradition means by *total depravity*: precisely *not* that everything is as bad as it can be, but that the fall affects every aspect of created life” (96). Such an approach to one of the theological themes of Ecclesiastes is intriguing to say the least. Unfortunately, Bartholomew does not make this one of the topics for discussion in any “Theological Implications” section.

Many commentators believe that the *carpe diem* passages (2:24-26; 3:10-15, 16-22; 5:18-20 [17-19]; 8:10-15; 9:7-10; 11:7-12:7) represent a hedonistic response to Qohelet’s frustration and despair. Bartholomew, however, understands them to be far more positive in affirming a believer’s enjoyment of God’s good creation (80-81).

Bartholomew provides discussion for most of the major interpretive cruxes in Ecclesiastes. His detailed treatments of the cruxes furnish readers with well-crafted arguments leading to the author’s ultimate conclusion. Examples of such exegetical care occur in his treatments of 1:4-11 (109-12), 3:1-8 (160-65), 3:10-11 (166-67), 5:8-9 [7-8] (216-18), 9:7-10 (303-5), 11:1-2 (335-37), and 12:11 (366-69). However, sometimes the detail is absent and the treatment remains inconclusive and flat. An example would be the so-called moderation text in 7:16-18 (255-57). When the reader arrives at 12:1-7, he will find that Bartholomew rejects the traditional interpretation regarding a description of aging and death in favor of a metaphorical description of eschatological judgment in the day of Yahweh (348-53).

The sections presenting “Theological Implications” vary greatly. After 1:1-11 Bartholomew deals with the relationship of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes as well as the concepts of wisdom and *hebel* (112-17). Following 1:12-18, the topic becomes the autonomous viewpoint of Qohelet’s epistemology and a brief discussion of what the author terms “the legitimate role of suspicion” (125-27). The interpretation of 2:12-23 concludes with a discussion of the repetitiveness of history (145-48); a description of *shalom* (153-57) complements the interpretation of 2:24-26; time, creation order in time, and historicism wrap up the chapter on 3:1-15; and the issue of oppression (including a detailed statistical survey of the oppression of children in modern times, 192-93) occupies Bartholomew’s treatment of implications following 4:1-16 (192-200). The tone of most of these “Theological Implications” tends to be philosophical, doubtless due to the author’s vocation as a professor of philosophy and his own personal interests. For the reader with a commensurate interest, these sections will be enjoyable. This reviewer, however, found the section dealing with

worship following 5:1-7 [4:17-5:6] to be far more appealing theologically (209-13).

The volume concludes with a postscript titled “Postmodernism, Psychology, Spiritual Formation, and Preaching” (375-89), an impressive bibliography (391-420), and indexes for subjects (421-30), authors (431-38), and “Scripture and Other Ancient Writings” (439-48). In the postscript Bartholomew reveals that he has preached Ecclesiastes only in “a one-hour session as well as over a series of four one-and-a-half-hour sessions” (388)—quite unlike Michael Eaton (TOTC, IVP, 1983) who had preached through the entire book in a prolonged series. Bartholomew advises preparing congregations for Ecclesiastes by “a good working knowledge of Proverbs . . . as well as a robust doctrine of creation” (388).

The lengthy introduction, careful interpretive treatment of most cruxes, adherence to the Masoretic Text instead of suggesting numerous emendations (cp. 166, 217), moderately heavy discussions of theological implications, and healthy bibliography all commend this volume to students, teachers, and preachers alike. The majority of the text outside the cruxes receives little attention in the “Interpretation,” and the best attention occurs within the footnotes to the “Translation.” Taking all these things into consideration, the volume makes a significant contribution to the study of Ecclesiastes, but falls short of a more exhaustive exegetical commentary.

Richard Bauckham. *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008. 285 pp. \$34.00 (cloth). Reviewed by Trevor Craigen

The 1998 publication of Bauckham's *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* becomes the first chapter of the book under review. Six other essays, compiled over a ten-year period, and an exegetical/theological note have been added. All are independent, self-contained essays. Because they are all connected to Bauckham's theme in his first book, some degree of overlapping occurs. To the author, these are working papers moving him towards the completion of a much more comprehensive study than that done so far—a study to be entitled *Early Jewish Monotheism and New Testament Christology* (xi). Interested in the “strict” monotheism in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Judaism? Then a good deal of fresh material will be provided by the book being reviewed. Interested in NT Christology? Then the work has further grist for the mill as well. The author observes that the Jews of the period mentioned “drew the line of distinction between the one God and all other reality clearly, and were in the habit of distinguishing God from all other reality by means of certain clearly articulated criteria” (3). A paragraph or two later, he writes “[H]igh Christology is possible within a Jewish monotheistic context, not by applying to Jesus a Jewish category of semi-divine intermediary status, but by identifying him directly with the one God of Israel, including Jesus in the unique identity of this one God” (3). In fact, this was

perhaps unprecedented in Jewish theology. "Their self-conscious monotheism was not merely an intellectual belief about God, but a duty of belief and praxis, involving the exclusive worship and exclusive obedience to this one God" (5). Monolatry and monotheism in tandem! Identifying Jesus with God is *the* important fact hammered home repeatedly in all these essays.

The author brings out in his treatment of high Christology the exalted Jesus participating in God's unique sovereignty, and that Jesus also shares God's exaltation above all angelic powers, being given the divine name Yhwh and being worthy of worship (22-25). Further, His pre-existence and his involvement in creation is not overlooked (26-30). Chapter One, with its multiple cross-references, is worth absorbing in a slow and thoughtful reading. The next chapter, Essay #2, deals with the problems of monotheism. Twelve pages interact critically and thoroughly with Nathan MacDonald's *Deuteronomy and the Meaning of Monotheism* (62-74). MacDonald asserts that Deuteronomy simply does not present a doctrine of a monotheistic God. To him this doctrine comes from the Enlightenment. He may affirm the uniqueness of Yhwh but without denying the existence of other gods. He acknowledges that two statements in Deuteronomy 4 on there being no others besides Himself (4:35, 39) mean that Yhwh is unique (the only god who is God) and is the only god *for Israel*. However, this points to unrivalled power throughout the cosmos rather than a reference to the sole, alone, absolutely unique One (62-70). These other gods are non-effective deities, impotent nonentities, mere puffs of air, and powerless. The question on whether or not these divinities really exist is left unengaged. The scorn of the prophets and the psalmist heaped on idols and casting aspersion on their total inability to do or say anything valid is powerful and true. Bauckham expresses disappointment with MacDonald and his failure to deal systematically with Yhwh's uniqueness vis-à-vis the other gods (65).

Essay #3 is entitled "The 'Most High' God and the Nature of Early Jewish Monotheism." The key question is, How is the uniqueness of one God to be understood? Inclusive monotheism has God as the highest member of a class of beings to which He belongs. Exclusive monotheism on the other hand understands His uniqueness in terms of the absolute difference in kind from all other reality. Of course, exclusive monotheism does not exclude acknowledging the existence of many heavenly beings created by the one sovereign Lord. Special attention is given to the interpretation of Deut 32:8-9. Additional and separate treatment is also accorded to the Most High in early Jewish literature. The section on the Most High and the gods is quite instructive. One interesting reminder: "the difference of use between Palestinian and Diaspora Jewish literature must be related to the fact that the title 'Most High' . . . was in widespread use by non-Jews" (120-21). This made it a term for the God of Israel which Gentiles would readily understand and a term that could, for apologetic purposes, connect with Gentile usage. This is no doubt why it was in regular use by or for Gentiles in Diaspora Jewish literature. Several lists depicting the use of "Most High" in this literature are added for information.

Essay #4 is a "meaty" chapter, basically treating the prevalence and

centrality of the worship of Jesus in early Christianity, in terms of prayers, doxologies, and hymns. These are followed by brief descriptions of pagan perceptions of Jesus and their unfavorable response to the exclusive divinity of Jesus (127-40). Comments on 1 Cor 8:6 and Revelation show that the worship of Jesus was really divine worship, which was preceded by or accompanied by a rejection of polytheism. In Revelation, John represents Jesus as one who shares in the glory due to God. He is not just an alternative object of worship. Particularly interesting in the section “Missionary Christianity in the Apocryphal Acts” is that traditional Jewish monotheistic formulae intended to assert monotheistic worship against paganism are employed for the same purpose of proclaiming the deity of Christ. That the Christians were persecuted and martyred for “atheism” is a good reminder of an historical fact often forgotten that “atheism” meant the exclusive worship of the one Lord of heaven and earth, Yhwh of Israel, to the exclusion of all other gods (145). A repetitive note sounds when the author takes up patristic Christological development (146-50). One is left with the conclusion that either Christians were worshipping a creature, or Jesus belongs to the being of the one God who alone may be worshiped (150). That the early church clung tenaciously to the Jewish understanding of monotheism is the concluding observation.

Essay #5, “The Throne of God and the Worship of Jesus,” is a thorough presentation of “God’s heavenly thrones and other thrones,” “sitting and standing in heaven,” and “in the heights of heaven.” Again God’s absolute sovereignty over absolutely every reality is clearly pointed out. Again stress is upon monotheism which is “representative of one of the essential characteristics definitive of the divine identity” (164). Bauckham also takes time to look at “Figures on the throne,” namely wisdom, Moses, the Son of Man, and Jesus (167-82). The conclusion is the same as previously given, but what one realizes is that the repetitive note arises from a thorough examination of different materials, which nevertheless endorse the author’s thesis of divine identity applied to Christ in both Jewish and early Christian literature. Psalm 110:1 draws little more than a passing glance from Jewish writers, which is not the case with Christian writers of that time, who considered it a foundational verse. These men understood that the church’s doctrines were to be exegetically based. That is obviously why the conclusion being drawn by them came about.

