

Book Reviews

Benjamin D. Suchard. *The Development of the Biblical Hebrew Vowels, Including a Concise Historical Morphology*. Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics 99. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2019. xii + 304 pp. Hardback. ISBN: 978-9004390256. \$113.00.

The past few decades have witnessed what may be characterized as a “linguistic turn” in biblical studies.¹ The most prolific research involves the application of pragmatics, text-linguistics, and discourse analysis. In many ways, this recent move is not altogether novel. Linguistic inquiry was birthed in the context of nineteenth-century (and earlier) comparative philology. In contrast with the turn to the synchronic analysis of pragmatics and meta-discourse, the earliest linguistic investigations were historically oriented and focused on phonology and morphology. Its theoretical origin may be traced to the so-called *Junggrammatiker* (“Neogrammarians”), who proposed that diachronic sound change was without exception regular. A great number of successes—including the oft-cited confirmation of Saussure’s proposed Proto-Indo-European laryngeal theory—paved the way for landmark achievements in grammar and lexicography.² Similar advancements were achieved in Semitic and Hebrew philology. The longevity of the work of Theodor Nöldeke, Carl Brockelmann, Wilhelm Gesenius, and others exemplifies the value of comparative methodologies and further authenticates the insights of what became known as historical linguistics.

Even though some biblical scholars have questioned the principle of regular sound change (notably Joshua Blau), in this 2019 work, Benjamin Suchard seeks to account for the origin and development of the Tiberian vocalic system using the Neogrammarian paradigm (pp. 1–2). To accom-

plish this goal, he addresses a number of problematic phonological developments in Hebrew vowels. The study is anchored by analyses of the Canaanite Shift (Chapter 3), stress and lengthening (Chapter 4), diphthongs and triphthongs (Chapter 5), Philippi’s Law (Chapter 6), the law of attenuation (Chapter 7), and word-final vowels (Chapter 8). Each chapter provides a review of previous scholarship, an evaluation of the outstanding issues, an identification of the most problematic exemplars, and an attempt at reconstructing regular sound change rules. The conclusion includes a rule-ordered relative chronology of the development of Hebrew phonology and a selected list of examples. An appendix summarizes biblical Hebrew morphology of “pronouns, nouns and adjectives, numerals, and verbs” from a historical linguistic perspective (p. 231).

On the whole, Suchard provides strong evidence that the traditional formulations of historical phonology should not be abandoned when dealing with biblical Hebrew. Yet, specialists will find many quibbles with the niceties of the proposed developments (e.g., the reconstruction of an analogically developed syllable closing *-b* [i.e., **ʔantab* et passim] to solve the anceps problem, pp. 203–6).³

Suchard is to be congratulated on his yeoman’s service to the field of biblical Hebrew phonology and his aim to realign future queries to conventional historical linguistic research. This work provides excellent examples of the prodigious gains and the promise of continued research in the area of Hebrew phonology. One would hope that biblical scholars would engage with historical linguistics and the resources it provides to better understand the languages of the Bible. Suchard’s discussions are most helpful not as a replacement of more comprehensive treatments, such as Bauer and Leander, *Historische Grammatik der Hebräischen Sprache des Alten Testaments* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1962 [1922]), but as a starting point for scholars and students interested in phonology from a Neogrammarian perspective.

The project, however, suffers from several underspecified assumptions and omissions. First, dialectal variety and diversity is eschewed for a monolithic language presentation at the earliest and latest stages of Hebrew development. Second, a robust description of Tiberian phonology is altogether missing. The endpoint of the developmental pathways is not the phonetic realization of Tiberian Hebrew,⁴ but the final stage appears

¹ This term is apt but should not be confused with the description of analytic philosophy by Richard Rorty (*The Linguistic Turn, Essays in Philosophical Method* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967]), even though the theoretical origin of both, at least in part, can be connected with the structuralism of Ferdinand de Saussure.

² Jerzy Kurylowicz, “*ə* indoeuropéen et *h* hittite,” in *Symbolae grammaticae in honorem Joannis Rozwadowski*, vol. 1 (Cracow: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, 1927), 95–104.

³ Following Ahmad Al-Jallad, “Final Short Vowels in Gə‘əz, Hebrew *ʾattā*, and the Anceps Paradox,” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 59 (2014): 315–27.

⁴ Geoffrey Khan, *The Tiberian Pronunciation Tradition of Biblical Hebrew*, vol. 1, Cambridge Semitic Languages and Cultures 1 (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2020).

to be a pre-Tiberian phonemic reconstruction. Third, the phonological development of proper names is not considered. While these nouns have particular difficulties because of their tendency to resist systemic sound change, they also exhibit innovations which need to be included in a full-scale historical accounting. Fourth, the dueling solutions of genetic transmission and areal diffusion appear to be enacted in an ad hoc fashion. A more robust engagement with dialect geography and contact linguistics would improve the analysis. Fifth, focusing on Tiberian Hebrew restricts the scope of the historic associations and verification. Incorporating additional transcription evidence (Hexapla, Jerome) and other medieval phonologies (Babylonian, Palestinian) could have provided a closer temporal approximation of the phonological changes in Hebrew.

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William J. Webb and Gordon K. Oeste. *Bloody, Brutal, and Barbaric? Wrestling with Troubling War Texts*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2019. 397 pp. Paperback. ISBN: 978-0830852499. \$40.50.

Bloody, Brutal, and Barbaric? (BBB) attempts to solve the problems raised by genocide and war rape texts in the Bible. In this reviewer's estimation, William Webb and Gordon Oeste accomplish a Herculean feat by elucidating the complex issues within these texts and by providing innovative and orthodox answers to difficult questions. In this review, I devote significant space to a survey of the volume's contents followed by an assessment.

BBB is neatly divided into three sections. In the first two sections, the authors introduce the basic claims of the book, survey genocide and war rape texts in the Bible (e.g., Num 31:1–54; Deut 21:10–14; Josh 8–12), and outline traditional and non-traditional solutions to the presence of genocide and war rape in the Bible. BBB makes six basic claims: Christians apply the wrong answers to the right questions, the Bible's total-kill rhetoric is hyperbolic, the genocide and war rape texts reflect divine accommodation, the Bible portrays a redemptive-movement ethic, the portraits of YHWH and Jesus cohere, and the Bible presents an unfinished justice story (pp. 13–19).

Webb and Oeste consider the following “traditional answers” to genocide and war rape texts: God is the source of holy war commands, holy war has good purposes, the extreme sinfulness of the Canaanites merited extreme divine punishment, and divine warfare against the Canaanites anticipates eschatological judgment (pp. 35–50). Webb and Oeste contend

that these answers do not solve the modern ethical problems raised by the genocide and war rape texts. However, they argue that these answers solve the ethical problems of the ancient audience (i.e., the creation of sacred space resulting in the expulsion of Canaanite idolaters from YHWH's sacred land).

Webb and Oeste deem their approach “non-traditional” and capable of solving the modern ethical problems raised by the genocide and war rape texts. The foundation of their “non-traditional” approach is a redemptive-movement hermeneutic (Chapter 4). Webb and Oeste admit that there are legitimate problems in the biblical text due to divine accommodation (e.g., genocide and war rape). They believe that these texts depict an early stage in God's redemptive story. Moreover, they note that despite real ethical problems in the biblical story, Israel's ethics supersede the ethics of their ancient Near Eastern neighbors. Chapter 5 outlines the (truly) ugly side of war rape in Deut 21:10–14 (i.e., women as sexual property who were given one month to grieve their past before being coerced to marry an Israelite). Chapter 6, however, shows that Israel's custom was morally superior to their ANE neighbors. Unlike their neighbors, the Israelites were not permitted to commit battlefield rape or rape temple slaves. Moreover, compared to Israel's ANE neighbors, Deut 21:10–14 shows some concern for the foreign woman.

Chapter 7 functions as a transitional chapter arguing that both issues of genocide and war rape require an incremental ethic approach. Chapters 8–16 consist of Webb and Oeste's resolution to the problem of genocide in the Bible. In Chapters 8–11, the authors contend that total-kill language in texts like Num 31:1–54 and Joshua 8–12 is hyperbolic. They argue that ANE scribes regularly used hyperbole to describe warfare and that ancient Israelite scribes followed suit. In Chapter 8, they discuss examples of hyperbole in ANE literature. They list numerical hyperbole (i.e., number of troops in battle), speed hyperbole (i.e., length of time taken to defeat an enemy), severity hyperbole (i.e., heightening the extent of human lives lost in battle), extent hyperbole (i.e., geographical domain defeated), and attribution hyperbole (i.e., king-rather-than-army as victor in battle) as representative examples. They then show how Joshua and Judges are laced with these forms of hyperbole in Chapter 9. In Chapters 10–11, they quell arguments against the hyperbole thesis.

