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The Use of the Old Testament
in the New Testament



BOOK REVIEWS

***Demons: What the Bible Really Says about the Powers of Darkness.* By Michael Heiser. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020, xviii+320pp., \$19.99.**

After his *Unseen Realm* and *Angels*, Heiser continues his study of supernatural beings. His recent book, *Demons: What the Bible Really Says about the Powers of Darkness*, is built upon his earlier research and explores the subject of demons. Although the subtitle seems to create an impression that this book will provide an overall survey of what the Bible teaches about demons, it actually focuses on the history of these supernatural beings, especially what Heiser calls the three divine rebellions.

The structure of this book is clear and straightforward. There are four sections. The first section discusses the Hebrew terms that the Old Testament uses to describe evil spiritual beings and the Greek translations of these beings in the Septuagint. Although the term for “demons” is missing in the Old Testament, there are a variety of words relevant to these kind of beings. Heiser helpfully categorizes these terms into several groups: those associated with the realm of the dead and its inhabitants, those that denote entities with geographical dominion, and preternatural creatures associated with idolatry and unholy ground. In chapter two, Heiser provides charts for readers to clearly see the Greek translations of those terms in the Septuagint.

Section two is the main body of this book, where Heiser proposes the idea of three divine rebellions: The initial rebellion of an individual figure; the second rebellion described in Genesis 6:1-4; and the third rebellion after the episode of the Tower of Babel. While examining the initial rebellion, Heiser goes beyond Genesis 3 to address Isa 14:12-15 and Ezek 28:1-19. He believes these passages provide more information about Genesis 3 (p. 66). The second rebellion is recorded in Genesis 6:1-4. “The sons of God” took daughters of man as their wives and their descendants were those mighty men. There are various views on who were “the sons of

God.” Heiser argues against the Sethite view and the view of polygamous royal marriages but favors the supernatural view that takes “the sons of God” here as supernatural beings. These heavenly beings crossed “the boundary” to mingle with humans and produced an illegitimate species. Heiser believes that this rebellion was the origin of demons. After the descendants of these supernatural beings and daughters of man died, their disembodied spirits became what we call demons or evil spirits. The third rebellion is related to the Tower of Babel, which causes not only the scattering of humanity, but also the allotment of the nations to members of Yahweh’s heavenly council as Deut 32:8-9 describes. Heiser highlights Psalm 82 and interprets this psalm as portraying the corruption of the gods of the nations. After the incident of the Tower of Babel, Yahweh assigned the nations to these heavenly beings. However, instead of ruling with justice, they became corrupt and even turned humanity to idolatry.

In section three, Heiser continues to apply to the New Testament the framework that he draws from his discussion of the Old Testament and Second Temple Judaism. He examines the names and titles of the devil, as well as his dominion and destiny, then demons and their destiny. In chapter eleven, Heiser addresses the destiny of the ruling powers, namely, the gods who were allotted to nations at Babel. Through the work of Christ, those powers were delegitimized and Israel and nations are reclaimed. Paul’s language and description indicate this idea. “[W]hen Paul uses terms of geographical dominion in conversation with gentiles, he is not referring to the demons of the Gospels. He is referring to the corrupt gods allotted to the nations as part of God’s punishment of humanity as Babel” (p. 223).

The last section tries to correct some misconceptions based on what has been said earlier in the book. Some questions are well-answered. For example, while answering the question “Can a Christian be demon possessed?” Heiser traces the reasoning behind this idea of ownership. The English phrase “demon possession,” which was used to translate the Greek word *daimonizomai* creates, the wrong impression of ownership. “The best alternative seems to be simply to transliterate *daimonizomai* as ‘demonize’” (p. 255).