Essay #6 covers Paul’s Christology of divine identity, and advises that early Christology was framed within the familiar Jewish framework of creational, eschatological, and cultic monotheism (185). An informative set of lists of Pauline references and the use of Yhwh is inserted into the main text—with an acknowledgment that it is based on Gordon Fee’s 2007 book on Pauline Christology. Eight OT references, accompanied by at least two NT passages, with a short explanatory paragraph of each, are used to introduce eschatological monotheism (191-93). Creational monotheism brings under its purview Rom 10:13 and Phil 2:6-11 as well as pertinent citations from Isaiah. Then 1 Cor 8:5-6 receives attention, stressing allegiance to the one and only true God in a polytheistic religious environment (210).

Six categories in a listing of Yhwh texts with Jesus as referent, provides material which the author says should be examined in far more detail than can be given in this essay. The reader will probably stop and look over a few verses to see what is taking place between the NT and the OT verses. Bauckham considers his proposal of divine identity as going beyond the standard distinction between functional and ontological Christology. The thinking is not of divine essence or nature in Jewish theology but of divine identity; thus Jesus is intrinsic to the unique and eternal identity of God. One more set of listings of Yhwh texts with Jesus as referent, but outside the Pauline epistles, provide more information for personal study and reflection. However, one cannot avoid taking into his study of Jesus Christ, the questions of divine and human natures, of essence and co-inherence, and the *kenosis*. Bauckham's treatment impressed this reviewer as being careful to tie all these important points of doctrine together for a complete picture of Jesus Christ, very God of God and very man of man. Obviously, this was not the author's intention to deal with a specific period of time and its literature and doctrinal emphases.

Essay #7, a chapter in a forthcoming book edited by Bauckham and MacDonald, presents the divinity of Jesus in the letter to the Hebrews. The book just mentioned will be entitled *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology* (Eerdmans, forthcoming). Again, the reader finds the repeated theme that Jesus is identified with God. Also, one has to remember that "for Jewish monotheistic faith what was most important was who God is rather than what divinity is, and thus Jesus shares the divine identity of Israel's God (233).

Essay #8, "God's Self-Identification with the Godforsaken: Exegesis and Theology," is a study of the cry of dereliction (Matt 27:46; Mark 5:9). It is an appropriate thought-provoking close to a book so filled with an emphasis upon the worship of Christ Jesus.

A wealth of information pours forth from *Jesus and the God of Israel* in both text and footnotes. One can be forgiven if he stands a little ashamed after reading it at how much of Second Temple material he has forgotten or did not know and how much of early Christian and Jewish literature of which he was unaware. Bauckham's gathering of all that information together is undoubtedly highly commendable. Read this book to fill in gaps in a knowledge of that early period in church and biblical history and perhaps even in the history of the development of Christology.

Constantine R. Campbell. *Basics of Verbal Aspect in Biblical Greek*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008. 160 pp. \$16.99 (paper). Reviewed by Aaron K. Tresham.

A work such as this has been greatly needed for some time. Verbal aspect has become increasingly prominent in the study of Greek grammar and NT interpretation over the last twenty years. The two works most responsible for bringing this

field of study to the attention of exegetes were the monographs of Stanley Porter and Buist Fanning (*Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood* [Peter Lang, 1989] and *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek* [Clarendon, 1990], respectively). Many Greek teachers were trained before these books were published, so their teaching may not reflect the new understanding of Greek verbs found in the two works. Most of the remaining teachers were trained by such teachers, so they may have had only minimal (if any) exposure to verbal aspect. Thus, the exegetes trained by any of these have had a corresponding lack of exposure to aspect theory. However, discussions of verbal aspect will be found in an increasing number of theological books, commentaries, and journal articles. Therefore, Greek teachers, students, and pastors need a bridge between their traditional education and the modern approaches.

Campbell wrote his book to provide such a bridge. Both Porter's and Fanning's monographs are slight revisions of their doctoral dissertations, whose technical nature and high prices make them inaccessible to most students of the NT. Campbell's work, however, is affordable and readable. He has simplified the material enough so that a newcomer can grasp the concepts, but in doing so, he has not sacrificed accuracy. Moreover, Campbell is a gifted writer, which greatly facilitates the reader's understanding of the material.

Campbell, who is lecturer in Greek and New Testament at Moore Theological College in Australia, is well-qualified to produce such a work. His doctoral dissertation at Macquarie University dealt with verbal aspect, a revision of which has been published as *Verbal Aspect, the Indicative Mood, and Narrative: Soundings in the Greek of the New Testament* (Peter Lang, 2007). This monograph is also surprisingly easy to read. Campbell accepts Porter's theory (contra Fanning) that Greek verbs do not grammaticalize time, even in the indicative (that is, the aorist indicative does not convey past time, the present indicative does not convey present time, etc.). But Campbell is no mere disciple of Porter; he has many unique ideas that contradict both Porter and Fanning at points. Campbell also wrote a second technical monograph dealing with aspect, *Verbal Aspect and Non-Indicative Verbs: Further Soundings in the Greek of the New Testament* (Peter Lang, 2008). In *Basics of Verbal Aspect* Campbell is able to avoid technical arguments by referring the reader to his other works. This is an advantage for the reader who wants to understand the issues, but it is a disadvantage for the reader who is looking for reasons to accept Campbell's approach.

This book divides into two parts. The first five chapters deal with verbal aspect theory in general. Verbal aspect is defined as "viewpoint" (19). An author may view an action from the outside (perfective aspect), or he may view it from the inside (imperfective aspect). Traditional grammars classified the so-called verb tenses (aorist, imperfect, etc.) according to *Aktionsart* or "kind of action." However, Campbell claims that *Aktionsart* is a function of context, while a verb's form conveys only aspect. Traditional grammars also saw temporal reference as a secondary feature in the indicative, but as mentioned above, Campbell rejects this.

Chapter two offers a brief history of verbal aspect's rise among Greek scholars, while the next three chapters classify the Greek verb forms. Campbell sees the aorist and future forms as perfective, while the present and imperfect forms are imperfective. The perfect and pluperfect receive a chapter of their own, since their aspectual nature is hotly contested. Porter says that the perfect has a third aspect, which he calls stative. Fanning sees the perfect as perfective, with some additional features as well. Campbell argues that the perfect is actually imperfective.

The second part of the book deals with the exegetical impact of aspect. Campbell examines how the root idea of a verb form (i.e., aspect) interacts with various contextual features to produce different kinds of action. A unique feature of these chapters is the inclusion of exercises (with answers at the back of the book). These are very helpful for understanding how aspect interacts with contextual and lexical features to produce meaning. Thus, this work could serve as a supplemental textbook for a course in Greek exegesis. Of course, if one does not accept Campbell's approach to verbal aspect, he may find some of the exercises less than helpful.

This reviewer was not fully convinced by Campbell's approach, especially as it relates to time in the indicative. Even traditional grammarians understood that the tenses did not always convey the same temporal reference. For example, although the aorist indicative was viewed as a past tense, it was recognized that an aorist indicative could refer to the future. In this case, the past tense verb used of a future event conveyed an added level of certainty that the event would indeed occur. Similarly, the present tense could be used of a past event (the historical present). This was understood as a more vivid way to communicate the narrative. Aspect theorists have devised a theory without such exceptions to the general rules of tense usage. However, a theory of language with no exceptions is probably flawed. Any language, Greek in particular, is a complex system which develops over time and depends heavily on the inclinations of the individuals who speak the language. Exceptions are to be expected, and may actually provide insight into an author's intended meaning. Campbell's own admission that the future tense actually conveys future time is further evidence of the temporal nature of the other Greek indicative verb forms.

Moreover, if the verb forms convey aspect and there are two aspects, why are there more than two verb forms? Campbell's answer is the concept of "remoteness." Thus the present is imperfective with proximity, the imperfect is imperfective with remoteness, the perfect is imperfective with heightened proximity, and the pluperfect is imperfective with heightened remoteness. On the other hand, the aorist is perfective and remote. In this scheme, there is an abundance of imperfective forms, but there is no perfective form indicating proximity or heightened remoteness. Furthermore, if the ideas of proximity and remoteness are so important, why are there fewer verb forms found outside the indicative? It is possible that remoteness was originally part of the Greek verbal system rather than temporal reference. However, Campbell acknowledges that temporal reference is a part of the verbal system of Modern Greek. The question is, When did the verbal system change from

remoteness to past time reference? (Campbell asks the same question himself on page 132.) The evidence demonstrates that this process was well under way by the time the NT was written.

On the other hand, an aspectual approach does have some advantages over the traditional *Aktionsart* approach. The aspectual emphasis on the author's subjective viewpoint as opposed to the more objective presentation of the action suggested by *Aktionsart*, is helpful. Aspect theory may also avoid some of the abuses of the traditional approach (such as the fallacy that the aorist always means "once-for-all" action). Anyone interested in the study of the NT should familiarize himself with verbal aspect, and Campbell's book is an excellent place to start.

Everett Ferguson. *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009. 975 pp. \$60.00. Reviewed by William Varner, Professor of Biblical Studies, The Master's College.

I have read so many books and articles on the mode and subjects of baptism from both "Baptist" and "Presbyterian" perspectives that I was a bit hesitant about what this book could contribute. I was overwhelmed, however, when I encountered the vast amount of information in it that should make it go down as "the last word" on the subject. *Baptism in the Early Church* is without a doubt the most exhaustive examination ever written about the baptismal teachings and practices of the earliest Christians.

