

# *Journal for the Evangelical Study of the Old Testament*

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## ***Must Biblical and Systematic Theology Remain Apart? Reflection on Paul van Imschoot***

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*Biblical and systematic theology stand in tension as fields of study that are constructively related in theory but strictly segregated in practice. In the first place, the nature of biblical theology seems to mandate that the concerns of systematic theology exert no conscious influence upon the work of biblical theologians. Furthermore, as a rule, biblical theologies—especially those firmly grounded in the OT—only tangentially influence the work of systematicians. Thus endures a stubborn, seemingly intractable impasse in academic theology. Those who nonetheless seek a voice for biblical theology in the broader world of Christian theological reflection have an unlikely ally in Paul van Imschoot, a nearly forgotten pre-Vatican II Catholic biblical theologian. Van Imschoot's productive labors transgress received assumptions on the relationship between biblical and systematic theology and beckon present theologians to return to the grounding of Scripture for the formation of doctrine.*

**KEYWORDS:** *biblical theology, systematic theology, OT theology, pneumatology, Paul van Imschoot*

### INTRODUCTION

According to theologians as disparate as Paul Tillich on one hand and Millard Erickson on the other, biblical theology is one of the primary sources of Christian theology.<sup>1</sup> Yet even a cursory review of bibliographies in volumes of dogmatics reveals that theory and practice stand

1. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (3 vols.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951–1963), 1:34–36; Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (3rd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 12. Other significant hermeneutical influences in theological formation include historical theology, philosophy, and the writing theologian's own situation in life. See Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (2nd ed.; Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2006), 347–57.

at odds. Citation of whole-Bible biblical theologies and single Testament theologies—especially OT theologies—is typically quite sparse.<sup>2</sup> For their part, biblical theologians seem to agree that their work should provide “raw materials” for the construction of dogmatics, but as a rule they defer actual interdisciplinary work to dogmaticians.<sup>3</sup> Thus lingers the “sterile impasse” between Bible and theology that Childs discerned more than two decades ago, and large-scale bridging of the two disciplines essentially stands rooted in the realm of theory but unrealized in fact.<sup>4</sup>

In response to this unsatisfactory state of affairs, the present study assays the relevance of Paul van Imschoot: a scholar whose work intentionally straddled the biblical-theological divide, but whose writings have heretofore stimulated little sustained critical reflection. In order to read van Imschoot’s work within the context of biblical and theological studies in the twentieth century, this essay first surveys the life setting out of which his theology emerged. Then a review of reception of van Imschoot’s work introduces the issue of his methodology, a central point of contention among his critics. Next, van Imschoot’s pneumatology attracts special focus, for his many treatments of pneumatological issues permit readers to discern a thoroughly developed complex of thought that can inform a Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Lastly, the present study draws upon its preceding analysis to suggest a way forward in the

2. Regarding the citation of OT theologies, Erickson’s relatively robust appropriation of biblical-theological scholarship is a rule-proving exception; he cites Eichrodt (pp. 240, 298, 467, 469, 869), Oehler (pp. 525, 735, 869), von Rad (p. 520), and Vriezen (p. 298). In contrast, Tillich cites neither OT nor NT theologies. Vivid evidence of the estrangement of biblical and systematic theology appears in Arthur J. Keefer, “The Use of the Book of Proverbs in Systematic Theology,” *BTB* 46 (2016): 35–44.

3. Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 882–84; Theodorus Christiaan Vriezen, *An Outline of Old Testament Theology* (trans. S. Neujien; Oxford: Blackwell, 1958), 119. Hamilton’s recent whole-Bible biblical theology affirms the value of systematic theology, but does not address how theological ideas transfer from the Bible into doctrine. See James M. Hamilton, Jr., *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010).

4. Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), xvi. A recent work by a biblical scholar and a systematic theologian may signal a new openness to cross-disciplinary collaboration. See Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012).

ongoing negotiation of the relationship between biblical and systematic theology.

PAUL VAN IMSCHOOT, CANON-THEOLOGIAN OF GHENT

Paul Emile Armand Joseph van Imschoot was born on September 17, 1889 in Ghent, Belgium in the home of his parents Marie Joséphine Anna Bourdon and Emile-Frédéric van Imschoot, a medical doctor and professor of surgery at the University of Ghent.<sup>5</sup> He remained in Ghent through his secondary education at the Jesuit-administered Collège Sainte-Barbe (present-day Sint-Barbaracollege), where in his final year he served as prefect of the school's Congregation of the Immaculate Conception.<sup>6</sup> Following graduation, van Imschoot studied at the Ghent diocese's minor seminary for a year before attending the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. Residing at the Pontifical Belgian College, he earned a philosophy doctorate in 1910, received priestly ordination in 1912, and completed his S.T.D. in 1914.<sup>7</sup>

World War I interrupted van Imschoot's further studies at the Pontifical Biblical Institute.<sup>8</sup> He taught at a boys' secondary school in German-occupied Eeklo from April 1916 until the end of the war. Then in 1919 he returned to Ghent as professor of exegesis at the major seminary, where he began his prolific writing career that featured over seventy contributions in Latin and French to the diocesan journal *Collationes Gandavenses*. His crowning achievement during his professorship was authoring more than 130 articles in Dutch for the *Bijbelsch Woordenboek*, a collaboration between the Catholic seminary

5. Stadsarchief Gent, Paul van Imschoot birth certificate, document number 3442; Université de Gand, *Programme de cours, année académique 1889–1890* (Ghent: C. Annoot-Braeckman, 1889), 8. Van Imschoot was born at Rue des foulons (present-day Voldersstraat) 16.

6. Xavier Dusausoit, "Les collèges jésuites et la société belge du XIXe siècle (1831–1914): Échanges, influences et interactions," (PhD diss., Catholic University of Louvain, 2005), 1106.

7. Johan Ickx, *De alumni van het Belgisch Pauselijk College te Rome, 1844–1994 = Les anciens étudiants du Collège Pontifical Belge à Rome, 1844–1994* (Rome: Pontifical Belgian College, 1994), 325; Luc Schokkaert, ed., *Biografisch repertorium van de priesters van het bisdom Gent, 1802–1997* (2 vols.; Leuven: KADOC, 1997), 2:534. Information from Ickx and Schokkaert provides the framework for van Imschoot's biography in the present study. Unfortunately van Imschoot's doctoral dissertations are no longer extant.

8. Untitled funeral notice for Paul van Imschoot, *ETL* 44 (1968): 666–67.

faculties of the Netherlands and Flanders.<sup>9</sup> Van Imschoot's essays are notable for their thorough coverage of theologically significant topics, and his article on Jesus Christ also appeared in an expanded version as a stand-alone book.<sup>10</sup> He became titular canon of St. Bavo's Cathedral in 1941 and theologian of the Ghent diocese in 1943.

After twenty-nine years of seminary teaching, van Imschoot retired in 1948 and became spiritual director of an order of nuns who administered Maison St. Pierre, a secondary school for girls (present-day Sint-Pietersinstituut). Despite moving away from the seminary and its library, van Imschoot continued writing and was among the early members of the Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense, an annual meeting of Catholic biblical scholars. At the society's second meeting in 1950, he described his plan and method for an OT theology that was "at the point of being achieved."<sup>11</sup> In 1953 van Imschoot served as the society's president and inaugurated its meeting with his address, "The Holy Spirit: Principle of Biblical Piety."<sup>12</sup> The following year he became a permanent member of the Colloquium's Committee as a former president, and the first volume of his OT theology appeared in publication. The second volume appeared two years later.<sup>13</sup> Then for the Colloquium's most ambitious undertaking since its founding, van Imschoot presided over the

9. Adrianus van den Born et al., eds., *Bijbelsch Woordenboek* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1941).

10. E. de Cooman, "De bijbel en het Christelijk leven," *Streven* 10 (1942): 186–90, esp. 188–89; Paul van Imschoot, *Jesus Christus* (Roermond: Romen, 1941). Since van Imschoot's preferred language was French, it is possible that the later French edition of this book is actually the original. See Paul van Imschoot, *Jésus-Christ* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1944).

11. "Journées bibliques de Louvain," *ETL* 26 (1950): 552–54. Due to citation of works in multiple languages, English translations of quotations such as "sur le point d'être achevée" appear in the body of the present article for readability.

12. "Dies Studiorum Biblicorum Lovanienses," *Bib* 34 (1953): 558; untitled note, *ETL* 29 (1953): 699. The subject of van Imschoot's address was "Le St-Esprit, principe de la piété biblique." Though the Colloquium did not publish documents from the 1953 meeting, similarity of title suggests that this work appeared in publication as Paul van Imschoot, "L'Esprit de Yahweh, source de la piété dans l'Ancien Testament," *BVC* 6 (1954): 17–30.

13. Frans Neirynck, "Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense 1-50," in *The Biblical Canons* (ed. J. M. Auwers and H. J. de Jonge; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), xxxiii–xlvi; Paul van Imschoot, *Théologie de l'Ancien Testament* (2 vols.; Paris: Desclée, 1954–1956).

biblical theology section of the International Catholic Bible Congress, convened in the Vatican pavilion at the 1958 World's Fair in Brussels.<sup>14</sup>

In the foreword to *Théologie de l'Ancien Testament* volume 1, van Imschoot alluded to working in unspecified "particularly disadvantageous and trying conditions."<sup>15</sup> Then at some point after finishing the second volume, at the height of his notoriety, van Imschoot abruptly ceased writing. Some surveys of his work imply that death prevented the completion of the projected third part of his theology, but the definitive cause of the end of van Imschoot's writing career remains a mystery. Van Imschoot would continue serving at Maison St. Pierre for five years after the International Catholic Bible Congress and then live for five further years. Despite suffering from gradual degradation of his physical and mental faculties, van Imschoot maintained a regular regimen of scholarly reflection until his final months, eventually passing away on May 25, 1968.<sup>16</sup>

#### RECEPTION OF PAUL VAN IMSCHOOT'S WORK

Fellow Catholics lauded van Imschoot's contributions to scholarship during his lifetime. In an address at the major seminary of Ghent in 1958, Joseph Coppens called van Imschoot and his successor Henri van den Bussche the two-candle "biblical candelabra" of the seminary.<sup>17</sup> The following year, Luis Alonso-Schökel wrote that van Imschoot's *Théologie de l'Ancien Testament* was the only available work that supplied the fruits of OT exegesis to doctrinal theologians.<sup>18</sup> In 1965

14. J. Coppens, A. Descamps, and E. Massaux, eds., *Sacra Pagina: Miscellanea Biblica Congressus Internationalis Catholici de Re Biblica* (BETL 12-13; 2 vols.; Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1959); Roger Aubert, untitled note, *RHE* 52/4 (1957): 1022-23.

15. Van Imschoot, *Théologie de l'Ancien Testament*, 1:viii, "conditions particulièrement désavantageuses, voire pénibles." These conditions need not imply physical pain, as in the English translation of volume 1. See Paul van Imschoot, *Theology of the Old Testament, Vol. 1: God* (trans. Kathryn Sullivan and Fidelis Buck; New York: Desclée, 1965), xii.

16. Paul van den Berghe, "In Memoriam Monseigneur Paul van Imschoot," *CBG* 14 (1968): 270-71; Stadsarchief Gent, Paul van Imschoot death certificate, document number 1669.

17. J. Coppens, "Réception des Congressistes à Gand et à Bruges le 28 août 1958," in *Sacra Pagina*, 1:52-61, esp. 52-54.

18. Luis Alonso-Schökel, "Argument d'écriture et théologie biblique dans l'enseignement théologique," *NRT* 81 (1959): 337-54, esp. 354.

Pope Paul VI made van Imschoot a member of the papal household, designating him a Monsignor in recognition of his services to the Church.<sup>19</sup> Five years after van Imschoot's death, Harrington claimed that "The outstanding Roman Catholic *Theology of the Old Testament* is that of P. van Imschoot."<sup>20</sup> However during the ensuing four decades until the present, with few exceptions such as that of a lone master's thesis by a Catholic author in 1998, reference in academic works to van Imschoot has been largely "terse, stereotypical, and infrequent."<sup>21</sup>

At least three causes may account for scholarly neglect of van Imschoot's contributions to theology. First, researchers may bypass van Imschoot due to the fact that he never completed his *Théologie de l'Ancien Testament*, thus some aspects of OT theology remain untreated therein. For example, Hubbard and Stachurski consider van Imschoot's view on messianism unrecoverable since it would have appeared in the unfinished portion of his theology under the rubrics of salvation and judgment.<sup>22</sup>

Another historical impediment to scholarly interaction with van Imschoot is that he was a Catholic author writing in a field defined and dominated by Protestants. Non-Catholic biblical scholars typically paid little attention to their Catholic counterparts in the early to mid-twentieth century, believing that confessional strictures constrained Catholics from producing true research.<sup>23</sup> Emblematic of Protestant concern was an annual "Oath against Modernism" that van Imschoot and his colleagues swore, that they would "firmly embrace and accept all and each of the things defined, affirmed, and declared by the inerrant Magisterium of the

19. See AAS 58 (1966): 535.

20. Wilfrid J. Harrington, *The Path of Biblical Theology* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1973), 81.

21. Michael R. Stachurski, "The Old Testament as Christian Scripture: Three Catholic Perspectives," (Th.M. thesis, University of Otago, 1998), 12.

22. David Allen Hubbard, "Paul van Imschoot, *Theology of the Old Testament*" in *Contemporary Old Testament Theologians* (ed. Robert B. Laurin; Valley Forge: Judson, 1970), 191–215, esp. 209–10; Stachurski, "Old Testament," 61. In fact, van Imschoot composed lengthy entries on the Messiah and messianic expectation for the *Bijbelsch Woordenboek*. See van den Born, et al., s.v. "Messias," cols. 1060–68, and "Messiaansche verwachting," cols. 1054–60.

23. Thomas Albert Howard, *Protestant Theology and the Making of the Modern German University* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 29.



Church, mainly in those points of doctrine directly opposed to the errors of our time.”<sup>24</sup>

Despite such required conformity to certain traditional teachings, 1943 marked a watershed in Catholic biblical studies. The papal encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu* granted unprecedented freedom to employ the fruits of critical scholarship, permitting Catholic biblical-theological studies to draw much closer to the established Protestant model.<sup>25</sup> Van Imschoot specifically noted the “pressing invitation” the encyclical extended toward work such as his, and the second edition of the *Bijbelsch Woordenboek* editorialized that although critical methods had already experienced a degree of use among Catholics, the encyclical provided official approval and reassurance “for which [professional exegetes] cannot be grateful enough to the Holy See.”<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, even two decades following *Divino afflante Spiritu*, prominent voices in biblical scholarship still assigned van Imschoot’s OT theology the distinctive and limiting label “for Catholics.”<sup>27</sup>

24. Norbert Trippen, “Antimodernisteneid,” in *LTK* (ed. W. Kasper et al.; 3rd ed.; 11 vols.; Freiburg: Herder, 1993–2001), 1:761; C. J. T. Talar, “Swearing against Modernism: *Sacrorum Antistitum* (September 1, 1910),” *TS* 71 (2010): 545–66. The official oath is from Pope Pius X, “Motu proprio *Sacrorum Antistitum*,” *AAS* 2 (1910): 655–80, esp. 669–72, and an English translation appears in Fergus Kerr, *Twentieth-Century Catholic Theologians: From Neoscholasticism to Nuptial Mysticism* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2007), 223–25. For an overview of Catholic reaction to theological modernism with respect to Old Testament studies, see Gerald P. Fogarty, “The Catholic Church and Historical Criticism of the Old Testament” in *Hebrew Bible, Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation* (ed. Magne Sæbø; 3 vols.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996–2014), III/1:244–61.

25. Pope Pius XII, “Litterae encyclicae *Divino afflante Spiritu*,” *AAS* 35 (1943): 297–325; Henning Graf Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation* (trans. Leo G. Perdue; 4 vols.; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009–2010), 4:406; Raymond E. Brown, “Rome and the Freedom of Catholic Biblical Studies,” in *Search the Scriptures: New Testament Studies in Honor of Raymond T. Stamm* (Gettysburg Theological Studies 3; Leiden: Brill, 1969), 129–50, esp. 137.

26. Van Imschoot, *Théologie de l’Ancien Testament*, 1:viii; Adrianus van den Born et al., eds., *Bijbels Woordenboek* (rev. ed.; Roermond: Romen, 1954–1957), s.v. “*Divino afflante Spiritu*,” cols. 348–51, esp. 351—“waarvoor zij de H. Stoel niet dankbaar genoeg kunnen zijn.”

27. John Bright, “Recent Biblical Theologies: VIII. Edmond Jacob’s ‘*Theology of the Old Testament*,’” *ExpTim* 73 (1962): 304–7, esp. 304; Robert C. Dentan, *Preface to Old Testament Theology* (rev. ed.; New York: Seabury, 1963), 75–76. More nuanced was Hillers’s evaluation of van Imschoot’s theology as “less consciously Roman Catholic” than those of his predecessors. See Delbert R. Hillers, “An Historical Survey of Old Testament Theology Since 1922,” *CTM* 29 (1958): 664–67, esp. 668.

A third reason that van Imschoot's work failed to gain much traction is perhaps most significant: his method of doing theology ran directly counter to the instincts and paradigmatic expectations of his Protestant contemporaries. Accordingly, the following section develops perspective on van Imschoot's contrarian theological method through discussion of the three major, related ways that it deviated from prevailing trends in Protestant biblical theology in the mid-twentieth century. These characteristics include van Imschoot's use of an organizational scheme derived from dogmatics, his rather segmented exposition of individual theological concepts within a Neoscholastic framework, and his chosen means of treating wisdom and history in the explication of OT theology.<sup>28</sup>

### PAUL VAN IMSCHOOT'S METHODOLOGY

#### *A Dogmatic Structure for Biblical Theology*

The relatively few surveys of biblical theology that mention van Imschoot customarily note his tripartite scheme of God, humanity, and salvation: themes borrowed from systematic theology.<sup>29</sup> Critical evaluations of this plan of organization are overwhelmingly negative. Gerhard Hasel calls the theology-anthropology-soteriology progression an "external structure based upon categories of thought alien to Biblical theology."<sup>30</sup> Others opine that van Imschoot's chosen framework is "too confining," an "alien idiom of didactic exposition," an "outdated dogmatic structure"—strongly implying that arranging biblical theology

28. Also unlike most Protestants, van Imschoot includes the deuterocanonical books of the Catholic Bible within the OT canon. Citation of these works along with other ancient sources is common in biblical scholarship, therefore this is not as great a point of difference with Protestant approaches as one might assume. Note for example C. Marvin Pate et al., *The Story of Israel: A Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 25, 105–18.

29. See for example Walther Zimmerli, "Biblische Theologie I: Altes Testament," in *TRE* (ed. Gerhard Krause et al.; 36 vols.; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1976–2004), 6:426–55, esp. 439; Henning Graf Reventlow, "Theology (Biblical), History of," in *ABD* (ed. David Noel Freedman et al.; trans. Frederick H. Cryer; 6 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 6:483–505, esp. 489.

30. Gerhard Hasel, *Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate* (4th ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 158–59.

according to dogmatic themes constitutes a nearly debilitating methodological flaw.<sup>31</sup>

Some degree of rejection likely derives from widespread agreement with Gabler's assertion of the need for strict separation between the disciplines of biblical and systematic theology.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, systematic outlines for OT theologies were commonplace both during and after Gabler's era. A contemporary of Gabler, Bauer organized the very first OT theology according to theology and anthropology, concluding with a lengthy appendix on Christology.<sup>33</sup> The OT theologies of Steudel and Hävernicks in the mid-nineteenth century assumed a similar form.<sup>34</sup> Davidson's early twentieth century OT theology unfolded in twelve chapters divided among theology, anthropology, and soteriology.<sup>35</sup> The appearance of Köhler's and Sellin's theologies demonstrated that it was fully possible to appropriate this traditional structure for modern critical scholarship.<sup>36</sup> Yet despite the publication of many more OT theologies since van Imschoot's in 1954–1956, none have utilized an arrangement as clearly derived from systematic theological categories as his. As for the notion that use of systematic theological-philosophical constructs

31. Elmer A. Martens, "The Flowering and Floundering of Old Testament Theology," in *A Guide to Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (ed. Willem A. VanGemeren; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 169–81, esp. 177; Samuel Terrien, *The Elusive Presence: Toward a New Biblical Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), 34; Sakkie Spangenberg, "Ses dekades Ou Testament-teologie (1952–2012): Van één Spreker tot verskeie menslike sprekers," *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 68 (2012): Art. #1273, 1–9, esp. 4—"uitgediende dogmatiese struktuur."

32. John Sandys-Wunsch and Laurence Eldredge, "J.P. Gabler and the Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology: Translation, Commentary, and Discussion of His Originality," *SJT* 33 (1980): 133–58, esp. 137.

33. Georg Lorenz Bauer, *Theologie des Alten Testaments, oder, Abriss der religiösen Begriffe der alten Hebräer* (Leipzig: Weygand, 1796), vii–xvi.

34. Johann Christian Friedrich Steudel, *Vorlesungen über die Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Berlin: G.A. Reimer, 1840), xiii–xiv; Heinrich Andreas Christoph Hävernicks, *Vorlesungen über die Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Erlangen: Carl Heyder, 1848), xv–xvi.

35. Andrew Bruce Davidson, *The Theology of the Old Testament* (ed. Seward D. F. Salmond; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914). Had Davidson lived to complete his theology himself, he may not have chosen the final arrangement, which he characterized as "too abstract for a subject like ours," (p. 12).

36. Ludwig Köhler, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (3rd rev. ed.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1953), vii–xi; Ernst Sellin, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (2nd rev. ed.; Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1936), vii–viii.

necessarily distorts the presentation of biblical theology, apparently this concept has now achieved the status of conventional wisdom. However, two aspects of this assertion merit critical reconsideration: first, the idea that organizational structures derived from outside of the biblical text are inappropriate for use in biblical theology, and second, the charge of distortion itself.

First, it is necessary to observe that every biblical theology manifests a structure that is liable to criticism for its artificiality or “externality.” The diverse constellation of existing approaches to biblical theology attests that no broadly accepted organizing method arises organically from the biblical text. Each chosen system naturally highlights biblical materials that cohere with its own points of emphasis and sidelines perspectives within the canon that do not, even systems that treat the theology of biblical books one after another. This readily observable selectivity of stress is inherently idiosyncratic, ideological, and “external” to the biblical text. Since all organizational strategies for biblical theologies are external impositions, rejection of the use of dogmatic categories on the basis of their externality is not logically tenable.

Second, and more significantly, one should question whether developing a biblical theology according to concepts drawn from systematic theology must result in theological distortion. After all, theologians of all stripes unavoidably decontextualize theological ideas as they “lift” them from biblical texts through interpretation and summarization. This decontextualization is an act of abstraction, stripping away the layers of intertextual connections that powerfully inform the exegesis of biblical text. Next, theologians assemble and organize theological ideas for placement into a scholarly presentation of biblical theology. That is to say, whenever reorganized theological concepts appear within a journal article or book rather than their native biblical context, they experience re-contextualization. Re-contextualization binds together decontextualized and reorganized theological ideas with the theologian’s own subjective ideology. Each step in the threefold process of decontextualization, reorganization, and re-contextualization inherently transforms theological ideas drawn from the biblical text. If “distortion” implies departure from the internal logic of the source of theological ideas, then some degree of distortion is part and parcel of doing theology, for composing any work of biblical theology creatively blends alien elements into its presentation. Therefore, evidence of misrepresentation must accompany claims that a certain biblical theology

distorts the theological ideas under its scope of concern, otherwise the charge of distortion by itself carries little meaning.

*Segmented Exposition of Individual Theological Concepts within a Neoscholastic Framework*

Following the deconstruction of much *a priori* dismissal of van Imschoot's theology-anthropology-soteriology approach to biblical theology above, critique of van Imschoot's treatment of individual theological concepts now merits reflection. Hubbard perceived a dearth of interconnection of ideas in van Imschoot's work; his OT theology on occasion reads as if it were a compilation of theological encyclopedia entries rather than a unified work of theology.<sup>37</sup> What some readers identify as unevenness of presentation and the lack of a discernible plot-line likely stems from two causes. First, van Imschoot's preparation of a broad collection of articles for the *Bijbelsch Woordenboek* showcased his in-depth thinking on discrete issues but did not require nesting those concepts within broader systems of thought. Later, when van Imschoot marshaled a lifetime of scholarly output in order to assemble his OT theology, his chosen organizational scheme did not summon the fresh creation of thematic unity.

More importantly, the second cause of perceived uneven, segmented presentation derives from van Imschoot attending primarily to the concerns of his immediate audience rather than the world of biblical scholarship at large. A son of Catholic Flanders, Paul van Imschoot's upbringing, education, liturgical ministry, teaching, and scholarship each took place within the context of the Roman Catholic Church. All of his publications issued from Catholic presses. Except for brief periods away from his home city, van Imschoot consistently lived within five kilometers of the major seminary of Ghent and Saint Bavo's Cathedral, the seat of the Ghent diocese. Thus, it is unsurprising that some readers have sensed traces of Neoscholastic Thomism within *Théologie de l'Ancien Testament*, for van Imschoot's generation of Catholic theologians received firm grounding in Thomas Aquinas's philosophy.<sup>38</sup> Following the pattern of *Summa Theologiae*, the first volume of van Imschoot's theology leads with God as the first cause or "principle" of all things, followed by "God and the World," "Revelation," and finally

37. Hubbard, "Paul van Imschoot," 202; Harrington, *Path*, 85–86.

38. John H. Hayes and Frederick C. Prussner, *Old Testament Theology: Its History and Development* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1985), 228; Fergus Kerr, "A Different World: Neoscholasticism and its Discontents," *IJST* 8 (2006): 128–48, esp. 129.

“God and His People”: essentially a movement from the general to the particular.<sup>39</sup>

In contrast, Eichrodt’s OT theology focuses first upon the particular relationship between God and people through covenant. Then the nature of the special covenant relationship carries discussion forward to more general theological topics such as “God and the World” and “God and Man.”<sup>40</sup> Also opposite to the approach of van Imschoot, Barth’s development of thought in the first two parts of *Church Dogmatics* starts from the particular, “The Doctrine of the Word of God,” before moving to the general, “The Doctrine of God.”<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, Barth’s theology denied the helpfulness of all but the most indirect influence of philosophy, and Barth’s life setting demanded inclusion of ethics in his theology.<sup>42</sup> Yet van Imschoot’s decidedly Catholic approach to theology not only mandated philosophical undergirding, but also relieved him of the work of the moral theologian in drawing out ethical implications and applications.<sup>43</sup> Thus from a Protestant perspective, van Imschoot turned on their heads the metanarratives and even some of the fundamental assumptions of the leading voices in mid-twentieth century biblical and systematic theology.

### *The Place of Wisdom and History in OT Theology*

Since the significant biblical theme of wisdom does not cohere well with dogmatic categories, one may suppose that biblical theologies organized according to such categories are not likely to grant wisdom literature as

39. Compare Étienne Gilson, *Le thomisme; introduction à la philosophie de Saint Thomas D’Aquin* (6th rev. ed.; Paris: J. Vrin, 1965), 31–32, 168; Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Aquinas and His Role in Theology* (trans. Paul Philibert; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2002), 137.

40. Walther Eichrodt, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (3 vols.; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1933–1939).

41. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Thomas F. Torrance; 4 vols.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1936–1977).

42. Harald Hegstad, “Karl Barth,” in *Key Theological Thinkers: From Modern to Postmodern* (ed. Staale Johannes Kristiansen and Svein Rise; Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2013), 65–76.

43. Johannes Lindblom, “Vad innebär en »teologisk» syn på Gamla Testamentet?” *STK* 37 (1961): 73–91, esp. 78–79.

independent and distinct a voice as that with which wisdom speaks within the biblical canon. Apart from consideration of the way van Imschoot himself discusses wisdom, as a general principle this critique appears valid. However, failure to accord wisdom literature a theological standing corresponding to its prominence in the canon is hardly a weakness specific to biblical theologies that employ a dogmatically influenced outline.<sup>44</sup> In fact, the theology-anthropology-soteriology outline is basic and flexible enough to accommodate exposition of most any material.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, van Imschoot's coverage of topics is sufficiently comprehensive that Harrington criticizes him not for omissions, but instead for "unevenness," asserting that van Imschoot devotes too little attention to the attributes and word of God and too much to angels and demons, the concept of hypostasis, and the cult.<sup>46</sup>

Alongside wisdom, the proper treatment of the dynamic of history is perennially a vexed issue within the discipline of OT theology. Regarding the state of the question in the early to mid-twentieth century, Eißfeldt asserted that history and theology belong on two utterly separate planes.<sup>47</sup> Eichrodt contrastingly insisted that OT theology "has its place entirely within empirical-historical OT scholarship."<sup>48</sup> Adherents of Eichrodt's "cross-section" or thematic approach to OT theology thus labored to anchor their thinking in history to a greater or lesser degree, and the activity of God within history was famously a chief concern of the "Biblical Theology Movement."<sup>49</sup>

44. Charles H. H. Scobie, "The Place of Wisdom in Biblical Theology," *BTB* 14 (1984): 43–48, esp. 43–44; John F. Priest, "Where is Wisdom to Be Placed?" *JBR* 31 (1963): 275–82.

45. James Barr, *The Concept of Biblical Theology: An Old Testament Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 39–40.

46. Harrington, *Path*, 83–85. Even though Harrington is Catholic and his book bore a *nihil obstat* and an *imprimi potest*, he wrote after Vatican II from a perspective closer to that of classic Protestant biblical theology than van Imschoot's.

47. Otto Eißfeldt, "Israelitisch-jüdische Religionsgeschichte und alttestamentliche Theologie," *ZAW* 44 (1926): 1–12.

48. Walther Eichrodt, "Hat die alttestamentliche Theologie noch selbständige Bedeutung innerhalb der alttestamentlichen Wissenschaft?" *ZAW* 47 (1929): 83–91, esp. 89—"nach durchaus ihren Platz innerhalb der empirisch-historischen ATlichen Wissenschaft."

49. Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), 39–44. Though the "Biblical Theology Movement" itself is long past, history retains a significant and necessary role in all constructive models of theology. See Leo G. Perdue,

Though it appeared amid a groundswell of desire for biblical theologies that would grant history a more prominent place than in previous approaches, van Imschoot's theology limits the theological significance of history to its role as the backdrop of progressive revelation.<sup>50</sup> In marked contrast, much more closely aligned with the mid-twentieth century zeitgeist was von Rad's tradition history-based OT theology. Von Rad's first volume seized the attention of biblical scholarship when it appeared in 1957, and his theology decisively shifted and drove forward the currents of OT studies for years thereafter.<sup>51</sup> Especially in light of the great and lasting influence of von Rad's nearly contemporaneous theology, neglect or benign indifference toward van Imschoot's work is all the more apparent.

Indeed, organized according to dogmatic categories, cast in the venerable philosophical mold of Neoscholastic Thomism with little narrative continuity, and out of step with works that highlighted the roles of wisdom and history, van Imschoot's theology likely would have appeared retrograde and unimaginative to Protestant theologians in his day. Yet now, despite the many factors that detracted from a warm reception for *Théologie de l'Ancien Testament* among Protestant biblical scholars at the time of its publication, six decades of historical distance allows more dispassionate review of van Imschoot's work. Therefore, as an illustration of the productivity of his theological method, the following section examines the focal point of a great deal of van Imschoot's scholarly reflection throughout life: the specific theme of pneumatology.

