STR 10.2 (Fall 2019): 101–33

Book Reviews

Marieke Dhont. *Style and Context of Old Greek Job*. Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 183. Leiden: Brill, 2017. x + 409 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-9004358485. $159.00.

In her study of Old Greek Job (GJ), Marieke Dhont approaches this translation as "an artefact of Hellenistic Jewish literature, and a product of an intercultural context in which Jews did not simply adopt elements commonly associated with Hellenism, but in which Hellenism, in turn, is approached as a culturally diverse environment that includes Judaism and that undergoes change as Judaism evolves" (p. 4).

Dhont's argument in *Style and Context of Old Greek Job* unfolds across nine chapters: 1 through 3 devoted to method and theory, 4 through 8 to a demonstration of GJ's style and rhetoric, and the final chapter to situating GJ in its literary environment. This book is not a study in translation technique containing, for example, an exhaustive analysis of the Hebrew infinitive construct into Greek, though Dhont touches on the subject (pp. 18–33). Rather, Dhont applies Polysystem Theory (PST) to show where GJ fits on the literary landscape.

Within PST, literature, like any socio-semiotic system, is an integral part of society. Through PST, Dhont imagines literary texts as artefacts of a polysystem, which is conceptualized by oppositions (center/periphery, primary/secondary repertoires, canonized/non-canonized, pp. 61–63) and includes translations as an integral part (p. 64). All polysystems have hierarchies with various strata. Thus, Dhont envisions Job as part of the Jewish-Greek literary polysystem, a subsystem of the Hellenistic Greek literary polysystem containing overlapping categories of literature and translated texts (p. 73). This polysystem developed from the third century BCE to the second century CE with the Greek Pentateuch for its fount, and from this source, Jews rendered other scriptural texts into Greek and composed original works in Greek also (p. 74). In short, the repertoire expanded. Furthermore, translation technique developed (p. 81) as also did style (p. 83) within the Jewish-Greek polysystem, as Greek Proverbs, Job, and Isaiah show.

Moving on from method and theory, Dhont's work demonstrates linguistic and stylistic features with a view to showing GJ's place in the Jewish-Greek polysystem. In chapter 4, she shows how the translator employed both Septuagintal and natural Greek language by analyzing (1)

word order (e.g., the position of the genitive before and after its antecedent), (2) syntactic and grammatical features (e.g., parataxis and hypotaxis [primarily through the use of participles]), (3) words typical of koine Greek, (4) the sparing use of transliteration (reserved for the names of Job and his friends), and (5) Septuagintalisms (e.g., ἡ ὑπ᾽ οὐρανόν [lit. the one under heaven, i.e., "the world"]).

In chapter 5, Dhont believes elements of high register Greek in Job "indicate . . . the repertoire of options from which a Jewish-Greek translator could choose during the translation process had expanded" (p. 178). She points inter alia to (1) higher register vocabulary used exclusively or predominantly by Greek poets, (2) more natural Greek use of the optative, and (3) rhetorical features on the colonic level. Dhont also mentions GJ's exclusive use of ναίω ("to dwell") in 22:12 (pp. 145–46), but the point might be more appreciated, if she had mentioned that early reception of classical and biblical works already shows its rarity by supplying οἰκέω ("to dwell") to explain it (e.g., in scholia to Homer and Isidore of Pelusium).

Dhont treats the method and study of rhetorical features in GJ in chapter 6. Although these rhetorical features (e.g., anaphora [repetitions at the beginning of two cola]) were not explicitly named until the second century, Dhont is correct to point out that an earlier author may have had notions of certain rhetorical devices without having thought about them systematically or theoretically (p. 191).

Chapter 7 turns to an analysis of GJ's use of these rhetorical devices. Dhont notes that the Hebrew, of course, has many repetitions of its own, but sometimes the Greek will employ *variatio* so the repetition in the source is obscured (p. 234), while at other times the Greek employs repetition and obscures the *variatio* in the Hebrew (p. 236). Furthermore, the translator will use these rhetorical devices as part of his method for paraphrasis, as in Job 23:8–10 (pp. 237–38).

Chapter 8 shows how GJ combines these rhetorical devices over three cola or more. But does the use of these rhetorical devices and higher register Greek mean GJ was composed as poetry (pp. 298–302)? If poetry is determined only by consideration of a text's meter according to the Hellenistic macrosystem, then, no. But Dhont notes early MSS that arrange cola stichometrically. She could also have mentioned that several church fathers, like Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. 350 CE), list Job among the five books written "in verse." Thus, from the viewpoint of reception, Dhont questions the functionality of the distinction between prose and poetry in describing LXX translations. Perhaps, in the Jewish-Greek polysystem, the notion of poetry might have been different than the notion of poetry in the macrosystem, and therefore GJ could have been read as poetry (p. 301).

After her analysis of the language and rhetoric of GJ, Dhont returns to polysystem theory for a framework to locate GJ in its literary environment. Furthermore, she comments on why Job would be translated in the first place, anchoring the cause in second temple interest in the figure of Job and in the translator's view of the sanctity of the text of Job (pp. 327, 329–30).

In conclusion, I note a couple of mistakes:

- there is no genitive absolute construction in Job 38:8 on p. 109—ἐκπορευομένη is a circumstantial participle in the nominative case.
- The pronoun τοῦτ' in GJ 40:19 is neuter singular, indicating that the instances of αὐτοῦ/αὐτῷ in vv. 16–23 are also genitive neuter singular—not masculine as Dhont says (p. 277). Thus grammatically, there is good reason to think that "the wild beasts" of v. 15a is still the antecedent in vv. 16–23, and a new section begins in v. 25 with the introduction to the "dragon."

Dhont has provided a work that should push the field of Septuagint studies past analysis of "free" or "literal" translations. Her work not only analyzes the language and rhetoric of GJ but also situates it as an ancient translation in a wider context or polysystem. It is a welcome contribution to the field and will be important to the on-going discussion of Greek Job and the LXX for some time.

John D. Meade
Phoenix, Arizona

Brandon D. Smith and Everett Berry. *They Spoke of Me: How Jesus Unlocks the Old Testament*. Spring Hill, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2018. 239 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-1948022019. $12.97.

Understanding and interpreting the Old Testament in light of Jesus is a difficult yet essential task for every Christian. Brandon D. Smith and Everett Berry have written *They Spoke of Me* to address this dilemma. In this well-organized, concise, and insightful work, the authors show the believer how Jesus is the key to understanding the OT through the lens of nine OT examples. They draw several helpful parallels between these OT examples and Jesus and are often quite successful in showing that the OT is indeed unlocked by Jesus. For these reasons, and despite a few areas for improvement, the book will be enjoyed by many laypeople.

The book's organization is straightforward. First, the authors

introduce their goal and methodology (chapter 1). Second, they demonstrate their central claim (that Jesus unlocks the OT) by means of investigating nine OT examples (chapters 2 through 10). Third, the book ends with a conclusion that restates the authors' purpose and an encouragement for the reader to follow that paradigm in their own reading of the OT (chapter 11).

The bulk of the book is spent discussing the nine OT examples. These discussions follow the same basic organizational pattern. First, each chapter begins with an illustration. Second, the authors discuss the OT example in its literary and historical context. Third, the authors discuss how the OT example ultimately points to Jesus. The latter element typically accounts for half of each chapter. An exception is the discussion of the Temple. Here, the historical focus covers approximately fourteen pages while the discussion of Jesus accounts for approximately five. In any event, the authors' discussion of how Jesus unlocks many OT themes centers on parallels and on the correspondence between the OT example and Jesus.

The book has many strengths. In particular, the book is organized well. For example, the chapters are outlined systematically and simply. The book begins with an introduction, continues with a body, and ends with a conclusion that restates the authors' purpose. Second, one often finds that the illustration used at the beginning of each chapter is revisited at the chapter's conclusion. This helpful technique is found in chapter 2 where the authors discuss humanity. Third, the book is organized graphically like an outline. The strength of this is that the reader can quickly distinguish main points from subordinate points by simply referring to the headings.

Another strength of the book is the insightful and concise coverage of the OT examples. The discussions weave together details apparent to most readers along with details that depend on knowledge of historical backgrounds. The combination of obvious details together with less obvious ones is found in the authors' discussion of the Davidic kings, for instance. The authors begin this discussion by tracing the history of the covenants. Such details are often observations easily deduced from the biblical text (pp. 134–37), yet the authors insightfully mention that "through the Exodus, the Lord showed his superiority over all of Egypt's gods and laid claim to Israel as his people" (p. 135). The fact that the plagues demonstrate that the Lord is God and not the Egyptian deities may not be immediately apparent when reading the biblical data but is clearly operative when one accounts for the nature of the plagues against the text's historical background. Overall, the authors remind the reader of many items already known, while introducing new insights.