Everett Ferguson is a senior scholar at Abilene Christian University, already well known for his admirable *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (3rd edition). He has been honored with the Distinguished Service Award by the North American Patristics Society—just one indication of how highly he is regarded in the world of patristic scholarship. This massive study of well over 900 pages leaves no baptismal stone unturned. Ferguson has plowed through the NT for every reference to baptism, providing a full analysis of each text that contributes to the meaning, mode, and subjects of baptism (99-200). In addition he deals thoroughly with the Jewish antecedents of baptism, including a survey of the *mikvaot* installations uncovered in Israel (60-82). He proceeds century by century discussing every mention of baptism in the successive church fathers through Augustine in the fifth century (201-818). He also deals with the material culture of baptism, namely the numerous depictions of baptism in various art forms (various pages) and also the surviving baptismal fonts in the remains of the earliest churches (819-52). His thorough discussion of the patristic texts and the art and architecture of baptism is probably the most original contribution of his work and contributes greatly to knowledge about this often debated subject.

One will never need another book on baptism, although handing this one to a beginner would probably be a serious example of overkill. A primer it is not. Perhaps a condensed version would be quite useful in churches. As it stands, this book will serve mainly academics and pastors desiring to delve deeply into the issues.

By the way, if anyone is wondering about the controversy over the mode and subjects of baptism, Ferguson's marshaled evidence points overwhelmingly to immersion (usually trine) of believing adults as the dominant practice well into the fifth century. The first reference to infant baptism was by Tertullian, who mentioned the practice in the late-second century. He referred to it, however, as a practice that was different from that of the church as a whole. In any case it did not become widespread for nearly five centuries.

This reviewer would like to add some personal experiences to the data assembled by Ferguson. I have debated and discussed this subject with Presbyterians for years. I am quite familiar with their arguments for pouring, even many of them arguing for that mode in the NT. On the other hand, whenever I have had contact in academic meetings with critical scholars from various denominations and a discussion of the practice of baptism arises, they always have acknowledged that the ancient practice was immersion. No question about it ever arose for those who are interested mainly in historical matters, not denominational arguments. It is only in evangelical circles that some will argue for pouring as the original mode. The critical scholars, many of whom may be in churches where pouring or sprinkling is practiced, always acknowledge that the original and ancient mode was immersion. To them the evidence is so clear that the issue is not even discussed. Such is the overwhelming evidence that is so thoroughly examined in this book. While pouring might be found on occasion, it was the exception and not the rule. During a personal visit to Calvin's Cathedral in Geneva last December, I examined the excavations under the church and there at the earliest level was a baptistery that was clearly intended for immersion.

A closing word is in order about the pattern followed in the *Didache*, the oldest Christian writing outside of the canonical NT scriptures. Immersion in the trinitarian "name" (chap. 7) was commanded for those who had been taught the basics of their new life (chaps. 1-6). While pouring on the head was permitted in special circumstances, it was clearly exceptional and not the preferred practice among the teaching of the apostles. The preferred practice was immersion in cold, flowing water. Ferguson's abundant evidence indicates that such was the almost exclusive practice by Christians for centuries.

The question that must be faced is this: If baptism in the NT was by pouring and if infants were included in the ordinance, why then did the church get it wrong for nearly 500 years, but then return to the NT practice in the Dark Ages?

Michael J. Gorman. *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers*. Revised and expanded edition. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2009. xii + 286 pp. \$19.95 (paper). Reviewed by William D. Barrick, Professor of Old Testament.

Gorman is professor of sacred Scripture and dean of the Ecumenical Institute of Theology at St. Mary's Seminary and University, Baltimore. In this revised and expanded edition he pays greater attention to what he terms "theological interpretation" (1). Also, he adds a sample exegesis paper on an OT text (2, 264-75). Gorman also edited a companion volume titled *Scripture: An Ecumenical Introduction to the Bible and Its Interpretation* (Hendrickson, 2005).

"Part One: Orientation" (7-59) introduces the reader to the concept of exegesis. The first chapter ("The Task," 9-33) describes exegesis as an investigation of the many details of the text of Scripture (10-11), a conversation with past and present readers of the biblical text (11), and an art requiring intuition, imagination, and sensitivity (12). Gorman selects an eclectic employment of synchronic, diachronic, and existential approaches (23-24). Seven basic elements comprise his exegetical process: survey (overview and introduction), contextual analysis (historical and literary), formal analysis (form, structure, and movement), detailed analysis, synthesis, reflection, and expansion together with refinement (26). Gorman rightly declares, "Wise exegetes prepare a careful initial exegesis of the text on their own before consulting the experts" (31).

The second chapter ("The Text," 34-59) asks two questions: "How is a text selected for exegesis?" and "Which translations and editions of the Bible are best for exegesis?" (35). Gorman prefers the NRSV, NAB, TNIV, and NET Bible (44-46). He advises caution with useful translations like RSV, NIV, NASB, REB, ESV, and HCSB (46-49). He classifies the NLT, NJB, CEV, GNB, and *The Message* as unacceptable for basic exegesis, though useful for some study (49-51). Lastly, he identifies KJV, NKJV, and LB as unacceptable for exegesis (51). Summarizing the benefits of a variety of study Bibles (52-57), Gorman settles on *The Catholic Study Bible*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2006) as the best (57).

"Part Two: The Elements" (61-172) consists of seven chapters presenting each of the seven elements of Gorman's exegetical process. The first element (survey) involves reading the text, getting first impressions, making a provisional translation, and writing a brief introduction (63-68). The second element (contextual analysis) looks at the historical, cultural, literary, and canonical contexts of the text (69-81). Formal analysis comprises the third element (83-100). In this step the exegete looks at the literary form, the structure of the text, and how the text moves from one unit of the structure to another. He notes that special literary devices such as repetition, antithesis, parallelism, inclusio, and chiasmus sometimes demarcate structural patterns (91-94). Narrative follows much the same type of pattern that exposition exhibits (94-96).

Element four (detailed analysis) stands at the heart of the exegetical method (101-25). By means of bullet-pointed lists, Gorman identifies the basic questions involved in performing a detailed analysis of the biblical text (103-4, 112, 113-14, 118, 119-20, 122). This approach to the task enables the student to walk through the process question by question—a very effective pedagogical technique. Detailed analysis includes lexical analysis (word studies) and syntactical analysis. It is at this point that the author recommends some form of diagrammatical analysis (113). Gorman inserts various aspects of the historical-critical method (source, form, tradition, and redaction criticism) into this element of the exegetical process (116-19). The position he takes regarding such methods recognizes their value while being cognizant of their limitations and problems (117). Intertextuality (both textual/canonical and cultural) also finds a role in this fourth element of the exegetical process (119-21).

The fifth element (synthesis) occupies the seventh chapter of the volume (127-38). Synthesis consists of seeing the forest rather than focusing on the trees (129). In this section Gorman handles the issues of plurality of interpretations (129-31) as well as ambiguity and polyvalence (131-36). He relates these issues to authorial intent, *sensus plenior*, reader response, and evocative communication (as compared to propositional communication).

Chapter eight, covering the sixth element (“Reflection: Theological Interpretation”), fills a significant portion of the material (139-66). The process focuses on the exegetically significant question, “So what?” (139). Five possible interpretive postures represent the attitudes potential in exegetes: antipathy, appreciation coupled with noncommitment, discernment or inquiry, suspicion, and consent or trust (140-43). Gorman takes the last posture. He then presents eight principles for the theological interpretation of Scripture (148-55) before discussing a potential ninth principle, the missional hermeneutic (155-58). Throughout this chapter the author emphasizes the biblical exhortation for the reader to become a doer of the Word (Jas 1:22) or, as he puts it, “a *living exegesis* of the text” (160; cf. 163-65).

The seventh element of the process (expansion and refinement) involves a brief statement about the use of exegetical tools (167-72). This general introduction precedes the final section of the volume, “Part Three: Hints and Resources” (173-232). The tenth chapter offers suggestions for students preparing exegesis papers (175-79). Gorman briefly explains the errors to avoid and what a student needs to accomplish for each of the seven elements of the process. The final chapter lists resources for exegesis, arranged under nine headings corresponding to the first nine chapters of the book (181-232). Gorman’s choices reflect theological ecumenicity. Though he does list some conservative or evangelical sources, he avoids directing students to resources like the following: Robert B. Chisholm, Jr., *From Exegesis to Exposition* (Baker, 1998); Robert L. Thomas, *Evangelical Hermeneutics* (Kregel, 2002); Robert L. Thomas, *How to Choose a Bible Version* (Mentor, 2000, 2004); *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*; Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *A History of*

Israel from the Bronze Age through the Jewish Wars (Broadman & Holman, 1998); and Eugene H. Merrill, *A Kingdom of Priests* (Baker, 1996). About *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Zondervan, 1976-1992), Gorman writes, "This classic set by conservative evangelical scholars based on the NIV is responsible work but somewhat predictable in exegetical and theological perspective. It should therefore be used with some caution and balance from other perspectives" (225). He provides an informative description of all major CD-ROM resources (192-95).

At the end of each of the first nine chapters, the author provides a summary, some practical hints, and suggested assignments for practice (e.g., 31-33, 58-59, 66-68). Four beneficial appendices round out the book: "Tables of Exegetical Methods" (233-40), "Practical Guidelines for Writing a Research Exegesis Paper" (241-46), "Three Sample Exegesis Papers" (247-75; examples from John 11:45-53, 2 Cor 12:1-10, Psalm 84), and "Selected Internet Resources for Biblical Studies" (277-81).

