

# Book Reviews

*Where is Boasting? Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul's Response in Romans 1-5.* By Simon J. Gathercole. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003, xii + 311 pp., \$32.00 paper.

Critical responses to the view of Judaism and Paul propounded by E. P. Sanders in *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (1977) continue to be published. The recent volume, *Justification and Variegated Nomism* (2001), has suggested an adjustment of Sanders's view, though some of the contributors continue to endorse the view proposed by Sanders. Friedrich Avemarie has recently maintained that rabbinic literature contains an uneasy tension between the emphasis on covenant and obeying the Torah. In some instances covenant and election are prominent for obtaining life, but in others the focus is on obeying the Torah to gain life. Hence, Sanders overemphasizes the covenant in his own analysis of Judaism. Mark Elliott argues that Judaism during the Second Temple period did not envision salvation for all Israel but only for the faithful remnant that observed the Torah. Sharp criticisms of the new perspective on Paul, which, of course, represents a diversity of perspectives and cannot be confined to Sanders's view, have recently been written by Andrew Das and Seyoon Kim. This new work by Simon Gathercole continues this trend. The book represents a revision of a thesis written under James Dunn, which is interesting in itself since Dunn is famous as an advocate of the

new perspective. In the first section of the book Gathercole re-examines Jewish literature that can be dated before A.D. 70, and introduces later literature as confirming evidence. The thesis Gathercole advances supports the work of Avemarie but establishes it from earlier Jewish evidence. He maintains that Jewish soteriology before A.D. 70 maintained that final salvation depended on divine election (the covenant) and obedience to Torah. Paul, on the other hand, in Romans 2-4 insists that justification cannot be gained by obeying Torah.

Part one, which is really the bulk of the book, examines the role of obedience in final vindication in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, Qumran literature, Jewish soteriology in the New Testament, and writings composed after A.D. 70, including 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, Josephus, the Rabbis, and the Targums. Gathercole acknowledges that not all of the literature yields the same conclusion. Sirach, Tobit, 1 Maccabees, and Jubilees, for instance, do not betray any great interest in the life to come and yet they often draw a connection between obedience and reward in this life. Most of the writings, on the other hand, from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha teach that life in the age to come is based on obedience and election, even though such themes are presented in a diversity of ways in the literature. Obedience appears to be the basis for final justification in a number of texts, indicating that Sanders overstates the role of the

covenant in Judaism. In considering the Qumran literature Gathercole argues in some detail, and rightly, that "works of Torah" cannot be confined to the boundary markers of the law. "Works of law" at Qumran refers to the law in its totality, so that final judgment and vindication based on obedience to the law are taught.

Gathercole then investigates the role of works at the final judgment for Jewish soteriology in the NT. Gathercole maintains that the NT should also be used to shed light on Second Temple Judaism's view of the law. The importance of works for final vindication is apparent in Matthew, Luke, John, James, Revelation, and even Paul. Gathercole argues that Lutheran theology has wrongly denied the role that works play in final justification in the NT. For instance, he maintains that works function as the *means* of eschatological justification in James. Paul's discussion of works in Romans 2 cannot be treated as merely hypothetical. The doing of the law here does not merely represent covenant status as Wright insists, nor faith and the presence of the Spirit as Moo contends. Paul genuinely thinks of keeping the law here, and believes here and elsewhere that obedience is necessary for final vindication before God. According to Gathercole, Paul's view of obedience is Christ-centered rather than Torah-centered. He contrasts Paul's view with that of Jewish contemporaries because obedience is the work of the Spirit and the result of his power. Obedience is necessary

for final vindication in Paul, and here Paul stands in contrast especially to Lutheran theology. Gathercole criticizes scholars like Yinger who see Paul's theology of works as similar to what we find in Judaism, for then the role of the Spirit is diminished. Paul views the Spirit as empowering and animating Christian obedience, and this theme is lacking in Jewish literature. Even at Qumran the Spirit is given to illumine but not to empower.

Gathercole helpfully emphasizes the importance of works at the final judgment for believers in Christ. Protestant theology has sometimes over-reacted to Roman Catholicism and diminished the necessity of works when the NT clearly teaches that those who practice lawlessness will be excluded from the kingdom (Matt 7:21-23). We can even accept Gathercole's claim that James teaches that we are justified *by means of works*, if we define carefully in what sense this is true. Believers are not justified by means of works as if such works are sufficient to merit favor with God. God demands perfect obedience and all fall short of his glory. James clarifies that all good works are *the fruit of faith*, and hence the consequence of trusting in the cross alone for salvation. So, the works that are the means of salvation never stand alone, but are always the evidence of genuine faith—the result of God's work in his people. Hence, good works are never the ultimate basis of salvation, for the work of Christ alone is the basis of justification. Further, all good works flow from faith and are inseparable from such faith in Christ. Therefore,

those who lack such works demonstrate their lack of genuine faith, for the faith that saves always produces good works.

In chapter four Gathercole maintains that the necessity of works at the final vindication is clear also in works composed after A.D. 70, whether we look at 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, Josephus, Rabbinic literature, or the Targums. In discussing the Rabbinic literature Gathercole depends especially on the work of Avemarie who argues that some texts emphasize obedience and others God's covenant, and there is no attempt to harmonize such. Gathercole concludes that what we find after A.D. 70 in Tannaitic literature is already clearly present before A.D. 70.