Despite these and many other strengths, there are a few areas for improvement. First, the book could benefit from more biblical references. For example, the discussion of how Jesus is a priest of a better covenant would benefit from in-text citations of Hebrews 7–8. Indeed, the discussion clearly depends on and alludes to this passage and draws many helpful points from it, but since the authors do not provide citations in the discussion, the reader is forced to assume the validity of the authors' statements (pp. 81–82). This tendency is also seen on pages 173–74, where the authors include the point that Jesus often referred to himself as a temple, but unfortunately, they do not provide biblical support for this claim.

A second area for improvement would be the discussion questions. Including such questions is at first glance a great addition to the book since its goal is immensely practical—teaching believers to read the OT in light of Christ. However, one is a bit disappointed that the same three general discussion questions supplement each chapter. More specific questions tailored to each chapter's content would have served the reader better.

Overall, *They Spoke of Me* is a well-organized, concise, and insightful book that explores how Jesus unlocks the OT. For these reasons, many laypeople will greatly benefit from this book and learn to interpret their OT more faithfully. Indeed, the noticeable deficiencies, some of which are mentioned above, do not ultimately detract from the authors' overall goal. I would thus recommend this book to most laypeople with confidence.

Anthony Ferguson
Beaumont, California

Paula Fredriksen. *Paul: The Pagans' Apostle*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017. xii + 319 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-0300225884. $33.25.

Paula Fredriksen is the Aurelio Professor of Scripture *emerita* at Boston University and currently serves as a member of the Humanities Faculty at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. She is a prominent history of religions scholar having written *From Jesus to Christ: The Origins of the New Testament Images of Jesus; Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews*; *Sin: The Early History of an Idea*; and *When Christians Were Jews: The First Generation*.

In *Paul: The Pagans' Apostle* Fredriksen locates the impetus of Paul's mission to the *ethnē* both in the mission and message of Jesus and in the traditions about Jesus's resurrection. In order to understand the scope and nature of Paul's mission, Fredriksen argues that Paul's undisputed letters

must be properly situated in their two "generative contexts"—Second Temple Judaism and the Greco-Roman cities (p. 7).

The first chapter examines the history of interaction between Israel and the nations. Fredriksen describes the complex relationship among Israel, the nations, and Israel's god (using the lower-case "god" throughout). Emphasis is placed on the stories from Jewish literature and their influence on Jewish/*ethnē* relations, especially as they offer insight into the anticipated eschatological implications of the distinction between Israel and the *ethnē*.

In chapter 2, Fredriksen attempts to provide clarity about the way that the diaspora community lived among the nations. She explains that diaspora Jews had a sense of a double-identity, one associated with their city of residence, or "fatherland," and the other connected to Jerusalem as the "mother city" (p. 48). Discussing the difficulty of translating *ethnē* with a single English word, she explains, "there was no such thing as a religiously 'neutral' ethnicity," and she frequently uses the terms "nations," "gentiles," and "pagans" interchangeably throughout the book. Her preferred term for non-Jewish Christians is "ex-pagan pagans" which captures both the religious and ethnic aspects (p. 34).

The third and fourth chapters situate Paul's mission in the complex diaspora context, identifying the source of the persecution that Paul faced as originating among the Jewish diaspora community due to his upsetting the delicate balance between Jews and *ethnē*. Paul's mission, she argues, radically insisted that pagans who followed Jesus and the Jewish god remain pagans in the sense of maintaining many of their traditional practices but removing the worship of other "lower gods." However, Paul is not embracing an anti-Jewish/anti-Law position in doing so. Rather, Paul insists that Jews should continue fulfilling the Jewish law while pagans do not attempt to "become Jews" by taking on the responsibility of Jewish law.

The final chapter focuses on the message of Paul's mission. This chapter reveals Fredriksen's background in the history of religions. She attempts to separate the religion that Paul practiced and preached from the theology that later developed from his writings. In her effort to do so, she commits basic errors in Greek translation and exegesis and generally overstates her case. One example of this is that she inserts an indefinite article in Phil 2:6 where the Greek text lacks an article indicating that Jesus was "in the form of *a* god" rather than "in the form of God" (p. 138). Second, she argues that Rom 1:4 refers to the general resurrection ("by the resurrection of *the* dead") rather than the resurrection of Jesus ("by resurrection from the dead") based on inserting a definite article where the Greek text lacks one (p. 142). Her purpose in doing this is to show that readers

should not interpret Paul through the later creedal formulas of the church. Her conclusions often derive less from the evidence that she presents than from her presupposition that later theological development radically changed the message and theology of Paul.

Fredriksen is successful in raising two important issues related to both theology and mission. The first regards properly situating Paul within the complex world of the first century. She demonstrates that both the anti-Jewish Paul and the "New Perspective" are far too narrow to fully explain both Paul's identity and his mission. The second issue relates to finding an adequate translation for *ethnē*. No single English word readily incorporates the entire semantic range of the Greek term. Any attempt to define *ethnē* with a primary or even a single aspect falls short of conveying the full complexity of the term. These issues demand further exploration.

Despite the importance of the issues that Fredriksen raises, her reluctance to use the word *ethnē* throughout the text in place of the numerous potential English translations creates confusion in her argument. The reader is left to figure out from the context whether she intends to communicate something important by the chosen term or if she is simply resorting to conventional translations.

Throughout the book, she raises several valid points, frequently presents evidence that requires further examination, and challenges the *status quo*. However, she often overlooks or ignores evidence and arguments that challenge her presuppositions. She rarely engages viewpoints that differ from her own, and her bibliography lacks significant works relevant to Paul's identity and mission. Fredriksen presents an argument that should be engaged even though she falls short of successfully proving her thesis.

Matthew Hirt
Henderson, North Carolina

Abner Chou. *The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers: Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2018. 251 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0825443244. $23.99.

In conservative biblical scholarship some of the most controversial issues are hermeneutics, the apostolic hermeneutic, and intertextuality. In this book, Abner Chou attempts to tackle all three topics concisely. His well-rounded work will probably leave a mark on these fields because it is written with a style, vocabulary, and clarity that is easily accessible to a wider audience, while presenting refreshing research. It builds upon many other conservative scholars' works while also incorporating helpful insights from non-evangelical writers.

One of the most interesting aspects of Chou's research is the starting point from which he seeks to unveil how the apostles used the Old Testament. Chou states, "While it may appear completely counterintuitive, I suggest an investigation of the Apostles' use of the Old Testament begins in the Old Testament itself" (p. 20). By this Chou means that the apostles were simply using the same hermeneutic that the prophets themselves had passed down to later generations. Chou next states his thesis plainly: "The prophetic hermeneutic continues into the apostolic hermeneutic, which is the Christian hermeneutic" (p. 22).

Although scholars have produced tomes of research on the hermeneutic of the apostles, what is often overlooked, and also makes Chou's argument attractive, is that he first examines how the prophets themselves interpreted Scripture as the starting point for the apostolic hermeneutic. Chou next argues that the prophets were scholarly exegetes and theologians. What he means by this is that the prophets were thoroughly immersed in the Torah, its theology, and any previously available revelation. Not only this, but they simply built upon and expanded the theology and logic contained within the Torah itself. This expansion of and building upon previous theology and revelation is what Chou defines as *intertextuality*. This definition of intertextuality is very different from Julia Kristiva's deconstructionist, post-modern concept of intertextuality, since Chou's view is diachronic in its nature. In other words, Chou's intertextuality simply refers to later prophetic authors' usage of and building upon the concepts and theology of earlier authors (this is similar to what some scholars refer to as *inner-biblical exegesis*). Not only did the prophets build upon earlier theology, but they "accurately maintained both the main ideas of Scripture as well as its particulars" (p. 63). With this in mind, Chou lands his methodological plane by arguing that the apostles simply maintained the same hermeneutic laid down by the prophets.

Chou's thesis is not a new one, but it is a breath of fresh air for conservative scholars who are not convinced that the apostles had some sort of special and divinely sanctioned hermeneutic that allowed them to play fast and loose with previous revelation. Chou further strengthens his thesis by attempting to explain many of the passages in the New Testament that at first glance seem to misuse the Old Testament. He tackles passages such as Matthew's infamous virgin birth quotation of Isa 7:14, his "Out of Egypt I called my Son" quotation from Hos 11:1, his use of Jer 31:15, "Rachel weeping for her children," as predictive of Herod's slaughter of the children in Bethlehem, and his quotation of Zech 11:4–9 in relation to the death of Judas. Chou also unpacks Paul's reference to "the Rock" as Christ in 1 Cor 10:4, Paul's use of Christ as "the seed" in Gal 3:16, Paul's use of the Torah and Isa 54:1 in an allegorical sense in Gal 4:21–

31, Peter's use of the Psalms in Acts 2:26–28, James's use of Amos 9:11–12 in Acts 15:15–17 concerning the "fallen booth of David," and many other well-known examples.