Unlike Chisholm's *From Exegesis to Exposition*, Gorman does not deal with the biblical languages or with the specific details of original language exegesis. Despite this lack, his ecumenical approach, and depreciation of evangelical sources, evangelical students will find Gorman's volume useful. He provides a practical page-by-page outline of what a 15-page exegetical paper should look like (29, 241-46), gives good pointers on constructing an outline (90), and literally walks the student through the process with key questions, summaries, and hints. The three papers in the third appendix also faithfully replicate the author's process.

Adolph L. Harstad. *Joshua*. Concordia Commentary. Saint Louis: Concordia, 2004. xxxii + 906 pp. \$42.99 (cloth). Reviewed by Michael A. Grisanti, Professor of Old Testament.

The Concordia Commentary series represents an impressive series of commentaries for those pursuing biblical studies. The stated purpose of the series is to "assist pastors, missionaries, and teachers of the Scriptures to convey God's Word with greater clarity, understanding, and faithfulness to the divine intent of the text" (xv). Contributors to this series belong to conservative Lutheran denominations. Four convictions serve as guidelines for each commentary (and author) (xv-xvi). First, the editors and authors believe that the Old and New Testaments place their focus on Christ. They refer to these volumes as Christ-centered or Christological commentaries. Second, they believe that Law and Gospel are the overarching doctrines of the Bible and that is what these commentaries seek to unfold. Third, they accept without reservation that the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments are, in their entirety, the inspired and inerrant Word of God. Fourth, since God gave the Scriptures for the benefit of all humanity, their living context is the church.

The author of this volume on Joshua presently teaches at Bethany Lutheran College and Seminary in Mankato, Minnesota. Prior to this, he has pastored churches in other states and also served as a missionary in Zambia.

After a brief bibliography (6 pages) and a helpful introduction (36 pages), the bulk of the volume focuses on the interpretation of the text of Joshua (almost 800 pages). Each pericope of Joshua is treated under three headings: translation, textual notes (sometimes longer than the commentary), and commentary. The textual notes treat issues of grammar, syntax, word meanings, as well as text-critical problems. Every major section of Joshua begins with an outline and a brief overview of the section. Each section concludes with a brief backward look, summarizing that section. A number of excurses are scattered throughout the commentary. After the commentary proper, Harstad provides a number of potential preaching texts and themes from Joshua, a thorough glossary of key terms, eleven maps, and abundant indices (subjects and passages). Eleven figures are scattered throughout the introduction and commentary. Throughout the commentary proper are fifteen icons that highlight some aspect of the message of Joshua. Some of these are tied to the theme found in Joshua and others point to interpretive conclusions that cohere with the Lutheran perspective of the authors (e.g., baptism, Lord's Supper, ministry of Word and Sacrament, the church, etc.). An example of one of the more interpretive conclusions involves Harstad's connection of crossing of the Red Sea as a baptism for the nation of Israel with Christian baptism (cf. 1 Cor10:2) (173). Finally, as part of their understanding of Law and the Gospel, the authors are amillennial and conclude that the ultimate fulfillment of OT promises takes place through the church (7, figure 1).

With a commentary this large, only select issues can receive attention. Harstad accepts the early date for the Exodus from Egypt (ca. 1446 B.C.), placing the beginning of Israel's conquest of Canaan to ca. 1406 B.C. Harstad defends Rahab's decision to lie in protecting the spies (Joshua 2) as something intended for the good of the spies (something Luther calls an obliging lie). The intent of the speaker of the lie determines the appropriateness or sinfulness of a lie, according to this view (115-18). When discussing the events that took place at Gilgal, Harstad connects circumcision with Christian baptism as the event that brings a person into relationship with the covenant (243). In Joshua 10, Harstad views the "long day" of Joshua as a miracle in which God caused more hours of sunlight in order to facilitate Joshua and his army's devastation of the southern coalition of Canaanite cities. He makes no effort to explain the mechanics of the miracle because the text of Scripture does not provide an explanation. When commenting on Joshua 11 and 13, Harstad correctly points out that Joshua's conquest of the land of Canaan was not totally comprehensive. When it says "the land had rest from war" (11:23), chapter 13 refers to parts of the land of Canaan that were not yet conquered and passes on the responsibility for conquering those areas to each individual tribe. This is an important point to understand because various scholars suggest that Joshua's claim

to have conquered the entire land of Canaan contradicts the reality found in the book of Judges.

As part of his commendable attempt to explain the contemporary relevance of various parts of Joshua, Harstad makes applications that do not seem to be the main points of OT passages. For example, he connects the “landlessness” of the Levites with the situation of pastors who live in parsonages and do not own their own homes (509). However, the Levites were set aside for a different reason with a role different from pastors. Also, what about pastors who have jobs or own their homes?

The commentary offers a number of helpful features. Harstad’s belief in inspiration and inerrancy as an important theological underpinning for his interpretation adds to the value of his work. He also interacts with historical, geographical, and archaeological issues at numerous points. His textual comments provide helpful technical information about the Hebrew text, raising issues that clearly relate to one’s interpretation of the passage. Also, this commentary is huge and costs the same as another volume in this series that is half the length. One of the greatest frustrations is totally understandable. Harstad’s Lutheran belief system shows up repeatedly in the application he makes or the way he interprets various OT institutions and theological realities. This should be no surprise since the series is written for a Lutheran publisher. It will serve as a helpful resource as long as it is used carefully (good advice for any commentary).

Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton. *A Survey of the Old Testament*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009. 799 pp. \$49.99 (cloth). Reviewed by William D. Barrick, Professor of Old Testament.

Hill serves as professor of OT studies at Wheaton College (1984-present) and Walton taught for 20 years at Moody Bible Institute before joining Wheaton Graduate School as professor of OT (2001-present). Zondervan published the first edition of *A Survey of the Old Testament* in 1991 and the second in 2000. Hill and Walton mix general and special introductions together rather than keeping them separate. Following a longer curriculum approach, they provide sections on OT geography (Chapter 2, 34-54), OT historical backgrounds (Chapter 9, 180-201), archaeology (Chapter 19, 356-71), and the formation (text, transmission, and canon) of the OT (Chapter 26, 480-99). Although their materials address a number of significant issues, a few escape notice. For example, Hill and Walton do not cover the orographic effect on the weather patterns of Palestine. Methods of field archaeology also are noticeably absent.

On a seminary level, professors must choose what to teach as part of a course in Old Testament Introduction (OTI). They must also select the textbook(s) that will provide at least the core material for the course’s content. Professors who opt for the shorter curriculum deal with canonicity, textual criticism, higher critical

methodologies, and archaeology. The longer curriculum adds inspiration and inerrancy, ancient Near Eastern history and culture, and ancient Near Eastern and Palestinian geography. Teachers might elect to include topics absent from the required curriculum for the degree (normally the M.Div.) in order to fill the vacuum and to round out the student's exposure to the breadth of OT studies.

Unfortunately, the title for Hill and Walton's volume (*A Survey of the Old Testament*) creates some confusion. OT survey usually involves more special introduction topics like authorship, date, background, structure, and theme for individual OT books—thus distinguishing it from OTI. Dillard and Longman's *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (2nd ed., Zondervan 2006) serves as an OT survey textbook.

Gleason Archer's *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (3rd ed., Moody, 2007) has not changed substantially in thirty or forty years. It omits major OTI topics like history and geography and focuses primarily on the documentary hypothesis rather than exposing the student to the wider range of higher critical methodologies. R. K. Harrison's *Introduction to the Old Testament* (reprint, Hendrickson 2004) also has not kept pace with developments in the field of OT since its first edition in 1969.

In contrast, *A Survey of the Old Testament* expresses an up-to-date evangelical stance in regard to significant areas of OT studies. It integrates the examination of higher critical methodologies with specific sections of the OT most affected by higher critical views. Two appendixes handle the more general discussions of higher critical methodologies ("Appendix A: Critical Methodologies," 753-60, and "Appendix B: The Composition of the Pentateuch," 761-69). Hill and Walton provide a balanced discussion of various existing viewpoints on such matters as the dating of the exodus from Egypt (105-8). Throughout the book the authors engage the reader in discussion concerning the relationship of the OT to the NT (e.g., 117, 118, 120).

All of the accouterments of pedagogically sound textbook production make their appearance: annotated bibliographies (concluding each section of the text; e.g., 73-75), visual presentations of key issues by means of charts and tables (e.g., "Comparison of Chronological Systems," 66), "Questions for Further Study and Discussion" as well as a bibliography "For Further Reading" concluding each chapter, attractive and pertinent color photos, maps, and charts illustrating the text.

Hill and Walton's third edition updates chapter bibliographies ("For Further Reading"). For example, at the end of Chapter 4, "Genesis" (97-98), Walton adds nine entries and eliminates eight from the second edition. Entries involving volumes within a series lack a consistent formatting. Sometimes the author of a chapter abbreviates the series titles or omits series titles entirely. This reviewer would prefer that series titles consistently appear as an acronym (e.g., AB for Boling's *Joshua* and NICOT for Woudstra's *The Book of Joshua*, 233).

In the second edition the final section ("Epilogue") contains two chapters ("Toward the New Testament," 555-61, and "What We Have Learned," 562-70). The third edition provides three chapters: "What We Have Learned" (a brief OT

theology; 715-27), “Responding to God” (basic OT ethics; 728-41), and “The Journey to Jesus” (revised “Toward the New Testament,” 742-52). “Anthropomorphism,” “covenant,” “Levant,” “Mesopotamia,” “Pentateuch,” “Septuagint,” “theophany,” and “Torah” enter the third edition’s “Glossary” (770-74), whereas “kinsman-redeemer” and “levirate marriage” drop out.