They support their argument for hyperbole by showing that expulsion was an equally acceptable form of removing the Canaanites from YHWH's sacred space and, therefore, it is unlikely that “total-kill” meant total-kill in those texts (Chapter 12). In Chapter 13, they demonstrate that the Hebrew Bible forbade the ancient Israelites from committing the war atrocities committed by Israel's ANE neighbors. They survey texts in the

Old Testament that reveal YHWH's hatred of war and deem him an uneasy war God in Chapter 14. Then, in Chapter 15, they show how the cross, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus transfer literal warfare against God's enemies to the domain of spiritual warfare against God's enemies. They also show that the Christ-event moves history towards the goal of ultimate justice. Finally, in Chapter 16, they argue that the warfare in Revelation is not literal, but spiritual and that Jesus defeats his enemies on the last day with a word not a sword.

In my estimation, Webb and Oeste's non-traditional approach to the concerns with war rape and genocide in the Bible paves the right path forward. Their approach is both accurate and comprehensive. By situating war rape and genocide in the Bible within its larger ANE literary context, they correctly demonstrate that Deut 21:10–14 ethically surpasses ANE war rape practices (although it is not without its own problems!) and that texts like Num 31:1–54 and Joshua 8–12 employ significant hyperbole in their description of warfare (but with their own problems too!). In sum, Webb and Oeste support their thesis with a thorough argument. They leave no stone unturned and, thereby, overcome dissenting opinions. Their work is sure to help believers and skeptics navigate the Bible's darkest corners for years to come.

My primary criticisms of the book concern the interpretation of individual passages. For example, I dispute their interpretation of YHWH's rejection of the institution of the monarchy in 1 Samuel 8 and their interpretation of YHWH's character as weighted towards love and forgiveness based on Exod 34:6–7 (pp. 306–11). However, the overarching redemptive-movement thesis of *BBB* is both valid and sound.

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Matthew Barrett. *Canon, Covenant and Christology: Rethinking Jesus and the Scriptures of Israel*. New Studies in Biblical Theology 51. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2020. xiii + 359 pp. Paperback. ISBN: 978-0830829293. \$30.60.

In this important study, Matthew Barrett, Associate Professor of Christian Theology at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, offers a biblical-theological defense of a robust, evangelical doctrine of Scripture. Adopting an edifying rather than polemical approach, Barrett aims to “fortify evangelicals and remind them that their doctrine of Scripture depends not on a few proof texts but is far more organic, grounded as it is

in the character of God, his covenantal speech, and Christological fulfillment” (p. xiii).

Barrett's work is motivated by a dilemma facing evangelicals. Scripture is God's unified, covenantal, and redemptive revelation (pp. 2–4). However, some scholars have concluded that Paul's “explicit” testimony regarding the Old Testament and the apparent lack of comparable statements from Jesus and the Gospel writers suggest a divide between Jesus and Paul, with the doctrine of inspiration constituting a non-Jewish development within Christianity (p. 5). If accepted, devastating effects follow for inspiration, canonical unity, and redemptive history. Unfortunately, some evangelicals are tempted to affirm this divide or merely to “pay lip service to inspiration” (p. 5). Barrett counters this “hermeneutical darkness” by showing that Jesus and the Evangelists have “just as convictional a doctrine of Scripture” as Paul, if one reads Jesus and the Gospels “within the Old Testament's promise-fulfillment pattern and typological tapestry” (p. 6).

In Chapter 1 Barrett discusses some foundational issues for his argument, particularly its cornerstone: “divine authorial intent” (p. 24). Its diminished appreciation in post-Enlightenment scholarship produced a loss of biblical authority (pp. 9–17). Divine authorial intent is foundational for Scripture's unity, which is canonical, substantial, expressed through typology and *sensus plenior*, and fundamentally Christological.

In Chapter 2, Barrett explains the presuppositions of Jesus and first-century Jews concerning Scripture to prepare readers to understand how Jesus read the OT. He highlights the covenantal, progressive, and divinely-interpreted nature of God's revelation (pp. 41–47). Offering a mini whole-Bible biblical theology, he demonstrates the OT's nature as an “inscripturated” covenantal text, the prophets' awareness of their own inspiration, and the unity of God's revelation. Furthermore, often by means of prophecy and typology, the prophets “narrowed” their focus upon the one through whom God's redemption would be fulfilled, the promised prophet, priest, and king (p. 88).

Chapters 3 and 4 offer two “case studies” from the Gospels of Matthew and John, demonstrating how the Evangelists and Jesus read Scripture as a conceptual unity, finding its fulfillment in Jesus. Underlying this assumption is the conviction of all Scripture's inspiration and divine authorship (p. 98). Importantly, Barrett unpacks how in Matt 5:17–19 (on fulfilling the Law) Jesus affirms Scripture's Christological telos as well as its verbal, plenary inspiration; its “reliability and authority;” and its “perpetual efficacy” (p. 119). Likewise, Jesus knew his actions fulfilled Scripture as he took them (p. 136). These chapters' closing implication is that the OT Scriptures “give birth to Jesus himself and are the genesis of the

church” (p. 197).

In Chapter 5 Barrett investigates the Synoptic Gospels, explaining how Jesus’s redemptive mission is successful because he as the “obedient Adamic son” offers covenant obedience to the Scriptures (p. 204). This obedience accomplishes redemption and affirms Scripture’s authority and inspiration (p. 204).

In Chapter 6 Barrett connects “the reliability of Jesus’ position on Scriptures” (p. 249) to his Trinitarian identity as the Incarnate Word. He details evidence from all four Gospels that prove Jesus’s divine identity and authority and explains how the whole Trinity is involved in the process of revelation. As God, Jesus confirms and fulfills God’s word in the OT and has the authority to speak a new, inspired word (p. 295). Barrett closes by proposing how this argument can inform systematic theology and conversations about inerrancy. His main emphases are that the “ultimate dogmatic location” of divine inspiration is the doctrine of God (p. 302) and that the doctrine of Scripture he articulates is more Christological than the Barthian separation. For, “to drive a wedge between Christ as the Word and the in-scripturated text is to miss the unified trinitarian delivery of revelation” (p. 309).

On the whole, Barrett’s argument is compelling, and he demonstrates the high stakes of an impoverished doctrine of Scripture. The work’s interdisciplinary focus, drawing from the fields of biblical theology, hermeneutics, historical theology, and systematic theology, is one of its chief strengths. He successfully integrates important research from the field of biblical studies to demonstrate how the biblical authors presupposed a divine authorial intent lay behind Scripture’s unity. Despite this, he is more conversant with recent biblical scholarship when discussing NT texts than OT texts since he is overly reliant upon Meredith Kline. That does not negate his overall argument though. In fact, as a biblical scholar, I found this study not only convincing, but also *convicting!*

Barrett’s book should be required reading for every seminary student as a timely prophylactic and balm against the deleterious effects of an over-focus on the human authorial intention at the expense of the divine. Yet it also offers a model for aspiring theologians and biblical scholars. Hopefully evangelicals will take his assessment and proposed solution seriously.

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John Kampen. *Matthew within Sectarian Judaism*. Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019. xvii + 320 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-0300171563. \$65.00.

John Kampen is Distinguished Research Professor at Methodist Theological School in Ohio and a recognized authority on the Dead Sea Scrolls. In this new book, he seeks to draw on his expertise in the sect that produced and preserved the scrolls to understand the social setting of Matthew’s Gospel.

Kampen’s thesis is that “the gospel of Matthew is distinguished among the writings of the New Testament by notable similarities to other sectarian literature composed by Jews of the Second Temple era” (p. 203). Focusing on that era, scholars who apply the social sciences to the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls have argued convincingly that the Qumran community was a sectarian group. Kampen contends that the sectarian traits manifested in the Qumran documents are also found in the Gospel of Matthew. For example, he sees the content of the Sermon on the Mount as closely paralleling the paraenetic material in the Rules text of the Qumran corpus. He regards the diatribe of Matthew 23 as part of an intramural debate that juxtaposes the sectarian followers of Jesus with the rest of the Jewish community. He also suggests that Matt 28:16–20 is a statement on the role of this sect in Jewish history. Consequently, Kampen infers from this and other evidence that the genre of the Gospel of Matthew is “sectarian narrative” (p. 209).