#### PAUL VAN IMSCHOOT'S PNEUMATOLOGY

##### *Spirit in the OT*

For van Imschoot, primitive notions encoded in the word רוח provided the foundation for biblical conceptions of pneumatology. "Spirit" is essentially air in motion, such as the wind, which ancient Hebrews may

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*Reconstructing Old Testament Theology: After the Collapse of History* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 340–45.

50. Van Imschoot, *Théologie de l'Ancien Testament*, 1:1–5.

51. Gerhard von Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (2 vols.; Munich: Kaiser, 1957–1960).



have conceived as YHWH's "breath." Passages depicting the action of the divine "breath" or "spirit" are similar to those that describe the work of YHWH's "arm" or "hand," though the actions of the "Spirit" are more durable. Van Imschoot observed that רוח typically exhibits feminine subject-verb agreement, thus placing רוח in the class of impersonal forces rather than personal beings.<sup>52</sup> Further, most of the verbs associated with רוח, such as "rushing upon" and "filling," evoke the effects of a powerful wind or liquid rather than the activities of a personal entity.<sup>53</sup>

In accord with the basic understanding of רוח as the "breath" of God, the ancient Hebrews saw the Spirit as the source of life. God would "blow in" the breath of life (נשמת חיים), in order to animate living beings (נפש חיה). During life, ancient Hebrews observed the effect of strong emotions upon one's own breathing and concluded that רוח was the seat of emotions, drawing the Spirit into association with the heart (לב). At the end of life people and animals would return to dust, and God would take back the רוח. Therefore רוח did not serve as a means of postmortem continuation of existence akin to an immortal soul.<sup>54</sup> In this way, OT texts depict רוח as the source of life, and certain poetic texts also portray the Spirit of YHWH involved in the act of creation and working within it.

The Spirit was not only a wellspring of life for all people but also a source of psychic phenomena in the lives of a select few. The Spirit of YHWH enabled extraordinary, short-lived, powerful acts by judges (such as Samson), kings (such as Saul), and prophets (such as Hosea, who referred to the one who prophesies ecstatically as a "man of the Spirit"). Spirit-induced psychic phenomena were often violent and could even be

52. Van Imschoot noted an exception in 1 Kgs 22:21–22 (paralleled in 2 Chr 18:20–21), where a masculine verb describes the action of רוח. "Humanness" (or personhood) is one of the primary semantic influences upon the assignment of grammatical gender in languages. Though grammatical gender need not imply "maleness" or "femaleness," it is possible that both the typical feminine and the exceptional masculine use of רוח carry semantic significance. See Marcin Kilarski, *Nominal Classification: A History of its Study from the Classical Period to the Present* (SHLS 121; Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2013), 11–27; Geoffrey Turner, "'Wisdom' and the Gender Fallacy," *ExpTim* 121 (2009): 121–25. Not relevant to this discussion are uses of רוח as "wind" or instances of רוח in the construct state, such as the pronoun-like רוח with pronominal suffix.

53. The framework of this section derives from a synthesis of van Imschoot, *Théologie de l'Ancien Testament*, 1:51–54, 183–200; 2:28–35 and van den Born et al., *Bijbelsch Woordenboek*, s.v. "Geest," cols. 470–74, and "Heilige Geest," cols. 474–85. See also Paul van Imschoot, "L'action de l'esprit de Jahvé dans l'A.T.," *RSPT* 23 (1934): 553–87, esp. 553–54, 562, 575, 587.

54. Paul van Imschoot, "L'Esprit de Jahvé, source de vie dans l'Ancien Testament," *RB* 44 (1935): 481–501, esp. 482–87.

contagious, as when they manifested in Saul's messengers and Saul himself in 1 Sam 19:20–24.<sup>55</sup> The early notion of temporary effects of the Spirit eventually gave way to the concept that the Spirit permanently invested power in certain people such as Moses, Elisha, and David for the sake of their respective offices.

The prophets retained the idea of the Spirit's permanent rather than transitory activity, but began to focus upon the Spirit's work in the sphere of morality rather than the psychic realm. Under the Sinai covenant, the Spirit was a moral power that God used to accomplish his purposes, including fulfilling covenant promises. The Spirit was guide and protector of Israel, as well as conveyor of YHWH's orders. However, Israel failed to abide by the stipulations of the Sinai covenant and suffered exile as a result. Therefore the prophets looked to the future, when YHWH would faithfully save a remnant and establish a new covenant with them to bring about a complete religious and moral reform.<sup>56</sup>

The Spirit would in fact be the hallmark of this new covenant, resting permanently upon the Servant, the Prophet, and the messianic king, endowing superhuman intellectual gifts, wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, extraordinary moral qualities, and the knowledge and fear of YHWH. The Spirit would also grant strength in the exercise of judicial and military power to those who would carry out the orders of the king. Further, God would pour out the Spirit on the land, transforming treeless deserts into orchards. Above all, the messianic age would also witness God pouring out the Spirit upon all people to establish justice and peace. The Spirit would turn the people's "hearts of stone" into "hearts of flesh" to wash away the guilt of sin, to enable the people to live out God's commands faithfully, and to "know" God.<sup>57</sup>

55. Paul van Imschoot, "Vetus Testamentum: De libris prophetis," (unpublished class notes, 1942–1943), 50.

56. Paul van Imschoot, "L'esprit de Jahvé, principe de vie morale dans l'Ancien Testament," *ETL* 16 (1939): 457–67.

57. Van Imschoot, "L'Esprit de Yahweh, source de la piété dans l'Ancien Testament," 17–30; Paul van Imschoot, "L'Alliance dans l'Ancien Testament," *NRT* 74 (1952): 785–805, esp. 802–4.

Significantly, van Imschoot wrote that this future regeneration of God's people represents the very pinnacle of OT theology.<sup>58</sup>

After the time of the prophets, the Spirit became a mentor figure that actively supported the practice of discipline, virtue, and godliness. Thus the roles of Spirit and wisdom coalesced, especially in the Book of Wisdom, which seems to draw from Isaiah's theology of the Spirit to describe the role of divine wisdom in the lives of many.<sup>59</sup> Despite broadening the scope of the Spirit's present work to include "the wise," late texts still placed the inner transformation of all the people in the future messianic age.

One can summarize van Imschoot's presentation of OT pneumatology as follows. First appeared the basic conception of רוח as "breath" or "wind," which also constituted an important substratum of all subsequent Hebrew thinking on the Spirit. Before the prophets, the Spirit was a psychic power that operated temporarily in the lives of certain extraordinary individuals, and eventually worked permanently in order to empower the work of leaders. In the prophets, the Spirit became a moral force acting to fulfill YHWH's covenantal promises. In wisdom literature and other late works, the Spirit became a mentor to the wise. Finally, the Spirit would be the moral force that regenerates the hearts of the people to live rightly in the age of the Messiah.

Van Imschoot pointedly defended this progression of thought against a specific alternative view of theological development, one that instead posited a primal notion of רוח as a demonic entity that would cast people into temporary states of ecstasy. Following upon its conceptual origin in animism, the רוח then developed into a supernatural fluid that could pour into a prophet, permanently endowing him as a "man of the Spirit." Following the triumph of monotheism reflected in Isaiah, the Spirit became a designation for the immortality, majesty, and perfection of God. Ezekiel then transferred the divine Spirit to humans as source of the moral life. After the time of Ezekiel, the Hebrews viewed the Spirit as a divine hypostasis guiding and instructing the chosen people.

Certainly this alternative notion that culminated in a hypostatic view of the Spirit argued from the same texts and thus bore marks of commonality with van Imschoot's OT pneumatology. However, van

58. "Hier bereikt de leer van het O.T. haar toppunt." See van den Born et al., s.v. "Heilige Geest," col. 477. For an extended treatment of the Spirit and the new covenant see Paul van Imschoot, "L'esprit de Jahvé et l'alliance nouvelle dans l'Ancien Testament," *ETL* 13 (1936): 201–20.

59. Paul van Imschoot, "Sagesse et esprit dans l'Ancien Testament," *RB* 47 (1938): 23–49, esp. 37, 43, 46.

Imschoot's presentation not only built upon a completely different conceptual foundation, but also ended with the Spirit of YHWH as a personified *force* rather than a personalized *hypostasis*. As Harrington noted, van Imschoot treated the concept of hypostasis at considerable length, so to him this was no insignificant matter. Indeed, van Imschoot vigorously argued against even the slightest degree of hypostasization of the Spirit in the OT.<sup>60</sup> Though supposing a kind of halfway personhood seemingly proved useful to some theologians for developing theologies of the Spirit, van Imschoot charged such writers with being "much too impressed" by the Logos of Philo, the Trinitarian doctrine of the NT, and parallels in ancient religions.<sup>61</sup> Van Imschoot countered that poetic personification of the spirit, wisdom, word, name, and face of God was commonplace in the OT, but it neither encroached upon nor eroded thoroughgoing Jewish monotheism.

If one were only to read van Imschoot's works on the OT, it might appear that his pneumatology would serve only to discourage a systematic theologian from appropriating the witness of the OT for the construction of a doctrine of the Holy Spirit. After all, van Imschoot stressed the completely impersonal nature of the Spirit in Jewish thinking: hardly an identification of the Spirit of YHWH with dogmatists' Third Person of the Trinity.<sup>62</sup> Perhaps this is one reason why studies in pneumatology from the past half-century, whether drawing upon the OT or NT or more limited biblical corpuses, typically cite van Imschoot only sparingly.<sup>63</sup>

60. Van Imschoot (*Théologie de l'Ancien Testament*, 1:228 n. 2) cited Heinisch as a scholar who considered the Spirit a hypostasis in a limited "religious" sense, which one can find in Paul Heinisch, *Personifikationen und Hypostasen im Alten Testament und im Alten Orient* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1921), 20–21. The fact that Heinisch had authored the most widely-read Catholic OT theology before van Imschoot's heightens the significance of this critique. See Paul Heinisch, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1940).

61. Van Imschoot, *Théologie de l'Ancien Testament*, 1:235—"... trop impressionnés soit ..."

62. Van Imschoot allowed that, at best, one could view OT literary personification of Spirit as a "still-confused prefiguration" ("préfiguration encore confuse") of NT trinitarian doctrine that would have surprised both the Jewish authors and readers of the OT. See Paul van Imschoot, "La sagesse dans l'A.T. est-elle une hypostase?" *CG* 21 (1934): 3–10, 85–94, esp. 94.

63. For examples from the perspectives of both Testaments see Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody: Hendrickson,

*Spirit in the NT*

Though his OT works found a broader readership, Paul van Imschoot was principally a biblical theologian. His *Bijbelsch Woordenboek* entries and several journal articles record his reflections on the Spirit from NT texts and fill out a more holistic pneumatology.<sup>64</sup>

According to van Imschoot, intertestamental Judaism carried forward ideas present in late OT writings and thus served as additional prolegomena for NT pneumatology. In intertestamental Judaism, the Spirit was a divine power that granted visions and insight to the prophets, as well as inspiration to the authors of Scripture. Though the Spirit had been permanently present to provide strength for the practice of virtue, God withdrew the Spirit after the time of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi due to the sins of Israel. Even so, some rabbis proved worthy to receive the Spirit's inspiration. Upon the announcement of Spirit-inspired rabbinic teaching, a heavenly voice or presence of the Shekinah would signify divine approval.

Van Imschoot contended that the OT concept of רוח as "breath" or "wind" remained foundational to the understanding of πνεῦμα in the NT, yet the NT took a more philosophical approach to "spirit." Accordingly, the NT writers raised the issues of "spirit" (strong, divine power) versus "flesh" (weak, human nature) and "spirit" (God's power to deliver from sin) versus "letter" (regulations that, by themselves, cannot defeat the power of sin). Even so, according to van Imschoot, NT philosophical thinking did not likely reach the point of subdividing the human being into a dichotomous or trichotomous composite. Thus when Paul wrote of σῶμα, ψυχὴ, and πνεῦμα, it is possible that he reflected the Hebrew parallelism of בשר, נפש, and רוח.<sup>65</sup> Strikingly, van Imschoot wrote that most activities of the Spirit in the NT—just as in the OT—implied the actions of an impersonal force. In concord with the OT image of the רוח,

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1994), 906; Wilf Hildebrandt, *An Old Testament Theology of the Spirit of God* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1995), 6; Wonsuk Ma, *Until the Spirit Comes: The Spirit of God in the Book of Isaiah* (JSOTSup 271; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 21, 25. In contrast, note in-depth interaction with van Imschoot in Cornelis Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom: An Investigation of Spirit and Wisdom in Relation to the Soteriology of the Fourth Gospel* (WUNT 148; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 48–71.

64. The framework for this section derives from van den Born et al., *Bijbelsch Woordenboek*, s.v. "Geest" and "Heilige Geest."

65. Van Imschoot, *Théologie de l'Ancien Testament*, 2:35.

the divine πνεῦμα was first a psychic force, second a moral force, and third a source of life from God.

As a psychic force, the Spirit intervened in human lives in special circumstances, as in the case of Stephen. The Spirit granted prophetic visions and insights, exorcism of demons, spectacular healing, conception of children, miracle-working faith, and spiritual discernment. At Pentecost the Spirit enabled the disciples to speak in languages other than their own. Separately, the Spirit also gave the gift of tongues: ecstatic speech for praise, thanksgiving, and prayer that was unintelligible without the gift of interpretation.<sup>66</sup> All of these feats of psychic power were normally temporary. Even so, the NT closely linked the Spirit with certain offices on a more permanent basis. Prophets, teachers, deacons, and the apostles received the Spirit's power to fulfill their mission. Yet the supreme example of perpetual empowerment of the Spirit was the life of Jesus, whom the Spirit directly conceived in Mary.<sup>67</sup>

The NT also highlighted the moral, sanctifying power of πνεῦμα and closely associated Spirit with baptism. John the Baptist's baptism with water anticipated the Kingdom of God, in which the Messiah would baptize with "fire" and with the Spirit. Baptism with "fire" drew upon prophetic imagery of purifying fire, which prepared the way for the moral and religious regeneration of all people.<sup>68</sup> When a celestial voice at Jesus's baptism proclaimed him to be God's beloved son, the concomitant descent of the Spirit upon Jesus meant that God plainly designated Jesus to be the Messiah, the one who would "plunge people into sanctifying divine power" in the messianic age by baptizing them with the Holy Spirit.<sup>69</sup> The baptism of the Spirit marked the institution of the new covenant that Jesus sealed with his blood.<sup>70</sup> This covenant would

66. Paul van Imschoot, "De dono linguarum et glossolalia," *CG* 9 (1922): 65–70; van den Born et al., *Bijbelsch Woordenboek*, s.v. "Talenwonder," cols. 1480–82.

67. Van Imschoot, *Jésus-Christ*, 92.

68. On fire as a purifying agent, see Zech 13:9 and Mal 3:2–3.

69. Paul van Imschoot, "De testimonio Baptistae (Jn 1, 32–34)," *CG* 24 (1937): 93–97; van Imschoot, *Jésus-Christ*, 86–87—"plonger les hommes dans la force divine sanctifiante."

70. Paul van Imschoot, "Baptême d'eau et baptême d'Esprit Saint," *ETL* 13 (1936): 653–56; van Imschoot, "L'Alliance dans l'Ancien Testament," 805.

draw Jew and non-Jew alike to worship “in spirit and truth,” with their inner beings rendered submissive to direct instruction from God.<sup>71</sup>

The NT also expanded upon the OT concept of the Spirit as source of life. Through baptism in the Spirit, the people experienced “rebirth” into an eternal life of freedom from sin and death. The NT depicted Jesus as the giver of the Spirit and closely linked “Christ” and “Spirit.”<sup>72</sup> Thus life “in Christ” or “in the Spirit” meant a godly life in which one would experience unity with Christ and fellow believers. The NT concept of a “spiritual” resurrection body did not connote immateriality, but instead a physical body completely permeated and dominated by the divine Spirit, redeemed from the bondage of decay leading to death.

Communicating an impression of the Spirit as an extension of the power of God, the NT noted the “pouring out” of the Spirit and the Spirit’s “quenching.” Further, the NT related accounts of people baptized “with,” sealed “with,” anointed “with,” and filled “with” the Spirit. While on one hand Paul wrote of the Spirit’s autonomous activity, such as “living” (Rom 8:9), on the other hand he also described the concept of sin as if it also had life (Rom 7:17). The author of Acts in similar fashion frequently personified divine power when relating the activity of the Spirit.

Even so, van Imschoot noted that unlike the OT, the NT taught the personhood of the Spirit both implicitly and explicitly. The letter of the Jerusalem Council relayed what “seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us,” (Acts 15:28) pointing to the deliberative ability of a personal being. On occasion Paul’s letters likewise depicted the Spirit as a distinct actor, for example “bearing witness with our spirit” (Rom 8:16), calling out “Abba, Father,” (Gal 4:6), and “interceding with unspeakable groanings” (Rom 8:26). Parallelisms in 1 Cor 12:4–6 and 2 Cor 13:14 make it doubtful that Paul would have drawn a mere personification into a position of equal standing with Jesus and God. In Johannine literature, the Holy Spirit was an intercessor who advocated for Christ to the world and stood by the apostles in court. In a sense, the Spirit replaced Christ after his ascension in order to assist the disciples, to testify about Jesus, to refresh their memory of Jesus’s teachings, and to glorify him. Once again raising the issue of grammatical gender, van Imschoot noted that John 16:13 employed the masculine singular demonstrative pronoun

71. Paul van Imschoot, “De adoratione in Spiritu et veritate (Jn 4<sup>22ss</sup>),” *CG* 24 (1937): 265–69.

72. Paul van Imschoot, “De dono Spiritus Sancti apud Jn. 20<sup>22s</sup>,” *CG* 25 (1938): 3–5.

ἐκεῖνος to refer to the Spirit, thus signaling the Spirit's personhood.<sup>73</sup> According to John, the Spirit was a person distinct from Father and Son, present and at work among the faithful. For van Imschoot, affirmation of the personhood of the Spirit reached its climax in Matt 28:19, in the command to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."<sup>74</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

### *The Problem of Diversity without Unity in Biblical Theology*

It is the very nature of biblical theology to separate out for finer analysis the many unique theological viewpoints represented within the canon. Yet focus upon theological diversity generates an unavoidable tension, for in order to convey its findings to dogmatics, biblical theology must also explore how these concepts flow together like tributaries into a great river. Nevertheless, one recurring trend in OT studies is to resolve the tension between diversity and unity decisively in favor of diversity, that is to say, to deny underlying unity.<sup>75</sup> Unfortunately, lack of theological coherence in this approach renders the formation of doctrine from biblical sources an essentially arbitrary exercise.

73. The expected neuter form is ἐκεῖνο. John 16:13 also refers to the Spirit with the masculine singular reflexive pronoun ἑαυτοῦ. When intentional, deviation from expected gender agreement norms communicates a speaker's perspective on the referent. See Kilarski, *Nominal Classification*, 25.

74. Van Imschoot judged that the *Comma Johanneum* of 1 John 5:7–8 had no bearing on trinitarian doctrine due to its absence from the most ancient Greek texts. See van den Born et al., *Bijbelsch Woordenboek*, s.v. "Drieëenheid," cols. 322–26, esp. 325–26. As noted above, despite van Imschoot's vehement rejection of hypostasization of the Spirit in the OT, he discerned testimony to the full personhood of the Spirit in the Matthean, Lukan, Johannine, and Pauline writings. Of course, denial of the Spirit as hypostasis does not necessarily lead to affirmation of the Spirit's personhood. See for example Odette Mainville, "De la rūah hébraïque au pneuma chrétien: Le langage descriptif de l'agir de l'esprit de Dieu," *Théologiques* 2/2 (1994): 21–39, esp. 30, 32, 39.

75. See for example Erhard S. Gerstenberger, *Theologies in the Old Testament* (trans. John Bowden; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002). One may find a concise summary of Gerstenberger's manifold models of ancient Israelite religion in Erhard S. Gerstenberger, "Pluralism in Theology? An Old Testament Inquiry Part I: *Sojourners We Are: Social Rootings of Biblical Witness*," *Scriptura* 88 (2005): 64–72.



In the midst of a theological program that makes much of the presence of contradictory witnesses in the biblical text, Brueggemann strikes a further blow against the rationale of constructive, cohesive biblical theology. He writes, “I shall insist, as consistently as I can, that the God of Old Testament theology as such lives in, with, and under the rhetorical enterprise of this text, and nowhere else and in no other way.”<sup>76</sup> In the end, if biblical theology neither reads coherent core convictions from biblical texts nor addresses the world beyond the text with any authority beyond that of rhetoric, then biblical theology is not really competent to perform its supposed role as a “bridging discipline” between biblical studies and systematic theology.

*Diversity within Unity in Biblical Theology: Theology “from” the OT*

In contrast to approaches to biblical theology that deny theological consistency and undercut real-world applicability, most recent OT, NT, and whole-Bible theologies accept that the chorus of distinct voices in the canon sing together in rich harmony rather than in cacophonous discord. Furthermore, they assume that a contemporary audience occupies the “seats” in the biblical canon’s “concert hall,” expecting to unfold before them a life-impacting, gripping work of art with a message.<sup>77</sup> Engagement with this “message” of biblical text is a key concern for systematic theology, and the question remains: How may biblical theology best transmit its findings to systematic theology? As for venturing an answer to this question, the present study proposes that the focal point of criticism of Paul van Imschoot’s theological method—its connection with the concerns of systematic theology—is precisely what suggests its relevance. Moreover, against the backdrop of three parting reflections below, the present study endorses synthesis of the fruits of contextually-sensitive exegesis into doctrines as a service that biblical theologians can, and should, perform.

76. Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 66. Brueggemann warns repeatedly against theological reductionism in his work, but the ultimate effect of positing a God who is only a literary persona is to make systematic theology a *reductio ad absurdum*. See further Walter Brueggemann, “The Role of Old Testament Theology in Old Testament Interpretation,” in *In Search of True Wisdom: Essays in Old Testament Interpretation in Honour of Ronald E. Clements* (ed. Edward Ball; JSOTSup 300; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 70–88, esp. 87.

77. As Foster relates in his article, this contemporary and most receptive audience for biblical theology is the church. See Robert L. Foster, “The Christian Canon and the Future of Biblical Theology,” *HBT* 37 (2015): 1–12, esp. 6–7.

First, for all its perceived faults, broad organization according to dogmatic categories indeed provides a ready means of conveying the results of biblical-theological inquiry to the systematic theologian specifically, and onward to the church generally.<sup>78</sup> Now van Imschoot's OT theology is not the only such work to discuss the topic of the Spirit in its own right; for example Preuß reserves space under "Yahweh's Powers of Activity" for treatment of "Yahweh's Spirit."<sup>79</sup> However, the fact that one may easily consult Preuß's table of contents and leaf over to this section is likewise a consequence of his chosen organizational scheme. A different method of organization, such as that of Waltke, may not facilitate the exposition of an explicit OT pneumatology.<sup>80</sup>

Second, van Imschoot's pneumatology provides a test case to evaluate the claim that use of a systematic outline inevitably leads to listening "to the echo of [one's] own voice."<sup>81</sup> In fact, the Spirit section in van Imschoot's OT theology and his many journal articles on the subject manifest extensive interaction with ancient Near Eastern background, grammatical and syntactical issues, biblical content, and the research of scholarly colleagues in several languages. At least in the opinion of his contemporary Peinador, van Imschoot's biblical theology was the product of in-depth exegesis, synthesized into discrete themes. Thus, van Imschoot did not merely recapitulate the doctrinal stances of Neoscholasticism that were in vogue among Catholic theologians during

78. A recent work spanning biblical and systematic theological concerns is Reinhard Feldmeier and Hermann Spieckermann, *God of the Living: A Biblical Theology* (trans. Mark E. Biddle; Waco: Baylor University Press, 2011), which its authors describe as a "biblical doctrine of God," (p. 12). Its chapter on the Spirit (pp. 201–47) provides an apt contrast with van Imschoot's synthesizing theological method. Despite the assertions of the authors, it is likely that the strongly historical-critical orientation of *God of the Living* constrains granting "unconditional priority" in interpretation to "the internal logic of the text," (p. 205 n. 16) and in fact inhibits the systematization of theological concepts.

79. Horst Dietrich Preuß, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (2 vols.; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1991–1992), 1:183–87.

80. Bruce K. Waltke with Charles Yu, *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 64.

81. Max E. Polley, "H. Wheeler Robinson and the Problem of Organizing an Old Testament Theology," in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays: Studies in Honor of William Franklin Stinespring* (ed. James M. Efird; Durham: Duke University Press, 1972), 149–69, esp. 149.

his era.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, the tendency for scholars to achieve predetermined outcomes in literary analysis—to discover what they set out to find—is certainly not a phenomenon limited to certain methods of doing biblical theology.

Third, van Imschoot's theology satisfies Stuhlmacher's dictum that biblical theology must demonstrate the firm OT rooting of NT faith.<sup>83</sup> Regarding pneumatology, van Imschoot's depiction of the Spirit as psychic power, moral force, and source of life in the OT constituted the foundation of his NT view of the Spirit. Indeed, the OT distinction between the transitory presence of the Spirit in some people versus the Spirit's enduring empowerment of others may cast light upon both temporary gifting and permanent indwelling of the Spirit after Pentecost.<sup>84</sup> The centrality of the Spirit to the new covenant foretold by the prophets also illuminates NT pneumatology and carries significant implications for Christology and eschatology. Old Testament pneumatology sets the stage for the doctrine of baptism, which must account for the concept of baptism with the Holy Spirit. Tantalizingly, van Imschoot's work on the relationship between wisdom and Spirit may even suggest an as-yet insufficiently explored avenue of wisdom's contribution to biblical and systematic theology.

In light of differing faith commitments as well as advances in linguistics, ongoing recovery of knowledge of the ancient Near East, and ever-greater access to research in the last half-century, no doubt many contemporary exegetes would register dissent with some of van Imschoot's interpretive decisions. Since he did not complete the third volume of his theology, systematic theologians may want more from van Imschoot than the full corpus of his writings can provide. Nonetheless, as review of van Imschoot's theology of the Spirit has shown, he wrote

82. Máximo Peinador, "La integración de la exégesis en la teología: Hacia una auténtica «Teología bíblica»,» in *Sacra Pagina*, 1:158–79, esp. 163–64.

83. Peter Stuhlmacher, *Wie treibt man Biblische Theologie?* (Biblich-Theologische Studien 24; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1995), 25.

84. Hamilton affirms the permanent indwelling of the Spirit among post-Pentecost believers in a recent study. This is in pointed contrast to his view that OT believers were regenerate but did not experience the Spirit's indwelling. Hamilton's quest to specify the Spirit's location (dwelling within believers or not) thus maintains a different focus than van Imschoot's investigations on the Spirit's identity and activity. Also, while Hamilton devotes primary attention to the Gospel of John, van Imschoot's pneumatological reflections developed from conceptual grounding in the OT and ranged more evenly through the canon of Scripture. See James M. Hamilton, Jr., *God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments*, NAC Studies in Bible & Theology (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2006). Hamilton does not interact with van Imschoot.

theology *from* the OT, through the NT, and onward in a form that doctrinal theologians can use. As such, Paul van Imschoot's contribution to theological method is enduring, and it may cast light upon a rarely traveled and largely uncharted path for contemporary biblical theologians to explore.

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## ***Power, Mercy, and Vengeance: The Thirteen Attributes in Nahum***

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*Nahum scholars typically interpret the reference to YHWH's Thirteen Attributes of Mercy in Nah 1:3a as a re-reading meant to minimize YHWH's mercy and emphasize his wrath. This article shows that the quote originates from Num 14:17–18 while maintaining an allusion to Exod 34:6–7. In this light, Nah 1:3a does not explain YHWH's wrath against Assyria; rather, it explains how YHWH could pardon Judah's apostasy and deliver his people.*

KEYWORDS: *Nahum, Exodus 34, Numbers 14, hesed, massa*

While Nahum scholars agree that the book contains “majestic” poetry, they also usually credit it with a simplistic theme.<sup>1</sup> Whether the commentator admires or disdains the content, there is agreement that Nahum uses strikingly descriptive words to pronounce a basic message.<sup>2</sup> For exam-

1. Robert Lowth, *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews* (trans. George Gregory; Boston: Crocker & Brewer, 1829), 180. Klaas Spronk correctly observes, “On at least one point all scholars who have studied the book agree: the author was a gifted poet” (*Nahum* [HCOT; Kampen, the Netherlands: Kok Pharos, 1997], 12).

2. Examples of scholars who endorse Nahum's message and praise his skill include, Tremper Longman, “Nahum,” in *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary* (ed. T. McComiskey; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 2:765–829; O. Allis, “Nahum, Nineveh, Elkosh,” *EvQ* 27 (1955), 67–80; R. Patterson and M. Travers, “Nahum: Poet Laureate of the Minor Prophets,” *JETS* 33 (1990): 437–44. Works critical of Nahum's theology include, J. Smith, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Micah, Zephaniah, and Nahum*, (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1911); J. Mihelic, “The Concept of God in the Book of Nahum,” *Int* 2 (1948): 199–207; J. Sanderson, “Nahum,” in *The Women's Bible Commentary* (ed. C. Newsom and S. Ringe; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 217–21; G. Baumann, *Gottes Gewalt im Wandel: Traditionsgeschichtliche und intertextuelle Studien zu Nahum 1,2–8* (WMANT 108; Neukirchener Verlag, Neukirchen-Vluyn, 2005). For a discussion of Nahum's detractors, see J. O'Brien, *Nahum* (2nd ed.; Readings; London: Sheffield Academic,

ple, “The book of Nahum runs the risk of being monotonous because of the singularity of the author’s purpose and theme. He is intent on saying only one thing: Nineveh shall fall. But the variety of methods which he employs in saying this one thing are quite remarkable and lend great force to his message.”<sup>3</sup> In the opinion of this author, the prophet ill-deserves the reputation for theological simplicity. To adequately substantiate that statement would require more space than allotted here. This article only addresses how the presupposition of Nahum’s simplistic theme of vengeance has affected the interpretation of Nah 1:3a: “YHWH is slow to anger and great in power, but he will not leave the guilty unpunished.”<sup>4</sup> Nahum commentators have reached near consensus that Nah 1:3a adapts YHWH’s revelation of his Thirteen Attributes of Mercy (Exod 34:6–7) in order to mete out vengeance against Assyria. This interpretation, however, misses the subtlety and intricacy of the reference. Specifically, it will be argued that scholars have: (1) failed to recognize that Nahum primarily quotes from Num 14:17–18, (2) misinterpreted Nahum’s inclusion of וגדול־כֹּחַ (“and great in power”) and (3) misconstrued Nahum’s excision of ורב־חֶסֶד (“and great in loving-kindness”).<sup>5</sup> Because of these errors, commentators have not recognized

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2009), 101–20. O’Brien perceptively comments, “Nahum, according to these interpreters, is a violent, nationalistic book, one morally repugnant to modern persons. Its moral inferiority, however, does not mask its literary artistry. Nahum is a bad book written well” (p. 105).

3. P. Robertson, *The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 26. Other expressions of the one-simple-theme theory appear in M. Floyd, “The book of Nahum is largely concerned with a particular historical event: the fall of Nineveh to combined forces of the Babylonian and Medes in 612 BCE” (*Minor Prophets, Part 2* [FOTL 22; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000], 4); G. Johnston, “God will judge the wicked (both empires and individuals) who inflict military destruction on His people and the world as a whole (Nah. 1:2–8)” (“Nahum’s Rhetorical Allusions to Neo-Assyrian Conquest Metaphors,” *BSac* 159 [2002]: 22); D. Clark and H. Hatton, “the theme of Nahum’s prophecy is restricted to a single topic, the fall of Nineveh” (*A Translator’s Handbook on the Books of Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah* [Helps for Translators; New York: United Bible Societies, 1989], 1). A. George associates the simplicity of Nahum to the structure of the book in *Michée, Sophonie, Nahum* (2nd ed.; Paris: Cerf, 1958), 78.

4. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.

5. The deficiency of this translation is acknowledged, per N. Glueck: “חֶסֶד cannot be adequately translated in many languages, including English” (*Hesed in the Bible* [Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1967], 267).

that while Nah 1:3a has implications for Nineveh, it primarily refers to Judah's apostasy.

### THE THIRTEEN ATTRIBUTES

The account of YHWH's self-revelation on Mount Sinai "is found no less than seven times completely and more than twenty times partly in the Old Testament."<sup>6</sup> Understandably, scholars therefore assume that Nahum adapts Exod 34:6–7. A typical comment to this effect comes from Marvin Sweeney:

This statement was made by YHWH to Moses at the time that YHWH revealed the divine self to Moses following the Golden Calf incident at Sinai. In the Exodus narrative, it serves as a statement of YHWH's mercy and justice, and thereby explains the capacity for judgment against those in Israel who abandoned YHWH for an idol as well as YHWH's capacity to show fidelity to those who show fidelity to YHWH. The Nahum version of this statement is clearly shortened, and represents an attempt to interpret the statement in relation to the rhetorical needs of Nahum, i.e., it emphasizes YHWH's power and capacity for justice against an enemy but it does not include the statements concerning YHWH's mercy. This is in contrast to the version of the statement that appears in Jon 4:2 which emphasizes YHWH's mercy because divine mercy is a major concern of the book of Jonah. Essentially, Nahum (like Jonah) borrows, rereads, and modifies a well-known statement from tradition to make a point about YHWH's character.<sup>7</sup>

Sweeney represents established opinion in three ways. First, he makes no mention of Num 14:17–18.<sup>8</sup> Second, Sweeney credits Nahum's revisions

6. Klaas Spronk, "Nahum, and the Book of the Twelve: A Response to Jakob Wöhrle," *JHebS* 9 (2009): 4.

7. Marvin Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets* (Berit Olam; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 2000–2001), 2:428. Similarly, Spronk believes, "The poet put his own stamp on the traditional formulae. The original positive message was 'vengefully reapplied' to underline the announcement of YHWH's anger coming upon his enemies" (Spronk, *Nahum*, 36).

8. Almost all commentators attribute this reference to Exod 34. A few of these also note the similarities with Num 14 without making any further note of the Numbers passage. For instance, K. Cathcart links Nah 1:3 and Exod. 34:6 but then adds, "A similar list of

to vengeance against Assyria. Third, he asserts that Nahum edited these words in a manner contrary to the original quote. This article will now examine Nah 1:3a in light of Num 14:17–18 and Exod 34:6–7 and argue that Nahum primarily quotes Num 14. Once this is established, it will be shown that the quote refers more to Judah’s apostasy than Nineveh’s destruction; the quote sets the events of Nahum in the context of Israel’s rebellions in Exod 32 and Num 14.

## NUMBERS 14

A comparison of Nah 1:3a, Exod 34:6–7, and Num 14:17–18 yields two conspicuous similarities between Nahum and Numbers not present in Exodus. First, both Nah 1:3 and Num 14:18 begin, יהוה ארך אפים (“YHWH is slow to anger”). Even though the same words are found in Exod 34:6, there the name יהוה is doubled and then אל רחום והנון (“a compassionate and gracious God”) separates יהוה from ארך אפים. Contrary to Spronk—who notes “the uncommon word order” of יהוה ארך אפים in Nah 1:3 and attributes it to “the fact that the poet wanted to link these lines to previous strophe”—the “uncommon word order” suggests that Nahum begins by quoting Numbers instead of Exodus.<sup>9</sup>

Second, and more importantly, Nah 1:3a contains the phrase וגדל־כח. Almost all scholars treat these words as an original insertion by the prophet, rather than a quotation from Num 14:17. For example,

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attributes is found in Num. 14:18; Ps. 86:15; 103:8; 145:8; Joel 2:13” (*Nahum in the Light of Northwest Semitic* [BibOr 26; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1973], 45). E. Achtemeier includes, “However, lest the reader of Nahum’s words think God’s hesitancy is due to lack of power, the prophet, in the manner of Numbers 14:17 and Romans 9:22, emphasizes also God’s might” (*Nahum–Malachi* [IBC; Louisville: John Knox, 1986], 12). A. Pinker and W. Maier do link Nah 1:3a and Num 14:17–18. Pinker hypothesizes that Nahum quoted Num 14:17–18 instead of Exod 34:6–7 because the wording from Numbers proved more adaptable to the acrostic structure of Nah 1:2–8: “On the Genesis of Nahum 1:3a,” *Hiphil* 4 (2007): 3–4. Maier appears to link וגדל־כח to Num 14:17, in the statement, “For Yahweh is ‘great in power’ (Num 14:17)” (*The Book of Nahum: A Commentary* [St. Louis: Concordia, 1959; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980], 156). Unfortunately, he makes no comment clarifying how Nah 1:3 relates to Num 14. R. Patterson remarks upon the similarity to Num 14:17 but sees a stronger tie to Ps 147:5, which reads, גדול אדונינו ורבי־כח (“Great is our Lord and great in power”). See R. Patterson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah: An Exegetical Commentary* (Richardson, Tex.: Biblical Studies, 2003), 36.

9. Spronk, *Nahum*, 36.



אֲרַךְ אֲפִים . . . occurs frequently in Scripture (near parallels to this verse are found in Exod. 34:6; Num. 14:18; Neh. 9:17; Ps. 86:15; 103:8; 145:8; Jer. 15:15; Joel 2:13). In these contexts, however, אֲרַךְ אֲפִים is followed by affirmations of divine love or fealty rather than the affirmation וגדל־כַּח (but of great power). The difference between these usages may be accounted for by the context here being one of judgment.<sup>10</sup>

This is understandable if one assumes that Nahum quotes Exod 34, as that passage contains no form of either of these words. However, they do occur in Num 14:17: ועתה יגדל־נא כַּח אֲדֹנִי (“And now, please let the power of the Lord be great”). Rather than reinterpreting YHWH’s Attributes, the prophet merely reordered the quotation from Num 14:17–18 by inserting a phrase from verse 17, minus the entreaty נֹא, into the middle of the quotation from verse 18.

Two less pronounced aspects of Nah 1:3 suggest ties to Exod 34:6–7 not present in Num 14:17–18. The quotation in Nah 1:3 begins and ends with יהוה. In Exod 34:6, “the covenant name of God is repeated twice, precisely as in Nahum,” but in Exodus, the name is doubled at the beginning, while in Nahum, יהוה begins and ends the line.<sup>11</sup> Also, the beginning of Nah 1:2, אֵל קְנֹא וְנִקָּם יְהוה (“YHWH is a jealous and avenging God”), is reminiscent of יהוה קְנֹא שְׂמוֹ אֵל קְנֹא הוּא (“YHWH, whose name is jealous, he is a jealous God”) in Exod 34:14. The linguistic comparison suggests that Nahum blended aspects of Num 14 and Exod 34; yet, the syntactic ties to Num 14 are stronger than those to Exod 34.

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF NAHUM’S VERSION

The understanding that Nahum quoted Num 14 makes the prophet’s editing appear less arbitrary. To demonstrate this, the Hebrew text of both passages appears below, with strikethrough marks across the words that occur in Num 14:17–18, but not in Nah 1:3a.

10. Longman, “Nahum,” 789.

11. Robertson, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*, 63.

(Nah 1:3a) יהוה ארך אפים וגדל־כח ונקמה לא ינקה יהוה

וַעֲתָה יִגְדַּל־נָא כַח אֲדֹנֵי כַאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ לֵאמֹר יְהוָה אֲרֵךְ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד נִשְׂא עוֹן  
וּפְשָׁע וְנִקְמָה לֹא יִנְקֶה פֶקֶד עוֹן אֲבוֹת עַל־בְּנִים עַל־שְׁלִשִׁים וְעַל־רַבְעִים  
(Num 14:17–18)

This comparison shows that (1) all of the words in Nah 1:3a occur in Num 14:17–18, (2) the quote in Nahum begins and ends with יהוה while Num 14:17–18 names יהוה only once, (3) Nahum includes only select portions of Num 14:17–18, (4) the particle נָא has been removed from between יגדל and כה, and (5) וגדל־כח has been inserted between the two clauses from verse 18. The remainder of this article will explore the purpose for these changes.

The above task begins negatively; these changes do not support the belief that the prophet sculpted the quote to excise mention of YHWH's mercy and to emphasize the vengeance against Assyria, as is typically argued:

In most of these passages the emphasis is upon God's mercy, his slowness to anger, and his willingness to forgive. Nahum's emphasis, however, is quite different. While he acknowledges this traditional confession about the nature of Yahweh, he shapes the statement to support his own borrowed portrait of Yahweh as an enraged God of harsh vengeance. In contrast to all the other occurrences of this confessional statement *w<sup>e</sup>rab ḥesed* or *ûg<sup>e</sup>dôl ḥāsed*, "and great in loving kindness," Nahum has *ûg<sup>e</sup>dôl kôah*, "but great in strength." This shifts the thought from God's merciful willingness to forgive back to God's majesty, and the shift is completed by the following statement that Nahum shares with Ex. 34:7 and Num. 14:18: "And Yahweh will certainly not acquit the guilty."<sup>12</sup>

This argument fails on both points—neither the excision of וְרַב־חֶסֶד, nor the insertion of וְגַד־לִכַּח supports this conclusion.

It can be agreed, without controversy, that Nahum pronounces YHWH's vengeance upon Assyria. According to Nah 1:12–13, 2:1 [1:15 NRSV], and 2:3 [2:2], the restoration of Judah and Jacob provide one motive for this vengeance. With this understanding, however, it cannot

12. J. Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah: A Commentary* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991), 50.

be maintained that Nahum's message of vengeance motivated the removal of *hesed*. Works devoted to the meaning of *hesed* consistently link YHWH's *hesed* to his vengeance against the enemies of his people: "God's might, exercised for the sake of his people, is virtually identical with his *hesed*."<sup>13</sup> Psalm 136 provides a vivid example of this. The word *hesed* appears in each of the psalm's twenty-six verses. In verses 10–21 it is YHWH's judgment for the sake of his people that demonstrates his *hesed*. Most notably, in Ps 136:10 YHWH showed his *hesed* by killing Egyptian children. Another example comes from Ps 143:12, where the psalmist invoked YHWH's *hesed* as the basis for the annihilation of the psalmist's enemies. "Early commentaries proposed emendations for *hesed* on the ground that extermination and destruction could scarcely be considered an expression of God's mercy. . . . Although God is usually asked in his *hesed* or *'emet* to deliver the psalmist, he is regularly to do this by shaming or destroying the enemy."<sup>14</sup> As often acknowledged, the Hebrew word *hesed* defies translation into English. To render it as loving-kindness, imbue it with the modern idea of loving-kindness, and then deem the word inconsistent with Nahum's message does not do justice to the term or explain its absence from Nahum.<sup>15</sup> The concept of *hesed* matches Nahum's vengeance against Nineveh.

Attributing the addition of *gedol* merely to vengeance fails for similar reasons. While a few Nahum commentators note a connection to Num 14, none remark upon the significance for interpreting Nahum. In Numbers, Moses interceded for Israel by asking that YHWH's power would be great, enabling his mercy. In a commentary on Numbers, Baruch Levine makes this point and draws the proper correlation to Nahum: "The precise connotation of *kôah* (normally 'strength, power') in this verse requires comment. The sense here is 'forbearance, restraint,' namely, the strength to restrain the use of destructive power. Moses appeals to God, with some indirection, not to unleash his wrath against his people. This nuance is expressed in Nah 1:3: 'YHWH is long tempered and of great forbearance (*gedol kôah*).'"<sup>16</sup> Timothy Ashley

13. Glueck, *Hesed*, 82.

14. K. Sakenfeld, *The Meaning of Hesed in the Hebrew Bible: A New Inquiry* (HSM 17; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars, 1978), 220–21.

15. This is not to dispute the validity of "loving-kindness" as a translation. It is to acknowledge the limitations of the translation and to note that modern conceptions of "loving-kindness" differ from ancient Hebrew ones.

16. B. Levine, *Numbers 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 4; New York: Doubleday, 1993), 366.

also links YHWH's power to his mercy: "What Moses means is that Yahweh should show his great power by revealing, once again, his heart of mercy and forgiveness."<sup>17</sup> In Num 14:17 the phrase יגדל-נא כח has the opposite connotation to the one ascribed by Nahum commentators.

The theory that the prophet shaped his quote to emphasize God's vengeance fails at one more point. The quotation in verse 3 ceases after assuring the reader that YHWH will not acquit the guilty. Therefore, Nahum also lacks the generational curse—"visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the descendants to the third and fourth generations" (Num 14:18)—that both Numbers and Exodus include. Nahum's application of Exod 34 and Num 14 demonstrates more theological nuance than just a vengeful motive.

Having provided evidence against the prevailing opinion, this article now asserts that the prophet knit together the quotation to put the prophecy in the context of the rebellions in the wilderness and at Mount Sinai. The salient similarities between Exod 34, Num 14, and Nahum commend this interpretation. Both Exod 34 and Num 14 follow events where the Israelites offended YHWH so gravely that he vowed to obliterate them. In both cases, Moses immediately interceded and stayed total annihilation. In both instances, God's wrath consumed a multitude, despite Moses' prayer.

Nahum does not use Exod 34 and Num 14 contrary to their original contexts; instead, Nahum crafts the quote to identify the prophecy as a third manifestation of the same circumstance. In Numbers, Exodus, and Nahum, YHWH's covenant people acted faithlessly to the degree that his wrath burned against them, but it did not destroy them. Nahum compares Israel's (2 Kgs 15:19) and Judah's (2 Kgs 16:17) covenants with Assyria to the worshiping of the golden calf in Exod 32 and the rebellion of Num 14. This explains the judgment suffered at the hands of Assyria as well as the deliverance from Assyria.

Since commentators typically miss, or disregard, the reference to Num 14:17, they construe יגדל-נא כח as a statement of wrath. As shown above, this interpretation does not fit with Num 14. It does not fit with Exod 34 either. After the golden calf, Moses also used the phrase בכה גדול in the midst of his plea that YHWH not exterminate the Israelites (Exod 32:11). Therefore, in both Num 14 and Exod 32, God's great power is not at odds with his mercy but enables it.

17. T. Ashley, *The Book of Numbers* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 257.

Why then would Nahum remove נ from the phrase? The word נ has the context of “entreaty or exhortation.”<sup>18</sup> In Nahum the phrase lacks נ because it comes in an announcement, not an entreaty. The prophet Nahum heralded YHWH’s deliverance rather than pleading for it.

Therefore, the phrase has developed from Numbers to Nahum. What Moses asked in Numbers happens in Nahum. Nahum announces it as fact. YHWH is גדל־כֶּחַ. Nahum’s poetry proclaims that Moses’s prayer from Num 14:17–19 has crossed centuries to bring about YHWH’s mercy on his rebellious people.

The classification of Nahum as a מִשְׁא (Nah 1:1) strengthens this hypothesis. In the “seminal work” on the term מִשְׁא,<sup>19</sup> Richard Weis concludes:

Except for Nahum 1:2–3:19 the exemplars of the genre *maššā’* that survive in the final form of the Hebrew Bible are used to expound the manifestation in human events and affairs of the divine plan/intention revealed in some previously communicated expression of the divine will. This previously communicated revelation is always outside the *maššā’*.<sup>20</sup>

By beginning the prophecy in this way, the book of Nahum removes the need for Weis to qualify his definition. Nahum also “expound[s] the manifestation in human events” of YHWH’s revealed will—to have mercy upon Judah and Jacob, despite their rebellion.<sup>21</sup>

18. “נ,” *TWOT*, BibleWorks 8.

19. M. Boda, “Freeing the Burden of Prophecy: *Maššā’* and the Legitimacy of Prophecy in Zech 9–14,” *Bib* 87 (2006): 342.

20. R. Weis, “The Genre *Maššā’* in the Hebrew Bible” (PhD diss., The Claremont Graduate School, 1986), 273; emphasis his. Endorsements of Weis’s analysis include, D. Christensen, *Nahum: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 24F; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 152–53; Sweeney, *Twelve Prophets*, 2:423; M. Floyd, “The *MAŠŠA’* (*maššā’*) as a Type of Prophetic Book,” *JBL* 121 (2002): 403.

21. Nahum contains other fulfillments of “previously communicated revelation.” Unfortunately, explanation of this is beyond the scope of the present work. The assertion by Spronk that “the words of Nahum can often be read as a reinterpretation of oracles in, for instance, Isa. 5:24–30; 10:5–19; 14:24–27; and 30:27–33” (Spronk, *Nahum*, 7–8) demonstrates that Nahum may be read as a fulfillment of various prophecies regarding Assyria.

This hypothesis counters the widespread belief that “In the three chapters of Nahum there is not a hint of criticism of the Judah of the seventh century BCE, nor a whisper of threat of judgment against the people for their sins (at least in the book as it stands now).”<sup>22</sup> Over a hundred years ago, J. M. P. Smith criticized Nahum because, “instead of grieving over the sin of Judah and striving with might and main to warn her of the error of her ways that she herself, might turn and live, Nahum was apparently content to lead her in a jubilant celebration of the approaching death of Assyria.”<sup>23</sup> However, careful attention to how Nahum begins demonstrates this is not the case.

After Moses recited YHWH’s self-revelation in Num 14:18, he continued with the petition, “please forgive the iniquity of this people as the greatness of your loving-kindness and as you have lifted this people from Egypt until now.” Nahum begins by allusion, demonstrating how YHWH has pardoned his people. The intercession of Moses remains effective. YHWH patiently endured Judah’s apostasy and adultery with Assyria. His power to forbear proved sufficient to spare them. He did not, however, leave the guilty unpunished, as YHWH “afflicted” (Nah 1:12) Judah for nearly a century before breaking off the Assyrian “yoke” (1:13).

## CONCLUSION

This article contends that Nahum scholars typically misinterpret the reference to YHWH’s Thirteen Attributes of Mercy. Instead of recognizing that Nahum primarily quotes from Num 14:17–18, they interpret Nah 1:3a as a statement of YHWH’s wrath against Nineveh. The article demonstrated that the lack of mention of YHWH’s חסד cannot be attributed to a desire for vengeance against Assyria. It was also shown that the insertion of גַּדְלִיכָהּ comes from Num 14:17 as a statement supporting YHWH’s mercy, rather than contradicting it. The allusions to Num 14 and Exod 34 place Nahum in the context of two of Israel’s most serious rebellions. Therefore, the version of the Thirteen Attributes in Nah 1:3a serves to explain how YHWH could have mercy on his rebellious people and bring them deliverance from Assyria: “YHWH is

22. R. Mason, *Micah, Nahum, Obadiah* (OTG 28; Sheffield, England; JSOT, 1991), 57.

23. Smith, *Critical*, 281.

slow to anger and great in power, but he [has not left] the guilty unpunished.”





## ***The Visual and Auditory Presentation of God on Mount Sinai<sup>1</sup>***

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*In the OT there are two accounts of theophany recorded in Exod 19–20 and Deut 4–5. Some scholars thus argue that Deut 4 is constructed in such a way as to show that hearing is superior to sight. This paper argues that the senses of sight and hearing are used together to attain knowledge of God and that this interrelation between seeing and hearing is intended. The account of theophany on Mount Sinai is used as an example to show that seeing and hearing are often mingled to complement each other. The presence of God is experienced through hearing the voice of God and seeing God speaking out of fire, cloud, and smoke on the mountain. There is no sign to prove that one sense is superior to the other in the account of theophany. They are both means by which to experience God.*

**KEYWORDS:** *senses, sight, hearing, theophany, knowledge of God, epistemology*

It is through human senses that one perceives God and the world. Thus a range of verbs relating to the five senses is found in the OT,<sup>2</sup> but not all of the senses receive the same emphasis in terms of number of occurrences. In ancient society (as in modern times), seeing and hearing were the most prominent senses and are sometimes called the “high senses.”<sup>3</sup>

1. I sincerely thank the editors and the anonymous *JESOT* reviewers for their insightful feedback and comments which helped improve this article’s clarity and argument; however, I am responsible for all remaining flaws.

2. Avrahami’s study explores all of the senses in the OT. Y. Avrahami, *The Senses of Scripture: Sensory Perception in the Hebrew Bible* (LHBOTS 545; New York: T&T Clark, 2012).

3. The sense of sight is regarded as the highest sense and the lowest one is usually touch. See R. Jèutte, *A History of the Senses: From Antiquity to Cyberspace* (Oxford: Polity, 2005), 63. The sense of hearing is seen as “the bridge” between the “highest” sense of

This is the same case as in the OT. These two senses are the most significant ones in the epistemic process. There is, however, a debate of whether the sense of sight is superior to the sense of hearing or whether the sense of hearing is superior to the sense of sight in the OT.

In 1960 Boman proclaimed the idea that hearing was the crucial sense by means of which the Israelites learned about the world. He argued that, for the Hebrew, the sense of hearing was the most important sense “for the experience of truth (as well as various kinds of feelings), but for the Greek it had to be his sight.”<sup>4</sup> Even though Barr argued against this view in 1961,<sup>5</sup> Stephen Geller in his article repeats it and argues that Deut 4 is constructed in such a way as to show that hearing is superior.<sup>6</sup> Carasik picked up this issue years later and again used Deuteronomy to argue that it is seeing, not hearing, which has the central place in the Israelites’ understanding of how people acquire knowledge about the world.<sup>7</sup> He asserts that Boman’s argument “comes not from an analysis of Israelite modes of thought, but from the attempt to contrast ‘Hebrew mentality’ with ‘Greek mentality.’”<sup>8</sup>

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sight and the “lower” senses of smell, taste, and touch. M. M. Smith, *Sensory History* (Oxford: Berg, 2007), 41.

4. T. Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek* (London: SCM, 1960), 206. Jay accepts the view that vision was central for the Greeks as well. See M. Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 36.

5. In his book, Barr explains the intellectual background of Boman’s concept. J. Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 46–58. See also, J. Barr, *Biblical Words for Time* (London: SCM, 1962), 137–42.

6. S. A. Geller, “Fiery Wisdom: Logos and Lexis in Deuteronomy 4,” *Prooftexts* 14 (1994): 103–39. He argues, “Dt 4 has established a context in which ‘seeing’ and ‘hearing’ are contrasted rather than combined in the common hendiadys. Not only does he oppose the terms to each other, but also orders them religiously: ‘hearing’ is promoted, ‘seeing’ demoted in significance as regards revelation, and, by extension, all religious experience” (p. 113).

7. M. Carasik, *Theologies of the Mind in Biblical Israel* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005), 38.

8. *Ibid.*, 33. For criticism of Boman’s work, see W. K. Bechtold, “The Eyes of Both of Them Were Opened: A Rhetorical-Theological Analysis of the Theme of Visual Perception in the Narrative of Genesis” (PhD diss., Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014), 8.

The question that arises from this debate is whether this division of epistemology into either visual or auditory is legitimate. If one embraces the view that a particular sense is primary in the epistemic process, then he or she is suggesting that one sense is superior to the other in epistemology. Many biblical narratives, however, suggest otherwise. Sight and hearing are often complementary. For example, in Jacob's story, God made himself known to Jacob through a vision in a dream. The account of his dream is as followed:

And he dreamed [and behold (וַיַּהַרְא)] there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and [behold (וַיַּהַרְא)] the angels of God (מַלְאכֵי אֱלֹהִים) were ascending and descending on it. And [behold (וַיַּהַרְא)] the Lord stood (נָצַב) beside him and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. . . . Know [and behold (וַיַּהַרְא)] that I am with you and will keep (שָׁמַר)<sup>9</sup> you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." (Gen 28:12–15)<sup>10</sup>

The visual aspect of Jacob's dream is described by four clauses beginning with הָנָה.<sup>11</sup> While the first three clauses beginning with הָנָה (Gen 28:12, 13) are followed by visual images, namely, a ladder, the angels of God, and the Lord himself, the last one (Gen 28:15) is actually followed by God's utterance. The repetition of הָנָה rhetorically shifts Jacob's (and also the readers') attention from what he sees to what he hears.<sup>12</sup> The visual elements provide sound evidence for Jacob to trust in the promise that he heard from God. Jacob's perception of God will not be complete if he only sees God without hearing his words. In this passage, we see the interrelation of seeing and hearing. Both are significant in the epistemic process.

9. This is the only place in Genesis where God is the subject of שָׁמַר, and before that this verb is usually used to refer to men keeping God's covenant or commandments. Bechtold, "Visual Perception," 164.

10. All translations are working from the NRSV unless otherwise noted.

11. For the function of this term הָנָה, see F. I. Andersen, *The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), 95.

12. Bechtold, "Visual Perception," 165.

Similarly, in Job 42:5–6, we see the juxtaposition of the senses of seeing and hearing.<sup>13</sup> Job's knowledge of God is not based solely on the sense of hearing or seeing but on both. Only after he hears and sees God, he gains adequate knowledge of God.

In the book of Zechariah, the prophet sees many visions but he does not understand them until God's angelic interlocutor explains their meaning to him. In other words, Zechariah needs both senses of seeing and hearing to comprehend God's will. Some might argue that this shows hearing is the primary sense of perceiving God.<sup>14</sup> However, without seeing these visions, Zechariah cannot perceive the divine fully. Besides, the fact that the phrase "I looked up and saw" repeats throughout the book of Zechariah (Zech 1:18; 2:1; 5:1, 9; 6:1; 12:10) and the word עֵין ("eye") appears 17 times while רָאָה ("to see") appears 20 times, all indicate that the sense of sight is emphasised. For Zechariah, seeing visions and hearing angel's words are both indispensable in understanding God's will.

Thus, I argue that it is illegitimate to emphasise one sense over the other in Hebrew epistemology because sight and hearing are often used together in a significant way. In many instances these two senses are combined, such as in "hearing the voice of the sign" (Exod 4:8) or "seeing the sound" (Exod 20:18).<sup>15</sup> This suggests that this interrelation between seeing and hearing is intended, in particular, in the epistemic process.

In the following two parts of this article, I will first briefly survey the use of sight and hearing in relation to knowledge and show that both senses are seen as a way of acquiring knowledge in an epistemic process. Then I will use the account of theophany on Mount Sinai as an example to show that there is not a primary sense in attaining knowledge of God and dividing them is therefore unproductive because by doing so, one fails to grasp the significance of the interrelation between seeing and hearing and knowing God.

13. For detailed analysis of this passage, see below.

14. G. W. Savran, "Seeing Is Believing: On the Relative Priority of Visual and Verbal Perception of the Divine," *Biblical Interpretation* 17 (2009): 326.

15. The combination of different senses is not uncommon. For synesthesia of senses, see L. E. Marks, *The Unity of the Senses: Interrelations among the Modalities* (New York: Academic Press, 1978).

## SIGHT, HEARING, AND KNOWLEDGE

*Sight and Knowledge*

The verb ראה (“to see”) occurs 1,299 times in the OT. The word עין (“eye”) occurs 868 times. This makes the sense of sight the most frequently referred to of the senses. For the Israelites, vision was not only the most important means by which to perceive the world but was also a metaphor for understanding.<sup>16</sup> The vast number of occurrences of ראה and עין and the complexity of their usage makes it impossible to examine all the verses. As a result, I will focus mainly on the literal use of this verb, that is, seeing with physical eyes. The passages that I quote are selective but try to cover nearly every stage of Israel’s history to show that the sight-knowledge relationship emerges throughout the OT.

In the OT, seeing (ראה) and knowing (ידע) are closely related.<sup>17</sup> For example, in Josh 3:3–4, Joshua comments to the people:

When you see (בראותכם) the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God being carried by the levitical priests, then you shall set out from your place. Follow it, so that you may know (תדעו) the way you should go, for you have not passed this way before.

In order to know where to go, the Israelites have to depend on their vision. In this instance, vision is the only way of obtaining knowledge. Similarly in Josh 3:7, the Lord said to Joshua, “This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight (בעיני) of all Israel, so that they may know (ידעו) that I will be with you as I was with Moses.” Although the verb of seeing is not used, “in the sight of” implies the act of seeing. Through seeing the exaltation of Joshua, the Israelites will know that God is with him.<sup>18</sup>

We find the juxtaposition of sight and knowledge in the Prophets as well. For example, in Ezek 14:23, “They shall console you, when you see (תראו) their ways and their deeds; and you shall know (ידעתם) that it

16. Carasik, *Theologies*, 43. Simcha Kogut offers a suggestion as how to interpret ראה. He suggests that when it is followed by a “single constituent,” it means “to see” whereas, if it is followed by a clause, it means “to perceive.” S. Kogut, “On the Meaning and Syntactical Status of הנה in Biblical Hebrew,” *ScrHier* 31 (1986): 133–54.

17. E.g., Exod 3:7; Lev 5:1; Num 24:16; Deut 29:3; 33:9; Isa 32:3. Note that in most of these occurrences, the sense of hearing appears as well.

18. See also Josh 3:10–11.

was not without cause that I did all that I have done in it, says the Lord God.”<sup>19</sup> Observers will know the appropriateness of God’s actions when they see the ways and deeds of the recent arrivals (the survivors).<sup>20</sup> Similarly in Ezek 6:13, “And you shall know (ידעתם) that I am the LORD, when their slain lie among their idols around their altars, on every high hill, on all the mountain tops, under every green tree, and under every leafy oak, wherever they offered pleasing odor to all their idols.”<sup>21</sup> Even though the verb of sight is not used, the vivid description of the green tree and the leafy oak shows that the sense of sight to which is being appealed. Knowledge of God is often expressed in relation to seeing a mighty act of God. Hence, Balaam describes himself as “the one who hears the words of God and knows the knowledge of the Most High, who sees (יחזה) the vision of the Almighty” (Num 24:16).

Carasik points out that הודיע (to make known), the Hiphil of ידע (to know), indicates that “it is God who causes, or is asked to cause, someone to know.”<sup>22</sup> This is a correct observation, but, very often, when God makes himself known, he does it in a public and outward way which can be seen with human eyes. God makes himself known through his might and power (Jer 16:21) in visible acts. This is shown in Ezek 20:9, “But I acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they lived, in whose sight (לעיניהם) I made myself known (נודעתי) to them in bringing them out of the land of Egypt.” In Ezek 39:21–22 God says, “I will display my glory (כבוד) among the nations; and all the nations shall see (וראו) my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid on them. The house of Israel shall know (ידעו) that I am the Lord their God, from that day forward.” All these passages indicate that sight and knowledge are closely related.

19. It has been thought that the “you” in Ezek 14:22–23 refers to the Babylonian exiles, but Brownlee argues that the “you” are the refugees from Jerusalem, whom Ezekiel met while he was in Egypt. W. H. Brownlee, *Ezekiel 1–19* (Waco: Word Books, 1986), 209. Cooke points out that “you” could mean survivors who will bring their sons and daughters or that the sons and daughters are the survivors. G. A. Cooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1936), 154; M. Greenberg, *Ezekiel* (2 vols.; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 2:261.