In chapter 5 Gathercole considers boasting in Second Temple Judaism. Here he maintains that Jews, both individually and corporately, were confident of their final vindication, not solely because of their election but also because of their obedience. The problem with Jews was not that they lacked assurance of confidence about their final salvation nor was it that they trusted solely in their election (Sanders). Rather, they believed their works were adequate for vindication at the final judgment. Gathercole convincingly supplies evidence from the *Assumption of Moses*, Baruch, Wisdom of Solomon, 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra, 2 and 4 Maccabees, *Contra Apionem* and *Life* by Josephus, the *Sibylline Oracles*, *Jubilees*, *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, Pseudo-Philo, Tobit, and Saul the Pharisee demonstrating that obedience to the law, along with election, was viewed

as a basis for vindication in the final judgment. It is not enough, against Sanders, to intend to keep the law, but human beings must actually keep it to receive God's blessing. It seems to me that Gathercole makes his case quite convincingly in his analysis of these texts, demonstrating that Sanders overstated his case in his own analysis of Palestinian Judaism.

Part two of the work consists of an exegesis of Romans 1-5. The person addressed in Rom 2:1 is not just the moral person, but Paul engages a Jewish interlocutor. Paul charges the Jews with sin in Romans 2, but he does not level his accusations merely against Jewish teachers, nor are the sins listed in Rom 2:21-22 directed necessarily against Jews individually. Paul refers to the sins that defiled the nation and led it into exile. Israel's boasting in Rom 2:17 and 23 refers to its confidence of vindication at the final judgment, so that there is no basis for the view that Jews suffered from lack of assurance or uncertainty about their salvation in Romans 2. The problem with the Jews does not consist in their judgment of others but in their failure to repent. Paul's thinking before his conversion is representative of the spiritual condition of other Jews. He thought he was a good, law-observant person, but after his conversion he recognized that he was an unrepentant sinner since he persecuted the church.

Contrary to some proponents of the new perspective, Paul does not charge Jews merely with bad attitudes against Gentiles but with apostasy because they have turned away from the God of Israel—even if

they failed to admit such is the case. Hence, Paul assiduously attempts to persuade Jews that they have indeed sinned and wandered from the one true God. The catena of citations in Rom 3:10-18, Gathercole affirms, is intended to indict Jews, not Gentiles, since Gentiles were not judged on the basis of the law (Rom 2:12). The Jews believed their obedience to the law along with their election would save them on the day of judgment, and hence it is too simple to say that Paul only indicts Jews for restricting the covenant to themselves, as if national privilege is the only target of Paul's attack. Indeed, the Jews believed that their obedience to the law was the basis of their salvation on the last day. Gathercole's exegesis is insightful and mainly convincing, though I question whether the catena in Rom 3:10-18 is directed only against the Jews given the connection between Rom 3:9 and 3:10.

Romans 3:20 indicates that Paul engages in a polemic against Jews who saw their works as fundamental for their avoidance of judgment on the last day, indicating that they did not perceive themselves as needing repentance. Paul believes that the Spirit grants ability to observe Torah, but what he opposes here is any conception that the flesh provides strength to keep the law. Some Jews may have seen God as granting strength to please God in obeying his commands, but Gathercole maintains that this is fundamentally different from the gift of the Spirit granted by God through Christ. Romans 3:21 means that God's saving righteousness belongs to those who

believe instead of those who attempt to observe the Torah. Gathercole maintains that "righteousness" in 3:21 is not an attribute of God, nor is the term exhausted by covenantal faithfulness, or the imputation of righteousness. It seems that he is saying that it is the gift of righteousness God grants to believers. Israel's boast in Rom 3:27-28 cannot be confined to their election and the gift of Torah, though it includes both of these (cf. Rom 3:29-30). Israel also boasted because it believed in final vindication on the basis of works as well. In Rom 9:30-10:5 Israel is not faulted for exclusiveness and focusing on boundary markers but because it fixed its attention on God's commands and omitted faith.

In Romans 4 Paul counters the view that Abraham was justified on the basis of his works, and does not only address the issue whether adherence to Jewish customs was required for entrance into the people of God. "Works" here refers to the entire law and the demand that the law be obeyed comprehensively for justification. Gathercole maintains that in Jewish tradition (Sirach, *Jubilees*, the Damascus Document, 1 Maccabees, and the *Mishnah Nedarim*) Abraham's faith is commended *after* his trials instead of *before* them as in Genesis 15. Hence, justification is limited to the period after his trials in Jewish tradition. The Jewish tradition, therefore, *describes* Abraham's condition as a righteous person, whereas Paul in Romans 4 argues that Abraham was ungodly. Hence, in Jewish tradition justification *follows* Abraham's good works, but in

Paul justification *precedes* his good works. Once Abraham was justified, according to Paul, he receives the Spirit and new obedience is the result. Abraham's trials before his justification would only confirm his slavery to sin and the righteousness of God's judgment upon him.

Gathercole interprets the contentious Romans 4:2 to mean that Abraham appeared to be vindicated by his works before human beings, but he was not righteous in God's sight. Paul goes on to say that Abraham was justified by believing (Rom 4:3)—before he obeyed any commands. Jewish tradition read Gen 15:6 in light of Genesis 17 and 22, but Paul moved in a dramatically different direction, reading Genesis 15 with Genesis 12, so that he establishes the sequence: faith, justification, and then obedience. Abraham was an idolater at his conversion. In Jewish literature God declares Abraham in the right because such a judgment *fits* his character, but according to Paul, God's word creates a whole new reality by declaring Abraham to be in the right before him even though he was ungodly. God's creative word does not mean that "justify" means "make righteous," for texts like Gal 5:17 show that believers still remain sinners. He concludes from Rom 4:4-5 that Paul specifically rejects the Jewish exegetical tradition that grounded Abraham's righteousness on his works. By way of contrast, Abraham is righteous because he believed in God.