Kampen’s insights challenge several popular views of the character of Matthew’s Gospel. He argues that material in Matthew that treats the Mosaic law is not “anti-Pauline” as some scholars have claimed. Instead, this material addresses differences of opinion about the law that distinguished Jewish sects of this era. He argues that material that some scholars have seen as anti-Semitic is really neither pro-Roman nor pro-Gentile, but purely sectarian. The author of Matthew’s Gospel wants his readers to understand that Jews who oppose the Christian sect are responsible for Jesus’s death. However, he does not intend to indict the entire nation of Israel for Jesus’s execution. Kampen thus asserts that instead of seeing the community addressed by the Gospel as one that has separated *from* Judaism, it should be viewed as a sect *within* Judaism.

Unfortunately, Kampen exaggerates the parallels between the Qumran sect and Matthew’s community at times. He also hesitates to affirm some of the implications of his own thesis. Moreover, Kampen argues for a later date of composition for the Gospel than most scholars affirm, placing it at the end of the first century. However, the parallels between Matthew and the Dead Sea Scrolls are well suited to a date of composition

several decades earlier since the sectarian documents of the Dead Sea Scrolls were written prior to AD 70. Despite these caveats though, the book is a valuable contribution to scholarship that will interest those who seek to understand the relationship of the Matthean Christian community in Galilee to other Jews in the region.

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Francis J. Moloney. *The Apocalypse of John: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020. xxiv + 404 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-1540961778. \$54.99.

Francis J. Moloney, Senior Professorial Fellow at Catholic Theological College, University of Divinity in Melbourne, Australia, makes a unique contribution to the interpretation of the book of Revelation in his new commentary, *The Apocalypse of John*. Moloney rejects the traditional eschatological and millenarian interpretation of the book, but rather asserts that the book should be read Christologically and ecclesiologicaly “as a steady statement and restatement of the saving effects of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which act from before all time” (p. 27). Moreover, “The book is a celebration of the perennial significance of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the mystery of God perennially present across the whole of sacred history, from the beginning of creation down to the time of the Christian church” (p. 27). This work offers a creative interpretation of Revelation, but ultimately, when compared closely with the text of Scripture, is not compelling. Nevertheless, anyone looking for a unique and fresh reading of Revelation will benefit by reading this book.

Much of Moloney’s commentary captures not his own ideas but represent his “rethinking and rewriting of the interpretation of Eugenio Corsini,” an Italian scholar who has not had wide reception in the English-speaking world (p. xvi). Corsini insisted that Revelation is not a prophecy about the end of the world but “is the story of a past event that embraces the whole of the history of salvation, beginning with the creation of the world and culminating in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ” (Corsini in foreword, p. xi). Moloney embraces this view which guides the rest of the interpretation of the book.

He makes several important interpretive decisions. First, he believes that Revelation is “bent” apocalyptic in that it is missing “God’s final saving intervention [that] will mark the end of all time, the eschaton” (p. 8). Instead, Revelation presents the victorious Lamb as slain before the foundation of the world: “The victory has already been won” (p. 8). Second,

Moloney rejects the common view that Revelation was written to persecuted Christians. John is not writing to a struggling community and urging them to persevere in light of God’s coming judgment, but rather Revelation is “directed to Christians facing a situation of great ambiguity, caught between belief in the saving effects of Jesus’ death and resurrection and a lifestyle that that belief requires, on the one hand, and the allure of the glittering Greco-Roman world within which they lived, on the other” (p. 33). Finally, Moloney sees the series of sevens as determining “the heart of the document” (p. 32). Beginning with the seven churches, the series of sevens rehearses the history of humanity and the saving work of Jesus Christ among them. For example, although the letters to the seven churches are an exhortation to the churches in Asia, they also “represent Israel’s sacred story, foreshadowing, preparing, and instructing the church” (p. 67). The letter to Ephesus takes believers back to the garden reminding them of the fall from the original love, Smyrna recalls the affliction and plagues in Egypt, and so on, until Laodicea, which relates Israel’s rejection of the Messiah and the coming of the Son of Man.

At times, Moloney’s Christological reading of Revelation is very moving and enriching. The history of Israel and Christ’s death and resurrection do play central parts in the book. However, this approach goes too far by insisting that Revelation is not eschatological but merely rehearses the present benefits of Christ’s work. First, if Revelation is not eschatological, why was it written in the inherently eschatological apocalyptic genre? Second, verse 1 of the book notes that Jesus is making known to his servants “the things that must soon take place.” If the book was a mere rehearsing of the history of Israel and work of the Messiah, it would not allude to future events in the first verse. Furthermore, the book ends with a final judgment and a vision of the new heavens and the new earth. All these images reflect an eschatological judgment and final vindication and reward for the people of God.

The greatest weakness of Moloney’s commentary is its failure to employ an already/not-yet eschatology. We can affirm that there are present blessings and effects of Christ’s saving work to the church. However, we do not have to deny that a future eschatological confirmation and vindication are still to come. The fact that Jesus has died and been raised secures that future victory. In the present, however, we live in the tension of the already/not yet. *The Apocalypse of John* will help readers see how the history of Israel and work of the Messiah permeate Revelation; however, its denial of the book’s eschatology weakens it at many important interpretive junctures.

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Denny Burk, James M. Hamilton Jr., and Brian Vickers, eds. *God's Glory Revealed in Christ: Essays on Biblical Theology in Honor of Thomas R. Schreiner*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2019. Hardback. ISBN: 978-1462795581. \$38.47.

For more than a quarter of a century, Thomas R. Schreiner has enriched evangelicalism as an esteemed biblical scholar. His writing ministry reveals a remarkable breadth of expertise: several commentaries on the Pauline and General epistles, a biblical theology, a New Testament theology, and a Pauline theology, in addition to essays and edited volumes. Within the Southern Baptist Convention, Schreiner has been at the forefront of New Testament scholarship while his works span the disciplines of biblical theology and systematic theology. A cherished faculty member of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary since 1997, he has carried forward the legacy of A. T. Robertson. Schreiner is a worthy recipient of *God's Glory Revealed in Christ*, written in his honor.

In sum, this festschrift is a collection of chapters dedicated to biblical theology. It includes sections on whole Bible approaches to biblical theology (Chapters 1–5), major themes and issues in biblical theology (Chapters 6–11), background issues and biblical theology (Chapters 12–14), and applications (Chapters 15–19).

In the section on whole Bible approaches to biblical theology, the various “schools” of biblical theology reflect on how their biblical-theological framework contributes to hermeneutics, redemptive history, and understanding the Bible as a whole. Each approach to biblical theology is undergirded by core observations. For instance, building on classic dispensational theology, progressive dispensationalism argues that God's promises to Israel under the old covenant relate to national Israel and will be fulfilled with national Israel, contra progressive covenantalism, which views the church as the true Israel. Then, new covenant theology, while insisting that the new covenant fulfills the old covenant, rejects a single covenant of redemption as held in classic Reformed theology. Overall, each of the approaches to biblical theology affirms salvation history as integral to biblical theology, even while nuances such as the ordering of the Old Testament books—argued by Jim Hamilton—are suggested for best understanding salvation history in its fullness.

The second section of *God's Glory Revealed in Christ* covers chapters on major themes and issues in biblical theology. One such theme is the newness of Paul's gospel and the reality that Christianity is the fulfillment of Judaism expressed in terms of continuity and discontinuity. In addition, John Piper highlights Schreiner's emphasis that God's purpose in all

things is his glory through Christ, as affirmed through Paul's view of sanctification. Reflective of Schreiner's own interests and writings, other chapters are written on the ministry of Paul to the Corinthians, the Trinity in Hebrews, typology, and soul care in the pastoral office.

The role of backgrounds in biblical theology and other theological disciplines is continuously debated. In this regard, Clinton Arnold likely writes the most controversial chapter in the book, on the need to reconstruct the background of Colossians to understand the letter. Although the historical-cultural background of New Testament texts is illuminating and at points even necessary to understand the full thrust of a passage, the importance of backgrounds should not be overstated. Arnold contends that we cannot understand certain passages without historical study, but appropriately concludes that we can understand the theology of Colossians even if we do not know the precise nature of the false teaching the epistle addresses. Also on backgrounds, Jarvis Williams sheds light on the use of extrabiblical material, namely Second Temple Jewish literature, toward the study of the New Testament.