What makes Chou's book stand out is that he not only defines his methodology and hermeneutic clearly, he also applies it intentionally to many of the most difficult passages in the New Testament. Then, in the latter half of the book, Chou takes time to explain the implications of his hermeneutic upon the following topics: Christology, Ecclesiology, Soteriology, Morality and the Mosaic Law, Hermeneutics in general, Messiah in the OT, and the Christian's application of the Bible for life today. In fact, he is courageous enough to show how the implication of his hermeneutic gives a well-needed rebuke to the American church on the topics of homosexuality and gender roles.

Although Chou succeeds in writing a *concise* and well-articulated book with the purpose of tackling these tough topics, his work still needs to be followed by a larger tome that handles the details of his thesis with more thorough interaction. Nevertheless, this work would benefit any conservative scholar who desires to understand the apostolic hermeneutic and carefully handle the Scriptures.

Caleb L. Fordham
Wake Forest, North Carolina

Craig A. Carter. *Interpreting Scripture with the Great Tradition: Recovering the Genius of Premodern Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018. xxiv + 279 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0801098727. $27.99.

Interpreting Scripture correctly is imperative for both Christian preachers and Christian scholars. In *Interpreting Scripture with the Great Tradition: Recovering the Genius of Premodern Exegesis*, Craig A. Carter sets out to determine whether interpreters should follow the hermeneutics of the academy or the practice of the Great Tradition. He argues that the classical approach allows for a *sensus plenior* (i.e., a fuller sense or deeper meaning) under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; however, the academy has abandoned that approach as a result of the Enlightenment.

Part One serves as the foundation for Carter's argument. The Bible is sacred Scripture, not just another book. Because the Bible is inspired, a special hermeneutic is required. In the wake of the Enlightenment, the academy moved away from believing in the supernatural ability of God. As a result, the Bible lost its place as inspired Scripture.

Carter suggests that interpreters need to understand the theological metaphysics of the Great Tradition. What the Bible teaches about God, his nature, and the world as a whole should determine our interpretation. This approach, Carter argues, is that of the Great Tradition, which he identifies as Christian Platonism. In his view, Christian Platonism is the theological metaphysics of true, biblical faith coming out of the Nicene Creed.

The Nicene Creed served as the foundation of the early church's approach to interpretation. The early church believed in the authority of Scripture. It endorsed both a literal and spiritual sense of Scripture. The early church approached the Bible as a unified book of two Testaments, Old and New. It confessed the dual authorship of the Bible. Finally, the early church saw Christ as the focus of the Bible as a whole.

Yet this approach to hermeneutics fell from prominence as the effects of the Enlightenment took hold. Carter argues that the modern approach of historical-critical analysis reduced the Bible to an ordinary book that could be interpreted without regard to its inspiration and authority. The belief is that the academy offers a more scientific, modern approach, whereas the Great Tradition's approach was pre-modern and therefore incorrect. Carter argues that such an academic approach should be abandoned.

Part Two offers a way to recover pre-modern exegesis. Carter suggests three areas to consider and supports each with works from Ambrose, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Augustine, and John Calvin. The areas to be recovered are: (1) we must read the Bible as a unity centered on Jesus Christ, (2) we should let the literal sense control all meaning, and (3) we should see and hear Christ in the OT. Carter develops each of these areas in separate chapters.

Carter concludes the book by showing how modern scholars have interpreted Isa 53. Some follow the historical-critical approach while others fall in line with pre-modern exegesis. The book concludes with a look at D. A. Carson's and Kevin J. Vanhoozer's presentations of the theological interpretation of Scripture. Carter offers their approaches as samples that support his overall argument.

Interpreting Scripture with the Great Tradition urges a return to the more traditional approach of interpreting the Bible—that of Jesus, the apostles, and the early years of the church through the Reformation. As a whole, Carter offers a cogent argument. However, parts of his book leave the reader unsettled. A case in point is his affirmation of Christian Platonism. He offers a clear explanation of the concept, but too much ambiguity on Platonism itself may cloud the reader's understanding.

Another critique is his understanding of allegory, typology, and prosopology. The book offers allegory as a legitimate form of interpretation. The patristic era featured a lot of allegories—some done well, some

poorly. But should we use allegory today? Conversely, the book seems to look negatively on typology even though it was used in the NT. Carter seems to endorse a method faithful to Jesus and the apostles on one hand, but not on the other. Finally, the reader will need to contemplate Carter's prosopological exegetical approach. Should we really *hear* Christ *speak* in the OT, or should we read that passage typologically?

This book offers much for the preacher and the scholar. The reviews of the Enlightenment and early Christian doctrine are helpful. Carter's work with key figures like Augustine and Calvin support his argument and help the reader grapple with the past effectively. While one may disagree with parts of Carter's analysis, his critical engagement is worth the effort.

Carter is not suggesting modern interpreters discard careful study of the text, archaeological findings, textual criticism, and the like. But he is arguing that in concert with those approaches we continue to follow the longstanding models of exegesis endorsed by the church. The church today needs to reclaim a pre-modern exegesis that sees Christ as the hermeneutical key to the Bible. The academy would do well to follow suit. *Interpreting Scripture with the Great Tradition* points us in the right direction even with a few bumps in the road.

Christopher N. Dickerson
Fayetteville, North Carolina

Keith D. Stanglin. *The Letter and Spirit of Biblical Interpretation: From the Early Church to Modern Practice*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018. xi + 274 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0801049682. $26.99.

Keith Stanglin currently serves as professor of Scripture and Historical Theology at the Austin Graduate School of Theology. He has authored and co-authored numerous books in his chosen fields of historical theology and hermeneutics. His purpose in writing *The Letter and Spirit of Biblical Interpretation* is to make a case for a balanced hermeneutic, based on a historical-grammatical study of the text of Scripture as well as a theological interpretation of the Word. It is his contention that these two lenses for the study of Scripture can and should be applied with balance and restraint, thereby offering a harmonious and theologically accurate understanding of the biblical text.

Stanglin employs a rather comprehensive study of the history of biblical interpretation to demonstrate a methodological and philosophical evolution away from an emphasis on the *spirit* of the text toward the *letter* of the text. Walking the reader through the history of the Christian church, Stanglin shows how students of Scripture in pre-modern times

focused on the *spirit* of the text, even to the extremes of the *quadriga* (its fourfold sense) and allegorical interpretation. He further notes that modern times have seen a preponderance of literal studies, focusing on the historical and textual evidence but leading to an often sterile and dry reading of the Word of God.

Stanglin uses an illustration he admits is rather extreme to explain the difference between the *letter* and the *spirit* of biblical interpretation. He contrasts the study of the human body from the viewpoint of the careful investigation conducted by newlyweds on their honeymoon, as opposed to the careful clinical investigation conducted by a scientist on a cadaver. Both investigations lead to accurate and valid determinations and yet are conducted with vastly different motivations and relationships to the object of their study. The biblical text can be treated likewise in the example of the "kiss" found in Song 1:2. However, the historical-critical method of biblical study will carve up the word "kiss" like a coroner would cut a cadaver, thus stripping the text from any feelings of love and passion the author of the text intended. Similarly, a study of the text so focused on its emotions and symbols could lead to cases of extreme allegory and eisegesis, thereby overloading the text with unintended meaning. Stanglin thus hopes for a hermeneutical method that allows room for both the *letter* and *spirit* to coexist and together bring forth the meaning of Scripture with the application of proper controls.

On the basis of the historical overview alone, *The Letter and Spirit of Biblical Interpretation* is helpful and deserves to be read by anyone who desires a better grasp of the history of hermeneutics. The scarlet thread that is the *spirit* and the *letter* of interpretation also adds to the existing bibliography in terms of its balance and intellectual integrity. Nevertheless, there are some aspects of Stanglin's prescription for a harmonious application of both the *spirit* and the *letter* that leave the reader wanting. While Stanglin's argument is purely historical and rational, in his "way forward" he advocates for a healthy balance between the *analogia scripturae* and the *analogia fidei*. Here he puts forth that equal and careful attention should be paid to the rule of faith and to the unity of the Scriptures to understand a given text. Yet he seems to imply that the theological tradition and the text of Scripture stand on equal footing. Stanglin does not clarify this enough and leaves the door open for abuse. In a similar way, apart from some examples of literal and allegorical interpretations, there are next to no biblical arguments for a theological reading. To be fair though, Stanglin writes from his field of expertise and seems determined to offer a historical theological argument.

A final matter of concern is that more than once Stanglin uses terms and expressions popular among the Theological Interpretation of

Scripture (TIS) movement. The very thesis of his book is to reclaim emotion in hermeneutics and to allow the historic Christian tradition to function as a confirmation of exegetical conclusions. While these are strong elements in TIS ranks, Stanglin does not clearly identify with this movement apart from some allusions. Unfortunately, he fails to situate himself within this debate but at the same time takes a strong stance in favor of key aspects of TIS. Reading this book in the context of the current TIS debate, the reader is left seeing him as non-committal and yet involved in the debate at the same time.