20. D. I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 452.

21. Cf. Deut 12:2; Hos 4:13.

22. Carasik, *Theologies*, 40.

Next we look at several texts in Exodus which also point to the sight-knowledge relationship. In the OT, God's glory is characteristically visible,<sup>23</sup> and thus is always used together with רָאָה, as in Exod 16:7: "in the morning you shall see (רָאִיתֶם) the glory (כְּבוֹד) of the LORD." This is the first theophany recorded and it happens because of the Israelites' complaint. The glory of God appears in a cloud and the whole congregation sees it (Exod 16:10).<sup>24</sup> God hears their complaint and will give them meat and bread, as a result of which they "shall know (וִידַעְתֶּם) that I am the LORD your God" (Exod 16:12). On the basis of this firsthand experience, the Israelites will come to know that YHWH is their God.

It is not only human knowledge that is connected to sense perception; divine knowledge is also expressed using anthropomorphic sense perception. In Gen 18:21 God says, "I must go down and see (וְאֵרָאָה) whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me; and if not, I will know (אֲדַעַה)." This shows that even for God, "seeing is believing"<sup>25</sup> and his knowledge is confirmed by seeing.<sup>26</sup> The Psalter praises the Lord because God sees and knows: "I will exult and rejoice in your steadfast love, because you have seen (רָאִיתָ) my affliction; you have taken heed (יָדַעְתָּ) of my adversities . . ." (Ps 31:7). Divine perception is also described in Exod 3:7, "Then the Lord said, 'I have observed (רָאָה) the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard (שָׁמַעְתִּי) their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know (יָדַעְתִּי) their sufferings.'" Divine perception and divine knowledge are also indications that God is present with the Israelites in Egypt.<sup>27</sup>

Our study shows that sight is considered as a way of acquiring knowledge in Hebrew epistemology, and is consistently so in nearly every stage of the history of Israel. We now turn to the relationship between hearing and knowledge.

23. The visibility of God's glory is also recorded in Exod 24:17. This shows that the visual aspect of God's glory is emphasised. As Savran points out, the glory of God is described as "a visible and palpable manifestation of the divine." G. W. Savran, *Encountering the Divine: Theophany in Biblical Narrative* (JSOTSup 420; London: T&T Clark, 2005), 49.

24. The manifestation of God's glory proves God's presence in the exodus from Egypt. Durham argues that God's glory is equal to God's presence. See J. I. Durham, *Exodus* (WBC 3; Waco: Word Books, 1987), 220.

25. Carasik, *Theologies*, 40.

26. For a thorough study on the sense of sight in Genesis, see T. Sutscover, *Sight and Insight in Genesis: A Semantic Study* (HBM 56; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2013).

27. T. B. Dozeman, *Commentary on Exodus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 126.

*Hearing and Knowledge*

The sense of hearing, like the sense of sight, plays a part in Hebrew epistemology.<sup>28</sup> Hearing as a way of acquiring knowledge may be observed in Job 5:27, “See, we have searched this out; it is true. Hear (שמענה), and know (דע) it for yourself.” Also, in Jer 6:18, “Therefore hear (שמעו), O nations, and know (ודעי), O congregation, what will happen to them.” In these two instances hearing is connected to acquiring knowledge.

Hearing is understood by the Hebrews as one means of knowing. People hear in order to get certain knowledge. When it comes to the knowledge of God, hearing is also an important means, especially in relation to the signs that God performed. Though signs are mostly seen, they can also be heard, namely in the form of a report, by those who are far away. This is witnessed in Isa 33:13, where the Lord says, “Hear (שמעו), you who are far away, what I have done; and you who are near, acknowledge my might.” Moses also says that the Egyptians will hear how God leads Israel out of Egypt, leading them “in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night” (Num 14:13). To see a sign is a direct experience. To hear a report of a sign is an indirect experience. For those who do not see the signs themselves due to distance or time, they can still hear a report of these signs through the testimony of the Israelites (Ps 126:2). The signs that YHWH has performed then become a testimony to YHWH as the true God, and the proper response to that testimony is the acknowledging of God in worship as the true God. Thus, in Ps 22, there is a culmination of this, an expectation that the nations will hear and accept the testimony to YHWH: “All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him” (Ps 22:27).<sup>29</sup>

It is natural for people to visualise what they hear in words.<sup>30</sup> Thus, hearing the report of signs should have the same effect as seeing

28. M. Malul, *Knowledge, Control, and Sex: Studies in Biblical Thought, Culture, and Worldview* (Tel Aviv-Jaffa: Archaeological Center Publication, 2002), 145.

29. W. Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 129.

30. C. R. Hallpike, *The Foundations of Primitive Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979), 159.



those signs, that is, the report should lead them to honour God as the true God. This effect of hearing a report of signs is shown in the book of Joshua, where hearing of signs is recorded several times. First, the account of the people of Jericho hearing of the miracle of the drying up of the water of Red Sea reads:

For we have heard (שמענו) how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. As soon as we heard (וּנְשַׁמְעָה) it, our hearts melted, and there was no courage left in any of us because of you. The LORD your God is indeed God in heaven above and on earth below. (Josh 2:10–11)

Then all the kings of the Amorites heard of the miracle of the drying up of the waters of the Jordan River. This is recorded in Josh 5:1:

When all the kings of the Amorites beyond the Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites by the sea, heard (כִּשְׁמָעָה) that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan for the Israelites until they had crossed over, their hearts melted, and there was no longer any spirit in them, because of the Israelites.

The last example from Joshua is from chapter 9. When the inhabitants of Gibeon heard (שמעו) what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai (Josh 9:3), they came to make a covenant with Israel. They said to Joshua and the men of Israel:

Your servants have come from a very far country, because of the name of the Lord your God; for we have heard (שמענו) a report of him, of all that he did in Egypt, and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon the king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroath. (Josh 9:9–10)

Hearing is, for the Hebrews, a way of acquiring knowledge. Knowledge of God is gained through hearing God's words and also through hearing reports of the miraculous acts of God. These reports appear in the form of testimony, thus an appeal to testimony can be seen

as another means of knowledge also.<sup>31</sup> The sense of hearing is as significant as the sense of sight in the epistemology.

### *Sight, Hearing and Knowledge*

Sight and hearing are also used together in the epistemic process, such as in Gen 18:21, Exod 3:7, Num 24:16, Isa 6:9–10, and Job 42:1–6. We will look at two passages in detail and show how these two senses are used complementarily in Hebrew epistemology. We first look at Job 42:1–6:

Then Job answered the LORD: ‘I know (ידעת) that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. “Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?” Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. “Hear (שמע), and I will speak; I will question you, and you declare (והודיע) to me.” I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear (לשמע און שמעתוך), but now my eye sees you (עיני ראתך); therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.’

Job’s perception of God is mainly verbal, for God speaks to him out of the whirlwind. Thus his knowledge of God (Job 42:1) is based on his hearing of God’s utterance (Job 38–41).<sup>32</sup> Yet his hearing is not the only means in the epistemic process, because his vision of God is what transforms his doubt to certainty (Job 42:5–6).<sup>33</sup> Thus Samuel Balentine concludes that Job “has now not only *heard* but also *seen* something about God . . .”<sup>34</sup> But the question remains, although Job claims that his eyes have seen God, there is no reference in Job 38–41 about Job’s vision of God. Thus, some take “my eye sees you (עיני ראתך)” metaphorically as a first-hand divine experience, which is in contrast with

31. Brueggemann, *Theology*, 119.

32. There is a debate of the meaning of שמע און. See further in Savran, “Seeing,” 337–338.

33. Reyburn argues that “now my eye sees thee” expresses Job’s knowledge of God as “an eye witness.” W. Reyburn, *A Handbook on the Book of Job* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1992), 772.

34. S. Balentine, *Job* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2006), 693.

“hearing,” a secondary experience passed on by tradition or hearsay. However, as Savran points out, when ראה is used with עין, it refers to actual sight and when this phrase is used together with hearing, the sense of seeing and hearing are usually parallel or complementary.<sup>35</sup> If ראה refers to actual sight, then Job 42:5 is indeed a theophany text.<sup>36</sup> Job did see God for the whirlwind is an indication that God reveals himself to Job.<sup>37</sup> It is through seeing and hearing God that Job’s knowledge of God is made complete.

In Isa 6:9–10 we also see an important statement about the relationship between seeing, hearing, and knowing. However, in order to understand this passage we should consider its context. At the beginning of Isa 6, Isaiah “saw (ראה) the Lord sitting on a throne” in the temple and seraphs were attending him (Isa 6:1–2). Isaiah hears the voice of seraphs proclaiming the holiness of God (Isa 6:3). He then identifies himself with his people of “the unclean lips.” In his fear, he affirms the fact that “my eyes (עיני) have seen (ראו) the King, the LORD of hosts” (Isa 6:5). God removes the sins of Isaiah by touching his mouth with a live coal (Isa 6:6). Once Isaiah is purified, the voice of the Lord calls out, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Isaiah responded, “Here am I; send me!” It is at this point that the message of Isa 6:9–10 is given.

This introduction helps us to understand the blindness and deafness in Isa 6:9–10. In Isa 6:1–6, Isaiah sees God and hears his words. First, he sees God sitting on the throne and does not harden his heart, but recognises that he is a sinner living among the people of unclean lips. Because of his repentant response, his sin is then forgiven. After he sees God, he hears the words of God. Again, rather than being insensitive, he responds immediately to God’s calling.<sup>38</sup> He is an example of one who sees and hears and understands (ידע). We now take a closer look at Isa 6:9–10:

35. Savran, “Seeing,” 336.

36. M. Burrows, “The Voice from the Whirlwind,” *JBL* 47 (1928): 117–32 128; J. G. Williams, “Deciphering the Unspoken: The Theophany of Job,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 49 (1978): 60; Savran, “Seeing,” 338.

37. E. M. Good, *In Turns of Tempest: A Reading of Job, with a Translation* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 340; E. L. Greenstein, “A Forensic Understanding of the Speech from the Whirlwind,” in *Texts, Temples and Traditions: A Tribute to Menahem Haran* (ed. M. V. Fox; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 241–58.

38. G. V. Smith, “Spiritual Blindness, Deafness, and Fatness in Isaiah,” *BibSac* 170 (2013): 172.

Go and say to this people: “Keep listening (שמעו שמוע), but do not comprehend (תבינו); keep looking (וראו ראו), but do not understand (ידע).” Make the mind of this people dull, and stop their ears, and shut their eyes, so that they may not look with their eyes (ראו בעיניו), and listen with their ears (באזניו ישמע), and comprehend with their minds, and turn and be healed.

In this passage Isaiah asserts that the senses that used to be a means to mediate the knowledge of God cannot function properly, and this inability to understand and to know is due to the Israelites’ obduracy, spiritual impotence, and unresponsiveness. In this regard, sense perception is used metaphorically. But if we take the introduction of Isa 6:1–6 into consideration, we may come to a different conclusion.

In the narrative, Isaiah physically sees God and hears God’s words. Since Isa 6:9–10 follows immediately after Isaiah’s vision of God, it is legitimate to see Isaiah as an example of the one who sees, hears, and understands. Thus, the seeing and hearing in Isa 6:9 may be understood as physical seeing and hearing. Yet the seeing and hearing in verse 10 must be metaphorical, for Isaiah cannot physically blind the eyes and dull the ears of the people. This is how Uhlig understands it. He interprets the imperative verbs in Isa 6:9 as “literal imperatives,” and he considers the imperatives in Isa 6:10 as “figurative imperatives.”<sup>39</sup> We should note that Isaiah never makes it explicit whether he is referring to physical or spiritual blindness and deafness. In Isa 6:9–10, it could mean both. Thus we have here another example of how sight, hearing, and knowledge are related.

#### THEOPHANY ON MOUNT SINAI

We have shown that sight and hearing are both seen as a means of gaining knowledge of God, and there are many different ways of knowing God, such as seeing God’s signs and hearing the report of God’s mighty acts. Yet the most direct and significant event when God made

39. T. Uhlig, “Too Hard to Understand? The Motif of Hardening in Isaiah,” in *Interpreting Isaiah* (ed. D. G. Firth and H. G. M. Williamson; Leicester: IVP Academic, 2009), 68.

himself known is the event that took place on Mount Sinai. God shows himself to the Israelites so that they can know him more closely.

The following study of this account of the theophany on Mount Sinai will show that the senses of sight and hearing are both indispensable in knowing God. One is not subservient to the other. We will look at two groups of passages in turn: the narratives in Exod 19–20 and Deut 4–5.

### *The Visual Presentation of God (Exod 19–20)*

In Exodus, the narrative of the theophany contains extensive visual elements, such as smoke, fire, and cloud (Exod 19:16–18) and thus is often regarded as visual centered.<sup>40</sup> However, even when it seems to focus mainly on the sense of sight, auditory elements are mentioned. This can be seen in Exod 20:18, where we find the mixing of seeing and hearing modes of perception:

When all the people witnessed (ראים) the thunder (הקולת) and lightning, the sound (קול) of the trumpet, and [saw (וירא)] the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance.

In the OT, קולת (thunder) can also be a reference to “the voice of God,” as in Exod 9:23 and in Ps 29:3.<sup>41</sup> But because of the use of lightning, thunder is often regarded to be the best translation here.<sup>42</sup> Since thunder cannot be seen, some English versions translate the verb ראים as to “witness” (NRSV) or “perceive” (RSV, ASV).<sup>43</sup> Even Samaritan Pentateuch (100 B.C.) tries to soften this by adding the verb of

40. M. Z. Brettler, “‘Fire, Cloud, and Deep Darkness’ (Deuteronomy 5:22): Deuteronomy’s Recasting of Revelation,” in *The Significance of Sinai: Traditions About Sinai and Divine Revelation in Judaism and Christianity* (ed. L. T. Stuckenbruck, H. Najman and G. J. Brooke; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 24.

41. U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1967), 118.

42. M. Carasik, “To See a Sound: A Deuteronomic Rereading of Exodus 20:15,” *Prooftexts* 19 (1999): 261. See also W. H. Propp, *Exodus 19–40: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 2A; New York: Doubleday, 1999), 180.

43. Whether it is translated as “thunder” or “the voice of God,” the best verb to go with it would be שמע (“to hear”) rather than ראה (“to see”). The LXX, however, translates it literally as “to sound.”

hearing: “The whole people heard the thunder and the blare of the horn, and saw the lightning and the smoking mountain.”<sup>44</sup>

However, there is no strong reason against our understanding of ראים literally as “to see.” That is, the people saw what is audible, the thunder and lightning.<sup>45</sup> Rabbi Akiba also understood this verse literally. He believes that what people have seen is what thought to be audible.<sup>46</sup> This is also how Philo interprets the Sinai event. In Decalogue 46–47 he stresses,

Then from the midst of the fire that streamed from heaven there sounded forth to their utter amazement a voice, for the flame became articulate speech in the language familiar to the audience, and so clearly and distinctly were the words formed by it that they seemed to see rather than to hear them. What I say is vouched for by the law in which it is written, “All the people saw the voice,” a phrase fraught with much meaning, for it is the case that the voice of men is audible, but the voice of God truly visible. Why so? Because whatever God says is not words (ῥήματα) but deeds (ἔργα), which are judged by the eyes rather than the ears.<sup>47</sup>

Some scholars are not critical of Philo’s use of “seeing the voice” rather than “hearing the voice” because this is how LXX reads literally in Exod 20:18, καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ἑώρα τὴν φωνήν (And all people saw the voice).<sup>48</sup> Thus not many scholars pay much attention to this

44. S. D. Fraade, “Hearing and Seeing at Sinai: Interpretive Trajectories,” in *The Significance of Sinai: Traditions About Sinai and Divine Revelation in Judaism and Christianity* (ed. L. T. Stuckenbruck, H. Najman and G. J. Brooke; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 252.

45. If we read the beginning of the verse as an extended circumstantial clause, then ראים modifies not only “thunder and lighting” but also “the sound of the trumpet.” In my view, this is the most natural reading of the clause. Cf. Propp’s translation: “Seeing the sounds and the torches and the horn’s sound and the mountain smoking . . .” Propp, *Exodus*, 2:181.

46. Cited from Fraade, “Hearing and Seeing,” 253.

47. Philo, *Decal.* 46–47; trans. F. H. Colson, LCL VII, 29–31.

48. NIV, KJV, NRSV and NLT all translate τὴν φωνήν/הקולות in Ex 20:18 as “the thunder.”

verse. It is not possible to discuss this issue in depth here, but it is very likely that Philo's privileging of sight made him prefer a literal reading of LXX, "seeing the voice" to rendering it "seeing the thunders and lightnings" (KJV, NRSV, NIV). Also, his understanding of God's speech, as being radically different from human speech serves as a foundation for interpreting God's voice as visible. Most importantly, the speech of God can be interpreted as the thought of God, which only the eyes of the soul can see. The Logos of God is "interpreted by the power of sight residing in the soul, whereas those which are divided up among the various parts of speech appeal to hearing" (*Migr.* 48). As Philo says, "the voice of mortal beings is judged by hearing, the sacred oracles intimate that the word of God is seen as light is seen . . . virtue shining with intense brilliance, wholly resembling a fountain of reason" (*Migr.* 47). Thus for Philo, when speaking of human and divine relationships, sight and hearing are not "modes of sense perception" but are "as perceptual models that symbolised the relationship between human and divine."<sup>49</sup> Philo presents a "synesthesia" by which the eyes of the soul are capable of apprehending the voice of God because although God is beyond human experience, is accessible to human eyes somehow.<sup>50</sup>

Propp, however, argues that "seeing thunder" is the Bible's classic example of "zeugma," when a verb or adjective logically modifies only one of a pair of nouns and thus causes incongruity. He adds, "Obviously, the people saw only the lightning and smoke; they heard the sounds."<sup>51</sup> This explanation still does not answer the question of why the verb רָאָה is used instead of שָׁמַע.

Rashi and Iban Ezra offer other suggestions. Rashi agrees that they indeed "saw" a sound, something impossible to see in any other situation.<sup>52</sup> Ibn Ezra, on the other hand, proposes that this might be due to the confusion of the human senses in "Israelite parlance and experience."<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, the Israelites do make a clear distinction

49. D. Chidester, *Word and Light: Seeing, Hearing, and Religious Discourse* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 43.

50. *Ibid.*

51. See Cassuto, *Exodus*, 252.

52. Ibn Ezra, *The Commentators' Bible: Exodus* (trans. M. Carasik; Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2005), 164.

53. Ibn Ezra, *Exodus*, 164. Also cited by Carasik, "See a Sound," 262.

between the human senses in other passages.<sup>54</sup> The fact that this paradoxical language is again found in Exod 20:22, “The LORD said to Moses: Thus you shall say to the Israelites: ‘You have seen (ראיתם) for yourselves that I spoke with you from heaven,’” indicates that this paradoxical language is intended. Thus “seeing sound” would be understood to emphasise the unusual character of the theophany. A similar example can be found in 1 Kgs 19:13, where Elijah responds to what he hears by covering his face instead of covering his ears. The effect on both senses in this theophany is comparable to the Sinai event.<sup>55</sup> The integral use of seeing and hearing is not uncommon in the OT. For example, the psalmist in Ps 19:1–5 describes a visual revelation using terms which are associated with hearing while, in Ps 19:9–12, he expresses the verbal revelation of the Torah in terms of seeing.<sup>56</sup>

We can see that in this visual presentation of God, the auditory elements remain significant. Sight and hearing are both indispensable in the epistemic process. This paradoxical use of sensory language is intentional for both theological and psychological reasons. Psychologically, we can use language “to translate one sensory mode into another.”<sup>57</sup> Therefore, we can visualise what we hear in words. According to Hallpike, there must be some kind of “logical” mechanism which allows us to transform sight messages into sound messages.<sup>58</sup> The paradoxical language creates an impact with “zeugma,” as Propp suggests, which shows how extraordinary this theophanic event is.

Theologically, seeing God is an impossibility, yet the Israelites have “seen” the voice of God and remain alive.<sup>59</sup> This radical and

54. Carasik argues, “the Deuteronomic school had a well-developed epistemology that distinguished carefully between the realms of seeing and hearing.” Carasik, “See a Sound,” 262.

55. Savran, *Encountering*, 219.

56. S. L. Klouda, “The Dialectical Interplay of Seeing and Hearing in Psalm 19 and Its Connection to Wisdom,” *BBR* 10 (2000): 194.

57. Hallpike, *Foundations*, 159.

58. *Ibid.*

59. The biblical evidence shows that some people have seen God. For example, the psalmist speaks of the certainty of seeing God (Pss 11:7; 17:15; 27:4, 13; 42:2). See also, Numb 12:8; Exod 24:9–11. But seeing God is also said to be an impossibility for it is fatal (Exod 33:20; cf. Exod 19: 21; Judg 6:22; 13:22). I do not try to solve this problem here, since several scholars have already investigated the theme of seeing God in the OT.



revolutionary expression of the vision of God is affirmed in Deut 5:24, “Today we have seen that God may speak to someone and the person may still live.” “Seeing” the voice of God is a totally new experience for the Israelites and its purpose is to evoke their fear of God (Exod 20:21). More importantly, “seeing” the voice of God strongly implies a close relationship, as Moses emphasises to the Israelites in Deut 5:4, “The LORD spoke with you face to face at the mountain, out of the fire.” The phrase, “face to face,” does not mean that the Israelites literally saw God’s face.<sup>60</sup> What it implies is a personal relationship between the Lord and the Israelites. As Carasik puts it, the significance of the revelation at Horeb is that “Israel could see the revelation—not merely the accompanying phenomena, but the actual revelation.” The announcement of commandments is a direct, personal experience.<sup>61</sup> We may then conclude that by mixing the hearing and seeing modes of perception, the author seems to suggest that the revelation of God “requires the full sensory attention of its receiver.”<sup>62</sup>

### *The Auditory Presentation of God (Deut 4–5)*

It is widely accepted that the Deuteronomist(s) knew Exodus.<sup>63</sup> That means we have two accounts of Sinai theophany events. Many scholars believe that the Deuteronomists rework the Exodus material in a way as to downplay the ocular experience and thus highlight the auditory experience.<sup>64</sup> However, I will show that in this auditory presentation of

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M. S. Smith, “‘Seeing God’ in the Psalms: The Background to the Beatific Vision in the Hebrew Bible,” *CBQ* 50 (1988): 171–83; A. S. Malone, “The Invisibility of God: A Survey of a Misunderstood Phenomenon,” *EvQ* 79 (2007): 311–29; A. T. Hanson, “The Treatment in the LXX of the Theme of Seeing God,” in *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 557–68. On the physical presence of the divine, J. Barr, “Theophany and Anthropomorphism in the Old Testament,” *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* 7 (1960): 31–38.

60. J. H. Tigay, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Deuteronomy* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 61.

61. Carasik, “See a Sound,” 263.

62. Fraade, “Hearing and Seeing,” 267.

63. Carasik, “See a Sound,” 258; Brettler, “Deuteronomy 5:22,” 16.

64. For a list of scholarship, see Fraade, “Hearing and Seeing,” 252 n18. Brettler agrees that seeing and hearing are both important in bringing faith, but argues that the author of

God, one still finds visual elements which are indispensable in epistemology.

Compared with the narrative of theophany in Exodus, Deuteronomy adds some details, such as the Lord spoke “at Horeb out of the fire” (Deut 4:12, 15; 5:24).<sup>65</sup> It also emphasises the fact that the Israelites “saw no form, only a voice” (Deut 4:12, 15). While the Sinai event in Exodus is dominated by the visual, the recasting of the Sinai theophany in Deut 4 is often regarded as audio-centric.<sup>66</sup> Geller is a proponent of this view and argues that Deut 4 gives emphasis to hearing over seeing.<sup>67</sup> Deut 4:12 is often quoted in support of this view:

Then the LORD spoke to you out of the fire. You heard (שמעו) the sound (קול) of words but saw (ראו) no form; there was only a voice (קול).

This statement is repeated again in Deut 4:15–16 in order to combat the possibility of idolatry.<sup>68</sup>

Since you saw (ראיתם) no form when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the fire, take care and watch yourselves closely, so that you do not act corruptly by making an idol for yourselves in the form of any figure—the likeness of male or female.

This passage is a combination of two ideas: the earlier tradition that God speaks from heaven and the prohibition of idols (Exod 20:22).

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Deuteronomy 5 reworked Exodus material to show that hearing is believing. Brettler, “Deuteronomy 5:22,” 25.

65. Although some suggest that Sinai and Horeb are two different places, it is most plausible that these two refer to the same place. Cf. J. G. McConville, *Deuteronomy* (AOTC 5; Leicester: Apollos, 2002), 107.

66. Savran, “Seeing,” 326.

67. See his discussion, S. A. Geller, *Sacred Enigmas: Literary Religion in the Hebrew Bible* (London: Routledge, 1996), 30–61. For audio-centricity in the Deuteronomistic History, see H. Avalos, “Introducing Sensory Criticism in Biblical Studies: Audiocentricity and Visiocentricity,” in *This Abled Body: Rethinking Disabilities in Biblical Studies* (ed. H. Avalos, S. J. Melcher and J. Schipper; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 50–55.

68. See the discussion in Geller, *Enigmas*, 39–49.

Because God spoke from heaven and no form was seen, they should not make any image of him. This passage suggests no material presence of the Lord.<sup>69</sup> God reveals himself by the sound of word only.<sup>70</sup>

When Moses addresses the Israelites to remind them about the mighty saving act of God, he also emphasises the sense of hearing. He says in Deut 4:32–33:

For ask now about former ages, long before your own, ever since the day that God created human beings . . . ask from one end of heaven to the other: has anything so great as this ever happened or has its like ever been heard of (הנשמע)? Have any people ever heard (השמע) the voice of a god speaking out of a fire, as you have heard (שמעת), and lived?

All these verses in Deut 4 suggest that the auditory aspect is emphasised when recasting the theophany narrative. If we turn to Deut 5, we find extensive use of auditory terms, such as speak (דבר), hear (שמע) and voice (קול). Brettler thus argues that in Deut 5, revelation is only an auditory experience.<sup>71</sup> We should take a closer look at Deut 5:22–25:

These words the LORD spoke (דבר) with a loud voice (קול גדול) to your whole assembly at the mountain, out of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, and he added no more. He wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me. When you heard (כשמעכם) the voice (הקול) out of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire . . . and you said, “Look (הראנו), the LORD our God has shown us his glory and greatness, and we have heard (שמענו) his voice out of the fire. Today we have seen (רעינו) that God may speak to someone and the person may still live. So now why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear (לשמע) the voice of the LORD our God any longer, we shall die.

Indeed, we see in this passage a strong emphasis on the sense of hearing, such as the “LORD spoke with a loud voice” (v. 22), “you heard the voice out of the darkness” (v. 23), “God may speak to someone” (v.

69. S. R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1895), 66.

70. M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1–11* (AB 5; New York: Doubleday, 1991), 204, 213.

71. Brettler, “Deuteronomy 5:22,” 25.

24) and “we hear the voice of the LORD.” Unlike in Exodus, where people are afraid of seeing God, in this passage people are afraid of hearing God. Despite the emphasis on hearing, there are appeals to visual images. For example, God’s voice came out of “the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness” (v. 23). When they have heard God, they have also seen “the mountain was burning with fire” (v. 23). The verb of sight is also used twice (v. 24). This shows that the sense of sight and hearing are being used in a parallel and complementary way. The fact that Deut 5 emphasises their fear of hearing God is to show that just as “seeing is believing,” “hearing is also believing.” Both sight and hearing are direct experiences of God and thus are equally significant.

In other parts of Deuteronomy we also find the emphasis of visual aspect. For example, Moses continuously reminds the Israelites of the events that “your own eyes saw” (Deut 7:19) or uses the phrase, “before your eyes” (Deut 1:30). Also, there are many occasions when the verbs used are of hearing but the description is visual. For example, in Deut 4:36, “From heaven he made you hear his voice to discipline you. On earth he showed you his great fire, while you heard his words coming out of the fire.”<sup>72</sup> Note that the verb שמע is used with the vision of fire. The auditory revelation of God is combined with the visual revelation.

As we can see, some scholars argue from Deut 4 and 5 that God is present through the medium of his word, which is often compared with Exod 19–20. However, word (hearing) and event (seeing) are not separated here. The God who speaks is also the one who acts in signs and wonders (Deut 4:32–33). Israel knows God through his mighty acts, which are interpreted in “word-encounters.” This fusion of speech and act is close to Isa 40–55, in which God first says that he will deliver his people and then manifests his divine power (Isa 41:26–27; 43:9, 12).<sup>73</sup>

Our examinations of these biblical passages show that the visual and auditory elements in theophany need not be seen as two separate elements.<sup>74</sup> On the contrary, they complement each other. Thus, McConville disagrees that Deuteronomy “represents a shift from vision

72. This verse solves the contradiction between the traditions that God descended upon Mount Sinai (Exod 19:20) and that God spoke out of heaven (Exod 20:22). M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1–11*, 213; Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 56.

73. McConville, *Deuteronomy*, 115.

74. Savran, *Encountering*, 16.

to word.” Rather, he thinks that “word and actual encounter with Yahweh belong inseparably together.”<sup>75</sup>

Looking at these two accounts of Sinai events, one might argue that there is a shift from visual (Exodus) to auditory (Deuteronomy) because there is a transition from experiential language to scribal language, in particular if a later date is ascribed to Deuteronomy material. However, as Deut 6 shows, God’s words are to be heard (Deut 6:4–6), but at the same time to be written, namely, to be seen (Deut 6:9).<sup>76</sup> Hearing and seeing represent two different ways of perceiving God but together they provide “the comprehensive biblical description of cognition.”<sup>77</sup>

### CONCLUSION

In the OT the senses of sight and hearing are both used in relation to knowledge. God makes himself known through his might and power in visible acts. Hearing is also understood by the Hebrews as one means of knowing. People hear in order to get certain knowledge. God is also depicted as the one who hears, sees and knows. Both seeing and hearing are used to describe theophany, and they are often mingled to complement each other. The presence of God is experienced through hearing the voice of God and seeing God speaking out of fire, cloud, and smoke on the mountain. There is no sign to prove that one sense is superior to the other in the account of theophany. They are both means by which to experience God. Our examinations of these biblical narratives show that the senses of seeing and hearing are not to be divided nor should we regard one sense as primary mode of perceiving God. These two senses are both indispensable in Hebrew epistemology and only through the attention of both senses, one can acquire a full revelation of God and thus show a proper response, that is to fear God.

75. McConville, *Deuteronomy*, 107.

76. As Carasik points out, “we hear speech through the ear, but see writing with the eye.” Carasik, “See a Sound”: 258.

77. Ibid.



## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Oxford Handbook of The Psalms* edited by William P. Brown. Oxford: Oxford University, 2014. xix + 661 pp., US \$150.00 hardcover.

William P. Brown begins the preface of this volume by describing it as including the “likes of St. Jerome and Chuck Norris” (ix). This description alone is an encouragement for one to read through the massive volume, which includes essays that are both scholarly and concerned with the life of the church (thus, St. Jerome), as well as those that are hard-hitting and provocative (like Chuck Norris). *The Oxford Handbook of The Psalms* (hereafter OHP) features forty-two essays, by the same number of contributors, which cover the complexities of Psalter studies. Many of these essays reflect summaries of longstanding agreements while some provide new directions and insights, with the latter inviting further testing and prodding.

The volume begins with an introductory essay by Brown and concludes with two appendices by Peter W. Flint, a subject and names index, and a textual index. The bulk of the volume is divided into ten parts with each part containing essays generally related to the designated topic. Brown notes that the overarching movement of the volume is from “*Sitze im Leben* to *Sitze in unserem Leben*” (p. x).

The first part of the volume includes three essays related to the ancient Near Eastern background of the Psalter. The writers of these essays point out parallels and backgrounds from Mesopotamian, Canaanite, and Egyptian sources, and deal with matters related to religion, genre, dependency and/or parallels, structure, and motifs. These essays are insightful and helpful for developing a fuller understanding of the cognitive environment from which many psalms blossomed.