Since practical theology flows out of biblical theology (as well as the other theological disciplines), the final section of the book includes chapters on applications of biblical theology. Denny Burk's chapter on transgenderism helpfully demonstrates how biblical theology teaches the complementary differences between male and female. Moreover, biblical theology impels the church toward missions, as Brian Vickers observes.

This collection of essays makes its contribution in its broad engagement of important topics within the discipline of biblical theology. *God's Glory Revealed in Christ* demonstrates awareness of remaining challenges in biblical theology such as how to integrate the theological disciplines, navigate the unity-diversity question, and utilize historical background study in exegesis. Alongside the benefit of an engaging book on biblical theology, readers will find themselves edified by Tom Schreiner himself, as a Christian, pastor, theologian, and scholar.

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Steven J. Duby. *God in Himself: Scripture, Metaphysics, and the Task of Christian Theology*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2019. xvi + 295 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0830848843. \$40.00.

Steven Duby, a theologian noted for his work on the doctrine of divine simplicity, provides a substantial contribution to InterVarsity Press's new series on Christian doctrine and Scripture with *God in Himself*. Duby attends to *theologia* in the strict sense of the word, that is, “consideration of

God in himself without primary reference to the [divine] economy” (p. 6). He offers “a sketch of the rationale and practice of Christian reflection on God himself in his transcendence of the economy” (p. 6). This meditation on God *in se* allows Duby to interact with some of contemporary theology’s most influential voices—Karl Barth and Robert Jenson in particular—and sees him contend for a reframing of “the roles of natural theology, metaphysics, and the incarnation in the doctrine of God” (p. 6).

Modern theology that follows the trajectory set by Barth prioritizes God’s knowability through Christ. Barth famously rejected natural theology; eschewed metaphysics by arguing that such work begins with a generic, human conception of God; and condemned talk of an analogy of being between God and humanity (*analogia entis*) as anti-Christ. He did so out of his conviction that we must consider God primarily through Christ’s presence and actions in the divine economy. Referring to the divine essence, Barth wrote that we encounter God “either at the place where God deals with us as Lord and Saviour, or not at all” (Barth, *CD* II/1, 261). Robert Jenson and Bruce McCormack are but some of the many theologians who have embraced Barth’s program and developed it further.

Duby offers a respectful but penetrating critique of the Barthian project. He acknowledges Barth’s warnings about arrogant human speculation into divine things, but he pulls his readers more into the direction set by Thomas Aquinas and many Protestant scholastic theologians. Rejecting Barth’s singular focus on the divine economy, Duby contends that “God intends to grant us knowledge of himself in his completeness and transcendence of the economy” (p. 16). This revelation of God in himself, revelation that we possess in an admittedly ectypal manner, can then serve as an organizing principle for theological inquiry. In making this claim, Duby stands in good company. Aquinas, Bonaventure, and Amandus Polanus all framed theology primarily as consideration of God himself and then, by derivation, all things in relation to God.

From this position, Duby provides an account of Christian thought that attends to natural theology, the incarnation, and metaphysics. Natural theology reveals certain divine attributes and discloses humanity’s need for God, a point that Duby makes through a sophisticated—and charitable—reading of Aquinas. The incarnation is not the external cognitive principle of theology proper, but it does represent the culminating moment of supernatural revelation. Metaphysical concepts borrowed from the Aristotelian tradition help offer an account of God *in se*, provided that such concepts operate in a ministerial role. The doctrine of analogy, particularly the analogy of attribution, can play a constructive role in the theological enterprise by locating the triune God as the source of creaturely

natures and perfections.

Each of these moves breaks with Barth. Duby supports them with a deep reading of the biblical text and a thorough engagement with the Christian tradition. Indeed, in his reading of the tradition, he often interacts in depth with Barth, seeking to demonstrate how he either misunderstood or failed to deal charitably with claims made by Aquinas and others.

God in Himself is ultimately a recovery project, an attempt to take the trajectories set by Aquinas and numerous Protestant scholastic theologians and resource them for our post-Barthian context. Duby corrects the errors he sees in Barth’s thought while attempting to heed Barth’s cautions and warnings. He offers a substantial contribution to contemporary theological discussions, and his work coheres well with recent projects undertaken by Katherine Sonderegger and the late John Webster. Future writers could build on Duby’s work by further extrapolating the practical and pedagogical implications that emerge from this renewed interest in God *in se*.

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Gavin Ortlund. *Retrieving Augustine’s Doctrine of Creation: Ancient Wisdom for Current Controversy*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2020. xii + 249 pgs. Paperback. ISBN 978-0830853243. \$30.00.

Gavin Ortlund’s *Retrieving Augustine’s Doctrine of Creation* is part of a larger trend of theological retrieval in evangelical theology. As one of the stalwarts of theological retrieval a generation ago, John Webster wrote that it exists in part “to rehabilitate classical sources of Christian teaching and draw attention to their potential in furthering the theological task” (“Theologies of Retrieval,” *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, 596). Ortlund uses Augustine for the latter of these two purposes in this book by demonstrating how he can be used in furthering the theological task in the doctrine of creation. Across the six chapters of his work, Ortlund applies his retrieval of Augustine specifically to current creation debates in the evangelical world.

The author spends the first three chapters detailing Augustine’s perspective on creation and Genesis 1–3, his broader ontological understanding of God and creation, and his epistemic humility, in order to show ways in which Augustine can influence these current creation debates. In the introductory chapter, Ortlund explains his approach to each area of debate by picturing Augustine sitting at a table with representatives from Answers in Genesis (young-earth model of creation), Reasons to Believe

(old-earth model of creation), and BioLogos (evolutionary model of creation), and adding his perspective to the discussions that they would have in areas of mutual interest. These three organizations are Ortlund's major conversation partners throughout the rest of the book.

Chapter 1 sets the stage for Augustine's specific teachings on the doctrine of creation by laying out the implications of his doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*. For Augustine, *ex nihilo* creation demonstrates God's ontological priority over creation, his transcendence from and immanence within creation, and creaturely contingency upon God. Ortlund even places Augustine's thoughts on human happiness in the context of this larger framework of creaturely contingency in order to demonstrate humanity's ultimate need for God on the basis of our status as creatures. Chapter 2 then details Augustine's biblical and theological approach to the doctrine of creation, and specifically his humility in dialogue with various viewpoints on creation. This humility is unfortunately often lacking in creation debates today, and so Augustine's voice is as helpful here as it is in any specific debate. This chapter lays out specific features of Augustine's open-mindedness that guide the ideas in the rest of the book.

Chapters 3–5 are devoted to gleaning insights from Augustine's writings that are fruitful for specific areas of debate within evangelical doctrines of creation, including the age of the earth, animal death, and the historicity of Adam and Eve. Ortlund separates each of these issues out, but there is obvious overlap between them that makes the chapters in part dependent upon each other. Ortlund doesn't offer a full-scale defense of Augustine in these areas or a deconstruction of Augustine's understanding of creation similar to James K. A. Smith in *The Fall of Interpretation*, but rather uses Augustine to show there are different possibilities for understanding the text. In each of these chapters, Ortlund notes the difficulty of bringing Augustine into dialogue with areas of debate that would have been of no concern to him at the time of writing. So, for example, on the issue of the age of the earth, the question for Ortlund isn't whether Augustine saw himself as young earth or old earth, but whether his scriptural and theological interpretation allowed for the possibility of an old earth. The answer for Ortlund is a resounding yes. Part of the way that Ortlund arrives at this answer is to understand how Augustine approached the text of Genesis 1–2. In his interpretation of Genesis 1, Ortlund notes that Augustine conceived of each day of creation as different from ordinary days (p. 123). Further, he emphasizes that Augustine's understanding of the ordering of Genesis 1 isn't based on temporal sequence, but angelic knowledge (p. 125). Finally, as Ortlund points out, Augustine believed that creation was instantaneous and thus there was a literary quality to Genesis 1.

In Chapter 4, he demonstrates that Augustine's position on death (i.e., Adam and Eve contracted rather than originated death in Genesis 3) opens up the possibility of prelapsarian animal death. In Chapter 5, he demonstrates how Augustine's view of creation could align with *certain* forms of evolutionary creation. This thought has been drawn out by other writers such as Alister McGrath. However, unlike McGrath (and others), Ortlund does not proffer Augustine's *rationes seminales* as a case of predicting modern scientific discovery. Rather, he calls it an underdetermined part of Augustine's understanding of creation. Ortlund then uses Augustine's views of the historicity and nature of Adam and Eve as an entry way for opening dialogue into the possibility of evolutionary creation. Ortlund does not try to defend evolutionary creation here, but rather aims only at showing its limited possibility.