This book is commendable in several ways. First, with a post-Enlightenment Western context, Heiser acknowledges the ontological existence of supernatural beings such as demons and angels and is willing to devote his time and expertise in Old Testament studies to this realm. While interpreting certain difficult passages such as Gen 6:1-4 and Deut 32:8,

he highlights this supernatural perspective, which is often missing in contemporary Christianity. The same perspective is applied to relevant New Testament passages such as Jesus' temptation, transfiguration, resurrection, and the Great Commission. This approach provides a fresh view for the reader seeking to understand these familiar passages. Second, Heiser starts his discussion from the vocabulary in the Scripture. His exploration of the variety of terms that refer to these supernatural beings in the Old Testament is helpful. Third, Heiser advocates reading the biblical text as a product of its contemporary context(s), especially considering the polytheistic background. Modern interpreters tend to neglect or minimize this aspect. Heiser draws our attention to this important reality.

However, the reader may raise some questions. Heiser seems to rely heavily on Second Temple Judaism in "constructing" the history of demons or rebellious spiritual beings (for example, the story of the watchers). Although he is careful not to present the information from Second Temple Judaism as contradictory to Scripture, Second Temple Judaism seems to provide details to fill in the blank where the Scripture does not speak (at least it does not provide such detail). One cannot help asking, "Without those details from Second Temple Judaism, could the history of demons be understood as Heiser has presented here?" "Should we use extra-biblical documents to illuminate the obscure and difficult biblical passages?" or "Should we stop where the Scripture does not supply further information?" While learning fresh ideas from Heiser, one may need to examine the sources and the approach that lead to the conclusions.

Another question that may be raised is: After the reader has been informed about the discussions of the history of demons, what is next? How does this knowledge help a Christian to make daily decisions apart from knowing that evangelism and missions are supposed to reclaim the nations from the dark powers? What does the Bible surely say about demons? How do we relate this knowledge to Christian life and practice?

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***Paul and the Language of Faith.* By Nijay K. Gupta. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020, 225pp., \$34.99.**

In this volume, Nijay K. Gupta reexamines the meaning of “faith” (*pistis*) in the Pauline corpus. Gupta’s study is motivated by what he refers to as “three problematic trends in the way Christians (and others) use faith language in religious ways” (p. 2). He identifies these three trends as follows: (1) “faith as opinion,” that is believing irrespective of reason; (2) “faith as doctrine,” that is faith statements such as those found in creeds and confessions; and (3) “faith as passive,” that is faith as a “passive act” (pp. 4-5). In contrast to these trends, Gupta argues that “faith” (*pistis*) in Paul has two distinct and related meanings, namely “belief and faithfulness” (p. 9). He places these related meanings into three categories: (1) “believing faith” (*pistis* as belief); (2) “obeying faith” (*pistis* as faithfulness); and (3) “trusting faith” (*pistis* as trust) (pp. 9-13). This proposed taxonomy stems from Gupta’s close reading of relevant texts in which he examines the meaning of faith (*pistis*) by considering the semantic range of the term in relation to ancient non-Jewish and Jewish literature and in relation to Paul’s contextual usages of the term.

Chapter one not only explains the aforementioned concern and thesis of the work, but also summarizes the Old Testament foundation for Paul’s understanding of faith (*pistis*), discusses the deficiency of rendering *pistis* as “faith” in contexts that call for “faithfulness”; and defines the scope of the study by limiting considerations of the so-called *pistis Christou* (faith of Christ) debate and by situating the study within the divine and human agency debate. With respect to the latter, Gupta takes the position that Paul’s faith language “may overlap significantly with the Jewish concept of covenant” which means Paul saw faith as an “active mode of receptivity” rather than a passive experience (pp. 16-17). He rounds out the chapter by outlining his method which favors contextual word usage over static definitions and values the impact of Paul’s cultural heritage on his use of language.