The second part delves into the language of the Psalms. This section contains five essays. The first essay works through the variety of psalmic verse found in the Psalter. This essay is a helpful introduction for understanding the multiple artistic means in which authors sought to convey ideas and emotions. The second essay, “The Psalms in Poetry,” introduces the reader to the influence the Psalter has had on English poetry. This essay shows how so many poets have found and continue to find “in David’s words the motive—and metaphor—for their own new songs” (p. 110). The final three essays in this section flesh out how different types of language play a role in the Psalter. The writers of these

essays focus on the language of lament, praise and metonymy, and wisdom. The discussion of wisdom language was of particular interest. Diane Jacobson concludes that we know intuitively that there is something to the relationship between wisdom and the Psalter. “But, in truth, the nature of that something is as elusive as ever” (p. 155).

The third part contains three essays, each focusing on an ancient version of the Psalter. The Aramaic Psalter, the Septuagint Psalter, and Jerome’s Psalter are the topic of the respective essays. The fourth part moves into the discussion of the composition and compilation of the Psalter. The first essay argues that the Levitical singers arranged the different collections with a clear prophetic bias as a means of creating “a bridge between the First and Second Temples” (pp. 208–9). The second essay provides a case-study on the ordering of Pss 136–150 as a means of attempting to discover the thinking behind the arrangement. The third essay compares the varied arrangements of the Psalter in the Qumran material with that of the Masoretic tradition. Part five of the volume contains four essays that offer a sampling of current work being carried out in the areas of history of interpretation and reception history. The first three essays contain discussions of interpretation and reception in the Jewish, Christian (the NT period), and Islamic traditions. The last essay contains a case-study of the reception of Ps 91.

The sixth part of the volume is by far the largest part. This section contains ten essays related to tradition and emerging interpretative approaches of the Psalter. This group of essays contains approaches that range from literary studies, genre and form studies, studies on particular motifs (e.g., temple psalms, non-temple psalms, and kingship), use of rhetoric, and feminist interpretation. All of the essays are thought provoking and helpful for understanding the multivalent nature of the Psalter. However, three essays stood out as fresh and emerging approaches. The first is the essay “Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Psalms” by Joel LeMon. This essay focuses on the “theology of metaphor” and how an understanding of the larger ancient world of imagery may provide insight into “theologically significant” themes within the Psalter (p. 379). The second essay that stood out was the essay “Poetic Attachment” by Brent Strawn. In this essay, Strawn begins by offering an introduction to psychology and psycholinguistics and their application to the Bible. Strawn makes use of psychoanalytic psychology to “shed light on (a) the ancient ‘psychic attitudes’ or ‘seasons of life’ reflected in the Psalter and (b) how the Psalms ‘do something’ psychological, even now, when we take them up” (p. 407). My insight from this essay is based on the idea that the Psalms speak to



all readers in a very emotional way at different times and seasons of life. Thus, Strawn provides a place for any reader to begin to understand or at least gain a glimpse into the therapeutic nature of the Psalter and to find “attachment to God by means of poetry” (p. 418). The final essay that stood out is “Feminist Interpretation of the Psalms” by Melody Knowles. In this essay, Knowles first looks at feminine images used to describe God, then she surveys references to women in the Psalter, and finally she offers a brief history of how women have used the Psalms. I find this essay beneficial because it is a reminder that all too often a masculine evaluation (even if it is not recognized) is normative.

Part seven contains three essays revolving around culturally based interpretations. These essays focus on the African American, Asian American, and Latin American cultures. These essays go hand-in-hand with my observations related to feminist interpretation. Because the Psalter contains a great deal of literature that touches on emotions common to all of humanity, we may do well to listen to how different cultures read and understand these poetic texts. Part eight contains two essays, both of which relate to theologies of the Psalms, one from a Jewish perspective and one from a Christian perspective. Both essays survey the works and methods of their respective religion and both seem to conclude that the Psalter is too diverse and polyphonic to have a single perspective or method.

Part nine contains two essays addressing anthropological identities in the Psalms. Brueggemann argues that the Psalter recognizes “that the human person is complex, problematic, and wondrous” which is reflected in the Psalms’ “daring range of poetic extremities” (p. 516). He shows that Psalms is a place where a “dialogic transaction” between God and humanity takes place (p. 516). In Creach’s essay he argues that the anthropology of the Psalms categorizes humanity in two categories: the righteous and the wicked. The tenth and final part of the volume consists of six essays centered on the practicing of the Psalms. The topics range from preaching and singing the Psalms, using the Psalter in pastoral care, the monastic use, and the ecological use of the Psalter.

This volume is intended for both scholar and student, and I find this volume to be valuable for both of its designed audiences. Scholars may find some of the essays simplistic and a rehashing of longstanding and well-known methods and practices. Many students may find some of the essays overly complex and requiring a wide range of background information to understand. However, I would suggest this is the beauty of this volume. The volume could function as a helpful reminder for the scholar, as well as prompting new directions for research. The volume will push the student to find tremendous value in the true diversity of the Psalter. One helpful feature of the volume is the bibliography at the end

of each essay. These bibliographies can function to point the scholar and student to recent works. In the end I would agree with Brown's assessment that the volume's "variety of offerings aptly addresses the Psalter's own diversity" (p. ix).

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*Joshua 1–12* by Trent C. Butler.. Second Edition. WBC 7A. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011. 561 pp., US \$54.99, hardcover.

*Joshua 13–24* by Trent C. Butler. Second Edition. WBC 7B. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014. 362pp., US \$49.99, hardcover.

Butler's new, two-volume commentary on Joshua is a revision of his 1983 Word Biblical Commentary. The original commentary was only 344 pages in a single volume; this revised edition is over 900 pages divided into two volumes. The introduction to the commentary ballooned from a modest 25 pages in the earlier edition to 151 pages in the present edition. All the bibliographies have been supplemented with additional material. For example, on the "Consequences of Covenant Curse (7:1–8:29)," the original commentary had a little more than a page of bibliography divided into "Archaeology and Geography" and "Exegesis." The revised edition more than doubles the list to three-and-a-half pages. This is typical of the whole commentary; bibliographies are expanded in every case; some have as many as five times the entries. These expansions are not simply works published since 1984; many of the additions predate the original commentary.

Butler begins the introduction to the commentary by surveying the texts and versions of Joshua. This section has been completely rewritten since, as Butler recognizes, a great deal of work on the text of Joshua has been done since 1983 (p. 1:35). He therefore has tripled the bibliography for this section and provided a detailed chart indicating the various textual differences in the MT and LXX. Some of these variations in the textual tradition are mechanical errors, but these copyist errors can only account for a small percentage of variations. He suggests a few variants are the result of misunderstanding the meaning or syntax of the original or avoiding "unacceptable language." Most of the variants Butler lists are literary improvements, homiletical interpretations, or exegesis.

Given the range of textual issue in the book, Butler asks if the task of the scholar is to work with the oldest manuscripts preserved in the Bible (the MT), or should the text be reconstructed to an “original form”? While the question remains open, Butler’s approach in the commentary will be to translate and interpret the MT, commenting on divergence in the traditions where necessary.

The largest section of the introduction is a review of critical research on Joshua. As Butler comments in his author’s preface, this was a controversial section of the earlier commentary since he adopted some elements of Noth’s Deuteronomistic Historian. Since the language of Deuteronomy reappears in Joshua, he “raised hackles” among conservatives who wondered how his methodology could be compatible with a strong commitment to inerrancy. Since the 1983 commentary, several conservative scholars have published commentaries which recognize the influence of Deuteronomy on Joshua and Judges. Butler specifically mentions David Howard (Joshua, NAC) and Daniel Block (Judges, NAC), as well as K. Lawson Younger (Joshua, NIVAC) as examples of evangelicals who are exploring these connections once considered part of the dreaded historical-critical method.

The last section of the introduction is a theology of Joshua. Butler observes Joshua marks a transition from Torah to prophecy as well as a transition from Moses in the wilderness to the settlement of Canaan. While he covers several theological topics in this section, the most important question for students of Joshua concerns the nature of God. He is a jealous and angry God who orders the destruction of his enemies, yet he gives good gifts to his people and ushers them into the land which he promised to their ancestors. After surveying the literature on war in Joshua, Butler suggests war was a normal fact of life in the ancient world which always involved the deity. The “ban” was not invented by Israel, nor was Israel the only nation to violently destroy their enemies. But for Israel war often was the result of the wrath of God, a theme which runs throughout Scripture (1:181). Joshua in no way endorses nor encourages violence or military engagement in the modern sense.

The commentary itself proceeds in a similar fashion to other volumes of the WBC series. Sections of Joshua begin with a bibliography, new translation, and detailed notes on the text. In the textual notes Butler interacts extensively with Michaël N. van der Meer (*Formation and Reformulation*, Brill 2004) and Klaus Bieberstein (*Josua, Jordan, Jericho*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995). Following the translation, Butler makes a series of comments on the “form/structure/setting” of the text. In this section he discusses traditions and sources behind the text as well as their redaction which resulted in the

final form of Joshua. With respect to form, Butler interacts with the long history of form criticism of the book of Joshua, but more importantly the section includes comments on the literary nature of the section. For example, Butler describes the story of Rahab in Josh 2:1–24 as a “true spy story complete with folklore elements, humor and narrative tension” (p. 1:249) and that “such a story would be told around military campfires or at the city wall accompanied by snickers and sneers and laughter” (p. 1:252). In most cases new charts have been added to visually present the setting and structure of pericopae.

The body of the commentary proceeds verse by verse, commenting on the MT. One of the editorial features of the revised commentary is to use only an author’s last name where possible rather than citing both the author and title. This reduced clutter in the text and the footnotes and makes for a readable commentary. Following his exegetical comments, Butler concludes with an “Explanation” drawing theological insights from the text. In these short reflections he primarily grounds the teaching of the pericope in the context of Joshua and highlights their contributions to OT theology. Occasionally Butler draws connections to the NT where necessary. This is the case for the Rahab story, for example, since Heb 11 alludes to the story of Josh 2 as an example of faith.

Since the geographical material in the second volume is not theologically rich, Butler provides a wealth of data on the names of the locations listed in the tribal boundaries. After surveying several explanations for the extensive lists of boundaries and cities in Josh 12–19, Butler concludes these boundaries are ideals, “challenging premonarchial Israel to complete the conquering task” (p. 2:42). For each tribal boundary, he offers a chart with the biblical name, the modern location in Arabic and Hebrew, and a second column with alternate suggested locations, a map reference, and relative distance from a landmark. He also includes a column indicating whether the location has a Late Bronze/Early Iron Age presence. The last column in the chart is labeled both “alternate location” and “destruction level date,” yet no locations are given a destruction level date so it is not clear why the column is labeled as it is.

As Butler observes, “scholarship has virtually exhausted itself seeking to recover the historical settings of the various lists” in the second half of the book (p. 2:188). In doing so, they have missed the theological reason these lists appear in the book of Joshua. Butler connects receiving the land to Israel’s call to live in the land and receive the blessings of the Deuteronomic covenant. This reading of the long, dry lists of boundaries and city names is a helpful corrective to com-

mentaries interested in only the geographic and archaeological data. Butler has renamed the last section of Joshua “Identifying Israel” (20:1–24:33). In the original commentary this was a short 25-page section called “Life in the Land.” Since a major goal for Butler in this revised commentary is to demonstrate the Deuteronomistic Tradition, this material is developed in much more detail than the earlier commentary. For example, when describing Josh 23 in the original commentary, he stated “Every verse of the chapter displays Deuteronomistic theology and vocabulary” (1983, 253). In the revised commentary Butler provides a two-page chart listing twenty-seven examples of vocabulary appearing in Deuteronomy. He lists references to this data in both Deuteronomy as well as key places in the rest of the Joshua–Kings. The chart is followed by a detailed survey of various attempts in scholarship to describe the sometimes complicated redaction process.

Several new excurses appear in the revised commentary. First, a six-page excursus on “Yahweh War in Tradition and Theology” serves as a supplement to the destruction of Jericho. As he does throughout the commentary, this excursus surveys the literature and observes the way YHWH War fits into the world of the ancient Near East. He points out YHWH War is an important element of the Israelite experience, demonstrating that YHWH has a strong passion of justice and holiness. Butler offers a second short excursus on *herem*, the ban. He compares the ban in Deuteronomy and Joshua to other ancient Near Eastern examples and points out that in Joshua the ban is a test on obedience (p. 1:384). The third excursus is on the Philistines and includes three-and-a-half pages of bibliography. Butler briefly describes the archaeology and history for most of the major Philistine cities in this section.

This is one of several OT WBC volumes revised since Zondervan took over the series a few years ago. There are a few cosmetic changes that make a great deal of sense. First, the introductory pages now use Arabic numerals rather than Roman numerals. It was always frustrating in the old WBC series to cite pages by lengthy Roman numeral. Second, all of the excurses in the commentary are printed on gray pages, making them easy to find. One unfortunate change to the series is that Zondervan has printed the hardback edition of this book without a slip jacket. This simple cosmetic change likely saved the publisher money and made the book less expensive to the consumer, but I personally have never liked the look of printed boards on a hardback book. An additional change is that the paper is not as high quality as the earlier Word editions. However, these criticisms are simply a reflection of the cost of printing a book today.

In conclusion, Trent Butler has greatly improved his earlier commentary on Joshua. This revised edition is one of the best critical

commentaries on Joshua and provides extensive bibliographies which will guide future students of Joshua for many years to come. His judicious support for a Deuteronomistic History is an important step forward for evangelical OT scholarship, although it is a step some more conservative readers may find challenging. Although he regularly investigates written and oral sources for Joshua and their subsequent redactions, Butler's focus on narrative criticism limits his comments to the final form of the text. This commentary is clearly written from an evangelical perspective and a commitment to the Bible as the Word of God, yet this faith commitment does not detract in the least from Butler's scholarship.

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*The Shape and Shaping of the Book of Psalms: The Current State of Scholarship* edited by Nancy L. deClaissé-Walford. Ancient Israel and Its Literature 20. Williston, VT: SBL, 2014, xv + 267 pp., US \$36.95, softcover.

Nancy L. deClaissé-Walford is Carolyn Ward Professor of OT and Biblical Languages at McAfee School of Theology at Mercer University in Atlanta, Georgia. She is the author of *Reading from the Beginning: The Shaping of the Hebrew Psalter* (Mercer University Press), *Introduction to the Psalms: A Song from Ancient Israel* (Chalice Press), and is a co-author of *The Book of Psalms* in the New International Commentary on the Old Testament series (Eerdmans). Since 2010 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of Gerald Wilson's landmark monograph on *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, the Society of Biblical Literature decided that it would dedicate two of its annual meeting sessions in 2011 to the massive methodological field that Wilson's work pioneered. This edited volume on *The Shape and Shaping of the Book of Psalms: The Current State of Scholarship* is largely made up of those presentations, although the desire to diversify beyond American scholars prompted deClaissé-Walford to invite additional contributions from Germany, South Africa, Canada, and England. The end result is a compilation of academic articles from a group of scholars that is diverse in terms of denomination, gender, points in their career, and geographical locale.

Since Gerald Wilson's 1985 monograph, the field of shape and shaping of the Psalms has exploded with growth, but an updated work that interacted with the enormous field has been needed once again. For this reason, the bibliographic information is worth the price of the book, as each of the sixteen chapters includes detailed footnotes and also concludes with a bibliography specific to the particular article. The diverse nature of the contributors only adds to the comprehensive nature of the footnote and bibliographic material.

In the preface and introductory chapter of her work, deClaissé-Walford rightly points to Brevard Childs and James Sanders as scholars who shared an interest in the final form of the text and who jointly influenced Wilson's approach. She also helpfully distinguishes the methodological elements of each scholar's approach. For Childs, the editors who compiled and transmitted the texts of the Old Testament deliberately obscured the layers in the text to prevent them from being moored in the past, with the result that the product of the process rather than the process was to be the norm for interpretation (pp. xi, 3). For Sanders, layers of historical tradition rooted in communities of faith could be discovered, but the final form was also of primary importance for interpretation (pp. xi, 4). However, deClaissé-Walford omits the qualification that Childs did also consider the layers of accretion in a text as a tentative source of depth-dimension in biblical interpretation. More significantly, she often conflates the methodological terminology of Childs and Sanders, referring to both as "Canonical Criticism" (e.g. pp. x, xi, 3, etc.), whereas Childs insisted on the term "*Canonical Approach*." Since he was adamant that his approach was not simply another kind of criticism, but a whole new way of appropriating the tools of criticism, this change in wording would have better represented Childs. These few notes aside, deClaissé-Walford's introductory chapter provides the student with an extremely helpful overview of the shape and shaping field of inquiry to date, adding further summaries of pre-1985 works that influenced Wilson and continue to influence this field (pp. 5–6), before summarizing Wilson's *Editing* and overviewing the most important contributions to the field in the past twenty-five years (pp. 6–9). If I have already suggested that the bibliographies that conclude each chapter are worth the price of the book, this chapter is of even greater foundational value as an updated summary of the shape and shaping field as a whole.

The fifteen additional chapters are written from various points of view on the shape and shaping continuum. Nasuti shares Childs's interest in moving from final form *forward* to its interpretation by later Jewish and Christian communities, and McCann's semi-autobiographical chapter complements the introductory work of deClaissé-Walford, as he overviews the field with an emphasis on Wilson's predecessors. These

chapters are followed by further interactions with the work of Wilson (Wallace on Wilson and the characterization of David in Book 5, Flint on Wilson's contribution toward understanding the Book of Psalms in light of the Dead Sea Scrolls), various methodological approaches (Gerstenberger on the dynamics of praise in the ancient Near East, Gericke on perceived examples of intra-psalmic theological pluralism within an intentionally shaped Psalter, Magonet on reading the Psalms as liturgy), topical studies in the psalms (Petrany on wisdom psalms, Botha on a perceived antimaterialism in the Book of Psalms, Jacobson on the terms "awake" and "contend" in the Book of Psalms), micro- and macro-structural studies of the shape of the Book of Psalms (Wittman on the portrayal of foreign nations in Pss 2 and 149 and how this relates to the emphasis on God's kingship in the Psalter, Brown-Jones on the Asaphite collection, Ndogo on theocracy in Book 4, Tucker on the role of the foe in Book 5), and conclude with an article by Rolf A. Jacobson on the likely future of Psalms studies.

Although the diversity of the chapters will almost certainly mean that some will immediately appeal to the reader, it is also possible that the less directly relevant work will challenge the reader to develop a cross-methodological approach by exposing them to various interpretive strategies under the banner of shape and shaping. By way of personal example, while Wallace's extremely thoughtful and insightful work was of direct relevance to my own research, the work of Magonet provided a helpful challenge, reminding me to consider liturgical intentionality as a possible explanation of the shape of portions of the Book of Psalms.

Although the diversity among the book's contributors offers many strengths to the reader, it should be remembered that the disparity of perspective also bears witness to competing presuppositions among them. On the one side, Wallace clearly writes with a concern for the *Sitz im Buch* and consequently argues that the oft-neglected superscriptions should be interpreted as components of a unified final form (p. 198). On the other hand, the work of Gericke assumes that competing religious perspectives are present in the redaction and composition of the Psalter, and to no one's surprise, this presupposition leads him to "uncover" numerous examples of what he calls "intra-Psalmic theological pluralism" (p. 44). Perhaps the varying conclusions spring less from the respective contributor's intellectual rigor and more from their respective presuppositions.

These cautions notwithstanding, I heartily recommend this volume to those working in the field of the shape and shaping of the Psalter. The early articles provide an up-to-date introduction and sum-



mary of the field, and the latter articles continue the conversation in many directions. The work will almost certainly become a staple in Psalms research for years to come.

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*Consider Leviathan: Narratives of Nature and the Self in Job* by Brian R. Doak. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014. pp. 302, US \$39.00.

This book contributes to Joban studies by highlighting the connection between nature, especially plant and animal worlds, to the journey of self in Job's experience of moral struggle and innocent suffering. Literature on Job often draw attention to its legal and courtroom metaphor to address the issue of theodicy. Doak's work brings a fresh new lens to the discussion by adding the interdisciplinary dimension and intersection of anthropology, theology, and ecology to view the Joban self as well as the contents of the dialogue between Job and his friends and the divine speech.

The prologue introduces the rationale behind the book, citing examples of how Job evokes the world of flourishing and dying plants and animals to speak of human suffering and how the speeches of God center on nature and ecology. In chapter 1, "Consider the Ostrich," Doak defines the language of "self" as not limited to the human world but also applied to the natural world. He also provides a review of previous scholarly literature on the book of Job in relation to its eco-anthropological concerns. In chapter 2, "Eco-Anthropologies of Wisdom in the Hebrew Bible," Doak gives a sweeping scholarly review of wisdom as floral and faunal knowledge from ancient Near Eastern texts as well as the HB. The key texts in the HB include Gen 1:26–28, Deut 7, 11, Judg 9:8–15, 2 Kgs 14:9, Isa 5:1–7, and passages from Proverbs and Psalms. Drawings and illustrations accompany many of these explanations, which provides a helpful visual element to the argument. Doak builds a strong case in demonstrating how the plant and animal functions to define and reflect the human self.

In chapter 3, "Eco-Anthropologies in the Joban Dialogues," Doak focuses on the dialogues between the three friends and Job. The three friends use nature imagery such as the growth of the plants and the creation of animals as analogies for human order and suffering. Job, on the other hand, inverts the friends' analogies and challenges the traditional beliefs that God's activity can be accurately perceived through

a logical image of the physical order. Job's protests reveal the discrepancy between the divine and the human conditions as well as the disjunction between the human self and plant life (for instance, Job 29:18–20). In chapter 4, "Eco-Anthropologies in the Joban God-Speech," Doak argues that the purpose of the divine speech is not to avoid the problem of innocent suffering but to serve as a direct engagement of the book's nature metaphor. The condition of the plants and animals symbolizes the condition of the human self and Israel itself. Doak lists and cites specific animals to present the divine speech, such as lions, ravens, mountain goats, deer, wild asses, wild oxen, ostriches, horses, hawks, and vultures and associates them to the predicament of the human self. He then draws attention to the two mythic animals, Behemoth and Leviathan. Their invincible bodies form a stark contrast to the torn and suffering Joban body. We learn of the danger of the natural world and God's pleasure in it. Doak thinks that God's answer to Job does not come from the order and security that nature brings. On the contrary, nature helps one see his own peculiar place in the ecology of God's world.

Finally, in chapter 5, "Natural Theologies of the Post-Exilic Self in Job," Doak situates Job in the post-exilic Yehud among its contemporaries, Haggai, Zechariah, and Isa 40–66. At a time when the nation of Israel faces threats from various sides, its nature has been affected and devastated by the nation's fate. Against the ecological backdrop of this postexilic condition, the journey of the Joban self in connection with the nature imagery makes a lot of sense.

The book is well researched with solid evidence from both the texts and pictorial illustrations of the ancient Near East and the HB. The points of the interconnectedness between ecology, anthropology, and theology are well argued. The last chapter of linking the ecological theology to the historical setting of postexilic Israel also opens up a new way for readers to understand the historical context of the Joban narrative. Although the interconnectedness between nature and people in the HB and the ancient Near East is not something new, the connection between nature and Job is a fresh perspective. The drawback of the book is its lack of a bibliography to check references. The current index is a mixture of both authors and subjects. For the sake of clarity, it would be better to separate the two. The treatments on the prologue, dialogue, and divine speech are thorough. However, the session on the Elihu speech is only given a two-page consideration. Since Elihu also connects nature with humanity, especially in Job 37, it deserves a proper place and space in the book. Overall, this book provides a welcome addition to the

literature of the book of Job and will serve as an important resource for students and scholars in the Joban study.

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*The Book of Exodus: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation* edited by Thomas B. Dozeman, Craig A. Evans, and Joel N. Lohr. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 164. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014. xx + 669 pp., US \$264.00, hardcover.

*The Book of Exodus*, edited by Thomas B. Dozeman, Craig A. Evans, and Joel N. Lohr, is a recent addition to Brill's Supplements to Vetus Testamentum series. This volume brings together some of the leading scholars in the field of Exodus and Pentateuch studies. This review emphasizes a few significant articles and provides a brief critique of the summarized works.

The collected essays in this volume address three major subjects within Exodus scholarship: composition, reception history, and interpretation. While the three topics are approached through a variety of methodologies and viewpoints, the overall structure of *The Book of Exodus* is divided into four parts. Part I addresses the general nature and function of Exodus within the Pentateuch. This section emphasizes arguments that designate Torah as Tetrateuch, Pentateuch, or Hexateuch. Part II addresses issues of Exodus interpretation including essays that emphasize the influence of reception history on exegesis. Several authors focus their discussion on the influence of Deuteronomy on the interpretation of Exodus—arguments primarily rooted in the acknowledgement of Exodus's Deuteronomistic and Post-P reception history. Part III addresses the textual transmission and reception history of Exodus. Part IV, which I think is the most interesting section of the book, is where Walter Brueggemann and Terence E. Fretheim each contribute an essay that attempts to bring together the arguments of Parts II and III in order to lay an intriguing foundation for formulating a theology of Exodus. It is regrettable that the volume does not contain a concluding or summary essay.

Three essays especially noteworthy in *The Book of Exodus* are "Reading Exodus in the Tetrateuch and Pentateuch," "Exodus in the Pentateuch," and "The Promise of the Land As Oath in Exodus 32:1–33:3." I deal with each of them briefly below.

William Johnstone's chapter, "Reading Exodus in the Tetrateuch and Pentateuch," revisits his thesis, previously presented in other essays outside this volume, "that the reminiscences in Deuteronomy enable the recovery of a matching account of events in Exodus and Numbers that a later edition has overlaid" (p. 1). He argues that the version of the Decalogue in Deut 5:6–21 recalls "the influence [the] Decalogue . . . had on the composition of the 'Sinai pericope' in Exod 19–40" (p. 1). Johnstone concludes that the account in Deuteronomy and its deviations are attributed to a later edition when compared to Exodus. His article is well argued and convincing. However, in his comparative analysis of the two decalogues, he only compared the MT and did not consider any other ancient witnesses. It would be interesting and helpful for his overall argument if he had considered other ancient sources in his comparison.

Konrad Schmid's chapter, "Exodus in the Pentateuch," emphasizes the significance and prominence of Exodus in the HB—especially the Pentateuch. There are many allusions to Exodus in the books that follow the Pentateuch (e.g., Josh 2:8–11; 5:1; 9:9; 24:2–8; Judg 2:1; 2:11; 6:8–9; 10:11; 11:13; 19:30; 1 Sam 4:8; 6:6; 8:8; 10:18; 12:6; 15:2; 2 Sam 7:8; 1 Kgs 8:16; 8:51; 9:9; 2 Kgs 17:7, 36). In order to explore the redactor's rationale as to where Exodus is placed in the narrative, Schmid evaluates the history of the Documentary Hypothesis and determines that scholars who use this method arrive at conclusions that are inadequate for fully understanding the function of Exodus within the Pentateuch. Through his use of redaction criticism, he concludes that there is a high probability that Exodus functioned as an independent literary piece that was later combined with the canonical Pentateuch. Schmid's methodology also leads him toward a reevaluation of Exodus sources. He concludes that Exodus was a continuation of pre-Priestly material, as "P seems still to struggle with the sequence of Genesis and Exodus and the mediation of the different theological perspectives" (p. 57). While Schmid's article is innovative, his evaluation of source criticism is difficult to follow. I found it hard to determine exactly which sections of Exodus and the Pentateuch he determines as pre-P, P, and/or post-P. Yet, it is clear that he argues that "the basic narrative blueprint of the Pentateuch is P" (p. 57).

Suzanna Boorer's chapter, "The Promise of the Land As Oath in Exodus 32:1–33:3," is an evaluation of the promised land oath as a central area of Pentateuchal study. She revisits Rolf Rendtorff's argument that the land oath texts (Exod 13:5, 11; 32:13; 33:1) are identified as Dtr texts. Regarding narrative structure, Boorer argues: "Exodus 32:13 is an integral element of Exod 32:7–14" (p. 263). Summarized, Exod

32:7–14 is an expansion of an earlier narrative contained in Exod 32: Exod 32:1–6, 5aa, 19–24, 30–34, Exod 32:7–14. These sections comment on Exod 32:30–34 and elevate “YHWH’s knowledge over that of Moses, rather than the other way around as implied in Exod 32:31” (p. 263). With this structure in mind, she then fully engages with Rendtorff’s Dtr text source theory. However, she is unable to draw any specific conclusion that determines if Exod 32:1–33:3 was of a pre-Dtr, Dtr, and/or post-Dtr source. As each section of the land oath text must be evaluated individually, she concludes that it is difficult, and perhaps impossible, to determine a single source for the whole section.

*The Book of Exodus* presents significant advancement in the scholarly discussion of the book of Exodus, most notably in its debate over the reception history of Exodus. I highly recommend this volume to those who are interested in Exodus’s reception history that deviates in conclusion and argument from the traditional historical scholarship of the corpus. I would also encourage those who are interested in methodologies such as the Documentary Hypothesis or the New Documentary Hypothesis to investigate this work, paying particular attention to Part II. As a volume within Brill’s Supplements to Vetus Testamentum series, this work is rather expensive; however, I would say that its contents and level of scholarship are worth the investment.

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*Joshua 1–12: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* by Thomas B. Dozeman. AB 6B. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015. 627 pp., US \$100.00, hardcover.

The Anchor Bible commentary series is well known for bringing together quality textual analysis and innovative interpretations of Scripture, making the volumes useful to a wide variety of readers. Thomas Dozeman’s commentary on Josh 1–12 represents an addition to the Anchor Bible that will further the solid reputation of the series. Dozeman, who serves as professor of OT at United Theological Seminary, seeks to provide an interpretation of the book of Joshua based on the book’s dominant theological themes. The result is a commentary that takes seriously Joshua’s message of establishing a place for the worship of YHWH, as well as the unique difficulties the book of Joshua presents to contemporary readers.

Dozeman follows the typical layout of the Anchor Bible series. He begins his volume with a thorough introduction, followed by an expansive bibliography, a fresh translation of the book of Joshua, and notes and comments on the text. Dozeman's commentary makes the most of this structure. His introduction equips readers with the core of his approach to interpreting the book of Joshua and situates his approach within the history of Joshua's interpretation. Appendices focusing on the translation of the MT and LXX and geographical terms in the MT and LXX buttress Dozeman's introduction with additional background research.

Dozeman's goal in his introduction is to introduce his research and the place of his research in the history of the interpretation of the book of Joshua. While he provides a brief discussion of the date of Joshua's composition and the text of Joshua, little attention is given to other introductory issues such as the historicity of the Joshua narrative, the canonical place of the book of Joshua, the character of Joshua, or guidelines for reading Hebrew narrative. Dozeman's omission of such material from his introduction demonstrates the intention of his commentary to contribute something new to the interpretation of Joshua rather than serve as an introduction to the book of Joshua for students or pastors.