Apart from this final matter of clarity, *The Letter and Spirit of Biblical Interpretation* deserves to be read and re-read by all students of Scripture and biblical-studies: Stanglin's perspective offers a comprehensive yet refreshing overview of the history of hermeneutics.

Adrian Coetzer
Marietta, Georgia

Chris E. W. Green. *The End Is Music: A Companion to Robert W. Jenson's Theology*. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2018. 118 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-1498290821. $17.00.

Robert Jenson's theological project, especially as seen in his *Systematic Theology*, is thought provoking and imaginative and wrestles with the important issues in theology. Despite these strengths, one can easily argue that his theological project has not received the attention it deserves. While Jenson's theology has been the subject of many essays, articles, dissertations, and books, it is difficult to find resources that introduce Jenson's theological project to both students and scholars. Chris E. W. Green satisfies a need in this area with his insightful (and charitable) introduction to Robert Jenson's theology, *The End Is Music*.

In the preface of his book, Green writes that he tries "to describe his [Jenson's] work as charitably and faithfully as I can so that it appears in its own best light and as a gift to the church" (p. vii). Green attempts to introduce readers to Jenson's theology by giving an account of the different issues Jenson tackles. This review will highlight some of the key ideas Green engages and expounds from Jenson's theology.

Commenting on the distinctives in Jenson's doctrine of God and the identification of God, Green points out that in Jenson's theology, "God's own life has a narrative structure: this is the significance of the Trinitarian relations. Therefore, as God happens to creation, history itself becomes meaningful and storyable" (p. 16). Green continues, "In Jenson's vision, God is identifiable with and by the events in our history because God's

own life is event" (p. 16). Green insightfully points out a crucial distinctive of Jenson's theology here. For Jenson, God is identified with and by the events God does in history. This identification is not only how we can identify God, but history especially in its dramatic coherence also has significance for God himself. Green articulates Jenson's motivations clearly when he says, "To identify the gospel's God, we must identify Jesus. And to do that, we have to acknowledge the ways that God's self-revelation is temporally structured. The temptation is to abstract to a timeless God, a God beyond our history, a God unaffected by what happens in time. But such a God could not and would not take on flesh as one of us" (p. 19). A distinctive in Jenson's theological project is thus the attempt to dismantle theological systems that fall prey to the temptation which tries to abstract God from the events of history. Green is able to highlight Jenson's thought at these points and helps the reader make sense of Jenson's Trinitarian maneuvers.

Jenson's eschewal of an abstract, timeless God has certainly attracted criticism. Jenson's understanding of God and how he identifies himself with and by his interaction with creation has led some to say that Jenson blurs the distinction between the Creator and his creatures. Yet, Green points out that "As he [Jenson] maintains at every turn, there is God and there is everything else. 'Before there is the creature, there is God and nothing. And this nothing is not the kind that can be the antecedent of something. God and only God is the creature's antecedent'" (p. 55). Green further maintains that "In Jenson's account, then, the Creator/creature difference is one that God makes just by being God" (p. 56). Green's defense of Jenson at this point is worth noting because it attempts to present Jenson's theological project in its best light. Green highlights how Jenson affirms the Creator/creature difference while at the same time holding that God is identifiable with and by his interactions with his creatures. While this may not appease all of Jenson's critics, Green has provided an account of Jenson's theological project that seeks to capture the different things Jenson attempted to affirm in his own theology.

While *The End Is Music* capably and sympathetically presents Jenson's theological project, one wishes that Green would have provided a deeper engagement with Jenson's critics. Showing exactly where and how Jenson's critics are misguided may have been helpful. Lastly, Green mentions in his preface, "Of course, it goes without saying that I do find serious problems with some of Jenson's theological claims and maneuvers" (p. viii). It would have been intriguing to see where the author of this book would criticize Jenson. Yet, pointing out Green's limitations here goes beyond the boundaries established by the book and its author. In sum, this book is to be recommended to students and scholars who need an

introduction to Jenson's theological work. Furthermore, it is helpful to those interested in modern Trinitarian thought given that it introduces a significant modern Trinitarian theologian.

Brian Min
Raleigh, North Carolina

Derek C. Hatch. *Thinking with the Church: Toward a Renewal of Baptist Theology*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017. 210 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-1532611162. $20.80.

In *Thinking with the Church: Toward a Renewal of Baptist Theology*, Derek Hatch lends a helping hand to Baptists considering the role of tradition in theological reflection. Hatch is Associate Professor of Christian Studies at Howard Payne University, where he has served since completing his PhD from the University of Dayton in 2011. Hatch proposes Baptists embrace a theological method of *ressourcement*, defined as "a return to the sources of the Christian faith in order to discover . . . a more robust vision for theological renewal" (p. 9). He argues for his thesis in two parts. First, he considers the impact of Dortian Calvinism on Baptist theology and encourages Baptists to reconsider the connection between ontology and theological language. Second, he assesses three Baptist hallmarks: Inerrancy of Scripture, Soul Competency, and Religious Liberty.

Hatch begins by recounting stories of Baptist students who encounter Reformed thought in college and whose theological conversations are peppered with chatter of Calvinism's infamous TULIP. These discussions problematically make the five points of Dortian Calvinism an abstracted, conceptual framework for the whole of Christian theology. Correctively, Hatch revisits key historical sources and argues Baptists must recover theological language rooted in ontology, as opposed to conceptual abstractions. As a foil for resurgent Calvinism, he traces the relationship between divine sovereignty and human responsibility in the Catholic Church, introducing French Jesuit Henri de Lubac as his paradigmatic model for theological *ressourcement*. For Baptists to embrace De Lubac's model requires "a full-blown embrace of the Christian tradition, especially as embodied by other Christian groups, including Catholics" (p. 44). Hatch critically interacts with nineteenth- and twentieth-century Baptist theologians whom he argues failed to embrace tradition, urging contemporary Baptists to follow De Lubac's lead.

The second section begins by explicating Baptist views on inerrancy. Hatch critiques Biblicism in Baptist thought, concluding that Baptists have practiced reading the Scriptures "in isolation from other aspects of

Christianity" (p. 78). To explain, he traces the relationship between the Bible and the church through the writings of the early church. He lands with De Lubac's appropriation of the four-fold sense of Scripture as a model for Baptists to move beyond Biblicism. Next, Hatch considers soul competency. He introduces E. Y. Mullins's six axioms of New Testament Christianity and determines that the unifying theme of all six is that "no authority other than God stands above each individual Christian" (p. 107). According to Hatch, Mullins subordinated his ecclesiology to his emphasis on the individual. Hatch responds to Mullins's error by urging Baptists to be more like De Lubac and emphasize the church's participation in the Trinity in their ecclesiology. Finally, Hatch assesses religious liberty. He looks to E. Y. Mullins and G. W. Truett as Baptist exemplars, teasing out their relationships with the United States of the early twentieth century. He then introduces American Jesuit John Courtney Murray and *Dignitatis Humanae*, which both, unlike Baptists, provide a theological argument for religious liberty grounded in the Scriptures but growing out of a high view of Christian discipleship and the church. In this way, Hatch encourages Baptists to reconsider the theological mooring for religious liberty.

Hatch wades into waters not often traversed by juxtaposing Baptist and Catholic thought favorably. His efforts to find a more valued place for tradition in Baptist theological development are both helpful and instructive. While a growing number of theologians are considering theological *ressourcement*, Hatch's extended interaction with twentieth-century Catholicism distinguishes his work from others in the field. Further, this work shines brightest as Hatch recounts the contours of twentieth-century Baptist thought. His ability to critique the impact of Mullins, Truett, and others provides a valuable guide for the novice and a robust conversation partner for the expert.

On the other hand, it would have been helpful for Hatch to clarify his intended audience. He aims his text at Baptists in general. Given the diversity among contemporary Baptists, it would have served his readers for him to delineate precisely to which Baptists he refers. Also, Hatch offers little substantive interaction with more recent Baptist scholarship. There is a growing number of sympathetic Baptist thinkers who would affirm Hatch's emphasis on connecting Baptists to a broader, Trinitarian tradition, for example the late Stanley Grenz, Stephen Holmes, Timothy George, and David S. Dockery, among others. Similarly, while De Lubac proved a fruitful conversation partner, there have been other movements since the *Nouvelle Theologie*, many of them Protestant, calling for *ressourcement*. Though Hatch shows readers the genuine value and even necessity of interaction with Roman Catholic brethren, occasionally it seemed unclear what place the distinguishing marks of Protestantism have in

theological development. Locating this project in the wider Protestant conversation may have helped bring clarity. Hatch's voice is one among a growing many however, and his ability to interact with twentieth-century Baptist voices gives this particular project a unique timbre to lend to the *ressourcement* discussion.

Christine E. Thornton
Wake Forest, North Carolina

Michael Horton. *Justification* (2 vols.). New Studies in Dogmatics, ed. Michael Allen and Scott R. Swain. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018. 928 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978–0310597254. $80.00.