David in Rom 4:6-8 functions as one within the covenant who is righteous by faith instead of works.

David's sin does not focus on boundary markers since David was circumcised, kept the Sabbath, and observed food laws. David is considered to be a sinner because of his failure to do what God required. Again Paul's view stands in contrast with Jewish exegetical tradition. Like Abraham David is justified and forgiven as a sinner. Righteousness in Romans 4 is both positive in that it is an act of creation but also forgiveness in which sin is not covered.

Gathercole maintains that Rom 5:1ff does not clearly introduce a new section, as many interpreters have claimed. Perhaps 5:11 should even be considered the climax of 3:21-5:11. The boast of believers is in hope (Rom 5:2) and this hope is in God himself (Rom 5:11). The boasting in God here is not the same as boasting in Torah, for in 2:17 Paul refers to Jews who are unrepentant. They based their confidence both on their election and their obedience to Torah.

Gathercole's interpretation of Paul and Judaism is largely convincing, and poses a challenge to the new perspective on Paul. He demonstrates that Paul's view of justification stood in opposition to the Judaism of his day, so that the view of faith and works in Paul and Judaism were significantly different. We eagerly anticipate the future work of this fine young scholar.

Thomas R. Schreiner

*Journey with David Brainerd.* By Richard A. Hasler. Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria, 2002, 120 pp., \$9.95 paper.

One of the books I require students to read in my Great Books Seminar is *The Life and Diary of David Brainerd*, by Jonathan Edwards. Except for the Bible, God has arguably used the record of the life of this missionary to the American Indians in the 18th century more than any other book to inspire men and women to surrender their lives to missionary service. That fact alone justifies its inclusion in a Great Books curriculum in a Bible college, but it is further justified by the issues that are raised when theology students read and discuss Brainerd's life and ministry – issues such as a Christian understanding of depression, the relationship between Calvinistic theology and evangelistic fervor, Biblical methods of evangelism, and the role of a pastor, to name just a few.

*Journey with David Brainerd* is a collection of 40 readings from Brainerd's diary and journal. As Richard Hasler explains in the Introduction, "The selections are not meant to be read merely as history or biography. Rather, they are to be read creatively in the same devotional spirit in which they were first written." The readings are each about a page and a half long, and each concludes with a prayer that reflects the content of the reading. Hasler has divided the readings into five sections: personal commitment, pilgrimage for God's glory, the dark night of the soul, the Great Awakening, and union with God. Each section is commenced with a quotation from some well-known Christian leader who writes of the influence and benefit of reading Brainerd.

This is a fine introduction to Brain-

erd. Hopefully some who read this will be inspired to read the entire *Life and Diary*, but even if one reads only these devotional excerpts, he will be deeply challenged by the account of a passionate servant of Christ.

Jim Orrick

*The Lost Letters of Pergamum: A Story from the New Testament World.* By Bruce W. Longenecker. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003, 192 pp., \$14.99 paper.

One challenge a professor faces in introductory New Testament classes is this: How does one teach students about important but sometimes tedious historical and cultural background issues (e.g., the origin of the Pharisees or Herodian family relations)? Besides classroom lectures or partial discussions within standard introductory textbooks, many professors require an additional textbook on historical background issues (e.g., Everett Ferguson's classic *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*). Another supplementary option with promising pedagogical appeal is now available.

In his book, *The Lost Letters of Pergamum*, Bruce W. Longenecker offers a creative avenue for exposing students to cultural and historical backgrounds of the New Testament. This text presents readers with a series of fictitious letters between Antipas (who died as a Christian martyr in Pergamum, Rev 2:13) and Luke, the author of the third Gospel. Through Antipas's and Luke's interactions, students learn about Josephus, the Pharisees, the Essenes,



the societal and economic structures in first-century Galilee, emperor worship, pagan healing rituals associated with Asclepius, and so on. This book is more than a historical introduction, however. Antipas, who begins this literary interchange as an avowed pagan, takes a faith journey that captures the reader's imagination. At the end of the tale, as Antipas faces martyrdom for his Christian profession, the reader has not only been informed historically, but inspired spiritually. The book concludes with three short appendices: maps, a listing of characters, and a section-by-section comparison of the fictional vs. historical elements in the story.

Longenecker, a lecturer in New Testament Studies at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, must be applauded for his well-written, historically "true to life" story. Longenecker credits Ben Witherington's *New Testament History* (Baker, 2001) as the source of many of the historical snippets that appear in his letters. It is unfortunate that our modern culture celebrates well-written, historically-distorted religious fiction such as *The DaVinci Code*, rather than fine works such as *The Lost Letters of Pergamum*.

I have few quibbles with this book. Probably the most significant correction I would offer entails the story's presentation of early church structure. Longenecker depicts early Christian communities as evolving from decentralized, charismatic communities to more formally organized gatherings. Antipas spends much of his time in one of these earlier, decentralized communities. One wonders how much of this descrip-

tion was driven by Longenecker's historical judgments and how much was a literary device to aid in character development. Nevertheless, the biblical evidence stands against this Darwinian view of church structure. In Acts, Luke presents Paul and Barnabas as appointing leaders from the founding of new Christian communities (Acts 14:23). Evidence from Paul's letters supports this historical model as well (Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 5:17; Titus 1:5).