Weaknesses still manifest themselves in this third edition. For example, Hill and Walton deny Mosaic authorship to large sections of the Pentateuch (60, 79, 104, 165). They make no reference to sources dealing with the creation/evolution debate in Genesis 1–11 (97-98). Their map of the Red Sea crossing ignores any potential deep water crossings (109). The authors also elected not to include the “Berekhyahu son of Neriyahu” bulla from the City of David (see photo and caption, 538) as a reference to an OT individual by name in contemporary materials (368). In addition, they provide no response to critical views on the historical accuracy and integrity of Jonah (631-35) or on the unity of Isaiah (520-22). In the consideration of the Psalter’s headings, they make no mention of the superscription and subscription to Habakkuk 3 and its significance to the discussion (420-32, 664). Hill and Walton conclude the textbook on a negative note when they declare that “the question of historical reliability [of the Pentateuch] remains” (769). They indicate that the “current form” of the Pentateuch’s poetic sections “range from the thirteenth to the eleventh centuries BC” (60; cp. 377), but contradict the observation by giving a fifteenth-century date for the exodus in the chart on page 103.

Some omissions appear to be more accidental in nature. For example, Daniel 2:4–7:28 is missing from the list of Aramaic sections of the OT (481; but cp. 333). Emanuel Tov’s *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (2nd ed., Fortress, 2001) should have been added to “For Further Reading” at the end of “Formation of the Old Testament Scriptures” (499). Lastly, the authors (or, was it an editor’s decision?) fail to provide a Scripture index. This is an unfortunate omission since it markedly reduces the academic usefulness of the volume as a textbook.

The reviewer and a colleague both require this volume for the seminary OTI course that they teach. Students benefit significantly from the visual information conveyed in the third edition’s photos and charts. Two graduates of The Master’s Seminary provided a number of the photos (Todd Bolen: 6, 40, 41, 45, 61 et al.; Fred Mabie: 100, 108, 111, 128, 180 et al.). A laminated key for *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Zondervan, 2007) serves as a helpful supplement to the volume.

R. Reed Lessing. *Amos*. Concordia Commentary. Saint Louis: Concordia, 2009. xlviii + 691 pp. \$42.99 (cloth). Reviewed by Michael A. Grisanti, Professor of Old Testament.

This work by Lessing is part of a joint effort in the Concordia Commentary series to help pastors, missionaries, and teachers to a clearer understanding and greater faithfulness in handling the Scriptures.

The author of this volume is professor of exegetical theology at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, where he also directs the graduate school. He also pastored two churches for fourteen years before joining the faculty of Concordia.

For an overview of the features shared by each of the commentaries in this series, see above the review of the volume on Joshua by Harstad. Here are a few features of this volume that differ from the other Concordia Commentaries reviewed in this issue of *MSJ*. As with Wilch's commentary on Ruth, Lessing has almost seven hundred pages to devote to explaining the nine chapters of Amos compared with Harstad's almost one thousand pages to discuss twenty-four chapters of Joshua. Unlike Harstad, but like Wilch, Lessing does not provide an outline of the entire book that shows the flow of argument. He divides the book into major sections and at the beginning of each large section identifies each pericope. Like Harstad and unlike Wilch, Lessing intersperses several helpful excurses throughout the volume. His final excursus is "Preaching Like Amos."

Lessing broadly categorizes other studies of Amos as utilizing three different approaches. "Behind the text" includes considering the impact of archaeology and ANE history on the book of Amos. Unfortunately, many studies of Amos draw on anthropology and sociology to misread the text and use Amos' message for some unbiblical agenda. "Within the text" focuses on what is written in the extant, finished text of Amos. "In front of the text" focuses on strategies for applying the text of Amos to the modern day. Lessing seeks to avoid the abuses of all three, but makes use of all three approaches to Amos (and does a fine job at it). At the end of his introduction, Lessing summarizes three specific methods of interpreting Amos: form criticism, redaction criticism, and rhetorical analysis. On the one hand, Lessing rejects the speculative and subjective conclusions offered by form and redaction criticism (although he manifests an awareness of prophetic genres). On the other hand, he makes good use of the rhetorical structure of Amos.

After commenting on Amos 1:1-2, Lessing provides two excurses on Hebrew poetry and the land. In his treatment of the "land," Lessing correctly recognizes the important role this motif plays in the message of the OT. However, Lessing concludes that Israel will never be restored to the land of promise. In the final restoration of the new Israel in the new heaven and earth, the Lord will regather his *landless* people to Himself. Then Lessing uses nine truths to show the "spiritual" manifestation of the OT function of land in the NT. Finally, he summarizes and rejects the dispensational belief that God will fulfill His promises to national Israel, in part, by restoring the nation of Israel to the land of promise. Unfortunately, Lessing does not cite the best scholarly representatives of dispensationalism (besides Ryrie) and incorrectly describes dispensationalists as believing in two ways of salvation. Of course, his theology significantly impacts his explanation of Amos 9:11-15 and its use in the Book of Acts (596-600). There again, the only

dispensationalists cited by Lessing are Scofield and LaHaye and Jenkins, rather than some of the many modern dispensationalist articles and books that interact with the Amos 9 and Acts 15 issue.

Notwithstanding the above issue, Lessing provides his readers with a marvelous exegesis and exposition of the Book of Amos. He interacts with word plays and recognizes important aspects of the structure of various prophetic oracles in Amos. His commentary is a great contribution to the scores of studies already written on this important prophetic book.

R. Reed Lessing. *Jonah*. Concordia Commentary. Saint Louis: Concordia, 2007. xlii + 451 pp. \$42.99 (cloth). Reviewed by Michael A. Grisanti, Professor of Old Testament.

This author is professor of exegetical theology and director of the graduate school at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. He also has extensive pastoral experience.

For an overview of the features shared by each of the commentaries in this series, see above the review of the volume on Joshua by Harstad. Lessing's volume on Jonah is quite similar to the other Concordia Commentaries reviewed in this issue of *MSJ*. After a thorough introduction, Lessing devotes ca. 350 pages to his commentary proper. As with the other volumes in this series, he does not provide an outline of the entire book, but provides a basic outline of each major section (in this case, each chapter) of Jonah. At the outset of his treatment of each chapter, he provides a brief introduction to the chapter. He follows the basic format of all the volumes in this series by giving a translation, textual notes, and the commentary itself. His textual note section is lengthy and helpful. He also includes seven excurses scattered throughout the commentary that deal with important issues relevant to one's understanding of Jonah: "Yahweh, the Creator God," "Mission in the OT," "the Sign of Jonah," "the Trinitarian Basis of OT Solidarity," "Sheol," "Death and Resurrection Motifs in Luther's Baptismal Theology," and "When Yahweh Changes a Prior Verdict." With regard to the genre of Jonah, after summarizing numerous views on this issue, Lessing concludes that Jonah is narrative history and presents historical fact.

Observations offered by Lessing in his commentary include a description of the sailors who greatly feared Yahweh after he calmed the seas (1:16), Lessing suggests that the sailors came to know and believe in Yahweh as their God (139). Although they do recognize Yahweh's sovereignty over the sea, it seems more likely that they added Yahweh to their collection of gods that they worshipped. Lessing also provides a nice summary of the major interpretations of "a walk of three days" (3:3b) (294-96). However, after delineating the most commonly held views and pointing out the weaknesses of each, he does not seem to come to a conclusion

concerning which one is best. As part of his discussion of 4:11 and the “more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left,” Lessing also concludes that this is not talking about children but refers to Ninevites who are relatively ignorant of God and His Word (387-88, 411-12).

Of the four volumes of the Concordia Commentary series reviewed in this issue of *MSJ*, Lessing's volume on Jonah offered this reviewer the most help with exegesis and exposition. Although the commentaries are quite large (10 inches tall and all over 400 pages of text), they are priced similar to smaller commentaries. Lessing's volume on Jonah will provide its users numerous insights into the message of the prophet Jonah.

Neil Martin. *Keep Going: Overcoming Doubts About Your Faith*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R, 2008. 300 pp. \$16.99 (paper). Reviewed by Trevor Craigen.

In an engaging style, the senior designer at IDEO in London, Neil Martin, has written on different subjects which are a challenge to the Christian faith and life. His introduction advises that two questions are being answered by his book: What does the Bible say about the place of struggles in the Christian life? And how can the biblical material be used as a weapon to tackle some of the most common and important examples? Chapter One answers Question One. Chapters Two through Six answer Question 2. He asks a major question for many people, but perhaps one which is not always voiced openly, or understood: “Should We Expect to Struggle with the Christian Faith?” He lays out in six bullet points the reasons why the answer is in the affirmative, namely, difficult questions to answer, feelings not keeping pace with faith, admission that we are still sinners, living in non-Christian societies, affected by own temperament and circumstances, and forgetting to count one's blessings. A good description of each follows, with sound advice and exhortation. A selection of appropriate Scriptures provide biblical content or examples.

For the first reason he refers primarily to Asaph, to Job, and their situations. This is no selecting one verse, making a single comment, and then moving off on his own tangent. Martin deals with the texts. Pithy statements, thoughtful ones, occur, e.g., “without diligence in Christian practice, we have no right to expect Christian confidence” (16). Concisely, the subjects of sin, the fall, and its impact are described, particularly as relates to the Christian who is not yet free from sin's clutches. The reader will find himself nodding in agreement with so much being said by Martin. He notes the temperamental diversity among people, and does not swallow the myth of the ideal Christian temperament (30). Chapter One, then, augurs well for the chapters to come. Each chapter thereafter has had its structure determined by the six reasons why the believer should expect a struggle with the faith.