Since the 1977 publication of E. P. Sanders's *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, scholarly discussions of Pauline themes revolving around the doctrine of justification have been lively. If one is relatively new to this forty-year conversation, Michael Horton's *Justification* represents a great place to begin; it signifies an immense and helpful expansion of a 2011 dialogue in which he was one of nine scholars whose conversation manifested in James K. Beilby and Paul R. Eddy's *Justification: Five Views*.

Horton is the J. Gresham Machen Professor of Systematic Theology and Apologetics at Westminster Seminary California, a prolific and award-winning author, and host for the *White Horse Inn* radio program. *Justification* fits within a larger theological scheme represented by his *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way*, which assumes a Reformed, covenantal aspect of theology with a catholic, analogical tone. He confesses to being "deeply impressed by the Trinitarian and Christocentric coherence of the ecumenical creeds" (p. 2:51).

Volume One of Horton's *Justification* takes a diachronic look at the doctrine of justification from the Patristic era to the Reformation. He describes how several of the significant theologians of this time period understood the "great exchange." However, his methodology (for both volumes) is fourfold: (1) Deductive, as he recognizes that a "syllabi of quotations have limited value" (p. 1:75); (2) Inductive, since he showcases Augustine's understanding of this doctrine as both an event and a process, contra his own (Reformation) perspective of justification (pp. 1:84–91); (3) Summary, because he helpfully summarizes the work of others (e.g., Nick Needham's twenty-eight-page essay, "Justification in the Early Church Fathers," which sets the field for Horton's third chapter, "Justification in the Ancient Church"; pp. 1:75–91); and (4) Constructive, as Horton provides helpful observations on Origen's understanding of justification, which would otherwise be foreign for his Protestant readers (pp.

1:54–66).

Horton understands Origen's perspective, along with the perspectives of Augustine and the Medieval Theology he observes (pp. 1:84–162), to provide key beliefs that the Romanists adhered to during the sixteenth-century divide over this doctrine. Similarly, he catalogues "key [patristic] components of what would become the Reformation interpretation" of justification (p. 1:75). So, if we say Horton relies on Patristic scholars like Needham for learned assessments of the ancient church, we must say Horton *is* that voice with respect to the Reformation, and he rightfully knows this time as central to understanding the great divide in Western Christianity.

In his first volume, Horton is most at home in chapters 6 through 12, which primarily cover the period between Luther's 95 Theses (1517) and the Council of Trent (1545–63). These chapters represent 60 percent of Volume One but only fifty-six years of the considerable history it covers. Here he quotes from primary sources rather than secondary, more than elsewhere in this volume. And, his conclusion of this book both summarizes and sets the pitch for where he has landed in the Catholic-Protestant divide and where he will lead his readers in Volume Two of *Justification*. With respect to old and new perspectives of Paul, "The enduring merits of the Reformation's exegetical, theological, and pastoral legacy" still matter to us today (pp. 1:38, 375), and the Reformers' forensic understanding of the justification of the ungodly provides security, rest, and the knowledge that allows Christians to neither work toward their justification nor ask foremost how an ethic can be derived from this doctrine (p. 1:374).

In the second volume of *Justification*, Horton principally takes a synchronic, contemporary look at this doctrine from 1977 until now. His thoughts here revolve primarily around discussions within Protestantism (e.g., perspectives new and old, apocalyptic, covenantal, or forensic). He incorporates systematic theology and biblical theology in this discussion of justification, as he exegetically explores what Paul means by way of this term. His culminating chapter, "Union with Christ: Justification and the Great Exchange," roots this exchange not in justification but in union with Christ as an "umbrella motif," encompassing all the components of redemption (pp. 1:40; 2:449). That shows he has truly taken up the mantle of his predecessor at Westminster, John Murray (the author of *Redemption: Accomplished and Applied*).

Consequently, Horton's understanding of justification is driven not by anthropology but by Trinitarian theology, as was also the case for the Patristic Fathers, and this soteriological stance enables him to find solidarity with others in Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Protestantism—both past

and present. However, he differs from these three traditions by his understanding of the when, what, and where of this union: It "is the intersection between justification and sanctification" where justification is strictly forensic; it provides a *duplex beneficium* (twofold benefit) of "justification and renewal" (pp. 2:468–69); and it differs from those in the Baptist tradition since Horton (with Calvin) "does not see circumcision or baptism as an external sign of inward grace . . . but as the . . . real participation in the apocalyptic in-breaking of the kingdom of God," the place where union in Christ takes place (pp. 2:481, 485).

The publication of *Justification* begins a new series, New Studies in Dogmatics, which aims to provide helpful treatments of major theological subjects, written between the level of introductory and advanced monographs. Horton's work more than hits this goal.

Peter Dubbelman
Apex, North Carolina

Edmon Gallagher and John Meade. *The Biblical Canon Lists from Early Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. xxii + 337 pp. Hardback. ISBN: 978-0198792499. $46.95.

Edmon Gallagher and John Meade wrote *The Biblical Canon Lists from Early Christianity* (*BCLEC*) to provide scholars and interested laypersons with direct access to the ancient Jewish and Christian canon lists. *BCLEC* is a reference work containing the original text and modern English translations of a few ancient Jewish canon lists (Josephus and Baba Bathra 14b) and every Christian canon list until the early fifth century. Gallagher and Meade supply commentary on the canon lists to assist the reader's engagement with the primary sources, but their chief aim is that readers would study the lists themselves and process their own questions about the history of the biblical canon in conversation with the ancient church. It is the contention of this reviewer that they accomplished their goal.

Gallagher and Meade recognize that the canon lists are not the only sources of knowledge for canon studies. However, they claim that "the lists are the best sources for telling us specifically which books early Christians considered canonical" (p. xviii). Their presentation of these sources begins with an introductory chapter, "The Development of the Biblical Canon," followed by chapters on the Jewish Lists; Greek Christian Lists; Latin Christian Lists; The Syriac Christian List; Selected Greek, Syriac, Latin, and Hebrew Manuscripts; and an appendix on the Antilegomena and the More Prominent Apocrypha. This review first surveys a variety of positive features of *BCLEC*, followed by a few points of critique.

BCLEC devotes significant space to the purpose of the canon lists. For example, Melito's Old Testament canon list outlines the books that contain messianic prophecies that would be useful in evangelizing Jews (p. 79). Eusebius's lists appear to have the purpose of delineating which books early Christians received as Scripture and, therefore, which books his contemporaries *should* receive as Scripture (pp. 99–110). Athanasius compiled his list "to protect the church against heresy" (p. 120). His canon list showed which books refuted the early heresies (e.g., Manicheans, Montanists, Arians, etc.). Gregory of Nazianus delineated the canonical books to point to the inspired Scriptures that encourage piety and protect against false teaching (p. 143). *BCLEC* helpfully highlights the diverse reasons for the production of the canon lists.

BCLEC (implicitly) encourages serious self-reflection among evangelical Protestant readers about the use of non-canonical texts in the church. Athanasius, for example, had a threefold system of religious literature: canonical texts, ecclesiastical texts, and apocryphal texts. He even encouraged the use of non-canonical texts in the discipleship of new converts (pp. 127–29). Evangelical Protestants tend to be either ignorant or leery of non-canonical texts. However, the model of Athanasius (and others), outlined in *BCLEC*, implicitly challenges evangelical Protestant concern and (perhaps unintentionally) invites them to reflect on their knowledge and use of non-canonical texts.

BCLEC also contains salutary examples of ancient (imaginative!) interpretation in the canon lists. In their discussion of Epiphanius's canon lists, Gallagher and Meade note the divergent placement of Job (p. 170). Epiphanius placed Job after Ruth in one list and before Judges in another list. Gallagher and Meade suggest that this evidence places the historical figure Job in the time period of the Judges. However, in another of his lists, Epiphanius places Job after Deuteronomy which may indicate that Moses authored Job and that he lived in the time of the patriarchs.

The extensive analytical footnotes merit a final commendation of *BCLEC*. These footnotes comment on the text and translation of the canon lists and offer extensive secondary literature on the canon list under discussion. They frequently present a range of interpretive options and exercise caution where caution is due. For example, regarding the development of the tripartite division of the Hebrew canon, Meade and Gallagher write, "The prologue to Sirach convinces most scholars that some sort of tripartite arrangement dates to at least the second century BCE, perhaps alongside other arrangements. It is difficult to say more" (p. 17).

Readers are bound to quibble with certain arguments presented throughout the work (e.g., the hesitation to clearly identify Luke 24:44 as a testimony to a tripartite canon). However, since the primary purpose of

BCLEC is to present data, there are only a limited number of arguments to disagree with. *BCLEC* accomplished its goal, but it also left the present reviewer wanting more. Further work on the biblical canon from these two scholars is a desideratum. Their focus on a neglected element of canon studies could be usefully placed into a more general introduction to the canon debate. Such work could help students and scholars assimilate their research into the broader discussion of the biblical canon. That they have produced such a useful work on one element of the canon debate, suggests that they may have more to contribute to the field of canon studies.