This book will be an immense help for anyone desiring to understand the doctrine of creation from the viewpoint of evangelicalism. Ortlund doesn't attempt to convince the reader of any particular view between young-earth, old-earth, and evolutionary creation. Instead, he shows how Augustine makes the latter two legitimate possibilities (with theological caveats that he continually brings into the conversation), and thus brings Christian sisters and brothers of various views together to the table with each other, and with Augustine.

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Oliver D. Crisp. *God, Creation, and Salvation: Studies in Reformed Theology*. London: T&T Clark, 2020. xv + 204 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0567689535. \$36.95.

The complex task of theology produces voluminous works of literature simply because the Christian faith is encapsulated as *fides quarens intellectum* (faith seeking understanding). This is emphasized by Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109), although rooted in Augustine of Hippo (354–430). In his recently published book, Oliver Crisp attempts to scrutinize essential doctrines of the Christian faith in the spirit of Anselm with two purposes, theological construction and retrieval of the Christian tradition. Crisp earned his PhD at the University of London, served as a professor of systematic theology at Fuller Theological Seminary, and now holds the Chair of Analytic Theology at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. As a Reformed and analytic thinker, he is qualified to engage the different issues that relate to Reformed theology.

The title of the book presents its structure in three parts, ordered thematically. The first delves into the task of theology, the second focuses

on God and creation, and the last discusses Christ and salvation. Crisp begins by scrutinizing significant issues entrenched in systematic theology and then discusses central structures in the theology of John Calvin (1509–1564) vital to the evolution of Reformed theology. After that, the author brings the readers in Chapter 3 to Jonathan Edwards’s understanding of divine conceptualism, to Augustinian thoughts on Edwards, and to the latter’s perspective concerning abstract objects as divine ideas. Edwards believes that creation is immaterial at first, then God communicated it to exist. Creation, however, is not eternal since its existence is ephemeral.

Crisp puts John L. Girardeau and Edwards as interlocutors on the issue of free will in Chapter 4. Girardeau believes that prior to the fall, humans could choose against moral orientation, but after the fall, they are bound to their sinful inclination. The freedom to choose still exists (chastened libertarianism) but outside the parameter of soteriology. Chapter 5 elucidates Huldrych Zwingli’s theology of original sin, that fallen humans do not possess original guilt from Adam’s sin but are only blameworthy for the sins they have committed. For Zwingli, original sin is a disease that makes humans inclined to sin, but it is not sin per se.

Chapter 6 deals with the objection of James T. Turner Jr., who argues it is impossible for the Word to be “hypostatically united to any human nature” (p. 112). Crisp disagrees and continues the conversation in Chapter 7 with Thomas F. Torrance as an interlocutor. Torrance contends that Christ has a fallen but not sinful nature. The author elaborates this position as “the vicarious humanity” wherein the fallen state has been cleansed to become sinless during the “act of assumption making it a fit vessel for the Word” (p. 125). Crisp ends with Edwards’s virtue ethic. For Edwards, the main *telos* of a regenerated life is to participate in the existence of the triune God.

There are many things to appreciate in this volume. First, it is a well-written academic work. Second, Crisp elucidates the depth and breadth of Reformed thinking. Third, he provides primary sources in footnotes when dealing with theologians of the past (Calvin, Zwingli, Edwards, and others). Fourth, the trajectory of his thought is mapped out in the preface, which serves as a foretaste of what he has baked in his theological oven. He also clarifies that some chapters were presented in different settings. That does not make the various topics disconnected though since Crisp weaves them together in a traditional dogmatics structure.

With the rise of the new Calvinism, this work is timely because the author elucidates the differences within the Reformed tradition, which implies that Reformed theology is far more than monolithic “TULIP” soteriology. As such, this volume contributes to the scholarship of the

Reformed tradition. It would certainly be a helpful companion to a Systematic Theology course in a seminary.

There are some drawbacks though. First, Crisp avers that this book is written from an *Anselmian* perspective, but there seems to be a lacuna between Anselm and the topics covered. Anselm’s works are not adequately discussed except for brief explanations in Chapters 3 and 8. Second, this volume is suitable for seminary students and professors but would be heavy reading for laypeople in the church. Without a background in historical theology, or a knowledge of various positions of Reformed thinkers and the task of systematic theology, one might get lost in the conversation.

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Michael S. Heiser. *Demons: What the Bible Really Says about the Powers of Darkness*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020. ix + 321 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-1683592891. \$16.45.

Angels, demons, and the supernatural realm collide in Michael Heiser’s new work, *Demons*. Tracking the development of darkness from Old Testament foundations, Second Temple Judaic Literature (STJL), and New Testament authorship and contextualization, the author expositis semantics, interpretations, and contemporary issues with the intent of building a better, more faithful hermeneutic of primary sources (p. xvi). *Demons* also clarifies obscure traditions and myths that plague mainstream thought on Satan and his legion of darkness.

Satan, who is not specifically named in the OT, is of minor concern in the Hebrew literature (p. 83). The term “the satan” is better suited for courtroom language or an adversarial figure scattered throughout the OT (p. 78). However, Heiser builds his discussion around three divine rebellions. The first, found in Genesis 3, is not associated with fallen angels. Moreover, according to the author, fallen angels are not the “sons of God.” Instead, the “sons of God” scattered throughout the OT and STJL are divine image-bearers that share responsibility in the heavenly or unseen realm. In contrast, the significant terms “Nephilim” and “Rephaim” are closely associated with the second and third divine rebellions and are the starting point for the forces of darkness and demonic beings (pp. 92–93). Genesis 6:1–4 and Genesis 11 provide the foundation for Heiser’s conclusions here, but he draws more deeply from Mesopotamian literature alongside STJL.

Significantly, STJL directs most of his understanding of these obscure passages (pp. 97–101). However, should STJL have more weight than

biblical literature? Building a better hermeneutic allows STJL to influence contextualization, but Heiser's claims accord more authority to STJL and traditions not prominently expanded in other biblical passages. Contemporary interpreters typically understand the "sons of God" in Gen 6:1–4 to be human, in contrast to the minority position of fallen beings rebelling against God by intermingling divine and human figures. This interaction produces the "Rephaim" leading to the "Nephilim;" but where is the biblical evidence that these "mighty men" are demons (p. 126)? Heiser's claims suggest extrabiblical sources are necessary, if not equivalent to primary texts. At the same time, his conclusions help the reader see the importance of understanding the ancient Near East landscape, even if his position lacks full acceptance.

The third divine rebellion surrounds the Tower of Babel and its ramifications, which lead to Israel's election as God's chosen people. Because God has chosen Israel to be his light to the nations, Heiser argues that he abandons other nations in favor of his salvific plan (pp. 150–51). Babel's judgment certainly alters humanity's relationship with God, but is Israel a bridge back to God—or a means to divorce other nations from grace (p. 186)? However, Deuteronomy 32 and Psalm 82 provide some support for the author's claims, allowing for a divine council that turns away from God and enables the third rebellion to draw the nations away from worshipping the Lord (p. 161).

In the NT, Heiser paints a different picture of familiar passages pertaining to Satan: Christ in the wilderness, his temptation of authority over rebellious nations, Satan's fall like lightning, and the conversation with "Legion." Christ's interactions reveal the undoing of the powers of darkness and the ushering in of God's Kingdom (pp. 182–86). The temptation of Christ to submit to Satan is significant because the first-century audience would typically link abandoned nations, watched by the "sons of God" (cf. Deuteronomy 32), to Satan's authority over the nations. Christ's inauguration of the Kingdom conveys Satan's fall though since the true Son of God undoes the rebellions by the "sons of God" (p. 206). Matthew's revelation that Christ has all authority in heaven and earth signals Christ's true position of power (pp. 233–35). In fact, as the NT writers show, Christ's power over spiritual forces returns godly power over the nations, through his life, death, and resurrection.

While many will debate OT passages relating to the divine council/sons of God, the three rebellions, or even goat demons by the name of Azazel, all should find comfort that Christ's incarnation in the world of old proclaims his power and glory over the forces of darkness. Whether one believes in Satan, numerous satans, or demons and devils, the Kingdom of Satan dwindles away as the true Son of God appears, reversing

the effects of rebellion (p. 206).