In his introduction, Dozeman posits that the book of Joshua is a postexilic "Samaritan myth of origin, in which the promised land is heavily populated with kings and royal city-states requiring holy war to empty the land of its urban culture" (p. 31). Such a setting for the composition of Joshua leads Dozeman to conclude that Joshua functions as a polemic against the urban life of the postexilic period and a call to a rural, utopian living out of the covenant. Dozeman seeks to demonstrate how several major theological themes in the book of Joshua support his identification of the purpose of the book of Joshua. He notes that the procession of the ark to Ebal and Gerizim in Josh 8 indicates the arrival of the ark at its cultic destination near Shechem (p. 378). The resting of the ark at Shechem demonstrates the Samaritan influence on the narrative (p. 50). Dozeman also finds great significance in the fact that the "genocide" mandated by the ban (חרם) is only executed upon the royal cities. Dozeman believes the focus upon the destruction of royal cities in Joshua comes as a result of "the sense of alienation from the urbanization of the Persian Empire" (p. 77). The book of Joshua, therefore, is a charge for the people of God in the Persian period to recreate the promised land by rejecting the city-states of the empire and establishing an urban utopia in which the only cities are the Levitical cities prescribed in Josh 20–21.

Even Jerusalem is included in this polemic, thus the note that it continues to be inhabited by Jebusites—and thus is contaminated (Josh 15:63).

Dozeman's interpretation of the book of Joshua is well situated within his proposed setting of the composition of the book. He resists the temptation to interpret the book of Joshua in a way that has no substantive connection to the setting of Joshua's composition. The result is a compelling interpretation of the book of Joshua that possesses a high degree of internal cohesion.

Though Dozeman's interpretation of Joshua is compelling, it is not without significant difficulties. At the heart of Dozeman's argument is his assertion that the ark finds its cultic resting place at Shechem after the covenant ceremony in Josh 8. The ark coming to rest at Shechem is never made explicit in the text of Joshua. That the ark continued to accompany the army of YHWH seems a reasonable implication of the text, at least equally if not more reasonable than the ark coming to rest at a cultic center in Shechem. If one considers the possibility that the ark continued to accompany Israel, then the implication would be that the procession of the ark encompassed all of the Transjordan through the northern and southern campaigns of Josh 10–11, not just northern Israel as Dozeman asserts. Dozeman's assertion that the book of Joshua is a polemic against urban life and a call to rural also contains significant flaws. Such an interpretation fails to account for Joshua's statement in his farewell address that the cities the Israelites conquered have become part of their inheritance (24:13). If the book of Joshua is a polemic against royal cities, one must question why only Jericho and Hazor are destroyed, while the majority of conquered cities are inhabited by the Israelites.

Although significant issues arise from Dozeman's hypothesis about the composition and purpose of Joshua, his commentary represents excellent scholarship and a bold and thought provoking interpretation. Dozeman's comments on the text of Joshua provide readers with excellent linguistic and textual analysis, which are of great benefit regardless of whether one adopts his broader interpretation of Joshua. Dozeman's attention to textual detail in his comments, and his detailed discussion of the differences between the LXX and MT of Joshua in his appendices make Dozeman's commentary a veritable treasure for those concerned with textual and linguistic issues in the book of Joshua.

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*Do We Need the New Testament? Letting the Old Testament Speak for Itself* by John Goldingay. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015. 183 pp., US \$22.00, softcover.

John Goldingay is David Allan Hubbard Professor of OT at Fuller Theological Seminary, where he has taught since 1997. Prior to his teaching post at Fuller, Goldingay taught OT and Hebrew at St. John's Theological College in Nottingham, England. He has had an extensive publishing career, and some of his recent works include the 17-volume OT for Everyone series (2010–2015), *The Theology of the Book of Isaiah* (2014), and a three-volume *Old Testament Theology* (2003–2009). Goldingay has also written commentaries on Daniel, Isaiah, and Psalms.

In short, this book is an apologetic on letting the OT (or First Testament, as he calls it) speak for itself. Goldingay answers the question posed by the title of the book (Do we need the NT?) with a resounding “Yes!” but his primary aim is to examine the age-old issue of the relationship between the two testaments by discovering what the Scriptures themselves have to say. To that end, the chapters of the book are organized around topics that Goldingay traces throughout both testaments.

In Chapter 1, “Do We Need the New Testament?,” Goldingay presents a general survey of the uniqueness of the NT. After examining topics such as salvation, mission, theology, hope, promise and fulfillment, spirituality, ethics, and the general narrative framework of both testaments, he concludes that the NT does not offer much that is different from the OT. He does not hesitate to suggest that there are not many differences between the two testaments. Indeed, the tone of the chapter is set in its opening pages with the statement “in a sense God did nothing new in Jesus” (p. 12). To be fair, Goldingay acknowledges that there are aspects of newness in the NT—such as the embodiment of God in visible form and the resurrection hope of rising to a new life—but the reader will not walk away convinced of the necessity of the NT, only that it does not supersede the OT.

Chapters 2 and 3 examine the importance of Jesus and whether the Holy Spirit was present in OT times, respectively. Both chapters provide a fairly reasonable and accurate presentation of the evidence. Goldingay's emphasis in chapter 2 is not on who Jesus was or what he said; his uniqueness lies in the way he said things and, more precisely, what he did. Some may see difficulties with separating Jesus's identity from his work, but this does not seem to be a problem for Goldingay (p. 47). Chapter 3 is a well-argued survey of the Holy Spirit in both testa-



ments. I believe it is a helpful, and mostly positive, corrective on modern misunderstandings of the Spirit.

Probably the most beneficial and intriguing material in this book comes from chapters 4 and 7. In both chapters Goldingay takes informative forays into the field of memory. The focus of chapter 4 is to highlight what he calls “middle narratives” in both testaments. Narrative is a way that cultures articulate a memory of the past. In reaction to the clichéd use of words like “metanarrative” and “grand narrative,” Goldingay opts for middle narrative and defines this as stories that “articulate a memory of the past on a smaller scale” which express theological insights and “imply a grand theological narrative” (p. 71). His basic conclusion is that “the New Testament middle narratives embrace the First Testament grand narrative and nuance it in light of Jesus” (p. 89). Chapter 7 traces out the implications of the function of memory and history and how this relates to an understanding of the faith, hope, and life/ethics of Israel. Overall, both chapters are valuable for what they present, but this reader failed to see a strong connection of these chapters to the thesis of the book.

Chapter 5 examines how Christians over the centuries have thought wrongly about Hebrews. The two examples he uses are sacrifice and the models of faith (Heb 11). While I strongly agree with his premise that Christians misread the OT at times, I disagree with Goldingay’s interpretation of both topics in Hebrews. First, he adamantly argues that Heb 11 is not about individual faith in action, but he does not go on to offer a precise—or, for that matter, substantial—argument as to what the passage is about. Second, my critique of his conclusion that “the new covenant has surely not been established” (p. 98) lies in the evidence of the literary context of Heb 8–9 (the text clearly makes the connection between the new covenant and Jesus’s blood sacrifice, a point Goldingay fails to address). Again, I believe he presents an excellent point on hermeneutics, but his exegesis does not contribute favorably to the chapter’s aim.

Goldingay offers an apologetic for using or bringing back the Psalms (especially imprecatory psalms) into Christian worship in chapter 6. In chapter 8 he examines some ethical distinctions between the testaments (e.g., faulting the NT for its acceptance of slavery). Chapter 9 is Goldingay’s reaction to various methods (historical criticism, theological interpretation), warning about emphasizing Christocentric, Trinitarian, and “rule of faith” oriented interpretations. The book ends with a concluding chapter that summarizes his thesis and his purpose.

In summary, Goldingay has produced a readable survey of the relationship between the testaments. His content is thought provoking at times, and at other times just provocative. Positive contributions of the

book include the role of memory for understanding biblical culture and theology and his offering a corrective for faulty hermeneutics by letting the Scriptures speak for themselves. Much of what he writes is helpful, although at times some arguments seem forced or unsubstantiated. Occasionally, a text is taken out of context (Jesus instructing people to hate others [p. 31]; failing to account for the literary context of the new covenant in Heb 9 [pp. 97–99]). Overall, Goldingay offers a solid case against the theological inferiority of the OT. *Do We Need the New Testament?* is a welcome corrective for those insisting that the OT does not speak to Christians today. The book would be a great addition to the library of seminary students, pastors, and informed laypeople.

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*Abschied von der Priesterschrift?: Zum Stand der Pentateuchdebatte* edited by Friedhelm Hartenstein and Konrad Schmid. Veröffentlichungen der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft für Theologie 40. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlaganstalt, 2015. 220 pp., €38,00, softcover.

*Abschied von der Priesterschrift?* is a collection of essays by leading European scholars on the question of the nature of the Priestly narrative. Whereas the volume *A Farewell to the Yahwist?* (2002) debated whether a continuous non-Priestly narrative including the Patriarchal and Exodus traditions exists, in the case of the Priestly narratives, the existence of this continuous narrative combining the Patriarchal and Exodus traditions is not doubted. Rather, the debate centers over its character either as an independent source or a redaction. The article by Christoph Levin (“Die Priesterschrift als Quelle: Eine Erinnerung”) begins with a history of research on the Priestly writings, which shows that the state of the question has remained the same for the last two hundred years, with the same points being debated in favor of and against the Priestly narrative as a source or redaction. Levin affirms the main reasons to consider the Priestly writings to be an independent source, that is, because of the theology of the gradual revelation of the name of YHWH (Exod 6:2–8) and the rejection of sacrifice before Sinai, which would be disrupted if the Priestly account were a redaction including the non-P portions in Genesis–Exodus. Levin argues for the classic Documentary Hypothesis, according to which a redactor combined J and P, preserving them as

completely as possible and variously using one or the other as a base to which the other was supplemented. In an analysis focusing on the Patriarchal narratives, Erhard Blum ("Noch einmal: Das literargeschichtliche Profil der P-Überlieferung") advocates that neither the concept of a source nor a redaction alone can do justice to the complexity of the Priestly material, but rather it is best understood as a "composition" in which independent Priestly traditions have been combined with and modified in light of the non-P traditions to form a unified Priestly conception of history paralleling the non-P composition.

Jan Christian Gertz's text-critical investigation of the Primeval History and particularly of the Toledot-formulae ("Genesis 5: Priesterliche Redaktion, Komposition oder Quellenschrift?") suggests that the Priestly Primeval History can be read as an independent source. Nevertheless, Gertz follows Blum in contending that each thematic block of Pentateuchal tradition has to be assessed independently to determine the character of its Priestly material, as the Priestly Patriarchal narratives appear to be redactional, whereas the Exodus narrative appears to form an independent source. The articles by Christoph Berner ("Der literarische Charakter der Priesterschrift in der Exoduserzählung: Dargestellt an Exodus 1 bis 14") and Thomas Römer ("Von Moses Berufung zur Spaltung des Meers: Überlegungen zur priesterschriftlichen Version der Exoduserzählung") debate the nature of the Priestly texts in Exod 1–14. Berner defines what he perceives to be the base layer of P, and discusses how it would relate to the non-P material looked at from the perspective of P as a source and P as a redaction. According to Berner, the fact that many non-P texts are now considered to be post-P removes the traditional objection to the redactional model that P and non-P must be independent sources since they contain doublets (e.g., the relationship of Exod 3–4\* to Exod 6:2–7:7). Though the P material can be read as an independent source in relation to non-P, this requires the additional hypothesis that material from P has been omitted (such as the birth of Moses) and that a post-P redactor has modified P. Römer on the other hand argues that P in Exod 1–14 is an independent source, which best accounts for its intentionally structured theological links to Gen 1 and 17, and developing theology of the revelation of the divine name culminating in Exod 6:2–8. For Römer, the best explanation for the double traditions of the plagues in Exod 7–11 and the crossing of the Sea in Exod 14 is that P is an independent source, and it is reasonable to presume that a P account of the birth of Moses has thus been omitted.

Eckart Otto's "Priesterschrift und Deuteronomium im Buch Levitikus: Zur Integration des Deuteronomiums in den Pentateuch," recounts Otto's *Fortschreibung*-theory on the formation of the Pentateuch, according to which the Priestly Sinai materials and the

Deuteronomic Moab materials are two poles around which the Pentateuch gradually coalesced. The Holiness Code plays a pivotal role in mediating between a Priestly *Grundschrift* extending from Gen 1 to Exod 29:46, Priestly *Fortschreibungen* that develop in phases in Exod 25–Lev 16, and the Deuteronomic law and is therein representative of the end redaction of the Pentateuch. After the Priestly materials and H were combined with the Deuteronomic laws, the frame around the Deuteronomic law continued to develop and was influenced by H. The framework of Deuteronomy presents Moses as the scribal interpreter of the Sinai Torah and legitimates Moses as the prophetic figure who takes the role of mediating first-person prophecy of YHWH from Lev 26. Christoph Nihan’s article focuses on the formation and place of Lev 26 in the Pentateuch, which has traditionally been a battleground for competing models of Pentateuch formation (“Heiligkeitsetz und Pentateuch: Traditions- und kompositionsgeschichtliche Aspekte von Levitikus 26”). According to Nihan, Lev 26 belongs to the final redaction that formed Leviticus as a book and framed the Sinai revelation with its connections to Exod 19–20, but it does not represent the Pentateuchal redaction. The purpose of the chapter is to integrate Priestly and Deuteronomic covenant traditions and subordinate the authority of prophecy to the authority of Moses as the first prophet.

These detailed studies of key aspects of the Priestly texts by leading scholars provide a helpful overview of the current state of research on the subject, with the essays largely reflecting main points that the authors have argued more extensively elsewhere. The essays are testimony to the fact that despite almost two hundred years of research on the character of the Priestly literature, the same questions are being debated with no clear resolutions in sight. There is agreement, however, that the way forward can only proceed on detailed textual analysis, with openness to considering different parts of the Priestly narrative having a different character. Only an overall analysis of the Priestly narrative that takes account of all the data can produce an overarching model of how the Priestly narrative should be understood.

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*Adam, Eve, and the Devil: A New Beginning* [English] by Marjo C. A. Korpel and Johannes C. de Moor. Hebrew Bible Monographs. Sheffield,

England: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2014. xi + 332 pp., US \$95.00, hard-cover.

In their creative reading and speculative interpretation of KTU 1.100 and KTU 1.107, Marjo Korpel and Johannes de Moor reconstruct what they believe to be an underlying Adamic Myth from Ugarit that has up until now eluded scholars. They then relate this myth, as the background, to the fall narrative in Gen 3 as well as numerous allusions in the rest of the OT, NT, and parabiblical materials. They admit, however, that their theory is based on “fragile evidence” and will need to be tested in future research (p. 236). The two main tablets on which it is based, including KTU 1.100, which is well preserved but reinterpreted, and KTU 1.107, which is badly damaged, reconstructed, and translated with significant conjecture, are supplemented with the posited existence of a third tablet, based on a reference from Philo of Byblos. All of this leaves an admittedly conjectural theory with significantly speculative influence on biblical and extra-biblical passages.

The first chapter lays the methodological foundation in which they present their understanding of the similarities and differences between the biblical narratives and the mythological texts, particularly Ugaritic. The second chapter presents their evidence and conjecture primarily from the Ugaritic corpus. They begin with the few clear Ugaritic references to creation, including the Canaanite deity El (or Ilu) as the high creator god. This unique link to the Israelite creation story provides the only extrabiblical creator with the same name as Elohim in Gen 1. From the reference to “heaven and flood” (KTU 1.179:9; KTU 1.100:1), which appears to be a pair of primordial deities, they detect the common ANE creation event of separating the waters from the waters to form an atmosphere in the original creation myth, which they also extrapolate to have been done by Ilu. Additional identified parallels with the biblical material include Ilu as potter of a person, from clay or soil, and creation by word (though in this case, commanding the birth of monsters, not part of the cosmos).

They develop the most significant and conjectural part of the thesis in the remainder of chapter 2. Here they suppose an original myth of the Canaanite deity Ḫorrānu (Ḫôrôn or Ḫôrān) in connection with a reconstructed Adam myth regarding the loss of immortality. The reconstructed story line includes the rebellion of Ḫorrānu against Ilu, who casts him out of the divine mountain. Using KTU 1.100 and 1.107, which are usually translated and understood as incantations against snake bite (for recent translations and notes, see Dennis Pardee, *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit*, 172–91, or N. Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit*, 378–87, 391–94). Korpel and de Moor perceive a very different story line,

however, in which the outcast Ḫorrānu poisoned the Tree of Life with serpent venom to make it a Tree of Death. Adammū, a god commissioned to come to earth and recover the Tree of Life, is instead bitten by Ḫorrānu in the form of a snake (possibly the giant serpent, Leviathan). All of this occurs between the twin peaks of Ararat in the vineyard of the gods. On death's door, Adammū is somehow delivered from death by Šapšu, but he is no longer immortal. Thus mortal man begins. Ḫorrānu apparently repents and detoxifies the tree himself, after which Ḫorrānu becomes the compassionate divine executioner. The now mortal Adammū is accompanied by his once goddess wife Kubaba, and they now pursue immortality through procreation.

In chapter 3 the authors compare other ancient creation accounts from Egypt, Mesopotamia, Iran, and Greece. Similarities noted include such things as the existence of multiple (different) accounts in each tradition of the primordial history (relating that to Gen 1 and 2), creation by word or creation of mankind from clay, and the use of the potter's wheel. There was a common theme of rebellion against the high god by another god, relating to the understanding presented of Ḫorrānu. The parallels noted were of general character, however, and the differences distinct enough that the authors could not presume direct dependence. On the other hand, they suspect a common "substratum of oral tradition" (p. 103).

Chapter 4 compares the reconstructed myth with the HB beginning in Genesis but continuing throughout the OT. They come to the study with the previous conclusion that the current text of Gen 1–11 was edited late in Israel's history from earlier mythological accounts, with Gen 1–4 being self-consciously written as an introduction to the whole HB. With that in mind, they list eleven differences and twelve similarities with the other ancient writings, including key differences like the name of God (אלהים) in Gen 1 (similar but exactly the same as Ugarit and different from all others), the importance of the Sabbath, and the unique use of ברא among other things. Key similarities include the close relation of אלהים to the Ugaritic use of אלה as creator, the pre-existence of the deep ("flood") before creation begins (1:2), and creation by word alone. In Gen 2–4 they again draw out a list of eleven differences and some eighteen similarities. A significant number of these similarities are related to their understanding of the recreated Adamic myth (especially their understanding of Eve, immortality, or Ḫorrānu) or some marginal interpretations of the Hebrew text. They also work through Gen 5–9, Isa 14, Ezek 28, and Ezek 29–32.

The final chapters briefly examine remaining parallels in and out of the Bible. Chapter 5 looks at the parabiblical texts, including a large focus on Enoch and even a glance at Islam. Chapter 6 surveys the NT for passages that may be related in some way to the Canaanite myth uncovered by the authors, mostly relating to Satan and the sin of Adam. They find parallels in the Gospels, two passages in Acts, and a few references in Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Hebrews, Timothy, 1 John, and Revelation. Of course Hōrrānu and Adam figure prominently in these. Chapter 7 concludes with a summary of the main findings and the previously referenced warning that it is all preliminary and subject to further investigation. In the appendices, they offer their construction and translation of KTU 1.107 and KTU 1.100. This is helpful to compare with Dennis Pardee's or Nick Wyatt's translations mentioned above.

Their proposal brings a wide variety of data to bear on the issue of the back story of Gen 1–4. The modest gains in helpful analysis of the Ugaritic materials, and other ANE texts is offset by the overly creative and speculative readings of the texts. Their favoring of speculative interpretations extends to the Hebrew text as well, so that along with supporting the late views on composition, they offer minimal gain for those of us with a more traditional view.

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*Genesis* by Tremper Longman III. Story of God Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016. xviii + 593 pp., US \$45.99, hardcover.

Tremper Longman's commentary on Genesis does not disappoint as the inaugural OT volume in Zondervan's The Story of God Bible Commentary series. The OT series is a biblical-theological treatment that examines each book in its original context, then seeks to apply that book to the modern Christian life. The authors seek to accomplish this task by examining passages from three perspectives: "Listen to the Story," which looks at the passage itself, as well as possible biblical and extra-biblical connections; "Explain the Story," which does just that—explains the meaning of the passage in its original context; and "Live the Story," which looks at how the biblical text can and should be applied to the life of the church, particular in regards to Christocentric preaching, teaching, and hermeneutics (p. xv).

After a chapter of prolegomena typical to biblical commentaries (authorship, genre, structure, historical background, etc.), each subsequent chapter addresses a unit of text under each of the headings listed above. This division into chapters and then sections makes for easy digestion and use of the material in teaching and preaching. For example, Longman's chapter on the *Akedah* is sixteen-pages long and addresses the original meaning of the passage, its relationship to the surrounding literary context, whether God tests Christians today, the relationship between faith and obedience, and how Christ is the fulfillment of the *Akedah*. Of course, much more could be said about each of these issues; however, much less will have to be said in a fifty-minute class period or thirty-minute sermon. My point is that Longman models for pastors and professors an excellent way to communicate the most important parts of this text to their respective audiences.

Although certainly not a requirement of biblical scholarship, another helpful feature of this commentary is that it is well written. Longman crafts prose that makes the reader want to continue in the endeavor. Finally, the book's indexes (subject, author, and Scripture) are a helpful feature, as they usually are in such works. My only quibble here is that the subject index is a mere one and one-half pages and covers only one hundred or so subjects. Additionally, some of the subjects, such as "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" and "authorship and date," are overly obvious and the references are somewhat unhelpful. These two subjects in particular point the reader to the commentary's section on Gen 3 and the book's introduction, respectively—exactly where the intended audience would think to look first.

In the commentary's acknowledgements Longman recounts the story of how the series came to be. It is an encouraging tale of collaboration between Longman and editors at Zondervan to actualize Longman's desire for a robust commentary that "not only examined the ancient message of the Old Testament but also looked at the text from a New Testament perspective to describe its continuing relevance for Christian life and, most importantly, how this ancient text anticipated the coming of Jesus" (p. xi). As an OT professor at a small liberal arts college, this is the very thing I try to accomplish on a daily basis, and this commentary made that a much easier task earlier in the semester as I worked through the book of Genesis with my OT survey students. I cannot recommend it more highly as a tool for teaching the Bible in the



pulpit and at the lectern. I am greatly anticipating the future volumes in this series.

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*Psalms: An Introduction and Commentary* by Tremper Longman III. TOTC. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014. 479 pp., US \$24.00, softcover.

Tremper Longman III, esteemed author of *An Introduction to the Old Testament* and the Robert H. Gundry Professor of Biblical Studies at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California, has produced a first-rate commentary on the Psalms in the new and revised TOTC commentary series. A commentary on the whole of the Psalms is not for the fainthearted, and Longman acknowledges his debt to evangelical luminaries like Derek Kidner.

His introduction establishes his approach to the Psalms as “not only the heart of the Old Testament” but also “a pivotal witness and anticipation of Jesus Christ” (p. 9). Throughout his commentary Longman traces these theological connections both to the context of the OT and also to the trajectory of the Christ. He mounts a balanced defense of the titles of the Psalms, indicating that, while not part of the original composition, they were added to the text before the close of the canonical period (p. 24). Regarding the old saw concerning David’s authorship related to such titles, he quotes N. T. Wright saying that while we cannot for certain prove that the Psalms go back to David, we also cannot prove that they do not. Overall Longman is concerned to treat the Psalms, as C. S. Lewis insisted, not merely as “doctrinal treatises” but “poems intended to be sung.” However, Longman argues, while they are not doctrinal treatises, “the Psalms do teach doctrine.” He cites Athanasius approvingly: The Psalms are “an epitome of the whole Scriptures,” and also Martin Luther that the Psalms are “a little Bible, and the summary of the Old Testament” (p. 47).

He resists a strict, rigid structure to the Psalms, instead seeing them as beginning with an invitation to a temple experience of worship (and a warning for the unrighteous) and ending with a celebratory praise, moving “from lament to praise” overall. Psalms 1 and 2, then, are “the first of a two-part introduction to the Psalter” (p. 55). But it is more than merely passively introductory in general; “Psalm 1 stands like a Levitical gatekeeper, warning the wicked to proceed no further” (p. 55).

Many readers will turn to Longman's exegesis of their favorite and well-known, much-beloved Psalms, like Ps 23. He encourages us that "Psalm 23 has rightly found its place in the hearts of Christian readers. . . . Christians cannot read Psalm 23 that explores God as shepherd of his people without thinking of Jesus Christ" (p. 137). He takes a contextually laden approach to the common translation of the end of Ps 23 as "forever." That, he says, "gives a wrong impression." It is literally "for length of days." However, if we read Ps 23 "in the light of the New Testament [it] indicates that it is true that the psalmist and others who put their trust in God will live in his presence forever" (p. 137). On the other hand, while he indicates a developmental view of the teaching regarding the afterlife in the OT, when it comes to the plain teaching of Ps 49, he says, "Glimpses of the afterlife are rare in the Old Testament, but the psalmist here certainly affirms that, in the case of the upright, and specifically himself, death will not have the ultimate say" (p. 215).

For Longman, the Psalms are a "literary sanctuary, a holy textual place where worshippers speak in the very presence of God." This means that as Ps 1 was the "gateway," so the last psalm, Ps 150, "concludes the final doxology" (p. 479).

Throughout there are some juicy, heart-moving, and theologically rich analyses. "The book of Psalms does not only want to inform our intellect, but to stimulate our imagination, arouse our emotions and stir us on to holy thoughts and actions" (p. 9). There is a firm commitment to historicity: "Taking the authorship ascriptions and the historical titles seriously, psalms were written in response to the composer's experience of God's presence or absence during a specific historical episode in life" (pp. 31–32). There is insight regarding the understanding of the conventions of Hebrew poetry: "The first convention of Hebrew poetry is terseness, a word pointing to the poet's desire to communicate a message using as few words as possible" (p. 42). Ongoing confidence in the power of the Psalms to affect us emotively: "The psalmist's experience of the presence of God recalibrated his perspective. He now realized that present realities are not ultimate realities" (p. 276). His understanding of the spiritual nature of the imprecatory Psalms is telling: "[T]hey allow us turn our anger over to God for him to act as he sees fit" (p. 52).

All in all, this is a significant work of scholarship, accessible to the general audience, which provides both a compelling framework and

an applicatory trajectory that is Christ-focused, all of which will gratify the judicious reader.

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*Cantos and Strophes in Biblical Hebrew Poetry III Psalms 90–150 and Psalm 1* by Pieter van der Lugt. OTS 53. Leiden: Brill, 2013. xiv + 620 pp., US \$249.00, hardcover.

The publication of this book completes the trilogy of the *Cantos and Strophes in Biblical Hebrew Poetry* series (OTS 53/57/63, Brill, 2006, 2010, 2013), van der Lugt's *magnum opus* on the investigation of higher poetic structures in the Psalter. This book, consisting of four chapters, begins with methodology, followed by a study of Books IV and V of the Psalter (and Ps 1), and concludes with a systematic classification of the different types of canto and strophic structures found in the Psalms.

Van der Lugt's methodology is defined by two primary and two complementary keys. The first primary key is the identification of "formal devices" that mark transitions from one strophe, or canto, to the next (a canto is a series of strophes, which consist of two or three verselines each; pp. 2–3). He classifies eight categories of words that denote the beginning of a strophe (e.g., vocatives, interrogative particles, imperatives), and four that mark the end of a strophe (e.g., the Hebrew term "*selah*"; pp. 3–4). The second primary key involves an exhaustive study of verbal repetitions in the poem. Crucial in this aspect is how the repetitions occur as poetical features (e.g., linear or chiasmic arrangements) at the strophic level across the entire poem (p. 5), thereby reinforcing any strophic or canto structures identified. Two other complementary keys include quantitative analyses (counting of words or cola to reveal deliberate structured units based on symbolic numbers) and thematic collaborations within the texts.

An additional feature of this book involves the structural study of the entire Songs of Ascents (pp. 422–40). Van der Lugt argues that the Songs of Ascents can be structured into three main sections: Pss 120–25; 126–31; 132–34 (p. 424). He arrives at this conclusion based on unique verbal repetitions that occur in these sections.

In the final chapter of this book, van der Lugt consolidates and systematizes all the psalms in the Psalter into three main types of cantos. Type I consists of balanced or almost regular patterned cantos, which are most common in the Psalter. Type II consists of a series of cantos of

regular length, which are either preceded and/or followed by “half-long” canto(s). The third type of cantos consists of a “concentric framework” where “two regular cantos are interrupted by a canto of different length” (p. 597). Van der Lugt argues that the Psalter consists of a total of only 148 compositions (Pss 133–34; 9–10; and 42–43 are single compositions, but Pss 7 and 40 divide into two separate compositions; Ps 117 is not considered as an independent composition; p. 596).

Several strengths of van der Lugt’s work must be noted. First, he adopts a very systematic methodology. His identification of the transition markers provides an important and helpful basis for the demarcation of poetical units. Second, his work is detailed and extensive. Besides verbs and nouns, van der Lugt analyzes every conjoined (or independent) conjunction, particle, pronoun, suffix or preposition. To my knowledge, van der Lugt’s work is one of the most detailed studies of strophic structures of the Psalms. His work differs from Fokkelman’s primarily in the methodology (cf. J. P. Fokkelman, *Major Poems of the Hebrew Bible*). Van der Lugt’s poetic divisions are based on transition markers and verbal repetitions (rather than syllable counts). The quantitative aspect of a psalm is usually related to the rhetorical central message of a psalm. For instance, he argues that the six words in Ps 126:3, surrounded by exactly twenty-one words on each side, corresponds to the rhetorically crucial central message in the psalm (p. 378; cf. Casper Labuschagne’s Logotechnical analysis on the Psalms, <http://www.labuschagne.nl/psalms.htm>). Third, van der Lugt’s work raises several insightful claims. He argues that strophic divisions are present even within acrostic psalms despite their alphabetic structure (e.g., Pss 111; 112; pp. 239, 247). He also provides convincing arguments, in the case of Pss 114 and 115, against LXX’s view of uniting them as a single composition.

Nonetheless, several troublesome issues deserve to be mentioned. First, the lack of integration between *form* and *thematic* arguments for a poem’s structure remains a sticking point in several occasions. This is probably unavoidable since van der Lugt’s method is based on “formal devices” rather than the thematic development of a text. For instance, most scholars take Ps 124:3–5 as a unit because of the thematic idea of being “swallowed up,” but van der Lugt argues for a strophe break between verses three and four (pp. 368–70) based on poetical devices.

Second, I have found that despite the systematic identification of transition markers for strophic divisions, van der Lugt’s work remains somewhat a work of art. Each poem is presented (already) in its strophic divisions at the beginning of an analysis. The transition markers and

verbal repetitions analyses, subsequently listed, are all aligned to that structure. In other words, we do not actually know how some of the decisions for the strophic divisions were made when there are ambiguities. Furthermore, the designation of the conjunction, *waw*, as a transition marker renders a proliferation of such markers, which in turn makes it difficult to follow his divisions at times (e.g., Ps 102; pp. 113–15). Van der Lugt has a category of “contrary indications” in his analyses, but he almost never discusses them. The final structure of each poem is often still a trade-off between competing evidences.

Van der Lugt also allows “text-critical operations” (p. 12) in his analyses, which almost always support his macrostructural arguments (e.g., the restoration of the *nun* line in Ps 145, pp. 537–41). In passing, I note that all Hebrew words in his work are transliterated (and without vowels). For readers who have not memorized Hebrew in the transliterated state, his work will make quite a difficult read. In spite of these concerns, van der Lugt’s work (the entire trilogy) is impressive. It remains crucial to scholars who are engaged in Hebrew poetry and especially to those studying Hebrew poetic structures.

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*Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin* edited by Hans Madueme and Michael Reeves. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014. xii + 339 pp., US \$26.99, softcover.

Hans Madueme and Michael Reeves have edited a substantial volume that is designed to join the conversation concerning the relationship between the question of the historical Adam and the “riddle” of original sin. The editors admit that this work is “certainly not the final word,” but they hope that it “offers a measured word that seeks not only to engage important questions for specialists but also casts a wider gaze to more integrating, large-picture concerns” (p. xi). Such a project is not an easy task. It requires depth that is technical enough for specialists yet breadth that is wide enough to engage with the major fields of study that this question reaches.