One interesting motif in *The Lost Letters* is the frequent appeal to ancient understandings of honor and shame to explain the behavior of characters. In doing this, Longenecker makes a valid sociological point that is often overlooked in modern Western societies, yet the point seems a bit overdone to me. With the limited space in this short book, other historical issues could have been explored fruitfully.

In a fictional book that aims to inform as well as entertain, it is inevitable that some of the situations seem a bit contrived to allow for reflection on historical issues. While this expected deficiency occasionally becomes apparent, the literary correspondence normally progresses in an engagingly natural fashion.

This book could be used nicely as a supplementary text for a college or seminary New Testament class. It might also be used profitably for a travel course in Turkey. (Asia Minor—the setting for most of the events in the story). Despite the author's adept introduction of numerous historical issues through his fictitious narrative, it is inevitable

that many background issues remain untouched (e.g., mystery religions) or only superficially covered (e.g., Maccabean history). Even if this readable and informative book is adopted as a required text for a New Testament course, most professors will still want to require a more extensive traditional backgrounds text as well.

Robert L. Plummer

*Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ.* By Dallas Willard. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002, 269 pp., \$24.99.

Dallas Willard is one of those unique people who can write with equal facility in a wide range of genres, from technical philosophical works to devotional literature. A professor of philosophy at the University of Southern California, Willard is one of the sharpest philosophical minds of our time. However, he has already authored three well-received devotional works—*The Divine Conspiracy*, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, and *Hearing God*. While *Renovation of the Heart* is another significant contribution to devotional genre, Willard writes in a way that is refreshingly free of the clichés and oversimplification that characterize many contemporary devotional works.

Willard's object is to provide guidance about how to transform human personality. To this end he surveys the six constitutive elements of human personhood—thought, feeling, will (spirit or heart), body, the social dimension, and the soul. The author writes a chapter on how

each of these elements of personhood can be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ.

The methodology that Willard recommends to affect this transformation goes by the acronym “VIM”—vision, intention, and means. One must envision the kind of person that Christ wants us to be, decide to become that person, and discover means by which to bring about this transformation. While this description may initially seem oriented toward human good works, it is solidly grounded in the notion that no real transformation can take place apart from God’s grace.

Several factors make this a book well worth reading. Willard’s description of the six aspects of human personality is worth the price of the book. The views presented are thoroughly supported with Scripture throughout the book. Perhaps the book’s greatest value, however, is that sprinkled throughout the volume are numerous spiritual insights which are wise and discerning. Willard is a wise man of God who provides deep insight into human nature and sin, and offers hope about how to transform human depravity into Christ-like character. This book is highly recommended for any child of God.

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*Missions, Nationalism, and the End of Empire.* Studies in the History of Christian Missions. Edited by Brian Stanley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003, 313 pp., \$45.00 paper.

Could it be that the missionary expansion of the church that benefited from the British Colonial Empire also contributed to its demise? How did the missionaries serving under colonial authority and government render unto Caesar and unto God? The response found in this book is that the influence of missionaries on the emergent church and government in countries under British colonial rule contributed to the nationalism that brought about the end of colonial rule. However, neither the intentions nor the methods of the missionaries were uniform. They were caught between competing loyalties. Editor Brian Stanley and contributors provide detail and a number of primary sources in responding to these issues and others.

Insight gained from this analysis of the twentieth century, particularly since World War II, is valuable for missionary actions today in those same contexts and beyond. Lessons learned are indicative of what the church at large can experience when it must decide its role in informing the sociopolitical views of the national or indigenous church in a country under foreign rule. Stanley presents this as “the nature of the linkage in the mid-twentieth century between the Christian churches (and in particular their missionary bodies) and the dynamics of anticolonial nationalism and decolonialization in the non-western world” (1-2).

The thirteen chapters of this volume were originally papers at a conference of the same title held at Queens College, Cambridge, in September, 2000. The presentations

address the conspicuous absence in standard works of the mention of Christian missions and the church as an influence in European decolonialization. Chapters address China, India, and Asia, but the bulk of the work concerns Africa. While the British Empire and missionaries are the focus, a chapter is included on German Protestant missionary efforts.

Inevitably, the relationships between missionaries, their sending bodies and countries, the national church and its government provide a web of competing interests, loyalties, and tensions. The contributors to this volume engage such a reality with differing emphases. The reader is presented with some theological as well as pragmatic dimensions of these relationships. The difficult and essential transfer of leadership to the national, indigenous church from external control and influence is examined, often in light of an endemic paternalism.

In a strict sense we live in a “post-colonial” era. Many would also add a post-Christendom era. Nonetheless, the content of this book is relevant to our contemporary context in what is considered to be a type of economic imperialism exerted today over the poor in the Southern Hemisphere. We might also find this discussion engaging as it concerns military and quasi-political power exerted today in some areas of the world. The authors here provide us with historical background from major geographic areas of the world. We can learn from what was done correctly and what was done incorrectly.

The prophetic and ethical dimen-

sions of missiology are discussed in light of issues such as “apartheid.” The context and issue of racism both de facto and de jure continues to be of great importance globally. Responses are fleshed out as the reader hears the voices of the national Christians, missionaries, mission organizations, and governments. This is complicated by the Western missionaries’ view of church and state which they take to the non-Western world. What then is the role of the missionary in relation to the politics of the host country? Should the missionary avoid “politics” to seek first the kingdom? It is argued that there was indeed political influence but that it supported both nationalism and the “kingdom.” Ultimately, the church did help shape emerging governments.