Demons sheds light on the background of the ancient world, STJL, and poor church traditions, graciously and eagerly urging biblical investigation to spur faithful conversations about God's revelation. Heiser equips both laymen and scholars but hews toward the latter since his references and conclusions rely heavily on Second Temple literature. Even if one does not agree with him on all points, *Demons* is well worth the read as one untangles the web of tradition, folktale, and myth and replaces it with humble biblical and historical interpretation.

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Gilbert Meilaender. *Thy Will Be Done: The Ten Commandments and the Christian Life*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020. 144 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-1540961969. \$21.99.

In *Thy Will Be Done*, Gilbert Meilaender, Senior Research Professor of Theology at Valparaiso University, explores the shape the Ten Commandments give to the Christian life. He agrees with Karl Barth that ethics should offer an account of human action that corresponds to God's action in creation, reconciliation, and redemption and thus locates human action in the biblical story. Situating human action in the biblical story provides three angles of vision that, Meilaender believes, should inform Christian reflection on the moral instruction in the Decalogue. He uses these angles of vision to organize his thoughts about the commandments and to highlight how God and man encounter each other in five different bonds that unite human beings in community. These are marriage, family, life, possessions, and speech. His book thus offers Christians a view of the bonds in the light of creation, the need for healing, and the redemptive work of God, and helps them understand God's will as commanded and as ultimately fulfilled in the new creation.

This book is a work of moral theology that provides an examination of revealed truth regarding the moral life. Various doctrines—creation and sin, justification and sanctification, the persons of the Trinity and the Incarnation, the Church and "last things"—are consulted to gain insight into the moral life. Although it is not a work of biblical, historical, philosophical, or applied ethics, it treats biblical texts and draws upon the moral teachings of prominent Christian thinkers, including Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Karl Barth, C. S. Lewis, and John Paul II. Furthermore, it employs natural law reasoning and applies the Decalogue's moral teachings to an array of practical issues, such as abortion and assisted reproduction, divorce and homosexuality,

suicide and burial, avarice and lying, civil government and war.

Meilaender is a prominent contemporary voice in theological ethics who reveals his Lutheran convictions in Chapter 1 (“The Law of Christ”). In discussing faith and law, he emphasizes that believers are not to rely on works of the law to be made right with God. But, the peace that Christians have with God through faith in Christ does not eliminate the distinction between behavior that conforms to God’s will and behavior that does not. Accordingly, Christian moral reflection on the law of God (all of which has its goal in Christ) should differentiate between those aspects that do and do not continue to direct the Christian life. By recognizing the continuing value of the moral law in teaching Christians what pleases God (i.e., the third use), Meilaender answers the charge of antinomianism that has been directed against Lutherans. Additionally, pointing to Luther’s use of the Decalogue in his Small and Large Catechisms, he highlights its great value for catechetical instruction in the law of Christ.

In Chapter 2 (“The Marriage Bond”), Meilaender reflects on the prohibition against adultery. This prohibition leads him to consider the body, the created nature of male and female, the love-giving and life-giving purposes of marriage, the training in love marital faithfulness provides, and singleness. Chapter 3 (“The Family Bond”) addresses the command to honor parents, which includes reverence, obedience, and gratitude. Meilaender contends that the family is a school of virtue that develops the capacity to love those in close relationships, those more distant, and ultimately the Heavenly Father. In addition, parents bear witness to the reality that they stand under the authority of God, who alone can secure their lives.

Chapter 4 (“The Life Bond”) treats the prohibition against unjustified killing, which is predicated upon humankind’s creation in God’s image and the common bond of humanity. This commandment points to the special relationship between God and humankind, which culminated in God in Christ taking human life into his divine life. In Chapter 5 (“The Possessions Bond”), Meilaender discusses the prohibitions against stealing and coveting the neighbor’s house, wife, servants, and possessions as well as the commandment to sanctify the holy day. The Christian life, he contends, involves a constant movement between enjoyment of the good things of creation and renunciation of those things because they “are not Goodness itself” (p. 81). He also explains that the negative commands include positive duties to help neighbors and be grateful for God’s gifts and that these commandments teach Christians to trust God to care for them.

Chapter 6 (“The Speech Bond”) considers the commandments against false testimony and taking God’s name in vain. Meilaender understands

the goal of human speech to be the praise of God. He urges that truthful speech, which is ultimately grounded in truthful speech about God, binds lives together in trust and thus involves more than speaking words that mirror thoughts. These commandments, he believes, instruct Christians to use speech to bind human lives together by ensuring that outer words are harmonized with inner desires for the good of neighbors. In Chapter 7 (“The Great and First Commandment”), Meilaender observes that the first commandment makes clear that the bonds of life cannot hold first place, for Christians are to love God with all their being. Consequently, a persistent tension between the first commandment and the other commandments will remain until the commandments are fulfilled in the new creation when God’s people will do his will perfectly.

In this book, Meilaender succeeds in examining the shape of the Christian life in terms of the Ten Commandments, and readers will benefit richly from his insightful exploration of God’s will as expressed in the Decalogue. Readers will also come to a greater trust in God who, in the commands, promised to make Christians into “people who truly delight in and love his commands” (p. 12).

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Michael Pasquarello III. *The Beauty of Preaching: God’s Glory in Christian Proclamation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. xxxiii + 254 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0802824745. \$26.99.

God’s intrinsic beauty captures the heart of the preacher and listener. This is the core theme of *The Beauty of Preaching*, in which Michael Pasquarello offers an extended meditation on Augustine’s “restless desire for eternal truth, goodness, and beauty” (p. 85). Preaching’s beauty resides not in its style nor its pragmatism. Instead “the beauty of preaching is found in its blessed uselessness. . . . with no purpose other than delighting in the truth of God” (p. xx). Delight in the astonishing love of God thus prompts the preaching of the gospel. Pasquarello rejects “contemporary strategies of topical teaching, motivational speaking, and social or political analysis” (p. 5). The preacher must aim at “wisdom, rightly ordered knowledge and affection for God” rather than simple pragmatic applications (p. 7).

Chapter 1 seeks to shape a doxological life. Pasquarello begins with Isaiah’s message of the beautiful feet of the messenger and the doxological purpose of preaching. Chapter 2 highlights the generosity of the unnamed woman of Mark 14 who pours ointment upon Jesus. She has found a “compelling vision of a useless God” by which Pasquarello means

a God who is so great that he is worthy of worship for who he is and not what we think we can get from him (p. 60). She serves as an example of the preacher's devotion. The substance of the book follows, built around Augustine, before Wesley and Luther are brought to the table.

Chapters 3 and 4 focus on Augustine's warnings against disordered loves that turn affection from God. True preaching is "to know, love, and enjoy the triune God made known in Christ" (p. xxviii). Augustine's meditations of truth and beauty offer "not a theory of preaching but rather a way of loving God with his thoughts, affections, and words" (p. 105). Beautiful preaching is not filled with flowery language or poetic flow, but "is displayed by speaking the truth of God as aesthetically pleasing, accessible, and clear" (p. 112). Preaching should delight in the "self-giving love" of God displayed in Christ (p. 115).

John Wesley's contribution in Chapter 5 builds upon Augustine to find "both holiness and happiness in God" (p. 144). Martin Luther, in Chapter 6, exposes the "strange beauty" in the deformity of Christ, through whom God absorbs the ugliness of sin and shares his beauty with sinners" (p. 168). In contrast, the distorted heart seeks satisfaction in the self. True beauty and joy are found only when the heart is reoriented to God. Pasquarello concludes, "Preaching must be attractive and persuasive in order to disentangle our affections from attachment to false loves, desires, and delights. Sermons must be capable of delighting in the sweetness and joy of Christ" (p. 214).

The Beauty of Preaching offers a rich contemplation of Augustine's conception of true love. Each page is filled with extended quotes, from primary and secondary sources to the extent that Pasquarello's contribution is not so much in the novelty of his own words, but in the gathering of voices around the concept of beauty. The reader will need days to meditate upon each chapter as the book overflows with weighty quotations assembled from across the centuries. Regrettably though, Pasquarello highlights the practical nature of Jesus's preaching (p. 34), but remains almost exclusively in the abstract with his claims: "Giving glory to God is both the motivation and the goal of proclaiming the gospel of God's righteousness. ... God's glory is manifested in a life of mutual love and harmony" (p. 52). The text is beautiful and meditative but lacks concrete examples.