Chapter Two's main heading, "Tackling Struggles with Belief in God" (43), indicates the apologetic flavor of its content. A short summary of three arguments for the existence of God is followed by turning to the Scriptures to highlight the intuitions of God and of spiritual realities. Martin recognizes that humanism and atheism are in conflict with theism, and each other, too. From this point on and for the next thirty or so pages, Martin masterfully sets before the reader evolution, scientific-worldview as a whole, philosophy, and psychology, all of which undermine the theistic worldview. In these pages he is not loathe to take on Richard Dawkins as well. The reader grasps just how committed Dawkins is in his aggressive opposition to Christianity.

Chapter Three treats the question concerning the authenticity of the Bible. Martin began the discussion with the historical reliability of the Bible by asking if Jesus was fact or fiction, if the disciples embellished or misrepresented His story, and if later editors or translators corrupted or misconstrued His story (107). At one point, Martin remarks that sound documentary evidence assures the believer that Jesus did live in Palestine and did do all that the Bible says of Him (128). All in all, the chapter is instructive with a good number of Scripture references.

Chapter Four, the longest one in the book, tackles divine sovereignty, responsibility, and divine justice (147-217). Notably, this chapter quickly affirms God's attributes of greatness and goodness and His aseity. Theodicy questions are summed up in seven bullet points: how could a good and just God who controls everything allow for evil, an eternal heaven and an eternal hell, the saving of some and not others, and condemn them, etc. Martin opens his discussion not in the order developed around those questions in Chapter One, but begins with believers living in a non-Christian society. With emphasis on self-help groups, on feeling good, and having one's needs meet, it is not surprising that people have a less than accurate picture of God and are troubled by "the sovereignty of God." Immature believers—although Martin does not use this term—think they are better than they are and think they are deserving of more than they deserve. In fact, this in turn begins questions on whether or not God knows their needs. Martin's unfolding of the free will and human responsibility debate under the two categories of determinism and indeterminism is well done, but in places the reading slows down in order to understand fully what he has written. Moral determinism deals with the link between moral causes and moral effects, and operates according to motives and reflects human consent. The important point is that it never causes actions against one's own will. Genesis 50 and John 8 offer support here. Pretty much in standard Reformed theology fashion, he tackles the doctrine of election. Finite human minds cannot venture to understand the infinite mind of God (190-91). He comments that human responsibility makes human choices significant; divine sovereignty gives them meaning. Their combination is a paradox that is thoroughly justified (191). Finite minds will not handle responsibly all the biblical data on God unless it fits that finite mind's stereotype of what He should be like. Under three headings Martin sums up what finite minds think, namely, that God is an overreacting, vengeful tyrant

(196-99). The only missing factor is identifying who it is that paints such a picture of God. Is it the believer, even an immature one? Or the unbeliever who would not accept biblical truth without distorting it? The rest of the chapter closes out the discussion by noting that the whole thing will not seem just until things are looked at from God's perspective. Again he sums up a response by observing that there can be no justice and no grace without goodness and no salvation without grace (201-2).

The content was fine, but it seemed as though the book had dragged out the subject long enough. This reviewer several times paged ahead (to see just how much more needed to be said), sighed, and kept going [pun intended]. The last two chapters dealt with overcoming struggles with assurance and those struggles in Christ. Frankly, one wonders what has gone wrong in discipling and teaching if a professed believer struggles too often with lack of assurance. He remarks at the end of the book, "Knowing Jesus better is the thing we must pray for and work for above all else in our struggles—there is simply nothing like it to help and encourage us in our efforts to Keep Going! It will be a good exercise to read through *Keep Going*.

Iain H. Murray. *A Scottish Christian Heritage*. Carlisle, Pa.: Banner of Truth, 2006. xi + 403. \$28.00 (cloth). Reviewed by Dennis M. Swanson, Director of Seminary Library.

In one of his later works the Scottish nationalist and poet Hugh MacDiarmid (the penname of Christopher Murray Grieve, 1892-1978) wrote, "Scotland Small?" Our multiform, our infinite Scotland small? Though small in terms of geography, Scotland has exerted an influence within Christianity and Christian theology remarkably out of proportion to its size. So significant has the Scottish contribution to Christian theology been, an entire reference work, the *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (IVP, 1993) with nearly 1,000 pages, was produced to catalogue the contribution of this nation.

In this current work, Iain Murray has prepared a singular volume of "people and movements" in Scotland that made a lasting impact on Christianity, not only in that country but around the English-speaking world. Murray has divided his work into three sections: *Biographical* where he examines the lives of John Knox, Robert Bruce, Thomas Chalmers, James MacDonald, and Horatius Bonar; *Missionary* where he examines the work in the New Hebrides as "an illustration of the missionary spirit" and also the work of Robert Moffat in Africa; and *Church Issues* where he examines preaching, the problem of elders, church unity in Scotland, and what he calls the "tragedy of Free Church in Scotland."

As is the norm in Murray's works, this volume represents thorough research and is well written. The biographical entries are excellent and Murray has avoided having his narrative sidetracked by minor or insignificant details of the lives (a tendency that has occasionally hindered the author in the past). The accounts of

Bruce, Chalmers, and Bonar are particularly well done and will help reintroduce some exceptionally important men of church history to a new audience.

The section on Scottish preaching (313–37) is perhaps worth the price of the book itself. He deals with the real observations that Scottish preaching was often viewed as “wearisome” (313). Murray admits that some of the criticism was legitimate, but it also is largely overstated since the traditional Scottish preaching was much more multifaceted than it is normally given credit for. He quotes the American J. W. Alexander, who though also critical of the preaching style as occasionally tedious, also remarked that Scottish preaching was “at once expository, doctrinal, methodical, and impassioned” (316).

In the last section Murray takes up the story of the “downgrade” of the Free Church, mainly in the selection of new faculty, such as Robertson Smith, James Denney, and A. B. Bruce, who opened the door to a decline of evangelical theology in favor of higher criticism and the “New Theology” at Aberdeen and other denominational schools. The period of these changes in Scotland corresponded to what was happening in the Baptist Union in Great Britain in the Downgrade Controversy and in the United States as the Modernist controversies were beginning to consume the mainline denominations, particularly the Presbyterians.

Murray’s section here is another reminder that past fidelity to orthodox and evangelical theology does not ensure a continuation down that path. The path, as Murray notes, was the same regardless of what locale in which it occurred: a new and popular set of professors in the seminaries who had the desired academic credentials but were clearly abandoning orthodoxy; an administration or denominational structure that was slow or unwilling to confront error; the marginalization of those who spoke out against the error; and then a new generation of pastors and church leaders who were trained in a deficient theology.

In his introduction Murray states, “[T]he best Christian books never leave us as mere spectators” (ix). This recommended book is one that will read quickly, facilitated by the author’s crisp prose, but if read well, it will leave an impression that by examining the past, one can be freed from being a mere spectator of the future.

John N. Oswalt. *The Bible Among the Myths: Unique Revelation or Just Ancient Literature?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009. 204 pp. \$17.99 (paper). Reviewed by William D. Barrick, Professor of Old Testament.

John Oswalt also authored *Isaiah* (NIVAC, Zondervan, 2003), *Called to Be Holy: A Biblical Perspective* (Evangel Publishing House, 1999), *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1–39* (NICOT, Eerdmans, 1986), and *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66* (NICOT, Eerdmans, 1998). At the present he serves as research professor of OT at Wesley Biblical Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi. Oswalt’s two-volume work on

Isaiah in NICOT takes a clear stand in defense of the unity of the Book of Isaiah, and *The Bible Among the Myths* stands unashamedly on the side of divine inspiration of the OT and its distinct character as compared to ancient Near Eastern literature.

In his "Introduction" (11-18) Oswalt calls for the acceptance and defense of the historical and theological veracity of the OT (16-17). The Bible claims to be divine revelation. He defends that biblical claim and argues that it ought to be given the attention it deserves, instead of allowing disbelief in the Bible to occupy a privileged position in the discussion (18). Part 1 ("The Bible and Myth," 19-107) consists of five chapters establishing the differences between Scripture and myth. Part 2 ("The Bible and History," 109-94) presents five chapters dealing with the issues involved in the Bible's relationship to history and historiography.

Oswalt declares that changes in scholarly opinion resulting in the classification of the Bible as *myth* have come about through a shift in theological assumptions and worldview, not by means of any discovery of new data in the recovery of ANE literature (31). The first step one must take to respond to this shift involves establishing a definition for *myth* (31-46). After dealing carefully and exhaustively with the potential definitions of *myth* and identifying the best definition, he proceeds to demonstrate that "Whatever the Bible is, whether true or false, symbol or literal, it is not myth" (46).

In reality, Oswalt concludes, "[S]imilarities between the Bible and the rest of the literatures of the ancient Near East are superficial, while the differences are essential" (47). The very features common to myths (especially in the ANE) prove the distinct nature of biblical revelation (57-62). The biblical worldview differs diametrically from the views of extrabiblical cultures and their myths (63). The characteristics of biblical thought (e.g., monotheism, iconoclasm, the Spirit as first principle, absence of conflict in creation, a high view of humanity, God's reliability and supra-sexuality, etc.) prove the distinction (64-81).