Chapters two to four help to situate the study within three fields of inquiry, namely the history of interpretation, Paul’s linguistic milieu, and uses of *pistis* in the NT Gospels. Gupta briefly reviews how interpreters have understood Paul’s faith language in the Patristic era, the Medieval era, the Reformation, and within modern scholarship. Among his notable conclusions here, Gupta suggests that some apostolic fathers (Clement and

Ignatius) are “comfortable treating *pistis* as a kind of virtue (not a work)” and that Luther’s understanding of faith language has a “participationistic dimension” often missed by Pauline interpreters (pp. 37-38). With respect to Paul’s linguistic milieu, Gupta makes brief forays into pagan Hellenistic literature and Hellenistic Jewish literature. What he discovers from these corpuses is that *pistis* is not “primarily religious language” and that, contrary to popular opinion, Jews used *pistis* to “talk about their religious commitments and obligations” (p. 56). In this way, though Paul may use *pistis* in distinctive ways, it “did not emerge *ex nihilo*.” Based especially on the link between *pistis* and Jewish covenantal commitment in Paul’s cultural heritage, Gupta urges readers to rethink how the use of *pistis* in the Pauline corpus is likewise linked to a new covenant “via the Christ-relation.” Gupta’s examination of *pistis* within the Jesus tradition yields the conclusion that the term has a “breath of meanings” in the NT Gospels such as “seeking, believing, trusting, and obeying” (p. 75). While Gupta acknowledges several differences between Paul’s faith language and that of the Gospels, he warns against underestimating their similarities which include several points of overlap such as an “emphasis on believing in and trusting in God,” “faith as a distinctive quality of followers of Jesus,” and “the divine origin of saving wisdom and faith” (p. 76).

In chapters five through nine, Gupta’s analysis of Paul’s faith language begins in earnest as he evaluates Paul’s contextual uses of *pistis* in the following order: 1 Thessalonians, Philippians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans. Against the backdrop of Plutarch’s use of *pistis* as a reference to “loyalty,” Gupta argues that most contextual uses of the term in 1 Thessalonians and Philippians call for a translation of “loyalty” or “faithfulness” rather than a mere “kind of mental commitment to certain beliefs” (p. 94). His analysis of the Corinthian correspondence suggests that in both letters *pistis* is Paul’s epistemological alternative to a “sarkic perspective” which only values what it sees. Paul offers an alternative, namely “believing faith” which has been “trained to *look* for the right things” (p. 133). With respect to the examination of *pistis* in Galatians, Gupta coins the phrase “covenantal *pistism*” which he posits as a corrective to defining faith in the letter as “a kind of passive reliance on Christ” (p. 143). Based in part on the prior work of James Dunn, Gupta defines “covenantal *pistism*” in Galatians as “the core relational dynamic of the covenant, the nature of a covenantal bond that expects fidelity and mutuality with trust as its core” (p. 143). Finally, Gupta’s examination of

pistis in Romans detects a “comprehensive use” of the term that warrants the label “trusting faith” (p. 169). In this way, Gupta renders *pistis* in Paul’s Hab 2:4 citation as “the righteous will live by *trust*.”

In chapters ten to eleven, Gupta brings his exegetical findings to bear on the *pistis Christou* (‘Faith of Christ’) debate and then offers an overarching synthesis. With respect to the former, Gupta acknowledges that his study made him more sympathetic to a “third view” which moves beyond the impasse of the subjective and objective genitive views. Gupta argues “The Christ-relation is by the grace of God and initiated by Christ, but believers participate in it *by faith*” (p. 174). Consequently, he suggests rendering *pistis Christou* as “Christ-relation(ship)” (p. 175). In his synthesis and conclusion, Gupta expands upon his three-tiered taxonomy of *pistis* (obeying, believing, and trusting faith) and considers how his study informs issues such as the relationship of faith and works and the relationship between divine and human agency. He ultimately describes *pistis* as a “tensive symbol” in Paul that moves “along a spectrum of meaning such that one can use a number of words to translate it depending on the context” (p. 180).