In this examination of not so distant history, the reader will be engaged in these issues through the words and actions of the participants themselves. This helpful work provides background, relevant information, and insightful interpretation that will assist in contemporary missiological discussions.

Mark McClellan

*Biographical Dictionary of Christian Theologians.* Edited by Patrick W. Carey, Joseph T. Lienhard. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002, 608 pp., \$34.95.

While there are four major multi-volume theological reference tools available in German which include a wide range of theologians (the *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon*, 3rd ed., 1986-97, trans-

lated into English as *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*; the Catholic *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 3rd ed.; *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 4th ed., 1998ff, vol. 5: L-M in 2002; and the *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, 1977ff, vol. 35: *Vernunft-Wiederbringung aller* in 2003), and while there are two recent dictionaries particularly of evangelical theologians (see below), an English dictionary of theologians that also includes evangelicals and their predecessors is less readily available. This need is met by the present volume edited by Carey and Lienhard. The volume features a whole range of more than 450 (by and large systematic) theologians, from the Early Church (e.g. Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Marcion, though no entry for Polycarp) to the present (e.g. Paul Althaus, Yves Congar, Oscar Cullmann, Henri de Lubac, Reinhold Niebuhr, Karl Rahner, Paul Tillich, though surprisingly no entry on J. A. T. Robinson; “entries are restricted to Christian theologians who died before 1994,” vii) and of all denominations. It includes both those considered orthodox and those seen as heretical.

The scope of this dictionary and its selection are best made evident by listing all the entries for two randomly chosen letters of the alphabet:

Johann Eck, Meister Eckhart, Mary Baker Eddy, Jonathan Edwards, Jonathan Edwards Jr., Ralph Waldo Emerson (at least in Europe not obviously considered a theologian, also applicable to Samuel Taylor Coleridge), Nathaniel Emmons, Ephrem the Syrian, Desiderius Erasmus, John Scotus Erigena,

Eusebius of Caesarea, Eusebius of Nicomedia, Evagrius of Pontus ... Edward McGlynn, Thomas McGrady, John Gresham Machen, Douglas Clyde Macintosh, Joseph Marie Maistre, Henry Edward Manning, Marcellus of Ancyra, Marcion, Joseph Maréchal, Marsilius of Padua, Shailer Mathews, Frederick Denison Maurice, Maximus the Confessor, Camillo Mazzella, Philipp Melancthon, Émile Mersch, Thomas Merton, John Meyendorff, Virgil George Michel, Peter Mogila, Johann Adam Möhler, Luis de Molina, Johann Lorenz von Mosheim, William August Muhlenberg, Theodore Thornton Munger, Thomas Müntzer, and John Courtney Murray.

The entries are written by a wide range of North American scholars. Each entry offers a brief biographical sketch (including education and career), discusses the major works of the person under consideration, and surveys the impact made on their contemporaries and on subsequent times. The entries close with a bibliography listing the major works of the person and a selection of the secondary literature. Following the individual entries, the volume closes with a selected bibliography (553-55) and an exhaustive index (557-81).

Due to the editors’ emphasis, there is a good coverage of systematic theologians with a noticeable Catholic slant (and of people concerned with the liturgy). The editors provide the following definition: “‘theologian’ is here understood in a fairly restricted sense: those whose work was primarily in systematic and spiritual theology, or historians of the Christian Church whose work was

primarily theological in orientation. The editors have excluded exegetes, canon lawyers, and philosophers of religion such as René Descartes, Immanuel Kant, and Georg Hegel. . . . Entries were restricted to those whose work was primarily the result of a study of Scripture and tradition" (viii, Preface).

However, there is relatively little on the great missionaries of the Christian tradition (while there are entries on Bartholome de Las Casas and Raymond Lull, there is no entry for Bonifatius or William Carey, and the entry on Gregory the Great gives no indication of his missionary vision and efforts) and on the great biblical scholars of the church (e.g. W. F. Albright, J. T. Beck, H. J. Cadbury, F. Delitzsch, C. H. Dodd, E. W. Hengstenberg, J. Jeremias, J. Knox, W. M. Ramsay, A. Schlatter, J. Wellhausen, Th. Zahn; though there are entries on Rudolf Bultmann, Oscar Cullmann, Alfred Firmin Loisy, Johann Salomo Semler, and Richard Simon). For biblical scholars—who would argue for the supremacy of Scripture over tradition—one may wish to consult G. Bray, *Biblical Interpretation Past and Present* (InterVarsity Press, 1996); D. K. McKim (ed.), *Historical Handbook of Major Biblical Interpreters* (InterVarsity Press, 1998); or the magisterial H. Graf Reventlow, *Epochen der Bibelauslegung I-IV* (C. H. Beck, 1990-2001).

This Baptist reviewer is pleased to see the Anabaptists Hans Denck, Balthasar Hubmaier, and Menno Simons included; a little surprised to find William Booth, Margery Kempe (other women are Hildegard of Bingen and Madame Jeanne Guyon),

and George Whitefield; and startled to meet the Mormon Joseph Smith Jr. and Mary Baker Eddy included in this work. Despite the significance these latter two have had for the religious make up and identity of the U.S., one would wish to question the application of the terms "Christian" and "theologian" in both cases.