Robb Coleman
Wake Forest, North Carolina

Brent Nongbri. *God's Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018. xii + 403 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-0300215410. $35.00.

Despite continual scholarly interest in the early witnesses to the New Testament, much remains unknown about the discovery and original state of several of the earliest and most important Greek manuscripts. In this informative and illuminating work, Brent Nongbri contends that limitations in our knowledge about the original physical features of various manuscripts have not discouraged some from making what he regards as unjustified deductions about their date of origin and other matters. From his perspective, a "lack of consideration of the books as physical objects . . . has resulted in implausibly precise (and often implausibly early) dates being assigned to a number of important manuscripts" (p. 11). Traditionally, manuscripts have been dated largely on the basis of paleographical analysis. As he explains, however, this type of analysis is not always reliable and often provides only limited insight pertaining to a manuscript's probable date of origin. With this limitation in view, Nongbri calls for "greater attention to the books themselves as artifacts [and] to the archaeology of early Christian manuscripts" (p. 11).

The first chapter aims in part to "provide sufficient information for a good working knowledge of early book production" (p. 21). Those who could benefit from a primer on ancient writing materials and literary conventions will find this chapter to be of great value. One of the chapter's strengths is its treatment of the early use of the codex and the manner in which it was constructed.

Chapter 2 considers the numerous challenges associated with the dating of ancient manuscripts. In addition to accounting for the

conventional methods that have been employed, Nongbri offers a judicious assessment of the discipline of paleography and concludes that it "is by its very nature a subjective undertaking. . . . When early Christian manuscripts are concerned," he writes, "paleographic dating can devolve into little more than an exercise in wishful thinking" (p. 72). Then, as a helpful supplement to paleography, Nongbri considers the value of radiocarbon analysis (pp. 72–80).

Chapter 3 provides readers with keen historical insights pertaining to several Greek manuscripts discovered in Egypt during the "golden age" of discoveries, which he identifies as the period between 1860 and 1960. Nongbri describes the typical locations in which manuscripts are often discovered and why reliable information about several discoveries has proven elusive. His account of the discovery of the Nag Hammadi manuscripts (pp. 108–15) serves as an example of the many challenges associated with the dating of manuscripts and establishing what may be known of their original features. The chapter concludes with the somber assessment that "reliable knowledge about discoveries of early Christian books is extremely difficult to come by" given that many of them were not discovered by professional archaeologists (p. 115).

Chapters 4 through 6 analyze what now appears certain and what remains unclear about some of the more remarkable discoveries that took place in Egypt during the last century. In chapter 4, Nongbri discusses the Beatty Biblical Papyri, a collection of Greek manuscripts acquired by the American businessman A. Chester Beatty (1875–1968) during the 1940s. In his investigation of the discovery of the codices that comprise this collection, Nongbri observes that "questions about the provenance of the manuscripts have never been answered in a satisfactory way" (p. 118). In addition to the Beatty Biblical Papyri, Nongbri recounts the discovery of the Bodmer collection (chapter 5) and the large Oxyrynchus collection (chapter 6). Among other things, he observes that the records of Grenfell and Hunt, the two leading scholars overseeing the excavations at Oxyrynchus, are in many respects vague and unhelpful.

Finally, chapter 7 discusses the "Magdalen" papyrus (P^{64}/LDAB 2936), a manuscript some believe once included P^{4} and P^{67} before it was divided into smaller fragments. Nongbri's account of the history of this codex provides an apt illustration that scholars have, at least on certain occasions, reached hasty and unwarranted conclusions about the dating of manuscripts or have subscribed to dubious theories regarding their discovery. On the basis of his examination of some of the most significant discoveries, Nongbri concludes that "few Christian books may be as old as the second century, [and] none of them must be that old, not even the celebrated fragment of the fourth gospel in the John Rylands Library" (p.

269).

The volume makes several noteworthy contributions. Few recent works provide such extensive information about the discovery of notable collections of ancient manuscripts in Egypt. Much of the information analyzed in the volume is not easily accessible and undoubtedly required extensive research into archives and unpublished sources housed in various locations around the world. Nongbri's careful and even-handed study of the discovery of several manuscripts makes a compelling case that many longstanding assumptions about the dating and provenance of some important witnesses to the New Testament may be misguided, or at the very least, cannot be made with full certainty.

Although Nongbri's work effectively draws attention to the most daunting challenges associated with the study of ancient manuscripts, the book should be read with a proper perspective. Some readers may be inclined to conclude that little may be determined about the dating or provenance of *all* the early witnesses to the New Testament as a result of a lack of reliable information pertaining to the discovery and archaeology of *some* witnesses. In certain instances, it may indeed be the case that scholars have reached hasty and unwarranted conclusions relating to matters of provenance and dating. It should be kept in mind, however, that while we may not know all that we would like about the background and original state of every manuscript, there is certainly reason to be impressed about the overall progress made in the discipline of textual criticism and the study of ancient witnesses of the New Testament. One may thus be optimistic about the prospect for continual advancements in the future.

Benjamin Laird
Lynchburg, Virginia

Brian J. Wright. *Communal Reading in the Time of Jesus: A Window into Early Christian Reading Practices*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017. xxvi + 293 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-1506432502. $39.00.

Brian J. Wright's *Communal Reading in the Time of Jesus* is a welcome contribution to the world of academic publishing. Whereas most scholarly books simply respond to familiar arguments, Wright presents groundbreaking work that will reshape the way researchers think of how early Christian communities heard the word of God, and the quality controls they employed to preserve the manuscript tradition.

Wright's argument is that communal reading events were widespread in the first-century Greco-Roman context in which Christianity flourished. Groups listened to the reading of texts, such as those of Epictetus

and Seneca the Younger. One should not assume that low literacy rates in the ancient world meant that people were ignorant of texts. Quite the opposite was true. Communal reading gave people access to literature. It was fashionable. It was the way people heard philosophers, caught up on the latest news, or became acquainted with cultural ideas of the day. Christianity was birthed in this environment. It is therefore no surprise that followers of Jesus valued the public reading of sacred texts. The apostle Paul, for example, calls Timothy to devote himself to the "communal reading of Scripture" (1 Tim 4:13).

Wright points out that the first century provided an exceptional environment for communal reading to thrive. The economic and cultural context of the ancient Mediterranean prospered during the *Pax Romana*, which was stable enough to promote and spread public reading events. The settings could be indoor or outdoor, in sacred or non-sacred spaces, and practiced by Christians and non-Christians. The participants included people from various segments of society, not just the wealthy and elite. Public reading was therefore practiced in diverse settings—standing, sitting, dining, and even while bathing and swimming—and was experienced by people of various social strata, flourishing during a time of economic and cultural prosperity.

One of the most impressive aspects of Wright's work is the number of first-century Greek and Roman authors he examines, such as Ovid, Strabo, Statius, Petronius, Celsus, Seneca the Elder, Quintilian, Quintius Curtius Rufus, and Dio Chrysostom, all of whom testify to the popularity of communal reading. He also examines first-century Jewish authors, such as Philo and Josephus, showing that they expected texts to be read in communal settings. Wright leaves little doubt that the context in which the New Testament was written supported and encouraged the public reading of literature.

Another place where Wright shines is in arguing that first-century authors and audiences exhibited quality control over their texts. Some of the controls they exhibited were examining different manuscripts (Strabo), disposing of manuscripts with errors (Seneca), and making corrections (Celsus). Wright also shows that Persius and Dio Chrysostom opined that quality controls should be implemented in communal reading events. Ancient people, then, were not uncritical listeners. Many heard texts recited (usually more than once) and could detect an incorrect reading. So, inaccurate texts were even disposed of or corrected. These common practices also apply to early Christians who sought to control their textual traditions.

The capstone of Wright's book is his analysis of communal reading in all twenty-seven books of the New Testament, which makes a convincing

case that Christian communities practiced the public reading of their texts. Some of his most persuasive evidence is from the Pauline epistles, such as Col 4:16: "And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea" (ESV). Yet, Wright also appeals to passages that "assume" communal reading. For example, in commenting on 3 John, Wright contends, "The elder, then, can only hope Gaius will read it to them [the church] communally" (p. 193). There is no clear evidence for public reading in 3 John though, only the expectation that this is what the author would have wanted. Wright does examine passages that clearly support public reading in early Christian communities—and proves his point! However, appealing to passages that only "assume" communal reading is not convincing.

Another fruitful aspect of the book is the argument that a speaker would assume that his listeners would be able to recognize "quotes and allusions" they had already heard communally (p. 118). Otherwise stated, speakers assumed that their audiences had a "shared background" consisting of texts they had heard at previous communal reading events, which enabled them to hear resonances of such texts. This suggests that listeners of Scripture may have had more than just the immediate context in mind; they had an entire imagination that could be awakened by "words" that reminded them of other reading contexts.