The preacher looking for a handbook of ideas to quickly implement will need to look elsewhere. Instead, Pasquarello invites the reader to pull up a chair and listen. His prose sometimes rings poetic, "doctrine, devotion, and discipline that dispose one's thoughts, words, and affections" (p. 146), but more frequently he foregoes his own words to share pro-

tracted quotes from theologically diverse thinkers, including Rowan Williams, former archbishop of Canterbury, and Pope Francis.

Pasquarello expects mainline preachers, including women, along with evangelicals to benefit from the book, but I fear his diverse audiences will read the book very differently. Evangelicals will connect the concepts of beauty back to the historical reality of the cross while mainline preachers may be content with vague applications of brotherly love. While pragmatic issues were not Pasquarello's concern, it is in the actual task of preaching that the gospel is made known. *The Beauty of Preaching* will warm the heart of the preacher in his personal meditation and preparation, with the reminder that God's glory is always needed, but the preacher will only grow in his display of God's glory if he is already rooted in the historical truth of the gospel.

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Paul Gould. *Cultural Apologetics: Renewing the Christian Voice, Conscience, and Imagination in a Disenchanted World*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019. 240 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0310530497. \$22.99.

The term "cultural apologetics" is not new, but one now regularly sees it together with the name Paul Gould. Readers of his latest book will see why. *Cultural Apologetics* brings together Gould's skills as an artful storyteller, a rigorous scholar comfortable in analytic philosophy, and a passionate evangelist as he takes up the challenge of explaining the essence and task of cultural apologetics. The result is nothing short of excellent.

Gould lays out his book's project in Chapter 1. The author's thesis is that the task of cultural apologetics is to establish the Christian voice, conscience, and imagination within a culture, that Christianity is seen as true and satisfying on both the global and local levels (pp. 21–25). Using Paul's speech at the Areopagus in Athens as his model, Gould claims this task is two-fold: *understanding* our culture, which for Westerners is disenchanted, sensate, and hedonistic; and *resurrecting* the *relevance* of Christianity by showing how it meets our universal human longings for beauty, truth, and goodness. Chapters 2–3 explain how our culture became disenchanted and recommends steps that need to be taken toward reenchancing it. Chapters 4–6 look "at" and "along" the three capacities of imagination, reason, and conscience that all human beings possess as guides to beauty, truth, and goodness. Chapter 7 addresses some of the barriers to Christianity's truth and desirability, both those arising within the church and those found in the culture at large. Finally, Chapter 8 explores our quest for home undergirding our pursuit of beauty, truth, and goodness.

That quest, Gould argues, finds fulfillment presently and in eternity in God. In an appendix, the author highlights how one might apply the Pauline model for cultural engagement to non-Western cultures.

Much should be said in praise of Gould's book, but I highlight two features that stand out and make *Cultural Apologetics* required reading for anyone interested in defending the faith today. First, while the book's endorsement describes it as a "fresh model for cultural engagement," the author really calls us to *return* to a more ancient model of engagement (cleverly implied in the ideas of returning to God and going back home). True, his model for apologetics offers a fresh take on assessing our modern Western culture (e.g., one can see the influence of Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age* peeking through the book at times). However, those like Gould who have read classic works from theologians of the caliber of Augustine or Aquinas know that the church consistently spoke of God as the beautiful, the true, and the good. By highlighting our universal human longings for beauty, truth, and goodness, Gould's model connects deeply with the church's theological and philosophical tradition of understanding God as the telos for humanity and, thus, avoids being merely faddish. When the cultural artifacts he references are forgotten (a problem all books on cultural engagement face as they age) and the philosophical arguments with which he interacts evolve (which is why traditional apologetic books focusing exclusively on truth or goodness must constantly be updated), readers can still turn to Gould's model and find the essential task of cultural apologetics.

Second, throughout the book the author demonstrates the task of cultural apologetics he presents. He moves easily between cultural artifacts that significantly shaped Christianity and modern Western culture (such as Aristotle, Pascal, and Shelly's *Frankenstein*) and currently popular cultural artifacts (such as Endo's *Silence*, Martel's *Life of Pi*, and the movie *La Land*). Moreover, Gould is no dilettante when it comes to contemporary work in apologetics and philosophy of religion. He interacts effortlessly and precisely with live issues in the scholarship pertaining to, for example, the viability of naturalism, the argument from desire, and science's supposed ability to disprove the existence of God. Yet, he does all this in the language of everyman. In sum, the book argues for and illustrates the task of cultural apologetics.

Readers can discover additional gems to mine. For instance, Gould presents a strong case for reintroducing an appreciation for beauty into the church in Chapter 4 that deserves careful attention. Also, the section in Chapter 7 addressing internal barriers to Christianity—especially what he identifies as the unbaptized imagination—reminds us that the task of cultural apologetics incorporates the content and character of our lives.

These stood out to me as significant.

My only complaint with the book concerns what the author says about the relationship between cultural apologetics and other approaches to apologetics (pp. 21–23). Gould claims a "new lane" for cultural apologetics. An accompanying diagram suggests he sees cultural apologetics as another apologetic approach alongside rational, imaginative, and moral approaches. But earlier he states that cultural apologetics integrates these other approaches into a "more realistic and compassionate approach to apologetics" (p. 22). This seems to suggest that cultural apologetics includes these other apologetic approaches. So, is cultural apologetics simply another way of doing apologetics alongside rational, imaginative, and moral approaches? Or is cultural apologetics envisioned as a more complete approach that includes these other approaches? Gould could be clearer on this. That, however, is a minor spot on an otherwise superb work.

A short review cannot adequately praise a book like *Cultural Apologetics*. Gould's writing is as delightful as it is educational, for layman and scholar alike. If you have not already, I highly recommend you read it now.

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S. Joshua Swamidass. *The Genealogical Adam and Eve: The Surprising Science of Universal Ancestry*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2019. 264 pp. Hardcover. ISBN 978-0830852635. \$27.00.

Since the publication of *On the Origin of Species*, most have come to believe that (1) the traditional account of Adam and Eve as real people created directly by God only thousands of years ago, who are the progenitors of every human being alive today and (2) Darwinian evolution coupled with the evidence of science, are incompatible. If (1) and (2) are incompatible, Christians face a difficult decision: reject science so they can hold to the traditional account or get creative (pun intended) at fitting the Adam and Eve story into whatever space science leaves unclaimed. But are (1) and (2) incompatible? Do evolution and science rule out the traditional account of Adam and Eve? S. Joshua Swamidass argues that they do not. Evolutionary science does not require one to reject Adam and Eve as real people created specially by God as recently as six thousand years ago, who are the progenitors of every human alive today (p. 7).

A scientist by training, Swamidass presents and tests what he calls the genealogical hypothesis. Initially presented in Chapter 1, it states that consistent with genetic (and archaeological) evidence, it is possible that Adam and Eve were specially created less than ten thousand years ago and that

upon leaving the Garden their offspring blended with biologically identical neighbors so that eventually Adam and Eve become the genealogical ancestors of every human by AD 1 (pp. 10, 25–26). Swamidass then devotes Chapters 2–7 to developing various aspects of this hypothesis. Of particular importance is Chapter 3 where he distinguishes between genetics and genealogy, arguing that the traditional account of Adam and Eve concerns genealogy, not genetics—a distinction, he claims, most discussions have failed to discern. Chapters 8–11 turn to anthropology. There, he highlights the lack of consensus in both science and theology about what a human being is, which allows him to introduce a distinction between biological and textual humans. Consistent with evolution, biological humans could have existed outside the Garden prior to the creation of Adam and Eve. Thus, Adam and Eve and their lineage should be understood as textual humans that blend with biological humans and eventually become the ancestors of all humans by the time of Jesus. The author then proceeds with theological experimentation in Chapters 12–17, speculating about human origins in the light of his genealogical hypothesis. Chapter 18 concludes with reflections on what the genealogical hypothesis suggests for future conversations about human origins. In this regard, readers should know that in addition to the printed appendix at the end of the book, IVP has posted on its website five appendices from scholars who have dialogued with Swamidass.

Readers must remember that the author presents his genealogical hypothesis as a *thought experiment*. Thought experiments do not presume to report what is indeed the case (even if it turns out that what they present is factual). Thought experiments present what is possible. Philosophers have long understood the value of thought experiments in evaluating allegations of contradictory propositional claims, for if no contradiction exists, then should one claim turn out to be true, that claim does not *ipso facto* rule out the truth of the other claim. So, in evaluating the author's argument, one must not ask, "does it present the truth of the matter?" Instead, one must ask, "does Swamidass's thought experiment show that evolutionary science, if true, entails that the traditional account of Adam and Eve is false (or vice versa)?"