The American user will find a good coverage of European Catholic theologians from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, who are less well known in North America and in European Protestantism. Users from other parts of the world will appreciate the emphasis on North American theologians ("particular attention to theologians of the English speaking world," viii) and learn of many people little known elsewhere. A good number of Greek and Russian Orthodox theologians are included who are less well known in the Catholic and Protestant tradition. The selection of theologians is obviously a matter of choice and—in the modest estimate of the reviewer—in a good number of cases this ignorance is pardonable—at least for a Baptist! A useful supplement volume would be M. Greschat's (ed.) *Personenlexikon Religion und Theologie*, UTB 2063 (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), which is adapted from the entries of the *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon* (in the European Protestant tradition, see above).

The *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Theologians* is a helpful reference tool for church historians and systematic theologians. Unless there is a special interest in either or both of these disciplines, the average

pastor can do without this book ("the primary readership . . . was graduate students in a master's degree in theology. The volume is intended to give such students a first orientation to the great theologians of the Christian tradition," viii) and might find more inspiration in T. Larson, D. W. Bebbington, M. Noll (eds.), *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*, IVP Reference Collection (InterVarsity Press, 2003) or W. A. Elwell (ed.), *Handbook of Evangelical Theologians* (Baker, 1993, unfortunately out of print).

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*The Works of Jonathan Edwards, Volume 21: Writings on the Trinity, Grace, and Faith.* Edited by Sang Hyun Lee. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003, xii + 566 pp., \$95.00.

Jonathan Edwards wrote numerous books intended for publication, and, of course, preached many sermons, a large number of which exist in full manuscript form. But he also kept notebooks and penned essays on theological themes that he never attempted to publish. Some of these collections dealt with key theological themes, such as the Trinity and the doctrine of grace. Some of these writings have been available in print in the past and others are being published in this volume for the very first time.

On the Trinity, Edwards defended the Nicene heritage of the church, but did so by employing the language forms of his day along with those



inherited from the early church. This enabled him to defend the classical doctrine of the Trinity against the criticisms offered by John Locke and some contemporary Arminians, and to do so in the linguistic forms that were current during the Enlightenment. Edwards was also highly committed, as one might expect from this pastor-theologian, to elucidating the practical significance of the doctrine of the Trinity.

On grace, Edwards saw the Holy Spirit as the One who communicates the divine benefits of salvation to the human heart, but argues that he does much more than that. He designates the role of the Spirit in redemption as “the thing purchased” (149-65) and in so doing makes it clear that the Spirit is equal partner with the Father and the Son in the redemption process, since the Father offers the price of redemption, the Son pays the price, and the Spirit is now the thing purchased. Whatever one may think about this formulation, Edwards certainly offers a riveting exposition of the idea.

In the notebooks on Efficacious Grace, Edwards offers a very insightful critique of the Arminian understanding of self-determination and free will. Here again Edwards’s pneumatological views come to bear as the Holy Spirit acts in the heart of the regenerate person as a new inward disposition (196). This means that grace is, ultimately, irresistible and not subject to human choice (240-51).

The subject of justification by faith was constantly before Edwards in his capacity both as a pastor and a

theologian. His early *Justification by Faith Alone* (1734) is well-known to Edwards scholars. In this volume, editor Lee includes Edwards’s later reflections written in his notebooks but which never saw the light of publication.

It is hard to imagine doctrines that are more to the cutting edge of contemporary discussion than the Trinity, pneumatology, grace, and justification. Edwards’s reflections on these matters are filled with insights for the contemporary student of theology.

Chad Owen Brand

*Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus*. Biblical Studies Library. By David W. Pao. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002, 311pp., \$29.99 paper.

Originally submitted as a doctoral dissertation at Harvard University, this volume was first published in 2000 as volume 130 of *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* Series 2. In his preface Pao acknowledges his indebtedness to Francois Bovon, whose influence is evident throughout the work.

That Luke drew heavily from Isaiah in both his volumes has long been recognized. He quotes the prophet directly at pivotal points in the narrative, such as the preaching of John the Baptist (Isa 40:3-5; Luke 3:46), Jesus’ “inaugural” sermon at Nazareth (Isa 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19), Paul’s first turning to the Gentiles at Pisidian Antioch (Isa 49:6; Acts 13:40), and Paul’s final turning to the Gentiles in Rome at the end of Acts

(Isa 6:9-10; Acts 28:26-27). Pao adds to these Jesus’ final instructions to his disciples in Luke 24:46-47 with its allusion to Isaiah 49:6. Pao sees these texts as a clue to the entire structure of Luke-Acts.

Taking Isaiah 40:1-11 as his central text, Pao argues that all of Luke-Acts is built around the promise of the restoration of Israel in that text. He devotes his central chapters to the four main themes which he sees developed in Isaiah 40: the restoration of Israel, God’s Word, the polemic against idolatry, and the inclusion of the Gentiles.

At some points Pao’s argument appears forced, such as his appeal to the Simon Magus and Elymas incidents as examples of polemic against idolatry. This reviewer is also not convinced that Isaiah’s new exodus theme is as exclusive in providing the ground plan for Luke-Acts as Pao seems to claim. Nevertheless, in my opinion he has established that it is a *central* theme. Much of his treatment is fresh, providing a real contribution to the study of Acts, such as his linking the “Way” texts and the journey motif to the theme of the progress of the Word of God. Pao’s work covers a good portion of the Acts narrative and provides a sound model for inter-textual study. Anyone doing serious research in Acts will want to consult this volume, and it promises many gems for the more casual reader as well.