The book seeks to accomplish its goal through three key areas: the epistemological status of natural science for theology, historical criticism of the Bible, and church tradition. The first area concerns the perennial question of the relationship between science and theology: How do Christians respond when seemingly contradictory conclusions are drawn from the Bible and from science?

The second area considers the relationship between evangelical theology and historical criticism. Has the infallibilist picture of the Bible held the evangelical mind captive? This question fits hand-in-glove with the first question. The final area concerns the relationship between church tradition and contemporary conclusions in theology, with, of course, Galileo as the “poster boy” of this discussion. While Protestant evangelicals will admit to the fallibility of tradition, the exact role of patristic, medieval, and Reformation traditions in theology remains debatable.

Madueme and Reeves are right to combine these three areas into one treatment of the question of the historical Adam and original sin. So many theological conclusions are resolved downstream from this question that a proper treatment of it requires such an integrated approach. The claim of the book is that the fifteen chapters, though diverse, offer “one long argument” that engages these questions in a “comprehensive way” and concludes that the “traditional doctrine of original sin is not only orthodox but is also the most theologically cogent synthesis of the biblical witness” (p. xii).

The volume is divided into four parts: Adam in the Bible and Science, Original Sin in History, Original Sin in Theology, and Adam and the Fall in Dispute. Even within these four divisions the reader will immediately pick up on significant integration of subjects. Part 1 includes a chapter on Adam and Eve in the OT by C. John Collins, the corresponding chapter covering the NT by Robert Yarbrough, and a third chapter on Adam and Modern Science by “William Stone” (a pseudonym—the author of this chapter, an academic paleontologist, has chosen to remain anonymous for professional reasons).

The chapter on Adam and modern science is both the most intriguing and the most frustrating chapter in the book. The main point of the chapter is to defend the historicity of Adam by showing how such a claim is consistent with the paleontological methodology and findings. This is a rare and bold move from a paleontologist who suffers from the polarized and politicized relationship between his field and Christian theology. But such an inclusion creates a potential problem. The average student in theology will not understand every jot and tittle of the argument, nor is the paleontologist who happens to pick up this book likely to understand all the technical language in the theology sections. Regardless of this difficulty, this chapter is a step in the right direction toward integration between science and theology. However, the chapter is frustrating because the author (admittedly) does not answer the most important questions that he raises, such as how to relate the human fossil

record to the biblical narrative. Hopefully the author has provided the foundation for more work to be done in this area.

Part 2 contains five chapters covering the doctrine of original sin in history. The chapters include Patristic, Lutheran, Reformed, Wesleyan, and Modern Theology. Taken as a whole, this section functions as a survey of some of the main historical and theological movements in church history in order to show areas of general agreement as well as areas where there remains to be a lack of consensus. The outlier in this group is Carl Trueman's essay on modern theology, which instead of tracing the progression of the doctrine of original sin provides a helpful counterpoint on how the doctrine has waned in a post-Darwinian theological milieu.

Each of the chapters provides in-depth scholarship from an expert in the field. Especially helpful is Peter Sanlon's treatment of original sin in Patristic theology. The chapter contains an excellent assessment of Augustine's works, including interaction with secondary literature, especially in areas that are misunderstood, such as the oft-cited claim that no one before Augustine held to original sin. Unfortunately, the section as a whole falls prey to the malady that affects many treatments of historical theology in Protestantism in that it moves straight from Augustine to Luther. The editors could have done better to insure that at least a section in a chapter was devoted to medieval theologians who contribute to the conversation, such as Anselm of Canterbury.

Parts 3 and 4 continue to provide detailed contributions from various disciplines such as biblical theology, systematic theology, pastoral theology, biblical exegesis, and philosophy. James Hamilton's chapter on original sin in biblical theology provides a notable treatment of a topic that many would consider contradictory. How can a systematic category such as original sin be seen through the lens of biblical theology? Hamilton answers by showing that the biblical narrative often *shows* rather than *tells*. Therefore biblical theology and systematic theology do not have to speak different and incompatible languages; rather, they complement one another in many ways because of their different emphases. Thomas Schreiner's exegetical treatment of Rom 5:12–19 provides careful analysis of the biblical text and thorough interaction with secondary literature. Schreiner amends his previous treatment of the passage in his Romans commentary (*Romans*, BECNT), holding to a causal understanding of the enigmatic ἐφ' ᾧ in Rom 5:12 rather than his previous position, taking ἐφ' ᾧ as a result clause. Chapters such as Hamilton's and Schreiner's provide another reason why this work deserves wide readership.

Some of the chapters in this section, however, seemed deficient or incomplete. Daniel Dorinani's contribution on original sin in pastoral

theology, though warm and full of pastoral comfort, could have benefited greatly from an exploration of the connection between original sin and indwelling sin. Such a connection could have made the treatment much more applicable for pastoral purposes. Additionally, William Edgar's chapter, "Adam, History, and Theodicy" provides cogent material on animal death before the fall, but his treatment of the theodicy question seemed to be all defense and no offense. Edgar's work could have been better had he cut some of his interaction with secondary literature in order to provide more space for the presentation of his own answers to the question of theodicy.

On a more positive note, Madueme's chapter on original sin and modern science provides the key to the entire book. In this chapter he proposes an "eclectic" approach to the relationship between science and theology and outlines a way to integrate the material that has been presented throughout the book. He carefully shows how Christians should use the information that is given about Adam, the fall, and original sin and then guides the reader through a process of understanding how to integrate this knowledge with science. He acknowledges that Christians do need to allow science to provide guidance for how to understand our ancient origins, but he comes down strongly on the issue of evolution, saying that a historical fall and evolution are incompatible. This chapter presents what many collections of essays lack in that it provides unifying categories for diverse scholarship.

All in all, Madueme and Reeves's work is masterfully composed and should be widely read for both its depth and its breadth. Rarely will students and scholars find a work of such breadth without shallow content, or likewise depth without obscure substance; this work avoids both pitfalls and will no doubt be the subject of much conversation in the years to come.

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*Egypt as a Monster in the Book of Ezekiel* by Safwat Marzouk. FAT II/76; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015. xvi + 289 pp., €79.00 hardcover.

This slightly revised version of the author's doctoral thesis is a very well-researched and interesting study which can be highly recommended. The



author presents his thesis lucidly and argues convincingly for his interpretation. The study further contains useful summaries of the arguments and ensuing conclusions.

Marzouk reads the oracles against Egypt (with focus on Ezek 29:1–16 and 32:1–16, but also exploring Ezek 17; 20; and 23) through the lens of monster theory and proposes that the two-fold depiction of Egypt as a monster fills the rhetorical function of presenting the nation as both “the Other” and “the Same.” For Ezekiel, Egypt represents the threat of assimilation of Israel to the other nations and their gods. Egypt is “the Same” insofar as Israel is tempted to be like Egypt and to worship its gods. Therefore, Egypt must be presented as “the monstrous Other” in order that Israel realizes that Egypt is the chaos that awaits if it transgresses the religious boundaries and abandons its faith in YHWH. Marzouk’s study responds to a series of questions: Why is the imagery of a monster appropriate for Egypt? Which components constitute, characterize, and are associated with the category of monsters in the ancient Near East? The study falls into five chapters.

The first chapter begins with a history of research which explores and evaluates earlier scholarly theories pertaining to the monstification of Egypt. It is clear that the description of the defeat of the monstrous Egypt in Ezekiel contains elements of *Chaoskampf*, i.e., the cosmic battle against chaos. The question remains, however, how to interpret this motif. Marzouk argues that the rhetoric of Ezek 29 and 32 should be read within the context of the book of Ezekiel. Therefore, Marzouk challenges the commonly held view which understands Ezekiel’s description of Egypt in the light of Isa 51:9–10, which associates the defeat of a monster (Rahab) with that of the Exodus. Instead, as highlighted by Marzouk, for Ezekiel Egypt is not primarily associated with the Exodus event; rather Egypt is associated with the fear of Israel’s religious assimilation. As we can learn from Ezek 20:5–9 and 23:1–4, Egypt is the place where Israel learned idolatry. Marzouk further discusses the additional scholarly view that Ezekiel’s portrayal of Egypt as a monster is influenced by the political and historical circumstances in the sixth century B.C. when Judah became Egypt’s ally against Babylon. While this is correct, this does not sufficiently explain why Egypt is portrayed as a monster. Neither Assyria nor Babylon are described as monsters, yet they presented just as much threat and allure to Judah. Thus, Marzouk argues, we have to look elsewhere in order to explain the particular vitriol with which Egypt is attacked in the book of Ezekiel.

In chapter 2 Marzouk turns to monster theory as he continues his search to explain why Egypt is depicted as a monster. The chapter offers a clear and succinct introduction to this theory. In addition, interacting with the research of especially Friedrich Nietzsche, Mary Douglas, and

Michel Foucault, Marzouk discusses the role of the body in order to understand the category of the monster. The body represents a person's identity. Attributing a monstrous body to someone means projecting otherness to that person and inscribing its difference on its body. Furthermore, a monster is the outsider who does not fit into well-established categories. A monster has an anomalous body which marks it as impure. As such, it becomes the embodiment of boundary transgression. Furthermore, a monster must be mutilated publically and in a spectacular manner in order to serve as a monstrous example to the public and to enforce the authority of the punisher. At the same time, the monster is a "Double." Following the views of René Girard and Julia Kristeva, the monster represents the horror of facing oneself. They are a monstrous version of what is familiar and thus particularly threatening. They have to be repudiated so that the "I" can come into his/her own. Marzouk concludes that a monster is not only the "Other" but also the "Double," both the same and different. As to Egypt, it is Israel's enemy because it is also its double. It needs to be turned into a monster, repudiated, and punished publically, its body left with scars, so that Israel can be free from its influence.

Chapter 3 explores the motif of *Chaoskampf* in ancient Near Eastern texts and in the HB. By help of his analysis of the Mesopotamian *Enūma Eliš*, the Ugaritic Baal Cycle, and the Egyptian combat between Re and Apep, Marzouk discusses three issues. After an overview of the plot of the three narratives, he shows how the monsters (Tiamat, Yam and Lotan, and Apophis) represent both Otherness and Sameness. The monsters are deities like their opponents, yet they turn against their own kind. The monsters share many characteristics with those that defeat them; these same characteristics make the gods awe-inspiring whilst making the monsters monstrous. In this way, the *Chaoskampf* reveals the complex relationship between the monster and the divine pantheon. Marzouk further explores how these monsters embody the chaos. As a result of their defeat and the subsequent dismemberment of their body, order is established. Their dead body becomes a site of writing whereupon order is inscribed. In this way, their punishment serves as an example of the weakness of chaos and, at the same time, establishes the authority of the patron deity. Finally, Marzouk highlights the tension in the narrative between the near-annihilation of the monster and its continuing existence. The monster needs to be defeated again and again yet it, like chaos, will always lurk as a threat to the ordered world.

Chapter 4 answers the question as to why Ezekiel chose the motif of a monster to represent Egypt. Marzouk begins by investigating

how Ezekiel's descriptions of Israel and of Egypt use similar language and vocabulary. In this way, Israel and Egypt are depicted as each other's doubles. Moreover, they have a long, shared history. Israel began its life of rebellion against YHWH already when they were in Egypt when they worshipped the gods of Egypt. This was a transgression of boundaries: Israel should have stayed apart from Egypt rather than allowing themselves to be assimilated with it. Furthermore, as emphasized by the sexual and marital metaphors used in Ezek 23 in combination with the theme of nudity, the bond between Israel and Egypt was intimate and Egypt was Israel's preferred partner. This intimate relationship, in turn, helps us to understand why Ezekiel chose to depict Egypt as a monster: Egypt is both Israel's double and its enemy. It represents the threat of religious assimilation, yet Israel needs to uphold the border between them so that Israel can fully belong to YHWH. Expressed differently, Egypt represents the chaos that must be defeated so that order can be established.

Chapter 5 progresses through Ezek 29 and 32, showing that Ezekiel uses the combat myth in order to depict Egypt as the "Other" which needs to be defeated so that the boundary between Israel and Egypt can be restored. Marzouk shows how Ezekiel depicts Pharaoh in Ezek 29:1–3 and 32:1–2 as a monster which spreads chaos yet nevertheless remains under YHWH's authority. In a similar but lesser way, in Ezek 16:26; 23:20; 30:21; and 31 Egypt is portrayed as having a monstrous body. Egypt is an "Other" which must be cast out. Subsequently, Ezek 29:4–5 and 32:3–6 describe YHWH's combat with and defeat of Egypt, as well as the ensuing dismembering of Egypt's body. YHWH further dries up the Nile (Ezek 29:10) and he darkens the luminaries (Ezek 32:7–8). Egypt is thus being publically defeated and its body tortured, for the purpose of showing that the chaos forces are being rebuked and its punishment inscribed on its body, in order that the people may learn that YHWH is powerful.

Yet, the monster may return. It is impossible to defeat it completely and it is also not totally desirable. Israel needs an entity against which to define itself. Egypt must exist so that Israel can create a distinct identity. Chapter 6 thus deals with the idea that the defeat of the monster is insufficient. The boundaries between Israel and the monster must be made strong so that the monster will remain far from Israel where it can do no harm. Marzouk shows two ways in which Ezekiel renders Egypt undesirable and harmless. First, it places Egypt in the geographical periphery where it can exercise little influence over Israel (Ezek 29:12–16). Second, it minimizes its political power so that it can have limited power over Israel and where Israel will not be tempted to put its trust in it (Ezek 29:14). In parallel, Ezek 3:17–32 describes Egypt's descent into

the Netherworld where it will be associated with impurity and death. Both Ezek 29 and 32 thus establish strong boundaries between Egypt and Israel. Israel can formulate its identity up and against Egypt, always there as a threat of chaos, yet never strong or influential enough to constitute a really danger and/or temptation again.

Marzouk ends with some thoughts on the problems that these texts raise among present-day-Egyptian Christians, and how a correct understanding of Egypt's function in the book of Ezekiel can help rather than be an obstacle for the Christian community in Egypt to define their own identity.

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*The Divine Image: Prophetic Aniconic Rhetoric and Its Contribution to the Aniconism Debate* by Jill Middlemas. FAT II/74. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014. xi + 190 pp., US \$64.95, softcover.

Jill Middlemas, researcher at the OT Department at the University of Zurich, laments the stalemate in the debate on aniconism in current scholarship. In hopes of moving the discussion forward, she proposes that “better acquaintance with the prophetic literature on its own, the rhetoric employed, and the aniconism expressed therein should shed some welcome light on how best to include the prophets in the debate” (p. 13).

With this focus, Middlemas states that “a natural part of the discussion in this volume will focus on what a new consideration of aniconic rhetoric in the prophetic literature can contribute to interpreting the *imago dei* passages in P—to adjudicate whether P is aniconic in this respect or offering a blatant anthropomorphism” (p. 18). In her estimation, scholars first need to expand their definition of aniconism “to include stabilized mental images as well as two and three dimensional cultic objects and natural objects like the sun” (p. 154). When viewed in this light, the prophetic polemic against images, both actual and conceptual, includes various rhetorical strategies to destabilize conceptualizations of Israel's deity, in addition to arguing for the non-existence of other deities.

The book is organized into six chapters, beginning with the definitions and development of aniconism. After surveying various

approaches, she introduces the prophetic contribution to the issue. Alongside the antiquity of certain aniconic traditions, Middlemas asserts that the figurative language of the prophets marks a shift away from a stable representation of YHWH. In essence, “the prophets were iconoclastic not just with regards to the representations of other deities, but also with respect to objects symbolizing Yahweh” (p. 14). While such objects did indeed exist, she asserts that the prophets distance YHWH from a stabilized form by use of rhetoric.

In the second chapter the author details the various rhetorical strategies employed by the prophets. Notable to her study is the identification of Polemics Against Idols (PAI) as a distinct literary genre, akin to the Oracles Against the Nations (cf. p. 22n6). Though she does not provide an extended defense of this identification, she does mention some characteristics of the genre, including the extended length of the unit, the focus on the manufacturing process of idols, and the contrast of activity of idol making with the incomparability of YHWH (p. 23). Within this genre, she identifies four sections of Second Isaiah (her designation) and one unit in both Jeremiah and Habakkuk. Each polemic serves to shift focus away from the possible divinity and efficacy of images to concentrate on the material aspect and inactivity of the object. Thus, the PAIs exhibit both a positive function, namely to promote monotheism, as well as a negative function, namely to undercut an ANE ideology of cult images. Outside the PAIs proper, she traces similar strategies in prophetic literature that reflect similar aniconic sentiments.

Chapter 3 explores “various means employed by the writers and editors behind the prophetic books in distancing Yahweh from concrete images” (p. 55). For Middlemas, a major concern in the prophets was combating the stabilization of the divine image. A survey of the iconography of both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms leads Middlemas to conclude that cultic symbols, such as the ark and Jeroboam’s calves, functioned as “symbols of divine presence, but not form” (p. 90). Even so, she contends that certain biblical traditions rejected symbols such as the Ark due to possible association of the object with a concrete image of the deity. Furthermore, she surveys the rhetorical strategies that serve to distance YHWH from human figuration.

Chapter 4 draws attention specifically to the “rhetorical strategies that effectively destabilize the divine image itself” (p. 91). These strategies include means of displaying the incomparability of YHWH to other gods, the use of metaphor, and what Middlemas terms “multiple imaging.” Each of these strategies, with the help of current metaphor theory, looks not just at the *meaning* of the strategy but also the desired *cognitive effect* of the device. Regarding multiple imaging, for instance, Middlemas says, “Paradoxically, one way to avoid a stabilized mental

icon of the deity is to project and generate multiple perspectives by drawing the divine images from all realms of creation—human and non-human” (p. 123). By using multiple imaging the prophets are able to present YHWH as one that cannot be reduced to a specific form.

The fifth chapter brings the conclusions of the previous sections to bear on the questions of the meaning of the *imago dei* in Genesis. In Middlemas’s view, the commonality of language between the Priestly writer and the prophets legitimates the correlation of the two (cf. p. 140n57). Specifically, she surveys the divine image in Second Isaiah and Ezekiel, in conjunction with the P material. Whereas Second Isaiah leaves open the question whether something in the created order could resemble YHWH, both Ezekiel and P make explicit that the deity has a form. Yet through the use of various rhetorical strategies, such as multiple imaging, “a clear representation of the deity with an anthropoid body is resisted” (p. 143). One instance of multiple imaging noted by the author is the creation of humankind as male and female. Although humanity is fashioned in the image of God, that form encompasses both genders. Through this device, she states, a concrete conceptualization of the deity is resisted in the Priestly material.

The sixth and final chapter offers a succinct summary of each chapter, along with the conclusions reached in the study. She reiterates that “. . . aniconism is much more than attitudes towards and polemics against idols” (p. 154). If understood correctly, aniconism will include the conceptualization of the deity in both thought and word. To present these conceptions, the prophets employ a host of strategies to distance YHWH from a solitary form.

As a whole, Middlemas presents a fascinating analysis of the polemical dimension of prophetic literature. Her work succinctly brings together the debate on aniconism with contemporary metaphor theory. As each chapter builds upon the previous, her work is in many ways compelling, particularly in relation to individual strategies in the prophets. For instance, her treatment of Ezekiel is especially illuminating. Though Ezekiel is more explicit regarding the form of the deity (cf. Ezek 8:2), this does not nullify her thesis. Rather, her analysis shows that the prophetic book employs various strategies to distance YHWH from a *singular* form. YHWH is comparable, but not in direct correspondence to a human. Imagery from both the animate and inanimate realms cohere to portray a multivalent concept of deity. Together with other strategies, this provides a rich understanding not only of the conceptualization of the deity, but also key features of the book.

Another notable element is the treatment of deliberate misrepresentation in prophetic literature. While it may be common for scholars to view the criticism of idol worship as simply misinformed, Middlemas proposes a viable alternative. One instance of this rhetorical device is the conflation of practices commonly associated with Molech (i.e., child sacrifice) with the worship of Baal in Jer 19:5. Middlemas attributes this conflation not to a lack of understanding of the respective cult of each deity, but rather to the ingenuity of the prophetic author/editors. She views this conflation as a deliberate strategy to put the worship of Baal on par with the abominable practices thought to be associated with the worship of Molech. Thus, it is rhetorical design that is responsible for the conflation rather than mere ignorance on the part of the prophets.

For all of its brilliant insights, the monograph does have some questionable assumptions and arguments, particularly for an evangelical readership. Due to space limitation I can only briefly mention three. First, the reconstruction of Israelite religion presupposed in the book is open to question. Though Middlemas defends a monotheistic understanding of key passages in the prophets, she characteristically sets them in an exilic/postexilic context. Though the question of the development of monotheism is certainly complex, some readers will doubtlessly reject the reconstruction underlying her work.

Second, one question that is raised by this study regarding the biblical literature stems from the correlation of Genesis and the prophetic literature. Though Middlemas states that her analysis refrains from “participating in a historical task” (p. 150), such questions may not so easily be dismissed. Various statements regarding the influence of “Second Isaiah” on the Priestly material make this unavoidable (see p. 152). Yet for those who trace the source material of Genesis to an earlier period (or question the critical dating schema all together!), the resultant picture may look different. If the *imago dei* in Gen 1, with a seemingly iconic, albeit diverse, perspective, is dated to an earlier period, how would this affect one’s understanding of the correlation with the prophetic texts? Alternatively, the prophetic texts could just as easily be seen developing a theme latent in the Pentateuch.

A final critique centers on the validity of the “Polemics Against Idols” as a distinct literary genre. With such minimal criteria for identification of this genre, readers may not find this designation persuasive. Moreover, this categorization is used to set aside possible counter evidence, particularly in relation to incomparability in Jeremiah, because it appears in a different genre. Even if one were to grant that PAIs were an independent genre, one may ask if it is legitimate to set aside material outside this corpus that remains pertinent to the discussion.

In the final analysis, this book will be received as a welcomed voice in the debate on aniconism. Hopefully, it will be a catalyst for further research specifically on the prophetic contribution to the subject. Both the clear prose and frequent summaries increase the accessibility of the monograph. The conventions of the book, such as the inclusion of simplified transliteration, make it accessible both to scholars of the HB as well as non-specialists.

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*Just Deceivers: An Exploration of the Motif of Deception in the Books of Samuel* by Matthew Newkirk. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2015. xvii + 244 pp., US \$29.00, softcover.

*Just Deceivers* presents Matthew Newkirk's PhD dissertation from Wheaton College as another work focused on the positive appraisal of deception in the OT (e.g., John E. Anderson, *The Divine Trickster: A Theology of Deception and Yhwh's Fidelity to the Ancestral Promise in the Jacob Cycle*). His work accepts that "deception" is not categorically condemned by Scripture (despite this being widely held) but in fact finds nuanced expression and appraisals throughout the canon of Scripture and specifically in the books of Samuel, where deceptions play significant roles in numerous accounts.

In this volume Newkirk begins by defining deception carefully and following its narrative function via a close literary-synchronic and biblical-theological reading of the pertinent texts. He follows Kevin Vanhoozer's definition of deception: "*x deceives y*" means that *x intentionally causes y to believe p, where p is false and x knows it to be so*" (p. 5, emphasis original). This means that there must be (A) intentionality, (B) knowledge that the claim is false, and (C) success in convincing another to believe the falsehood (p. 5). This is Newkirk's working definition, in contrast to other (more philosophically and less biblically rooted) definitions offered and sifted through both in the introductory matters and at the conclusion.

Prior to engaging the texts of Samuel (and immediately following), detailed groundwork is laid in analyzing the texts of the Torah (with brief forays into the Psalms, Prophets, and very briefly into the NT and other OT books in the concluding materials) concerned with deception.



These are treated with sufficient detail to warrant parsing into various categories of deception which offer similar such categories for the specific study of the narrative accounts of Samuel that follow (pp. 15–52). He also recounts the work of the four articles which have attempted previously to specifically engage the topic of deception in the books of Samuel (pp. 9–11), demonstrating that this topic remains largely a lacuna on the theological and biblical studies landscape—a hole he seeks to fill with this project.

Newkirk is careful to carry out nuanced readings of the twenty-eight texts he suggests entail potential deception by establishing four categories for arranging this material from Samuel along lines of positive and negative appraisals: (A) deception intended to prevent death or harm, (B) deception intended to cause death or harm, (C) deception intended to benefit someone else, and (D) deception intended to benefit the deceiver. While categories in A and C are appraised positively or allowed to stand without explicit appraisal, categories B and D are judged negatively either by explication or implication. This is accomplished by a carefully charted comparison of four interrelated issues: tactics used, motives, achievement of goals, and negative consequences (charts: pp. 178–86).

Newkirk concludes that through a variety of means of deception “whether or not a deceiver lied does not issue in a negative or positive evaluation respectively” (p. 180). He contends that this is intended as part of the rhetoric of the author of Samuel as (at least in part) legitimating the replacement of Saul by David as king of Israel (pp. 177–78). Allowing for two anomalies, Newkirk’s suggestion is that motive determines whether deception be regarded positively (prevent death/harm, benefit someone else) or negatively (cause death/harm, benefit the deceiver) (pp. 180–82). He further suggests that success in the deception does not clarify whether it was positive or negative, and that negative consequences do not always associate with unjust deception. However, he notes that no just deceptions were connected to negative consequences (pp. 182–87).

Newkirk’s contribution to the study both of Samuel and toward a theology of truth/deception is a welcome addition. He is to be applauded for his careful analysis that allows for some variances and attempts to account for such without overstating his case. While this volume is technical (it is a dissertation, after all), he includes translations of all Hebrew and Greek usage and highly readable explanations of his project. His charting of the nuances of his work makes it more apparent how these various texts interrelate and demonstrates his argument that only deception which causes unjust harm and/or disadvantaging of another is condemned. He seems to make his case that motives matter and there is a

continuing place for “just deception” among the people of God that can be affirmed positively.

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*John's Use of Ezekiel: Understanding the Unique Perspective of the Fourth Gospel* by Brian Neil Peterson. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2015. xiv + 241 pp., US \$39.00, softcover.

Brian Neil Peterson is assistant professor of OT at Lee University in Tennessee. He has previously worked on the structure of Ezekiel as a covenant curse (*Ezekiel in Context*), but here nobly enters the waters of Johannine studies by examining the Fourth Gospel's use of the book of Ezekiel.

The thesis of Peterson's work is that many of the peculiar features of John's Gospel can be explained in light of its influence from Ezekiel (pp. 6–7). Specifically, it is the *structure* of Ezekiel's book that has the main influence on John (p. 21). Peterson hypothesizes that John's rhetorical agenda, socio-religious setting, and personal experience resonated with those of Ezekiel. In presenting the material, Peterson intersperses chapters on structural similarities with two chapters on thematic connections. Peterson bases his structural analysis on his previous research on Ezekiel, where he argues that Ezekiel's structure has five major peaks (1–3; 8–11; 16 and 23; 37; 40–48) based on Ezekiel's four major visions. The prophet's first two visions are of judgment, and the last two of restoration, perhaps corresponding to Jesus's public ministry (John 1–12) and Passion/Resurrection (John 13–21).

The first chapter introduces the thesis and argument. Chapters 2, 4, 6, and 7 discuss structural similarities, and chapter 8 is a brief conclusion. The structural similarities between John and Ezekiel are: John 1 and Ezek 1–3; Jesus's temple cleansing and Ezek 8–11; Jesus breathing the Spirit in John 20 and Ezek 37; and Jesus as the temple in light of Ezekiel's restored temple in 40–48. Some of these chapters overlap, notably the discussion of Jesus as the temple. However, there are important insights contained in these chapters. For example, John's unique story of Jesus breathing the Spirit onto the disciples is explained in light of Ezek 37. This leads to reading John 20 as the apostle's version

of the “new covenant.” Just as Ezekiel prophesies a covenant of peace when the Spirit comes onto Israel, Jesus promises “Peace with you” when breathing the Spirit onto the disciples.

Chapters 3 and 5 discuss thematic connections. The former notes connections between the theme of signs in John and Ezekiel’s sign acts. The latter examines the similarities between Jesus’ “I Am” sayings and attributes of YHWH in Ezekiel. Peterson makes a strong case that, though other prophets in the OT performed signs, Ezekiel is the most prominent, and only he identifies his actions as such. Thus there is evidence that John had Ezekiel’s sign acts in mind when portraying Jesus’s ministry. Some of the “I Am” connections appear speculative, such as “I am the bread of life” being connected to Ezekiel’s prophecy that grain would abound in the restoration (Ezek 36:29). Yet there are also clear cases of dependence, such as John 10 and Ezek 34, and Ezek 15 with John 15. Ezekiel is famous for YHWH “recognition formula,” so there is good reason to think John is borrowing this motif from Ezekiel.

One must first note appreciation for Peterson’s thoroughness in doing such an in-depth study of the connections between Ezekiel and John. This is a useful work for seeing intertextual connections. Peterson convinces in many places, for example the relationship between John 20 and Ezekiel’s covenant of peace; John 1 and Ezek 1; the vine of Ezek 15 and John 15; and John’s temple theology in light of Ezekiel’s temple. Therefore, there is much rich insight within these pages. Moreover, Peterson approaches both books holistically and theologically. The best aspect of this work is its unique study of the Gospel of John. As an OT scholar, Peterson approaches the Gospel with different eyes, providing even greater theological depth to the Gospel. Finally, Peterson writes very clearly and all his chapters are well-organized.

That said, there are a few important questions about the work. First, the author’s thesis is that John shapes his Gospel’s structure around the structure of Ezekiel, which he claims has four major visions (p. 21). Therefore one wonders why he spends a great deal of space on *thematic* connections. Moreover, his structure of Ezekiel is debatable. If one appropriates his previous work, the argument holds greater weight. Additionally, there are places Peterson admits that the structural similarities may not be there. This is clearest in the case of linking John’s “eight” signs to Ezekiel’s sign acts. In both books, the presence of eight signs is highly contested. Sometimes Peterson claims structural similarity, but the arguments are not persuasive (e.g. Jesus’s temple cleansing being connected to Ezek 8–11).

My second major question has to do with method. In essence, this is a book on intertextuality, yet Peterson never lays out a method for determining intertextuality, though much work has been done in this

area. It is not until his conclusion where, in a footnote, he mentions “valid correspondences” in light of Richard Hays’s criteria (p. 204). Therefore, one is not sure how many of these connections may be pure coincidence. Peterson could provide a better way of showing that John’s audience would have recognized these particular structural similarities. Especially in light of the fact that John never directly quotes Ezekiel, one wonders how to determine that such a strong influence exists.

Despite these reservations, I recommend this book especially to those working in the NT who are unfamiliar with Ezekiel. The prophet does indeed have an important influence on John that is largely unrecognized. One may not agree with the overarching claim of this work, but the convincing parts of the argument will provide rich insight into the Gospel of John. For biblical theologians and OT scholars, this book helpfully provides important theological connections within the Testaments by examining John’s use of Ezekiel.

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*Leviticus* by Jay Sklar. TOTC 3. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014. 336 pp., US \$18.00, softcover.

The Tyndale Old Testament Commentary series, with its inception in the mid-1960s, aimed to offer an up-to-date reading and explanation of the biblical text to its audience, which was facing various and increasing forms of critical scholarship and discoveries from the ANE (p. 7). However, an update of the entire series was necessitated by new questions asked by a twenty-first century audience, in addition to the need to incorporate advancements in ANE studies.