Gupta’s study is accessible, well-informed, and engaged with current Pauline scholarship. While Gupta intentionally limits his study to uses of *pistis*, it might have been helpful to consider how the many uses of *pisteuo* and other terms from the same semantic domain inform our overall understanding of Paul’s faith language. Additionally, a more robust examination of how OT faith language shapes Paul’s understanding would be helpful. Some key uses of *pistis* often associated with how Paul understands faith are underrepresented or not addressed altogether (e.g., Rom 10:17; 14:23; Eph 2:8–9). In any case, Gupta’s study is an important contribution to ongoing and recent publications on the topic such as *The Faith of St. Paul: The Transformative Gift of Divine Power* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2019) by Roy Harrisville III and Kevin McFadden’s *Faith in the Son of God: The Place of Christ-Oriented Faith within Pauline Theology* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2021).

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***In God's Image: An Anthropology of the Spirit.* By Michael Welker. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2021, xii+155pp., \$21.00.**

Michael Welker, senior professor at the University of Heidelberg in Germany and executive director of the Research Center for International and Interdisciplinary Theology, has developed his 2019/2020 Gifford Lectures at the University of Edinburgh, which were originated “to promote, advance, teach and diffuse the study of natural theology” (p. 1). Though concentrating on anthropology, Welker unfolds through his six lectures the comprehensive aspect of the human spirit and the divine Spirit, as a basis for natural theology, in which “humanity can realistically be ennobled by calls to justice, freedom, truth, and peace and thereby transformed into a joyful and loving ‘image of God’” (pp. ix-x).

In the first lecture, Welker articulates the focus for the overall theme of all lectures: “Whether and, if so, how human beings in their natural, social, and cultural existence can be understood as the image of God (*imago Dei*)” (p. 3). Drawing upon a few appropriate but disconsolate instances in various situations from different angles of human existence, Welker describes the tension and breadth of human life through which one cannot escape encountering deep agony as well as mental disability and disaster throughout history (pp. 6-9).

Based on the human reality, which has demonstrated self-endangerment and destructive inclinations in history, Welker engages the relationship between the divine Spirit and the human spirit, seeing them not as bipolar relations, but as multimodal powers, which helps to bring more focus on a realistic natural theology. Human beings in the social, cultural, and religious domain are surrounded by complex circumstances involving the human spirit and the divine Spirit that are too rich and complex to be conceived by a bipolar or triadic completion of thought (pp. 29-35). He understands the multimodal spirit to be functional “not only in human minds but also in a multitude of historical and cultural environments” (p. 43). In order to capture the clear contour of the divine and human multimodal spirits working within justice, freedom, truth, as well as efforts toward peace, Welker explores each concept throughout the rest of his lectures, which ultimately confronts the human agony, deep depression, and mental challenges present within the human experience.

Welker initially explores the shape of the image of God in justice. The United Nations Human Rights Convention of 1948 declared, “All human

beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood” (p. 45). Human beings have struggled to realize freedom and equality of all people by means of natural law; they have done so by appealing to a combination of law and mercy, justice and institutionalized protection of the weak. In fact, however, “all life lives at the cost of other life.” Natural law which has ignored this fact has failed in keeping an ethos of equality to protect the weak (p. 55). The perspective of a multimodal spirit of justice, “nourished by various impulses from family ethos, by a broad spectrum of feelings of empathy, and by religious perspectives that direct our attention across multiple generations and toward the grand destiny of human beings,” provides power for peace and enhances the human beings as the image of God (p. 66). In other words, ultimately, people with a multimodal spirit of justice, called and shaped in the image of God, become capable of managing themselves in the secular world with its inequality and injustice (pp. 129-30).

In the same manner, the multimodal spirit of freedom, truth, and peace works inextricably in connection with the multimodal spirit of justice. In the circumstances of the personal and social manifestations of suppression and the lack of freedom, those who espouse a multimodal spirit of freedom manifest the image of God and gain strength to fight for liberation, understood morally, legally, and politically (pp. 75-87). Similarly, with a multimodal spirit of truth, people “struggle to bring truth to bear critically and self-critically on the many levels of the search for truth” (p. 130). Finally, these contexts and circumstances of the multimodal spirit come to focus on the peace of the spirit, which brings about warm and loving friendships, creating opportunities for benevolence rather than a spirit of hostility, hatred, and warmongering. This indivisible interaction of the multimodal spirit in all circumstances and situations of social, cultural, and political realms helps to generate the possibility of living and acting commensurate with the image of God.