Scholars repeatedly appeal to correspondences between ANE literature and the Bible. For example, the *Enuma Elish* (a Babylonian creation account) supposedly proves that the writer(s) of the biblical creation account in Genesis aligned it with the Babylonian account. However, a basic comparison of the elements and characteristics of both accounts reveals that the similarities are artificial. Oswalt reminds his readers, "In fact it is important to point out that the *Enuma Elish* is not about 'creation' at all" (101). Genesis speaks of God creating something that did not exist before; *Enuma Elish* recounts the emergence of the world from pre-existent chaotic matter. Some scholars associate *tehom* ("the deep") in Genesis 1 with the Canaanite chaos monster Tiamat because of similarity due to lexical origin. However, the potential association only demonstrates that Hebrew is a Semitic language, not that the writer conscientiously made either direct or indirect reference to Tiamat (102). Overdrawn similarities often continue outside Genesis in other OT literature like the Psalter. No matter how many claims some scholars make regarding Canaanite influence on the literature, imagery, and concepts of the biblical psalmists, evidence in the Ugaritic literature consistently manifests a clear distinction from

anything in the biblical text or a total absence of any analogue (104-7). As Oswalt puts it, “the undoubted similarities . . . do not indicate a common way of thinking” (107).

This reviewer admits to a certain frustration with *The Bible Among the Myths*. With each passing page, he kept expecting a treatment of the matter of the Bible’s borrowing or employing ANE myth, mythical characters, and mythical imagery. A quick check of the “Author Index” (203-4) found that Oswalt makes no reference to the work of Elmer Smick on mythology in the Book of Job. Smick’s work must be considered foundational to such a discussion, so why its conspicuous absence? With the transition from the superb treatment of the topic of myth in the first half of the book to the topic of history, the direction of investigation continues down a separate path. Having established that the Bible is not myth, Oswalt does not resolve how biblical writers might have employed ANE myths. The second half of the volume presents a contrast between a conservative and biblical historiography as opposed to a non-conservative or postmodern historiography. The discussion is valuable, but leaves the reader hanging with unanswered questions about whether the Bible utilizes ANE myths.

One of the most helpful aspects of Oswalt’s comparative analysis of the Bible’s approach to history vs. the ANE’s approach to history (146-47) replicates differences identified by John Walton in *Ancient Israelite Literature in Its Cultural Context* (Zondervan, 1989). The tenth chapter of *The Bible Among the Myths* concludes by describing the views of four scholars with regard to biblical history: John Van Seters (172-75), Frank Cross (175-77), William Dever (177-81), and Mark Smith (181-84). Oswalt concludes that these scholars (and others) have not presented “a convincing explanation for the unique features of the biblical worldview and the ways in which that worldview affects the understanding of reality in the Bible” (184). The only satisfactory viewpoint regarding the nature of biblical revelation resides in its uniqueness in the world, not its apparent similarities to ANE literature and worldviews (192, 194).

This volume represents a distinct and high view of Scripture, its inspiration and veracity. Oswalt exposes the evolutionary, humanistic, and antisupernatural characteristics of opposition to the Bible’s uniqueness as divine revelation. He makes a significant contribution to the discussion of myth and history related to the Bible.

Mary Laurel Ross. *Veiled Honor*. Lee’s Summit, Mo.: Father’s Press, LLC, 2009. 391 pp. \$26.95 (paper). Reviewed by William D. Barrick, Professor of Old Testament.

Reading *Veiled Honor* took me back to my fifteen years of missionary service in the Muslim nation of Bangladesh. Time and again the images conjured up by Mary Laurel Ross in Saudi Arabia found their counterparts in my own and my

wife's experiences living in a Muslim land. This volume contains information gained only through living among and interacting with Muslims within their own cultures. Ross presents a fair and balanced viewpoint—sensitivity to the Muslims' view of their own culture and beliefs as well as the objectivity of a keen outside observer. The author interweaves pertinent historical data with her own personal encounters. Cameos of those whom she came to know and love accent her poignant plea for change in the status of women living under the veil in Islam.

A second group of cameos introduces readers to some key figures in the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the author informs her readers, attended a Baptist college in North Carolina where non-Muslim students tossed his shoes and the shoes of other praying Muslims into the campus lake (20). This humiliated and frustrated individual became the engineer for 9/11. His nephew, Ramzi Yousef, carried out the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center in New York (29). Abdullah Azzam (23), Osama bin Laden (45-46), Mohammed Atta (230), and Ziad Samir Jarrah (298) make their appearances in brief but informative introductions. One full chapter chronicles the life of Mohammed, the founder of Islam ("Allah's Messenger," 317-27). The only noticeably incomplete and potentially misleading piece of information that this reviewer detected occurs in this chapter (322). The author's description of the Battle of Badr (A.D. 624) provides no name or date for it and implies it was just a normal military engagement (other than the outcome). However, the Battle of Badr stands as the equivalent of Israel's exodus from Egypt—the defining event for an entire religion. In actuality the battle was a raid by Mohammed's followers on a large and rich Meccan caravan from Palestine. Receiving information about the raid, the Meccans sent a force two to three times the size of Mohammed's followers to defend it. However, Mohammed's force of a little more than 300 obtained the victory. The sword thus became a symbol of the power of Allah and of Islam.

In a chronology of the Islamic world's recent history, Mrs. Ross points out that 1979 holds a special place (47). She briefly describes each of the events to provide readers with a feel for the historical foundation of current events. Her husband (a U.S. Air Force fighter pilot) brought his family with him to his assignment as a military advisor to the senior staff of the Royal Saudi Arabian Air Force. With that setting in mind, the author provides a concise but insightful history of the Royal House of Saud and each of its kings (165-69, 329-39).

One chapter recounts her family's experiences with their Bangladeshi houseboy (81-97). This reviewer's fifteen years in Bangladesh provides full confirmation of the author's observations regarding Bangladeshi household help, Bangladeshi society, and the desire of Bangladeshis to go to America. Nothing was a surprise—not even Sa'eed's attitude that a houseboy really knew better than the woman of the household (our American author) how to clean kitchens and bathrooms (87).

In her chapters on "Shari'a" (117-45) and honor killing ("In the Name of Honor," 303-10), Mrs. Ross paints a vivid picture of the abuse of females in the

Muslim world. One horrendous tragedy symbolizes the oppression of females in the Islamic world: a March 2002 fire in a girls' school in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (125). Because the girls did not have access to proper attire that would allow them to exit the building, the religious police would not allow them to leave the burning structure. Fifteen teen-aged girls perished in the flames. Only members of the Jordanian royal family have dared to speak in opposition to the practice of honor killings (307). The Muslim concept of honor justifies both the abuse of women and radical Islamic terrorism (310).

In an "Afterword" (363) Mrs. Ross pays tribute to Neda Agha-Soltan the victim of a sniper during Iranian anti-government demonstrations in the streets of Teheran in June 2009. A Muslim woman's voice and death cry out for freedom from oppression and abuse.

Every person with an interest in learning about Islam and about the Middle Eastern Muslim cultures should read *Veiled Honor*. Although women will find it particularly appealing, men also need to read the volume. If a reader desires to pursue this topic further, the reviewer recommends following up with *Lifting the Veil: The World of Muslim Women* by missionaries Phil and Julie Parshall (Waynesboro, Ga.: Gabriel Publishing, 2002).

The end materials for *Veiled Honor* include an informative "Glossary" (365-70), a list of "Sources" (371-78), and end notes (379-90). In keeping with Mrs. Ross's journalistic style and current events approach, internet and media references dominate the sources. An improvement for future editions might be the inclusion of more materials from published books like the one by the Parshalls.

Douglas Stuart. *Old Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. 4th ed. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2009. xxi + 193 pp. \$24.95 (paper).
Reviewed by William D. Barrick, Professor of Old Testament.

Douglas Stuart is professor of Old Testament at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts. Stuart's published books include *Hosea-Jonah* (WBC, Word, 1987), *Exodus* (NAC, Holman, 2006), *Ezekiel* (Preacher's Commentary, Thomas Nelson, 2002), and the popular *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (2nd ed., Zondervan, 1993) co-authored with Gordon Fee. His fourth edition (1st edition came out in 1980, 2nd in 1984, and 3rd in 2001) of this *Old Testament Exegesis* provides a step-by-step guide to exegesis in the OT. Stuart's volume has influenced seminary-level Hebrew exegesis courses for thirty years.

The first change experienced users will note involves the rearrangement of the order of exegetical steps in Stuart's 12-step procedure:

3rd edition

1. Text

4th edition

1. Text

2. Translation	2. Translation
3. Historical Context	3. Grammatical Data
4. Literary Context	4. Lexical Data
5. Form	5. Form
6. Structure	6. Structure
7. Grammatical Data	7. Historical Context
8. Lexical Data	8. Literary Context
9. Biblical Context	9. Biblical Context
10. Theology	10. Theology
11. Secondary Literature	11. Application
12. Application	12. Secondary Literature

Procedurally, the new arrangement represents a welcome improvement. Minor alterations include a significantly expanded list of “Abbreviations” (ix-x) beyond the third edition’s 6-entry list. Two former appendixes now precede the indexes. “A List of Common Old Testament Exegesis Terms” (177-80) corrects an alphabetizing problem at the beginning of the third edition’s glossary, but neither adds to nor subtracts from the entries. “A List of Frequent Hermeneutical Errors” (181-83) was not alphabetized in the third edition, but now is. A larger and more readable (though not as attractive) Hebrew font appears where the text includes Hebrew words and phrases (9, 35, 47).

Stuart’s discussion of illustrative examples for the various steps in his exegetical procedure remains the same, virtually unchanged from the earlier editions. This reviewer hoped the author might at least update the sources to which he appeals during the presentation of those examples. Under his discussion of structure, the author adds discourse analysis and text linguistics to his section dealing with rhetorical criticism (121-23). A better revision consists of a section for resources dealing with life in Bible times (171).