Unfortunately, I have doubts. Some of these emerge from Swamidass seemingly conflating science and evolution. Throughout the book, he uses the terms "science" and "evolutionary science" interchangeably. I assume that by "science" he means those results obtained utilizing empirical observation and experiment. If "evolutionary science" is synonymous with "science," then his thought experiment succeeds *ceteris paribus*. But, why add the adjective "evolutionary"? Adding this suggests some distinction. If there is one, then it is reasonable to assume that the distinction involves

the addition of Darwinian evolution. But Darwinian evolution is not a synonym for science. Moreover, the theory of Darwinian evolution faces its own philosophical difficulties that (as others have noted) science cannot alleviate. So, by not clarifying his terms, Swamidass calls into question the "scientific" side of his thought experiment—despite his excellent presentation of the evidence from current genetic science.

More substantial doubts arise when readers consider the other side of the author's thought experiment that represent the traditional account of Adam and Eve. For some, his speculative narrative may involve such significant theological revision that it proves unacceptable in the broad Christian tradition. In that case, his thought experiment would fail because it loses sight of the theological community reading the traditional account of Adam and Eve. But more problematic would be incoherencies arising from the author's speculative narrative itself, for this would show that the thought experiment fails logically. Two possible incoherencies stood out to me: one related to his interpretative approach to Genesis, the other related to anthropology and ethics.

Part of his speculative narrative includes the assumption that the flood of Noah's day was a regional event that did not destroy all life on earth outside the ark. I do not dispute that this is possible. But does a *regional* interpretation of Genesis 6–8. fit with the traditional (all encompassing) account of Adam and Eve? I think not. The traditional account of Adam and Eve emerges from the impression people have when they read Genesis 1–2. Why should we think that Genesis 6–8. leaves any other impression on its readers than that the flood was global, destroying all life on earth except what was preserved in the ark? Though more descriptive, the biblical flood account does not seem to lend itself to a regional interpretation. Indeed, most readers understand the flood to refer to a global event. So, if we are to reject this reading, we need additional evidence. Unfortunately, Swamidass offers us none—not even a footnote (see pp. 169–70). Endorsing a traditional account of Adam and Eve but providing no evidence for why we should ditch a traditional account of the flood as global, suggests that the author's speculative narrative harbors hermeneutical inconsistencies. Such hermeneutical inconsistencies might also entail theological inconsistencies and an overall incoherent theological outlook. What these inconsistencies might be, I cannot say. But until Swamidass can explain why his speculative narrative endorses one traditional account but not another, readers should have reservations about his thought experiment's success.

The other possible incoherency in his narrative concerns how he understands the Fall in relation to biological and textual humans. Swamidass defines textual humans as Adam, Eve, and their genealogical descendants

and classifies as biological humans all organisms defined taxonomically as humans, including those people who existed outside the Garden (p. 134). Later, when presenting his speculative narrative, he claims that those biological humans outside the Garden have a moral sense and commit wrongdoing, but such wrongdoing does not result in a fall. However, when Adam and Eve commit wrongdoing, they fall and infect all their descendants, with the result that they are now morally corrupt and indebted. (Swamidass's description of the Fall includes other elements, pp. 175–91, but these are irrelevant to the point I am about to make.) Now if people outside the Garden commit wrongdoing and Adam and Eve commit wrongdoing, what is distinct about the wrongdoing that Adam and Eve commit that results in corruption and indebtedness? Swamidass alludes to Adam and Eve's wrongdoing being evil and not just mere wrongdoing, but this seems an ad hoc attempt to avoid either (at best) equivocation or (at worst) inconsistency. I suspect that the problem here stems from Swamidass dismissing anthropology too quickly in Chapter 9. Readers can decide if this suspicion is warranted.

The above reflects doubts I have about the author's argument, not my wholesale rejection. I believe these doubts stem from the novelty of his approach to the subject of origins. Sometimes our attempts to understand an important issue become gridlocked into inflexible camps until someone with enough imagination widens our horizons. Despite my concerns about the success of his thought experiment, I found myself thinking of new possibilities and new questions as I read this book. Swamidass reveals new avenues of exploration to those concerned with integrating theology and science. I especially find exciting the prospect of rediscovering old ways of thinking if, as he claims, science now must return illegitimately annexed territory to theology. Readers who engage with Swamidass may find ways to shore up his argument or avoid the potential criticisms I mentioned above. Perhaps we will look back and see *The Genealogy of Adam and Eve* as the first significant step toward showing that evolution, even if true, does not discredit the record of our common ancestry found in Genesis.

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John C. Lennox. *2084: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Humanity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Reflective, 2020. 229 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-0310109563. \$19.99

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Perhaps the two most influential dystopian novels of the twentieth century were George Orwell's *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. Both visualized a world in which the general population is controlled by a ruling entity, but the books presented very different scenarios as to how this control was exercised. Orwell envisioned an oppressive totalitarian political regime that subjugated its citizens by suffocating surveillance and total control of all media. The closest present-day fulfillments of *1984*'s nightmarish vision are countries such as North Korea and increasingly, China. The control predicted by *Brave New World* was more subtle and therefore much more insidious. Huxley predicted that people would be controlled, not by external coercion, but by giving them everything they wanted. Those in control would render the populace passively compliant by providing them with all their desires. Lennox uses these two novels to launch into an investigation of technological trends in the twenty-first century with the book's title, *2084*, as homage to Orwell's work.

In addition to those two classic twentieth-century novels, Lennox also interacts with more current works of fiction, such as Dan Brown's pot-boiler *Origin*. Lennox has good reasons for exploring the world of AI (Artificial Intelligence) through the lens of fiction. Thought influencers have used and continue to use fiction, more specifically science fiction, as a primary venue to address either their concerns or their hopes about the future.

Lennox distinguishes between broad and narrow (or weak and strong) versions of AI. Broad AI is already here, and it's all around us. Examples of broad AI are the programs embedded in social media software and search engines that use algorithms to determine the user's likes and preferences, programs that assist drivers on the road, and programs that can defeat humans at games like chess and Jeopardy. However, these programs are also called weak AI for a reason. They can do a singular task well, but they do not *think*—at least not in any normal sense of the word. They have no more cognitive ability than a pocket calculator. Cognitive ability is the goal of narrow AI: to produce software that can truly replicate the reasoning functions of the human brain. Lennox shows that such strong AI is still elusive and at this point remains in the domain of fiction. “The ‘artificial’ in artificial intelligence is real” (p. 26).

One area in which broad AI currently excels though, is in the collection, storage, and manipulation of large amounts of data. When the data collected is data about *you*, what then? Lennox describes the rise of sur-

veillance capitalism, where the harvesting of information about individuals has become big business. The flip side to this is surveillance communism, in which the Chinese government keeps tabs on all its citizens by means of facial recognition and a myriad of other similar technologies. Thus armed, China is implementing “social credit” programs to reward compliance and punish what the government deems undesirable traits or behaviors.

Moving from broad AI to narrow AI, Lennox demonstrates that the motivations driving the quest for narrow AI are part of a much greater agenda—the desire to transcend humanity. Adherents ascribing to these ambitions self-identify as Transhumanists. Transhumanists envision a future in which humans fuse with technology in such a way that makes them, quite literally, immortal. Transhumanists such as Yuri Harari don’t hesitate to refer to these future humans as *Homo Deus*. In many ways Transhumanism is an updated version of Gnosticism. It certainly displays the Gnostic disdain for the human body. The Transhumanist sees his physical body as a burden, a prison from which to escape. A person’s real essence, his mind or consciousness, is a ghost in the machine, ready and willing to be uploaded into some future non-biological apparatus.

While Lennox devotes the first half of the book to describing AI and Transhumanism, in the second half he presents the claims of the gospel. He argues that what Transhumanists truly desire are Christ and the Kingdom of God, even if they won’t acknowledge it. Jesus Christ is the true *Homo Deus*, the resurrection is the true transhumanist transformation, and the Second Coming is the true omega point of history.

2084 is brief, accessible, and engaging. Lennox has written this book with the busy pastor or interested layperson in mind, and he has a teacher’s knack for making difficult ideas clear. He has produced several similar apologetic works, including *Seven Days that Divide the World*, *Gunning for God*, and *God’s Undertaker?* When sharing my faith with someone who has a scientific interest, I may give him or her a copy of one of these books. *2084* joins them as another excellent resource.

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