Welker asks what it means to be persons created in the image of God in our multifaceted pluralistic societies. Beyond the typical approach of natural theology, which focuses on the existence and attributes of God without referring to any divine revelation, Welker is to be commended for developing a concept of the multimodal spirit in natural theology that draws attention to the anthropological function of the spirit in the complicated world where simple bipolar relations are insufficient to explain

the complexities so prevalent in our society. This insightful study, which connects natural theology to a more complete understanding of the image of God, leads readers to think more deeply about living faithfully in this world while growing in godliness.

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The Beauty of Preaching: God's Glory in Christian Proclamation.
By Michael Pasquarello III. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020, xxx-iv+254pp., \$26.99.

Michael Pasquarello is an experienced preacher, academician, and author who occupies the Methodist Chair of Divinity at Beeson Divinity School. He believes, “*The Beauty of Preaching* is an invitation to ‘see’ afresh the heart of the church’s vocation of preaching: to know, love, and enjoy God in all we think, say, do, desire, and suffer” (p. 24). He brings to light “the ‘ugliness’ of preaching that exchanges the love of God for the love of ourselves, the praise of God’s glory for the glory of praise” (p. 22). The preaching of preachers that incessantly attempts to be relevant “quickly become[s] preaching that has lost its capacity to speak of God’s truth, beauty, and goodness” (p. 10). To this end, Pasquarello directs the preacher to behold the beauty of Christ in the gospel we proclaim and to “show that theological and aesthetic considerations in preaching are inseparable” (p. xviii).

One observes *Saving Beauty* (ch. 1) in the beautiful feet of the gospel messenger, “The beauty is in the nature and purpose of the messengers’ words, the joy of proclaiming a message that delights our heart and stirs our desire” (p. 33). The chapter concludes with a thought-provoking section on the poor widow who gave out of her poverty (Mk 12:41-44). *Seeing Beauty* (ch. 2) is a reflection on the unnamed woman of Mark 14:1-9 considering the “beautiful thing” of anointing Jesus and, like her, discerning how to preach beautifully as an act of devotion to God. The next two chapters cover Augustine’s salvation (*A Converting Beauty*) and him as a preacher (*A Spoken Beauty*). His conversion was from a love for

the praise of people to a love for the praise of God (xxvii). For Augustine, as a preacher, “The eyes of his heart were enlightened to see Beauty in the Word made flesh” (p. 96) and his “new desire, then, was to allow the Word to do its work” (p. 97).

A Simple Beauty (ch. 5) highlights the preaching of John Wesley, for the beauty of Wesley’s preaching is “not found in its eloquent, elaborate, or entertaining oratory, but rather in the breadth of its reach *ad populum*” (p. 140). Wesley’s homiletical aesthetic is, “Proclaiming the gospel . . . a work of great beauty that makes known the glory of its true subject and object; the God of infinite love” (p. 159). Finally, *A Strange Beauty* (chapter 6) examines the preaching of Martin Luther. For Luther, “The proclamation of the gospel sparkles with the beauty of Jesus Christ” (p. 164) and “this “strange beauty” is perceived in the deformity of Christ, through whom God absorbs the ugliness of sin and shares his beauty with sinners” (p. 168).

The significant positive of this work is that it consistently points our preaching to the beautiful proclamation of the redeeming work of God in Christ. A few concerns: (1) this work is dense and sometimes labor intensive (copious footnotes, block quotes), (2) while he states, “I’ve written this book for preachers and students of preaching from both mainline and evangelical churches” (p. 19), its trajectory is more mainline (liturgical language, egalitarian view, slightly ecumenical), and (3) at times Pasquarello makes hay out of straw, i.e. “The unnamed woman’s act is a sign of the transformation affected in preaching when the Spirit ‘breaks open’ what is concealed to make known the glory of Jesus in human words” (p. 75). Despite these concerns, this book will still prove helpful for those concerned with God’s glory/beauty in preaching.