John B. Polhill

*Holman QuickSource Guide: Atlas of*

*Bible Lands*. By Paul H. Wright. Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2000, 160 pp., \$9.99 paper.

In order to fully comprehend the Bible, one should have a grasp of its geography. The geography of the Bible provides the background to the biblical events and is at the heart of God's promises to the nation of Israel. God made the lands of the Bible in such a way as to teach his people of his provision and of their need to trust him. The land of the Bible affected every aspect of Israelite society. For this reason, the *Holman QuickSource Guide: Atlas of Bible Lands* is a welcome resource for any pastor, Sunday School teacher, Bible student, or layperson who wants to better understand the happenings within the Scriptures.

The book begins with a quick overview of the Bible's ancient Near Eastern context followed by two divisions. The first section focuses on what is known as Palestine, Israel, or the Holy Land. This part gives attention to the major regions of Palestine, looking at the geographical and climatological features of each region. The first map in this section shows the modern political divisions of the land and is quite helpful because it provides a bridge for the modern reader between the locations of current events and the events recorded in the Bible.

The second division of *QuickSource Atlas* begins with the time of Noah and follows the Bible's storyline from Genesis to Revelation, illustrating the places where events occurred. This format should prove very user-

friendly to any student of Scripture. The over one hundred fully detailed maps (many of which are three dimensional), the photographs, and the discussion provide information that should help one gain better insight into the Bible and the biblical world. Hopefully, the publisher will produce the slides in an electronic format so that teachers may use them in Power Point presentations some day in the near future. The *Holman QuickSource Guide: Atlas of Bible Lands* would be a great addition to the library of anyone who has a desire to better comprehend God's Word.

T. J. Betts

*Psalms: Remembering Zion*. By Alastair G. Hunter. London: Routledge, 1999, 298 pp., \$36.95 paper.

Hunter is a Senior Lecturer in Old Testament at the University of Glasgow. His premise is that the psalms are ancient poems with obscure origins, yet their influence remains. Many read them for their beauty, but what real meaning could they have today? This problem is not recognized by evangelicals who view the psalms as inspired forms of worship poetry. For most non-evangelical theologians, however, the problem is very real, because the ideas of ancient people have to be re-read and translated for "post modern" readers. How, for example, should a contemporary person read the ancient cries for savage revenge? Who today sees nature as the psalmist did? What does a liturgy in an ancient middle-eastern temple say to an urban citizen in the west

today? Does it matter who wrote the psalms? Hunter seemingly does not really think so.

Hunter offers guidance on choosing a translation. His premise is that literary "meaning" is a construct of the modern reader, and the search for "authorial intention" is a fantasy. There is, in Hunter's view, "not the slightest shred of evidence" that we can enter into the mind of the ancient author (5). The meaning of a text, he says, "cannot depend absolutely upon its author's intention" (6). Hunter wants us to use historical criticism, but he sees that as a side issue, and his own interest does not lie there. Seeking to interpret a psalm in light of its actual origin is an impossible task, according to Hunter. This seems to be a widespread conclusion even among some contemporary evangelicals (who primarily seek canonical linkages and follow other secondary interpretive principles).

Hunter favors the New Revised Standard Version (with an Authorized Version near at hand for reference). He assumes a literary approach that assumes a particular kind of qualified reader (or set of readers). No reading, he suggests, can ever be considered as final. He buys into Collingwood's thesis that the past cannot be recovered except as it undergoes contemporary rethinking. Therefore, for Hunter, the present is as much the context of the text as is any supposed past event.

The reader, he says, must be willing to engage in critical analysis. What is the underlying basis for various translations? Poetry in particular requires a dialog between the text

and the reader, he says. Poetic and rhetorical structures must be understood. Readers need to know about similar material from other ancient Near Eastern cultures and about the ancient sociological context. Chapter 6 outlines the literary moves most post-modern scholars advocate. Then Part II, chapters 7–11, takes individual psalms as test cases for this interpretive reading style.

In the final section, Hunter tries to read the Psalms of Ascents (Pss 120–134) according to his proposed method. He demonstrates the linguistic unity of this grouping, and he offers many insightful points, though I think he fails to see the verbal linkage to some key prophetic passages. Helpful charts of characteristic words and formulaic phrases are given. Hunter certainly offers insight, and we can learn from this study, but to me it ultimately fails for the same reason that post-modern literary theory in general fails. These psalms did have an original intent, and they also have a canonical usage and a structural pattern provided by an editor who arranged the sequence. But without the first part, the other two levels drift into subjectivity.

I appreciate Hunter's work, and I find it helpful, but I still advocate the quest for original setting and authorial intent. I remain very far from mainstream OT scholarship, and very far from Hunter's conclusion.

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*The Church: Sacraments, Worship, Min-*

*istry, Mission.* By Donald G. Bloesch. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002, 351 pp., \$27.00.

This is the sixth and penultimate volume in Bloesch's Christian Foundations series, a fresh new systematic theology in multiple volumes. This volume continues the excellent treatments of the various *loci* of theology that readers of the first five volumes have come to appreciate. Bloesch's approach is different from most other large-scale treatments of systematic theology in that it does not follow a prescribed format. Rather, Bloesch follows an outline that is a combination of classical treatment adapted to contemporary conflicts and issues in the *locus* in question. While Bloesch always has a heavy historical component in his treatments, the historical discussions are not necessarily confined to one section of the volume, but may be scattered about in various places as he deals with specific issues. The same can be said of his treatment of Scripture. Bloesch does not give as much detailed attention to exegesis as one might find in the theology texts of people like Robert Reymond, James Leo Garrett, or Wayne Grudem, but the biblical interpretation is always there and is generally insightful.