Wright's work is groundbreaking and deserves a wide audience. He convincingly shows that communal reading events in the first century were widespread and people exhibited quality controls over their texts. People could be illiterate and still be knowledgeable of books—and even the correct versions. Christian communities functioned similarly, listening to the Scriptures and being aware of genuine readings. Thus, there is the strong possibility that the earliest Christian communities displayed conscious quality control over their manuscript traditions, being so familiar with texts that they could identify an inaccurate reading when they heard one. This raises a couple of important questions. Should textual critics see Christian communities as the driving force behind manuscript corrections? Or should textual critics envision that corrections were the exclusive work of an individual? Wright's conclusions seem to tip the scales in favor of the former.

Miguel G. Echevarria
Wake Forest, North Carolina

Michael Massing. *Fatal Discord: Erasmus, Luther, and the Fight for the Western Mind*. New York: HarperCollins, 2018. xvi + 987 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978–0060517601. $45.00.

Given all that has been published on the Reformation, can one more book about it be helpful? This one is. Michael Massing is an accomplished writer: He is the former executive editor of *Columbia Journalism Review*, author of several celebrated books, and a fellow for both the MacArthur and Leon Levy Centers for writing. This successful journalist makes history come alive, meticulously and skillfully presenting the drama between connected lives and countries, and capturing the emerging, merging, and digressing ideas (and rulers) of the time. He intermingles two biographical accounts from sixteenth-century Europe—Erasmus of Rotterdam, Holland, and Luther of Wittenberg, Germany—whose lives, he argues, have significantly impacted the Western mind, albeit in different ways. His ability to portray the Diet of Worms "as one of history's transformative moments" may equal the best that has been written about this event (p. 461). Certain readers of this book will therefore eagerly turn its pages until they have finished it.

Massing's book is perhaps most valuable to those who start reading it from a similar place to the author's when he began writing it. He confesses to being "raised in a middle-class Jewish neighborhood . . . about Christianity, I had learned nothing . . . the question nagged: How did a small underground sect that had splintered off from Judaism and been so fiercely persecuted by Rome manage, in the course of four centuries, to conquer the empire and replace it as Europe's organizing force?" (pp. 823–24). This question narrowed to a smaller one with a defined answer: Why is Erasmus so little known today? "The source of his obscurity became clear: Martin Luther" (p. 824).

Massing answers the question on Erasmus's obscurity with an end goal in mind: "Examining [Luther's] life can help shed light on the origins of modern-day evangelicalism. And studying Erasmus's life can help unlock the origins of modern-day humanism" (p. xv). This perspective is important for Massing, who understands that "the rivalry between Erasmus and Luther—between humanism and evangelicalism . . . continues to shape our world" (p. xvi); Erasmus's tradition has carried forward in Europe, Luther's in America (pp. xiii). This perspective, which Massing defends in the last two chapters of *Fatal Discord*, verifies what some may have suspected: Massing writes a tendentious, presentist view of "two enduring, fundamental, and often colliding traditions of philosophical and religious thought" in order to "restore Erasmus to his proper place in the Western tradition" (cover flap). Nonetheless, his related question is

valid—on the repercussions of Erasmus's and Luther's ideas on Europe and America—although addressed only briefly (pp. 783–821).

Arguably Massing provides important warnings to today's reader by way of subtle observations: "The pathway that Luther forged out of his own spiritual crisis . . . continues to provide a lifeline to many millions of Americans" (p. 821; e.g., salvation by faith alone, Luther-inspired individualism, and the priesthood of all believers); unlike Luther, "Erasmus failed to find a way to communicate his ideals to the masses. He wrote in Latin for a highly educated slice of society. He and his fellow humanists rarely mingled with ordinary people and had only limited knowledge of their attitudes, needs, and appetites" (p. 799). Moreover, Luther was willing to die for his ideas, Erasmus was not (p. 478). But make no mistake about Massing's intentions; for him, Erasmus's viewpoints receive little consideration. His *ideals* "deserve to be revived" (xi), by those who are "able to do a better job of making the case" than Erasmus did (p. 779).

For Reformation scholars, this book should be shorter. Massing's ability, however, to gather a host of professionals to help him along his discoveries (e.g., Volker Leppin and Christine Helmer, both of whom are Lutheran scholars) has kept him from wandering astray and makes the work a *tour de force*. Though he is not an expert of the material he presents, he has mastered it. In turn, he functions as an enthusiastic travel guide for the intelligent, inquisitive person who is not a scholar of the Reformation but wants either to understand it better or know the organizing forces behind the Western mind. This effort includes explanations of important topics (e.g., the making of the Vulgate, its reception, use, and mistakes; pp. 44–45, 92–93, 102–3, 243–56) and people (e.g., the apostle Paul's theology and missionary trips; pp. 222–35). His starting point for the book also causes him to empathetically "make the opaque clear, spell out the implicit" (p. 825) while not denigrating Christianity. I thus wholeheartedly recommend *Fatal Discord* to this type of person.

Peter Dubbelman
Apex, North Carolina

John Piper. *Expository Exultation: Christian Preaching as Worship*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2017. 328 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-1433561139. $29.99 USD.

As the third volume in a trilogy on Scripture, *Expository Exultation* crowns John Piper's majestic vision for the place of the Bible in the life of the church. *A Peculiar Glory* (Crossway, 2017) lays out the unique supernatural essence of Scripture. *Reading the Bible Supernaturally* (Crossway,

2017) teaches a hermeneutic that finds the glory of God through all of Scripture. *Expository Exultation* moves beyond these two volumes to the craft of the preacher in bringing God's word to God's people. The thesis of this book is that preaching is a vital part of congregational worship that should focus on the glory of God, the cross of Christ, and faithful obedience as the natural result.

After a brief introduction, the book is divided in seven parts with two to seven chapters in each. Part One describes the corporate worship service, defending the importance of local congregations gathering together for the express purpose of worship. Piper then argues for the centrality of expository preaching to corporate worship, based on the model of Paul's preaching, the place of preaching in church history, and as a witness to the delight of the Trinity in the glory of the Godhead. In Part Three, the argument shifts to the power of preaching to teach others and lead others in worship, something that Piper associates with the work of the Holy Spirit in and through the preacher. Piper then discusses the importance of clear thinking and careful preparation in Part Four. He also discusses the danger of relying on natural eloquence.

Part Five continues with consideration of the natural preparations of good preaching, such as focusing on the text and pointing to reality in the text. In Part Six, Piper digs into the meat of his argument, which is consumed with the reality that Christians experience. He develops a canonical vision of reality which preachers must proclaim and emphasizes both the glory of God and the Cross as central elements of all biblical preaching, which leads to application in faithful obedience. The final three chapters, which comprise Part Seven, show how the attributes discussed in the previous section can be applied even to Old Testament passages.

There will be few surprises in this volume for those who have read the previous two books in the sequence or for those who have listened to Piper or read his previous books. *Expository Exultation* is both an explanation for Piper's thirty-year pastoral ministry and the culmination of it. This is not an academic book but almost a devotional book on the act of proclamation of God's word. It makes very little use of resources other than the Bible, but the volume is well thought through. Rather than try to place his own perspective within the field of literature, Piper aims to outline his motivation for expository preaching.

Essentially, *Expository Exultation* is a pastoral book for pastors. There is little in the way of step-by-step instructions of young pastors trying to figure out how to perform their craft. Instead, Piper's book will encourage those early in their careers and powerfully support men later in their pastoral ministries as they may begin to wonder whether the hours of preparation for and weekly delivery of sermons have been worth the effort.

Too often, the signs of encouragement from the congregation are slow in showing, but Piper's book is an invitation to continue in the belief that the discipline of preaching matters and that the content of Scripture is of great significance. For the discouraged pastor, *Expository Exultation* may well breathe new life that gets him through another Monday letdown.

This volume will best be read by those familiar with Piper already or in concert with the earlier two books in the trilogy. Someone who is encountering Piper for the first time may miss or not fully appreciate some of the characteristic mannerisms of the prose. This is a volume that speaks with Piper's voice. The trilogy as a whole largely encapsulates Piper's entire ministry: He has written three volumes on the nature of the Bible, how to read it, and how to lead others into deeper worship of the Triune God through the proclamation of it. He wrestles with dependence on God and the importance of preparation. Piper treats questions about the truthfulness of Scripture seriously, but without falling into a well of perpetual analysis. This book, and indeed the entire trilogy, is about getting more people to rightly worship the Creator by pointing them toward him through the miraculous gift of Scripture.

Whether one agrees with Piper in every detail or not, *Expository Exultation* is worth reading. It has a narrower audience than the previous two volumes in the trilogy, being more focused on the preaching work of the pastor, but it is a book alive with joy in knowing Christ and dripping with the hope that others may know him more fully. It would make an excellent supplementary text in a preaching course, an encouraging gift for a pastor, and a helpful resource for a minister questioning his calling.