In addition to the general goals of the series, Jay Sklar (Professor of Old Testament at Covenant Theological Seminary) expresses his goal for the volume as, “to make clear what it is that the Lord said to the ancient Israelites and, in so doing, to make clear what the Lord is saying to us today” (pp. 10–11). Therefore, the aim of the volume is threefold: first, to offer an up-to-date reading of the text; second, to incorporate the recent contributions of ANE backgrounds; third, to understand Leviticus’s intended message to the ancient Israelites, followed by contextualizing its message for the contemporary audience. In the following section I assess the fulfillment of each goal.

*Goal 1: Offering an up-to-date reading.* Although the TOTC series does not offer a complete translation of the biblical text by its authors, Sklar's expertise in lexical analysis is demonstrated on almost every page of this commentary. Sklar on numerous occasions compares different English versions and explains why a certain translation reflects a closer rendering of the Hebrew text (pp. 89, 92, 96, 104, 115, 184). He also frequently offers his original translations, especially on expressions pertaining to rituals, such as, "purification offering," "suffer guilt's consequences," and "reparation offerings" (pp. 110, 121). Occasionally, he compares synonyms to indicate the precise nuance of a certain term, an example being his comparison between the meanings of זרק ("splash") and נזה ("sprinkled") (p. 91). Perhaps the greatest contribution of the current volume lies in making accessible Sklar's dissertation-turned-monograph, *Sin, Impurity, Sacrifice, Atonement: The Priestly Conceptions*. In the commentary Sklar convincingly asserts that sin *endangers* and *pollutes* the sinner. Therefore, when the Hebrew verb כפר ("atone") occurs in contexts of sin or impurity, it carries both connotations "to ransom" and "to purify." Hence, he correctly and persuasively reveals that כפר should be translated as "ransom-purification" (p. 53).

*Goal 2: Incorporating ANE backgrounds.* Sklar felicitously employs contributions from ANE studies to elucidate the biblical text. In discussing the date and authorship of Leviticus and the Priestly source, he aptly refers to the studies of Jacob Milgrom and Kenneth Kitchen to illustrate that details of the menorah, camp structure, and geographical description of the promised land find comparisons from New Kingdom Egypt (p. 34). Additionally, he quotes Richard Hess to show that the blessings and curses formulae in Lev 26 only finds comparisons from the second millennium B.C. and earlier (p. 34). Based on these external indications, Sklar concludes that portions of Leviticus date to the Late Bronze Age. Sklar also illustrates how ancient Israelite laws and punishments compare with neighboring Hittite laws and those found in the Laws of Hammurabi (pp. 66, 238). While Sklar commendably incorporates relevant ANE materials to elucidate Scripture, this is one area where improvements could be made. For instance, Sklar notes, "In the ancient Near East, one could atone for a breach of covenant loyalty by acknowledging the wrong and paying a appropriate penalty (cf. 2 Kgs 18:7, 13–14.)" (p. 119). Sklar uses the broad term "ancient Near East," which lacks specificity, leaving the readers asking "When, where, and who practiced such custom?" This omission of detail further inhibits the readers from assessing the propinquity and validity between the biblical and extra-biblical comparisons. Furthermore, while Sklar refers to the wider ANE practice behind the biblical custom, he omits reference to any primary or secondary literature supporting his claim, and instead only

offers an additional biblical example (Sklar makes similar ambiguous comments on p. 143). Additionally, Sklar primarily depends on ANET for translations of primary texts. Although James Pritchard's *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* is still held in high regard, the book dates to 1969—pre-dating R. K. Harrison's previous TOTC commentary on Leviticus—and since then numerous updated translations reflecting improved philological understanding have been published. Therefore, Sklar unfortunately does not incorporate updated translations found in works such as *The Context of Scripture*.

*Goal 3: Understanding the text's intended message to the ancient Israelites and contextualizing its message to the contemporary audience.* Sklar's writing demonstrates conciseness and lucidity, allowing easy navigation through the book. Sklar inserts numerous charts and lists, allowing readers to organize and correlate the wealth of information. Sklar also shows literary percipience, noting and illustrating the numerous chiasms and other literary techniques of biblical text. Particularly helpful within the book is Sklar's ability to contextualize ancient Israelite customs that often seem bizarre, obsolete, or even contradictory to the modern reader's ethical value and worldview. He anticipates questions contemporary readers might ask, such as "How do Levitical laws apply today?" (p. 57) "Does the doubled length of impurity caused by a birth of a daughter show biblical sexism?" (p. 177). Readers will find Sklar's numerous modern-day comparisons to ancient customs insightful (pp. 69, 144, 175, 188). I especially found his comparison between the concepts of sacrificial atonement and writing a cheque helpful (p. 72).

Based on the preceding evaluation, I confirm that Sklar wrote a commentary exhibiting conciseness, carefulness, and clarity, largely fulfilling his personal goals, as well as the general goals of the series. While the book's weakness lies in its sparse references to ANE epigraphic and archaeological materials and occasional ambiguous comments, the strength of the book lies in Sklar's expertise in lexicographical analysis, mastery of Israelite ritual, and ability to contextualize the biblical message to its modern audience. Pastors, seminarians, and Bible teachers will surely benefit from this volume, and its readers will likely quote many of Sklar's modern-day analogies.

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Accordance 11. Altamonte Springs, Fla.: OakTree Software, 2016. Software. US \$59.90–\$1,999.

BibleWorks 10. Norfolk, Va.: BibleWorks, LLC, 2016. Software. US \$389.

Once a technological breakthrough embeds itself within the rhythms of life, it becomes rather difficult to conceive of its absence. Thus the corded phones and flip-phones of yesteryear have largely given way to smartphones whose memory and computational capacities would have boggled the mind just a decade or so ago. The dramatic effects of technological advance are likewise evident in the field of biblical studies. Among software packages tailored to the needs of biblical scholars, Logos, Accordance, and Bibleworks together constitute a triad of indispensable research tools. On one hand, Logos has distinguished itself as a digital library platform *par excellence*. On the other hand, Accordance and Bibleworks maintain sharper focus upon analysis of biblical and related texts. Keeping the primary interests of readers of *JESOT* in view, the present review evaluates Accordance and BibleWorks from the perspective of biblical Hebrew and OT scholarship.

Mercifully past is the longstanding problem of platform specificity; one can use Accordance and Bibleworks on both Windows PCs and Macs. Nonetheless, the heritage of each software package is evident. Accordance employs an uncluttered Apple-style interface that aims for a relatively intuitive user experience. In contrast, BibleWorks builds a finer degree of control into its user interface. To illustrate this point, suppose that a researcher wants to study the difference in vocabulary between Gen 1 and Gen 2–3. The sequence of discrete commands one may issue to achieve this end in each software package appears below.

Accordance	Bibleworks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within the range of Gen 1, search for all words.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit range of hits to Gen 1.</li> <li>• Search for all words.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open a new tab.</li> <li>• Within the range of Gen 2–3, search for all words not found with the search on the previous tab</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a primary word list file of these hits.</li> <li>• Limit range of hits to Gen 2–3.</li> <li>• Search for all words.</li> <li>• Create a secondary word list file of these hits.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight words in the secondary list that also appear</li> </ul>

	in the primary list.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delete the highlighted words.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Save the resulting word list (or “inclusion-exclusion file”).</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform a search (still within Gen 2–3) of all words within this saved “inclusion-exclusion file.”</li> </ul>

User actions in the two paths differ in level of control over steps in the unfolding process, but they both lead to identical research results.

One can imagine an unbounded constellation of complex morphological searches that Accordance and BibleWorks make possible, such as tabulating all instances of *plene* spellings of the infinitive construct among strong verbs, finding verbal roots for which the Hebrew Bible attests both *Qal* passive participles and *Niphal* participles, comparing sentence-initial *yiqtol* verbs with sentence-initial jussives, and so forth. Before the development of these programs and their underlying databases, such research was possible only through leafing page by page through a Hebrew Bible and concordance.

Beyond the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) and its critical apparatus, Accordance and Bibleworks facilitate rapid access to other texts significant to OT scholarship, including BHQ, the Rahlfs-Hanhart Septuagint (and the New English Translation of the Septuagint), the Vulgate, the Peshitta, many Targums, the Samaritan Pentateuch (morphologically tagged in Accordance), Ben Sira, and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Accordance users can also view Northwest Semitic epigraphic texts, Ugaritic texts, and rabbinic literature. Assisting the analysis of these texts are lexicons whose contents are only a mouse movement away, with Brown-Driver-Briggs, Koehler-Baumgartner, and Lust-Ehnikel-Hauspie (for the LXX) available in both programs and the *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (both concise and full versions) in Accordance. Among the expanded “wordbook”-style references, users of both programs can electronically refer to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, and Accordance can also access the *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament* and the *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. Each program enables rapid reference to the standard grammars of Gesenius, Joüon-Muraoka, and



Waltke-O'Connor, though neither program presently incorporates the Van der Merwe-Naudé-Kroeze reference grammar.

At this point it is necessary to qualify the above-mentioned listing of texts, lexicons, and grammars with a word about their cost. In general, Accordance has taken a more modular approach to gathering together powerful study tools. After selecting a certain collection of resources as a foundational purchase, a scholar then adds individual resources or “bundles” to customize to research needs. This approach facilitates the availability of a large array of research assets in the Accordance platform, though each added resource naturally deepens financial investment in one’s own copy of the software. In contrast, BibleWorks attempts to maximize the research benefit of its baseline package and minimize the need for additional outlay of funds for modules. One example of reduced dependence on modules concerns the high-resolution images of the Leningrad Codex. At no extra charge, BibleWorks synchronizes displayed electronic text with Leningrad Codex images and overlays them with virtual verse notations, allowing rapid reference to the manuscript underlying BHS and BHQ. Viewing the Leningrad Codex in Accordance requires a separate purchase. The same situation pertains for each program’s specialized tool for Hebrew Bible and Septuagint text comparison; it is native to the standard package of Bibleworks but requires an additional purchase in Accordance. One should note that these comparison tools employ the Rahlfs-Hanhart Septuagint, and also that many volumes of the Göttingen Septuagint are available—again, for additional purchase—in Accordance.

Despite the economic advantage the BibleWorks pricing scheme may confer upon some users, Accordance offers two features that will most likely only gain significance through time. First, Accordance has committed itself to broader exploitation of mobile devices. While both BibleWorks and Accordance run on Windows tablets in their full-featured versions, Accordance has developed an app allowing access to one’s Accordance library and a reduced set of biblical language search capabilities on iOS devices as well.

Second, and much more significantly, Accordance offers syntactical searching of the biblical text, with only Isaiah and Jeremiah awaiting implementation at the time of this review. Syntactical tagging is in line with modern linguistic theory and is not language-specific, thus Accordance uses an identical system for analyzing the Aramaic portions of the OT as well as the Greek text of the NT. Further easing the learning burden of the user is the seamless integration of syntactical tagging into both the command line and graphical construct search methods. Researchers can easily investigate syntactical issues, such as the word order of verbless clauses, the placement of verbs in clause-initial

positions other than the first word in a verse, and the use of feminine subjects with masculine verbs. Otherwise, with recourse to morphological search capabilities alone, the user would need to screen out a significant number of non-applicable search results generated by attempts to account for the relationships between words by proximity and position within a sentence rather than by actual syntactical linkage.

All discussion above relates to use of primary resources, as well as tools and reference works that foster direct, unmediated study of the biblical text. As for the use of commentaries and other secondary resources in one's computer-empowered research, available for purchase and download in Accordance is an impressive array of high-quality works such as the Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries, the Anchor Bible Dictionary, various biblical and systematic theologies, and much more. Through partnership with WORDsearch, a narrower range of excellent secondary resources are available in BibleWorks as well. While there is an integrated e-book reader for adding resources in the epub format, amassing a portable electronic library is not a core function of the BibleWorks platform.

No review can fully do justice to the advanced capabilities of top-tier biblical research software such as BibleWorks and Accordance. The sheer power of these programs may even intimidate prospective users even as it raises the inevitable bottom-line question: "Which program should I buy?" Reformulating this question into "Which software package is better?" does not necessarily clarify matters, because determination of "better" for an individual user or institution tracks closely with specific research needs. On one hand, if one must have a system that maximizes research upon the biblical text and simultaneously facilitates the building of an electronic library, Accordance is clearly more suited to meeting both requirements. On the other hand, BibleWorks is arguably a more economical choice for research upon the biblical text alone. Yet even these generalities must defer to detailed consideration of software package capabilities.

In the end, once thinking through research needs leads to a purchase, helpful online videos, training guides, and user discussion forums will facilitate employing these tools to ever-greater advantage. Given what one can accomplish with Bibleworks and Accordance, it is now nearly unthinkable that one would undertake the task of serious research upon the biblical text without them.

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*Return of the King: Messianic Expectation in Book V of the Psalter* by Michael K. Snearly. LHBOTS 624. London: Bloomsbury, 2015. xii + 236 pp., US \$112.00, hardcover.

A promising development within Psalms scholarship recognizes the Psalter as a book with intentional structure and even “story.” Though this approach is popular, not all are in agreement as to the message. For many, Ps 89 discourages readers from trusting in the Davidic kings but in YHWH alone. However, this is not the only way to read. In his revised PhD dissertation, entitled *Return of the King: Messianic Expectation in Book V of the Psalter*, Michael Snearly argues that Book V (Pss 107–150) reveals a “purposeful arrangement” that “signals a renewed hope in the royal/Davidic promises” (p. 1).

Snearly recognizes that not everyone is convinced by the canonical/editorial approach, so critics’ concerns are carefully and convincingly answered before Snearly presents his own perceived dangers to the approach. First is the tendency to overreach and jump to unsubstantiated conclusions. Second is the opposite error of a detailed analysis of too few Psalms. Third is the problem of information overload: “evidence must be weighed, not counted” (p. 19).

A rigorous method is needed to avoid these pitfalls, so after surveying various methodologies, Snearly discerns arrangement from key-word links, distant parallelism, common superscriptions, common themes and structural parallels. To achieve this end, Snearly combined a close reading of the Hebrew text with Logos Bible Software to conduct a thorough and objective sifting of data.

Snearly presents two basic proposals for Book V’s structure, labelled the הללויה/הודו Taxonomy and the Variegated Taxonomy. The former finds its structure upon the recurrence of these words at Ps 106:48/Ps 107:1, Ps 117:2/Ps 118:1 and Ps 135:21/Ps 136:1. The latter approach recognizes this element but considers it alongside other relevant data such as common superscriptions, authorship, and genre. Snearly finds the Variegated Taxonomy to “accommodate the evidence of Book V better” (p.78).

Key to Snearly’s own proposal is the storyline of the Psalter, particularly Pss 1–2 and 89, which “influence the narrative arc of the Psalter most clearly” (p. 79). Psalms 1–2 present an ideal Torah-devoted king ruling from Zion and Ps 89 the apparent failure of the Davidic covenant, the crisis point from which the story must recover. Rather than concluding with Gerald Wilson and others that Davidic hope is misplaced, Snearly sees Book V as answering the crisis in Ps 89 by reaffirming the promised king in Pss 1–2. Snearly then develops his own structure from the vocabulary of these three Psalms, discerning each

section's boundaries, inner cohesion and significance to the Psalter's storyline.

- Pss 107–18 (חסד)
- Ps 119 (תורה)
- Pss 120–37 (ציון)
- Pss 138–45 (מלך)
- Pss 146–50 (הלל-ריה)

Psalms 107–18 address YHWH's apparent faithfulness, evidenced in unfaithful kings and Israel's exile (Book III). However, YHWH's eternal covenant-loyalty (חסד) is reaffirmed at the beginning and end of this section (Ps 107:1; Ps 118:29). Internally, this collection shares common words and phrases (e.g., Pss 107:1 and 118:1, 29; 113:2 and 115:18) and literary features (e.g., acrostics Pss 111–12). Thematically, this section thunders a "resounding affirmation" of YHWH's promises to David (p. 126). Psalms 107–18 then squarely addresses the complaints in Ps 89.

As a monolithic pillar to תורה, Ps 119 is its own section. This may seem odd for a solitary Psalm, but in terms of size, Ps 119 is longer than the 15 Songs of Ascent combined. Psalm 119 has a unique vocabulary; most of the Torah words don't appear elsewhere in Book V. Psalm 119 reaffirms the claims of Ps 1 that the Torah of YHWH is the pathway to life, and that Torah-faithfulness is the one positive requirement of the king (Deut 17:14–20); therefore, "Psalm 119 . . . witnesses to the re-emergence of the ideal Davidic ruler within the storyline of Psalms" (p. 139).

Psalms 120–37 reaffirm YHWH's commitment to ציון as his dwelling place. This collection includes the Songs of Ascent (Pss 120–34), a discernible unit of its own, but also Pss 135–37, which are more difficult to place. Most difficult is Ps 137; its placement has baffled many scholars. Snearly notes that keywords from Pss 120–34 are duplicated in Pss 135–37 (שיר, ציון, ירושלם, ישראל, מעלה), uniting the Psalms. The emphasis of praise and place words reminds us that the Davidic promises celebrated in Ps 2 "are clearly bound with Yahweh's commitment to Zion" (p. 153). As Snearly concludes, "By linking Zion with the king, Psalm 132 demonstrates that the program outlined in Psalm 2 still stands—Yahweh's reign will be represented by an earthly king whose throne is on Zion" (pp. 153–54).

Psalms 138–45 are united in their Davidic authorship, as well as echoes of Books I–III, especially Pss 1–2. King, kingship, and kingdom

words appear at the boundary Pss 138, 144, and 145, showing that a New David remains central to the Psalter.

Lastly, the Hallelujah Psalms (Pss 146–50) form a fitting conclusion. For Snearly, Ps 145:21 is the concluding doxology of Book V, while Pss 146–50 conclude the Psalter itself. The Hallelujah Psalms present Pss 1–2 as fulfilled, concluding “the story of a heavenly king and his earthly representative who forms a people in the midst of a hostile world and extend their kingdom over the unruly nations” (p. 181).

Little critique can be offered as Snearly has met his own exacting standards. First, conclusions are modest and thoroughly grounded in research; therefore they are harder to dismiss. Second, the scope of this study is broad enough to contribute something meaningful. Snearly tackles 44 Psalms with skill, discerning their cohesion and presenting his findings with logical and compelling arguments. Third, evidence is carefully weighed, resulting in tight argumentation for Snearly’s thesis. Beyond being more persuasive, the result is a much more enjoyable read.

*The Return of the King* is a clear, compelling, and comprehensive treatment of Book V of the Psalms. Not only does Snearly provide a sensible structure to Book V, he challenges much of Psalms scholarship by arguing for a strong Messianic hope. What’s more, Snearly sets forth a reliable methodology that begs to be applied to the other books of the Psalter. Future studies will need to grapple with Snearly’s arguments. My hope is that *The Return of the King* will bear as much fruit in both the academy and the church as it has in my own understanding.

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*Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi* by Anthony R. Petterson. AOTC 25. Nottingham, England: InterVarsity, 2015. 448 pp., US \$45.00, hard-cover.

This brand-new commentary by Anthony Petterson is part of the Apollos commentary series. As such, it is outspokenly Christian in character and aims “to take with equal seriousness the divine and human aspects of Scripture.” As always when reviewing a commentary, the yardstick by which to evaluate it must be to what extent it managed to fulfil the goals of the series in which it appears. Petterson’s own aims—outlined in the introduction—are fully in line with the intent of the series. He sets out to explore Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi from their position in the

(Protestant) Christian Bible and to elucidate their contribution to Christian thought and life. Petterson addresses primarily a lay audience and explains matters of interpretative methods for ministers and students in a helpful and clear manner. The commentary is staunchly conservative insofar as it accepts at face value biblical claims such as that the God of Israel was responsible for allowing the Jewish people to return from exile. It further treats many biblical texts as accurate historical records. Petterson uses, for instance, Ezra 1–6 to inform on the history of Yehud in the last quarter of the sixth century.

Petterson further highlights the roles of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi in the Book of the Twelve. He assumes that these books reached their (near) final form independently of one another rather than, as has been argued by several scholars, being part of redactions that spanned the entire Book of the Twelve. At the same time, he acknowledges the benefits of tracing plot progression and thematic development throughout the Book of the Twelve, with the Haggai-Malachi corpus as its intended climax of restoration, cleansing, and the nations' acknowledgement of YHWH: "The whole is greater than the sums of its parts" (p. 29).

Turning to their biblical-theological context in the OT and the NT, Petterson follows a growing number of scholars who see the establishment of the Kingdom of God as the unifying theme of the OT and the NT. Ranging from the garden of Eden to Jesus's anticipated return, the kingdom of God increases and decreases in cycles, always hampered to reach its culmination due to human sin. In this scheme of things, Haggai-Malachi is located after the loss of the Northern and then Southern Kingdoms at the beginning of a new (but not ultimate) restoration. Sin is still around: the people are defiled (Haggai), the High Priest is unclean (Zechariah), and the people have forgotten their calling to teach the nations about YHWH. In short, they are repeating the sins of the past. At the same time, the books are hopeful as they point forward to a time when God will act.

Finally, as to matters of method, Petterson is highly critical of those scholars who differentiate between various textual layers. While "many assumptions of the historical-critical approach are reasonable," so Petterson, it is also highly speculative and lacking methodological control. According to Petterson, this method does "not readily yield exegetical or theological insights" and it "fails to allow for complex thought" (pp. 36–37). In my view, Petterson's approach is overly critical of historical-critical approaches and runs the risk of alienating readers. It also fails to do justice to the aims of redaction-critical scholars who, *contra* Petterson, are very interested in the exact meaning of the text

under scrutiny. In addition, Petterson's stand vis-à-vis historical-critical scholarship is problematized by his equally strong reluctance to engage with literary approaches because they may neglect the historical and theological claims that a biblical text makes. This statement alludes to a desire to have the cake and eat it. If the aim is to explore the history behind the text, then it is imperative to interact with scholars that investigate exactly those types of diachronic questions (and in many cases therefore argue for multiple authors and subsequent textual strands). Petterson, following Al Wolters, finally opts for a confessional scholarly analysis. It allows for the text to be interpreted as part of the "grand narrative of the Christian canon" and it focuses "on hearing what God has to say through the text" (p. 40).

The actual commentary is structured in three parts: Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Each book opens with an introduction which discusses matters concerned with setting, authorship and dating, genre and structure, outline of the book, text criticism, and key themes. In the case of Zechariah, for example, Petterson follows the dating formulas and locates Zechariah's ministry in the last quarter of the sixth century B.C. in Yehud. He further argues, in dialogue with select scholars (but the absence of German scholarship is noticeable), for authorial unity of all 14 chapters. In support of this claim, he highlights the existence of thematic continuity throughout the book. The notion of YHWH's return, for instance, permeates the entire book, as does the theme of YHWH's sovereignty. Furthermore, Zechariah as a whole conveys a strong sense of future hope.

The commentary then proceeds systematically through the book, pericope by pericope. Petterson begins each section by offering an English translation of the text, followed by textual notes. He interacts closely with the MT and, when relevant, also with the LXX (both the Hebrew and the Greek are cited in transliteration). He then discusses the structure of the text before turning to a full-scale comment section. The final section, called explanation, draws out the theological message of the text for its historical audience as well as positioning it within the larger (Protestant) Christian canon. Petterson also highlights how the text can speak to us today.

In sum, this commentary manages well to combine the concerns of the scholarly community and the church and also to respond to the concerns and needs of the latter. As such, I can recommend it warmly. At the same time, scholars looking for comprehensive considerations of textual details, as well as for informed discussions of the historical

backgrounds of the various texts will find Petterson's commentary wanting.

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*By the River Chebar: Historical, Literary, and Theological Studies in the Book of Ezekiel* by Daniel I. Block. Cambridge, England: James Clarke, 2014/Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2013. xx + 315 pp., £25.75/US \$39.00, softcover.

*Beyond the River Chebar: Studies in Kingship and Eschatology in the Book of Ezekiel* by Daniel I. Block. Cambridge, England: James Clarke, 2014/Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2013. xviii + 238 pp., £23.00/US \$30.00, softcover.

In the evangelical world, any serious student of the book of Ezekiel necessarily comes under the tutelage of Daniel Block. For many, his massive two-volume commentary on the book in the New International Commentary on the Old Testament series is a hand-ready resource that never fails to wrestle with nearly every pressing issue of the text. Consequently, any serious professor of Ezekielian exegesis would without pause mark down a paper that completely neglected referencing Block's work on the given passage. However, Block's writings have not simply been appreciated by those who already agree with his theological positions and convictions. Over the past decades, Block has proved to be a model evangelical academician in conversation with broader critical scholarship. His role as a professor and scholar was celebrated in 2013 in a *festschrift* in his honor (*For Our Good Always: Studies on the Message and Influence of Deuteronomy in Honor of Daniel I. Block*), and the collection of works found in the two volumes discussed here present Block with yet another honor.

*By the River Chebar* and *Beyond the River Chebar* are primarily a collection of Block's previously published journal articles and a few conference presentations. Of the eighteen studies presented in the two volumes, only four are seeing publication for the first time. Despite the effort for coherence put forth in titling the twin volumes, the books read primarily like a collection of various essays with little flow. However, there is a true general division between the more historically and



literarily focused essays in the first volume and the theological focus of the second.

Whatever the volumes lack in flow they make up for in content. While one essay does not necessarily lead to the next, the topics discussed—especially in *By the River*—are expansive and do a wonderful job of presenting a full foray into the world of Ezekiel studies. The first collection begins with a study on preaching Ezekiel, which is then followed up with Block's *NIDOTTE* entry "The Theology of Ezekiel." The third study in this volume is a recent and unpublished study (the only one in this volume) presented to the Ezekiel in Theological Perspective group of the Society of Biblical Literature. In this essay Block argues that despite the numerable claims that Ezekiel is a grace-less book, "Ezekiel's message can only be understood against the backdrop of the history of YHWH's (com)passion for his people and Israel's response thereto" (p. 48), and when one takes into account the variety of vocabulary, the divine recognition formula, and the prophet's portrayal of history, the reader encounters a God that is certainly complex but profoundly gracious.

Chapters 4 and 5 of *By the River* display Block's ability to wrestle with Ezekiel's embeddedness within the larger ANE context. Chapter 4 examines Ezekiel's transformation of divine abandonment themes encountered in other ANE literature, and concludes that unsurprisingly the book bears some relationship to Mesopotamian literature, but by no means does it "fit the pattern of religious beliefs of the native Mesopotamians" (p. 99). Following a brief excursus featuring Block's original translation of "The Prophetic Speech of Marduk," chapter 5 examines the historical rise, development, and disappearance of Marduk theology in the ANE. Block argues that the fluctuations in Marduk's prominence were largely tied to the ups and downs of his native city, Babylon. As Babylon faded from the international scene, so did Marduk.

The final chapters in *By the River* shift toward more literary and theological studies, such as chapter 6, Block's oft-cited study on the significance of רוּחַ in Ezekiel ("The Prophet of the Spirit: The Use of רוּחַ in the Book of Ezekiel"). Chapter 7 explores the book's portrayal of death and afterlife, again venturing into comparative analyses and seeking to isolate the unique contribution of the prophet amidst the prevailing cultural ideas in the ANE. The final chapters, 8 and 9, turn to examine specific passages within the book, 1:4–28 and 24:1–14 respectively. In the first Block argues that the notorious difficulties with the text of Ezekiel's inaugural vision reveals "that the vocabulary and forms of expression available to the prophet fall far short of the requirements of this vision, which transcends all of the bounds of normal human

experience. Things cannot be described for what they are . . .” (p. 213). Turning to 24:1–14, Block describes the text as a literary unit comprising a disputation speech, which sought to rhetorically challenge the false and preconceived confidences of the Jerusalemites on the brink of judgment.

*Beyond the River* opens true to the subtitle and includes four articles addressing the monarchy and royal ideology in the book of Ezekiel. In chapter 1 (previously unpublished), Block argues that Ezekiel is not fundamentally opposed to Zion theology but is contextually limited by “his audience’s perception of their relationship with YHWH” (p. 7), and thereby relegated to explode their “delusions of innocence” (p. 7). Chapter 2 addresses Ezekiel’s particular affinity for the use of נָשִׂיא as opposed to מֶלֶךְ, and provides a helpful summary of each contemporary Judean king addressed in the book, arguing the future Davidic נָשִׂיא will succeed where Judah’s past kings (מְלִכִּים) have failed. “Unlike past kings, who perverted the worship of YHWH for selfish ends and/or sponsored the worship of other gods, this נָשִׂיא is charged with promoting the worship of YHWH in spirit and in truth” (p. 41). Chapter 3 specifically addresses Jehoiachin (Ezek 17:3–24; 19:1–14) and the complex ways in which Ezekiel simultaneously appears to lump the ruler in with previous Judean despots (19:1–14) yet also holds out hope that the exiled king is not the end of the promised Davidic line (17:3–24). Chapter 3 retraces similar ground as chapter 2 addressing messianism—or the apparent lack thereof—focusing on Ezek 34:23–24; 37:22–25, and the נָשִׂיא in chs. 40–48.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 focus on Ezekiel’s prophecies concerning Gog and Magog in Ezek 38:1–39:29. The first of this group provides an introduction and summary of the text, providing a brief frame by frame analysis of the text. Chapter 6, “Gog in Prophetic Tradition,” argues against interpreting the passage as unfulfilled prophecy amended by later editorial hands, and instead proposes a holistic reading of the two chapters, which seeks to demonstrate that Gog is in fact *not* the one spoken of by the prophets and inquired about in 38:17. In a similar way, chapter 7 focuses specifically on 39:21–29, a passage many critical scholars have deemed a secondary addition to the unit. Block again argues for a unified reading of vv. 21–29 within the surrounding context, building on internal structure within the passage, its unique place in the Gog oracle, and its transitional function in moving toward the eschatological picture presented in 40–48.

The final two chapters in *Beyond the River* appear for the first time in print in this volume and are the product of earlier presentations given at annual meetings of the Evangelical Theological Society. Chapter

8 provides a basic hermeneutics lesson on how to approach Ezekiel's temple vision in 40–48, where Block concludes “[I]t seems best to interpret chapters 40–48 ideationally. The issue for the prophet is not physical geography, but *spiritual* realities. As in his earlier vision, historical events are described from a theological plane, and the interpreter's focus must remain on the ideational value of that which is envisioned” (p. 172). The final chapter discusses the theme of sacred space in the book of Ezekiel, devoting much attention to the final temple vision. Block argues that a central feature of interpreting this vision is the perfection (תכנית) of the temple layout, which would thereby expose the sin and iniquity of the people.

It feels a bit odd recommending that readers purchase a collection of essays that have already been made available to the scholarly community through prior publication. That being said, these two volumes represent a wonderful collection of essays on Ezekiel that reflect both thorough and honest scholarship alongside a pronounced commitment to the Christian faith. However, the volumes are not simply helpful as an exemplar for evangelical scholarship. They truly do cover a myriad of issues one encounters when working through Ezekiel: necessary hermeneutical decisions, theological developments, historical intersections, the difficulties in establishing a reliable text at times, redactional theories, ANE parallels, even preaching and teaching tactics. Block and others have also provided a helpful resource in compiling a thorough scriptural index and a bibliography that represents a sizable swath of Ezekielian research in the twentieth century. Block made some effort to update some pieces with newer studies, but the research is largely rooted in the 80s and 90s. Having taught courses on Ezekiel, I would not hesitate to require these volumes to be read alongside other commentaries. While there is some overlap among the articles, the collection provides a convenient arrangement of studies—not all of which are easily attainable to the student—in two affordable volumes that will make for cheap tuition for those eager to enroll in the Daniel Block School of Ezekiel Studies.

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