This volume serves a dual purpose in that it engages the key ecclesiological issues that confront the church, but also tackles them with a view to actually "doing church" in the world today. The chapter on the demise of biblical preaching is worth the price of the book. While recognizing that preaching is not the only thing we do in worship, Bloesch argues that it is

central to worship, and quotes Barth's dictum that, in the Reformation tradition, preaching was essentially a third sacrament. Bloesch fears that we are on the verge of eliminating preaching due to the influence of visual arts in culture and due to our proneness to sand off the rough edges of Christianity, and true preaching will always retain those rough edges (183).

His discussion of baptism will not be satisfactory in every way to a Baptist, but he does make clear the importance of baptism. This is crucial in a culture where "rituals" are fast being eliminated, or where questions about the mode of baptism and the recipients of baptism are no longer being considered as theological issues anymore, but only as pragmatic considerations.

Bloesch's discussion of the role of women in ministry and home is insightful, if not entirely acceptable to this reviewer. He posits three models for the marriage relationship: hierarchicalism, characterized as a *march*; egalitarianism, characterized as a *race*; covenantalism, characterized as a *dance*. His description of covenantalism calls for the husband to lead and the wife "dutifully though freely" to follow, "and the result is an underlying harmony and beauty" (225). He does, however, contend that women can be presbyters (227), though he does not give a clear reason why he departs from Paul's teaching in this area.

Bloesch is always interesting, sometimes frustrating, often helpful. Every pastor should read this book, both for the theological content it

contains, and also for the helpful interface one will find here with the issues of pastoral ministry.

Chad Owen Brand

*The Blackwell Companion to the Hebrew Bible.* Edited by Leo G. Perdue. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2001, xxx + 471 pp., \$131.95.

This edited volume is part of the *Blackwell Companion to Religion Series*. The goal of this series is to present comprehensive overviews of topics of religion in mainstream scholarship. This companion to the Hebrew Bible is designed to be an accessible resource to introduce non-specialists to scholarship of the Hebrew Bible. This volume is a collection of twenty-six essays providing introductions to major topics in Old Testament biblical scholarship. All of the contributors are top scholars within the field of biblical studies.

The book is divided into eight major sections: The Hebrew Bible in Modern Study, Israelite and Early Jewish History, Archaeology of Ancient Israel and Early Judaism, The Religious and Social World of Ancient Israel and Early Judaism, Old Testament Theology, The Torah, The Prophets, and The Writings. Purdue provides an excellent preface introducing and summarizing the individual essays.

The first section contains three essays providing excellent introductions of modern approaches to biblical interpretation. The first provides an overview of current approaches to interpreting the biblical text from text

criticism to tradition criticism. The next two essays each deal with two dominant arenas in contemporary scholarship: literary criticism and social scientific studies.

The next three sections focus on historical models regarding the biblical text. The second section contains three articles on the history of ancient Israel focusing on early Israel and the development of the monarchy, the Monarchic Period, and Judah in the Persian Period. The third section contains two articles on archaeology, both by W. Dever. Both articles are summaries of the field and are programmatic in their approach. The first provides case-studies on how archaeological data have influenced biblical interpretation and the second focuses on trends within archaeology of ancient Israel. The fourth section contains four articles entitled: "Canaan," "The Household in Ancient Israel," "Archaeology, the Israelite Monarchy, and the Solomonic Temple," and "Schools and Literacy in Ancient Israel and Early Judaism."

The fifth section contains five essays discussing aspects of Old Testament theology. The first essay presents an overview of modern approaches to Old Testament theology. This is the only essay in this section that presents an overview of its topic; the other essays are position papers, each presenting a case study of a particular topic in Old Testament theology from the author's perspective. The topics are "Symmetry and Extremity in the Images of YHWH," "Theological Anthropology in the Hebrew Bible," "The Community of

God in the Hebrew Bible," and "Old Testament Ethics."

The last three sections contain essays that correspond to the major divisions of the Old Testament: Torah, Prophets, and the Writings. The section on the Torah contains two essays entitled "Creation and Redemption in the Torah," and "Law and Narrative in the Pentateuch." Both essays discuss major themes found in the Pentateuch. The first introduces major themes of Genesis while the second discusses the Pentateuch as a whole. The next sections contain the following essays: "Former Prophets: The Deuteronomistic History," "Later Prophets: The Major Prophets," "Later Prophets: The Minor Prophets," "Narrative Texts: Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah," "The Psalter," "Wisdom Literature," and "Apocalyptic Literature."

The book is well edited and easy to read, avoiding technical jargon and discussions of scholarly debates. This makes the subject very accessible to non-specialists. The claim that it is a comprehensive resource is due to the fact that the articles cover a wide variety of topics dealing with the Hebrew Bible. It is not comprehensive in the sense of presenting evangelical or conservative approaches to the interpretation of the biblical text, or even radical interpretations. It is not comprehensive in presenting an overview of Old Testament scholarship. This is an excellent resource to introduce students to contemporary, mainstream, biblical scholarship, but it is cursory at best, and only those articles with a narrow, defined topic can be considered comprehensive.



The price is prohibitive to making the book accessible to non-specialists! I would recommend buying three basic textbooks on the Old Testament, each focusing on history and archaeology, theology, and a survey, for a non-specialist to get a comprehensive overview of the Hebrew Bible.

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