Andrew J. Spencer
Monroe, Michigan

Joshua D. Chatraw and Mark D. Allen. *Apologetics at the Cross: An Introduction for Christian Witness*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2017. 329 pp. Hardback. ISBN-978-0310524687. $34.99.

Josh Chatraw and Mark Allen enter into the contemporary discussion of Christian Apologetics in *Apologetics at the Cross: An Introduction for Christian Witness*. Though the book provides instruction for developing arguments for Christianity, the primary aim of the book is to provide an analysis of, a defense of, and instruction *about* apologetics.

The authors' overall aim is to present and defend an approach to apologetics they refer to as *apologetics at the cross*. The book is divided into three main parts. Part One considers the biblical and historical underpinnings of apologetics. Chapters 1 and 2 look at apologetics in the Bible,

considering fifteen categories of biblical apologetics, including commonplace apologetic categories like "Miracles and Acts of Power" and lesser-emphasized categories like "Christians as Good Citizens with Exemplary Character and Love." Chapters 3 and 4 provide a history of apologetics from the early church through the twentieth century. The authors assert that while our contemporary apologetic work should fit our context, this work "should be built on the foundation of Scripture and our ancestors in the faith on whose shoulders we stand" (p. 62).

Part Two considers important theological components of apologetics. Chapter 5 overviews apologetic methods. Chapters 6 through 9 lay out four implications of what it means to be cross-focused in apologetics. Chapter 6 emphasizes the importance of living out the gospel for the apologetic enterprise and addresses other key apologetic issues, such as the role of the Holy Spirit in apologetics. Chapter 7 exposits humility as an apologetic virtue. Chapter 8 emphasizes that humans are not just rational beings; we are also *desiring* beings. Our apologetic must accordingly interact with the narrative/story of the person we are engaging and appeal to their imagination and emotion (not only their reason). Chapter 9 considers the ministry of the apostle Paul, specifically what he teaches in 1 Cor 9:19–23 and draws out lessons on contextualization from the sermons of Peter and Paul in Acts. The authors emphasize the importance of culture in shaping pre-rational assumptions we bring to interpreting reality, describing the apologist's task of leading people to examine and question their "cultural plausibility structure."

Part Three of the book focuses on the practice of apologetics. Chapter 10 instructs on how to engage in the particular context of twenty-first-century "late modernism" (the authors' preferred term rather than post-modernism). The common factor of late modernism is a continuation of modernism's focus on the self with a rejection of the high expectations of the reach of human reason. The model for engagement commended by the authors is termed "inside out." Christians should seek to understand and critique their interlocutor's worldview (inside) by (1) discerning which tenets can be affirmed and which should be challenged and (2) drawing out the implications of the worldview. The apologist should also present the Christian worldview (outside), showing (1) where the non-Christian worldview borrows from the Christian view and (2) how Christianity better explains our experience as humans. Chapter 11 applies the inside out method to four features of late modern western culture: "modern pluralism," "the ethics of authenticity," "religious lethargy," and "the therapeutic turn." Chapter 12 responds to eight significant objections to the Christian faith, including the argument from evil and the charge of the Bible's unreliability. Finally, chapter 13 succinctly overviews "signs" pointing to

the existence of God, articulates Christianity's story of reality pointing to its beauty, and then makes the case for the resurrection of Jesus to support the *truth* of Christianity.

There is much to appreciate in this work. Chatraw and Allen have built on the work of Charles Taylor, James K. A. Smith, Alister McGrath, Tim Keller, and others, emphasizing that worldview commitments are *more than* rational posits formed on the basis of explicit arguments, while not swinging to the other end of the spectrum and advocating that reasons and evidence are unimportant for Christian commitment. The most valuable section of the book in my view is the development of the "inside out" approach to apologetics in chapter 10 and the engagement with the ideas of late modernism in chapter 11.

I do have a concern, or at least a comment, concerning the usage of this book. I question if this book would serve the purpose of being a *primary* textbook for an apologetics class at the university or seminary level. The book focuses on questions about apologetics—what it is and why Christians should engage in it, what the Bible and church history can tell us about how to engage in it, and how Christians should go about practicing it in the twenty-first-century context. Because of this, the two foundational tasks of apologetics—developing (1) responses to criticisms of Christianity and (2) the positive case for the truth of Christianity—receive only one chapter each. So for example, in addressing the criticism "The Christian doctrine of the Trinity is confusing and illogical," the authors do not articulate the important distinction that Christians affirm God is one in *essence* or *nature*, whereas God is three in *person*. This omission is likely the result of giving only about two pages to this objection. As another example, the case for the resurrection of Jesus is given only seven pages; this seems inadequate for a thorough study of this central apologetic topic. (In contrast, the resurrection receives sixty-eight pages in William Lane Craig's *Reasonable Faith* [3rd ed., Crossway: 2008].)

I nevertheless commend this book as an excellent resource for those who want to learn about the discipline of apologetics and for those who want to engage successfully with our contemporary late-modern culture. It would serve as an excellent supplementary textbook for an apologetics class, and would be an excellent resource for pastors and teachers in the local church.

Ross Parker
Charleston, South Carolina

J. P. Moreland. *Scientism and Secularism: Learning to Respond to a Dangerous Ideology*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2018. 222 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-1433556906. $16.99.

J. P. Moreland is distinguished professor of philosophy at Biola University. He has authored, edited, or contributed to over ninety books, primarily in the areas of philosophy, ethics, and apologetics. In *Scientism and Secularism* Moreland explains what scientism is and why it is such a pernicious ideology.

Scientism is the view that only science—particularly the hard sciences (physics, chemistry, geology, biology, etc.)—provides real or reliable knowledge. Scientism exists in strong and weak versions. Strong scientism argues that science alone provides information worthy to be called knowledge. The weak version makes the more modest claim of the superiority of science over all other endeavors to gather knowledge such as theology and philosophy. Therefore, weak scientism argues that science should be the final authority over the other disciplines, that is, science should provide the plausibility structures for what can and cannot be held as reasonable in theology and philosophy. In strong scientism however, theology and philosophy are simply considered to be dead.

The irony of these claims, as Moreland effectively demonstrates, is that scientism itself is a philosophical position rather than a scientific one. Nor can scientism be demonstrated or derived scientifically. As a philosophy, scientism operates as an epistemology (i.e., a theory of knowledge)—and not a very good one at that. The scientism proponent is like a white supremacist who does not know about his African ancestry. He is unaware of what his viewpoint does to his own standing.

Another recent book, *Understanding Scientific Theories of Origins* by Robert C. Bishop et al., unintentionally illustrates Moreland's point. The authors' purpose for the book is to present a Christian approach to the natural sciences, and for the most part they fulfill that goal. However, when discussing the presuppositions for doing science, they make a remarkable claim. First they argue that the scientific enterprise requires belief that the external world exists, that sense perception and reason are basically reliable, and that nature behaves uniformly, consistently, and intelligibly. So far so good. But then they make the claim that "the knowledge of nature is largely worldview independent." They do not seem to be aware that they are presenting a worldview themselves, one that is very much informed by biblical theism.

In any event, Moreland explores the impact that scientism has had on modern culture. He explains how scientism shifted religion and ethics to the realm of blind faith; it reduced the meaning of life from the search for

truth to the pursuit of satiating desire; it turned virtue into "do-no-harm" minimalism; and redefined free will from a power to choose to the permission to do whatever one wants. In effect, Moreland presents scientism as the unseen fashioner of much of today's modern culture. Because of the pervasive nature of scientism, most do not realize the impact it has on their thinking, including most within the church.

In sum, scientism expelled Christian theism from the academy, to the detriment of the Church and the academy. Scientism declares the supernatural impossible by definition, and this creates obvious challenges to the Church. But scientism also damages the academy. In the materialist world of scientism, there is no transcendent truth to unify the university and no common ethic to guide the students. Universal tolerance becomes the only goal, with morality redefined as morale. Finally, scientism harms science itself. Good science requires integrity (i.e., the belief that misrepresenting experimental data is immoral), rationality (i.e., the belief that embracing something illogical is irrational), and beauty (i.e., the belief that truth is elegant, and therefore worthy of pursuit). Scientism undercuts all these essential features.

Moreland also gives examples of non-scientific knowledge. Science depends on the laws of logic and upon mathematics—both are prior to science, and not the other way around. Most scientists do not spend much time thinking about the philosophy of science, but scientific best practices are predicated on a well-thought-out philosophy. Much non-scientific knowledge, such as moral knowledge, is actually more stable than scientific knowledge. Moreland points out, as an example, that 150 years from now we may have a very different understanding of the electron, but we will still think it wrong to torture babies.

Moreland has written at a level that is accessible to pastors, students, and interested laypersons. *Scientism and Secularism* is a great resource for the young person endeavoring to enter the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) disciplines. Science is a great gift to humanity. Moreland shows how we can enjoy science without worshipping it.

Ken Keathley
Wake Forest, North Carolina