Throughout the volume the author omits key reference works that have gone out of print and inserts more recently published sources. Such changes increase the usability and value of the book for active exegetes. *Biblia Hebraica Quinta (BHQ)* finds its place alongside earlier editions of the Hebrew Bible based on Codex Leningradensis B19A. Stuart includes descriptions of current Hebrew text projects such as *BHQ* (97-98), HaKeter (98), and the Oxford Hebrew Bible Project (98-99).

This fourth edition is not your father’s *Old Testament Exegesis*. It contains a treasure-trove of online resources including OT bibliographies (2, 86, 91, 155-61), Septuagint resources (92, 102), Dead Sea Scrolls resources (93), Targum and Aramaic resources (94, 102, 109), Sumerian literature (130), topical concordances (144), and a variety of databases that provide more than just bibliographic references (161-62). Stuart suggests on a number of occasions that readers “google” various topics (92, 94, 102, 134, 154). His single most substantial revision arises in the discussion of “special reference sources” (152-65) under “Secondary Literature” (152-75). The fourteen-page discussion replaces three pages of material in the third

edition and introduces the reader to the use of the Web as an essential resource for locating secondary literature. Here is the guide to dependable online resources which no exegete with access to the internet should ignore.

Logos Bible Software makes its debut in this fourth edition (101, 103). Stuart ranks it third after *Accordance* (for Macintosh) and *BibleWorks* (Windows) in technical adeptness, but praises *Logos* for providing the greater library of secondary literature (111). An updated and expanded list of Bible software programs and providers closes out the list of aids and resources (172-75).

Disturbingly, Stuart still fails to list *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, or *The Master's Seminary Journal* among the journals to which he directs the reader (165-66). Although "Exegesis Aids and Resources" (83-175) includes the Samaritan Pentateuch among the critical text editions (93), Stuart still fails to include it in his discussion of the ancient versions (88-89). Regardless of any such shortcomings in this fourth edition, the quality and quantity of improvements will guarantee the continued use of this volume by many teachers, students, and pastors for years to come.

Erich A. von Fange. *In Search of the Genesis World: Debunking the Evolution Myth*. Saint Louis: Concordia, 2006. 392 pp. \$20.99 (paper). Reviewed by William D. Barrick, Professor of Old Testament.

Erich von Fange is professor emeritus of Concordia University, Ann Arbor, Michigan. He earned his Ph.D. as a Kellogg Fellow at the University of Alberta. He enjoyed teaching in Lutheran schools and colleges for 44 years, retiring in 1988, but continues to write on creation/evolution issues. This volume demonstrates his wide-ranging knowledge, intense research skills, and voluminous reading. For those truly interested in the debate between creation and evolution, this book will prove to be a rewarding excursion into the multitude of topics addressed within its covers.

The author verbalizes his purpose clearly: "First, how does the Bible fare as a framework for the ancient world in the light of scientific discoveries. . . . Second, is evolution 'fact' as many claim, or is it a type of mantra smothering all efforts to discover real truth?" (20). A sense of the breadth of the volume comes from a listing of its topics: archaeology, metallurgy, paleontology, agriculture, chronology, miracles, anthropology, the scientific method, evolution hoaxes, animal domestication, extinctions, natural history of horses, paleo-botany, the influence of Darwinism, astronomy, and ancient mysteries and riddles together with the theories they spawn. The author provides sources for most of the evidence he presents (via endnotes arranged by chapters, 363-92).

As von Fange puts it, he wrote this book "to inform and assure the reader that science was never the problem. There is a vast difference between science and speculation posing as science" (21). Details gathered over more than forty years of

teaching flow from the author as well-known and familiar facts, yet their massive quantity does not slow the flow of the text. Reading is a pleasure, not a burden. One detracting aspect appears repeatedly, however—many details lack proper references and some details find support in either questionable news media accounts or very outdated material. Improved, more exact, and up-to-date documentation would increase the length of the volume significantly, but would generate a greater willingness on the part of the reader to accept the factuality of the evidence. For example, the claim that Darwin looked forward to the elimination of lower human races and the potential influence this view had on the Nazi slaughter of Jews (130) possesses no direct reference to Darwin's own words. Instead, the endnote merely cites a secondary source by Stanley Jaki (374 n. 46). Another glaring absence of documentation comes in the listing of the statistics for extinctions by geological era (165). The author refers to a specific United Nations report, but fails to cite it directly—relying instead, upon a news article in the *Ann Arbor News* (166, 376 n. 6). I wish these were rare occurrences, but unfortunately, they occur so frequently that a careful reader will begin to feel a degree of discomfort with the dependability of some evidence thus presented.

Each chapter concludes with questions for reflection and discussion (22-23, 47-48, 60-61). The following is an example of these questions: “We can also see remarkable variation occurring when we sit down at a mall and watch the people go by. Is it possible that we are gradually changing into some other species if we give this process enough time? Why or why not?” (134, #8). The reader knows by these questions that the author desires interaction with the reader and interaction between readers—it is a volume that enlists the reader in research, discovery, and reasoning. Great teaching and successful learning consist of just such personal involvement in the subject matter.

Each reader will discover his or her own favorite chapter. The chapter about Joshua's long day (93-100), revealing the misinformation that swirled around biblical circles some years ago, admits to hoaxes on the creationist side of the debate. On the other hand, “The Incredible Piltdown Hoax” (137-60) exposes hoaxes on the evolutionist side. The story of the Piltdown hoax reads like a masterful whodunit (the title, in fact, of one of the chapter's sections, 152)—a very engaging and fascinating read alone worth the price of the book. “The Art of Misquoting Archbishop Ussher” (101-14) provides even more fodder for thought.

The penultimate chapter (“Science and Deception,” 333-53) commences von Fange's critique of what too often poses as science (cf. 21). He identifies evolution's three disastrous failings as “the science that consists of an unshakable faith in what this science is going to prove some day,” evolution's “borrowed concepts from nineteenth century physics that physicists discarded long ago as useless,” and evolution's failure to “invite us into the laboratory as with other sciences” (334-35).

Regardless of the shortcomings of *In Search of the Genesis World*, the volume provides an invaluable compendium of a wide range of topics in the cre-

ation/evolution debate. The author writes well and incites his readers to think deeply, carefully, and consistently (which might be the very reason why its shortcomings might become evident). The volume makes a valuable contribution and deserves a place alongside other good creationist materials.

John R. Wilch. *Ruth*. Concordia Commentary. Saint Louis: Concordia, 2006. xl + 418 pp. \$42.99 (cloth). Reviewed by Michael A. Grisanti, Professor of Old Testament.

The author of this volume is professor emeritus at Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary in St. Catherines, Ontario. He has served as a pastor or professor in the United States, Canada, and Germany. He has also been involved with various Lutheran mission agencies and committees.

For an overview of the features shared by each of the commentaries in this series, see above the review of the volume on Joshua by Harstad. Here are a few features of this volume that differ from the commentary on Joshua. Whereas Harstad was able to devote almost a thousand pages to a biblical book with 24 chapters, Wilch devotes 464 pages to a book with four chapters. His introduction section occupies almost a third of the volume. In addition to the customary issues covered in introductions, he devotes numerous pages to motifs, theology, and relevance (75 pages of 106 pages of introduction).

As with other volumes in this series, Wilch divides the Book of Ruth into major sections. Each section has a translation of that passage, textual notes, and commentary. In this volume, the textual notes are fairly extensive. However, Wilch never provides an outline of the entire book. He identifies each major section, but never attempts to demonstrate the flow of the entire book. One unique (and odd?) feature of the volume is Wilch's arrangement of almost every section of Ruth as some kind of chiasm.

Wilch's commentary is a great resource for students of the Book of Ruth. His textual notes deal with word meanings, syntax, and textual issues that might clutter up his exposition of the text. Although he writes for a Lutheran publisher, he includes less distinctively Lutheran observations than Harstad did, which makes his volume more usable to a wider audience. His observations throughout the volume are clear and helpful. He provides a measured "Christotelic" understanding of certain parts of Ruth, but generally does not overplay that aspect of Ruth's message. This commentary offers a solid exposition of Ruth.

A significant volume just received just before printing this issue of the *MSJ*:

Rynold D. Dean. *Evangelical Hermeneutics and the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Iron River, Wisconsin: Veritypath Publications, 2009. xv + 251 pp. \$24.99 (cloth).

This work by a TMS graduate is included because of its outstanding endorsements, two of which are given below:

“Rynold Dean’s work on evangelical hermeneutics and the NT use of the OT gives a detailed analysis of the question at hand that leads to a needed refinement in how we talk about the NT writers’ use of the Old. In particular, while correctly supporting grammatical-historical interpretation, he wisely argues that we should not speak of adding meaning to the Old Testament text. In this way, he helps to get past all of the slippery categories that have arisen which do not provide aid for clarity. In light of this, Dean’s work is worth the reading in order to rethink the categories that have plagued much of the discussion of the NT use of the OT.”

Dr. Mike Stallard, Dean, Baptist Bible Seminary, Clark Summit, Pa.

“Ryne Dean has given us a finely wrought critical analysis of the current intramural debate among evangelical scholars over the New Testament use of the Old Testament. E. B. White’s dictum ‘clarity is style’ makes this an elegant book as in brief space the author deftly presents the current veins of scholarship in clearest prose with an even-handed evaluation. His own insight as to the correlation that is inherent in the New Testament use of the Old Testament in its grammatical-historical context will enrich the ongoing discussion. This is an essential read for anyone who is concerned with understanding the whole Bible.”

Dr. R. Kent Hughes, Senior Pastor Emeritus,
Wheaton College Church, Wheaton, Ill.