Sermon preparation and delivery are not the aims of this book, like Augustine, Pasquarello “offers us a vision of the wisdom of preaching that serves the church on pilgrimage toward its final completion in knowing, praising, and loving God” (p. 135). While limited in audience, it will challenge students of preaching on a graduate or doctoral level. After one accomplishes some heavy-lifting from Pasquarello, they may want to peruse John Piper’s *Expository Exultation: Christian Preaching as Worship* (Crossway, 2018) or A. T. Robertson’s classic *The Glory of the Ministry: Paul’s Exultation in Preaching* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998 reprint [1911]). The beauty of preaching to which Pasquarello calls us to is not

in the messenger, but in the message, so may our preaching be like Zion, “*The perfection of beauty, [where] God appears in radiance*” (Ps 50:2).

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***In Stone and Story: Early Christianity in the Roman World.* By Bruce W. Longenecker. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020, xi+292pp., \$34.99.**

Bruce W. Longenecker serves as professor of religion and occupies the W. W. Melton Chair at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. Longenecker has written numerous articles and monographs on the relationship between Pompeii and the New Testament, including: “Pompeian Artifacts and Jesus-Devotion: The Contours of the Issue in the Early Twenty-First Century” (2019), *Early Christianity in Pompeian Light: People, Texts, Situations* (2016), *The Crosses of Pompeii: Jesus-Devotion in a Vesuvian Town* (2016), and “The Empress, the Goddess, and the Earthquake: Atmospheric Conditions Permitting Public Displays of Jesus-Devotion in Pompeii” (2016).

In his writing, Longenecker examines selected archeological artifacts (e.g., graffiti, inscriptions, statues, temples, paintings, tombs) preserved by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE to discover what they reveal about the ancient Roman world, especially urban settings. Classical texts are referenced occasionally, but only when they shed light on archeological remains. Afterward, he relates these artifacts to selected New Testament texts to glean new insights into the rise of the Christian faith in its historical settings. Longenecker is particularly interested in identifying the diverse ways Christianity gained a foothold, as well as the fresh ideas it introduced. While the calamity caused by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius affected multiple towns, Longenecker focuses mostly on the artifacts found at Pompeii and (to a lesser extent) Herculaneum, two coastal towns located approximately one hundred fifty miles south of Rome.

Those unfamiliar with the significance of the resources located at Pompeii and Herculaneum examined by Longenecker may question the legitimacy and uniqueness of his project. Nevertheless, when one

recognizes that Pompeii and Herculaneum were covered and preserved by huge amounts of volcanic pumice and pyroclastic ash for centuries (up to twenty feet), they come to realize that both locations provide a treasure trove of materials from the ancient world. To be sure, Pompeii and Herculaneum supply a window to the first century like no other towns from ancient times due to the carefully preserved materials, which archeologists have largely uncovered in the past several hundred years.

The author's purpose is neither to provide a complete introduction of ancient Roman artifacts nor a thorough discussion of early Christianity within the Roman world. Rather, he examines selected points of contact between the themes expressed in the artifacts with those found in New Testament texts. An additional motivation for writing *In Stone and Story* is a desire to provide a type of "interpretive bridge" for twenty-first century readers (p. 7). More specifically, Longenecker aims for his work to serve as a guide to help modern readers understand not only the first-century world of the Romans, but also the uniqueness of the Christian writings that appeared within it.

Longenecker arranges *In Stone and Story* into four major sections. In Part One, "Protocols of Engagement" (chs. 1-3), he covers various preliminary matters. The ancient Romans' pursuit of status served as "the most important social phenomenon of the ancient world" (p. 14). Indeed, this feature functions as the "glue" that holds together many of the case studies examined in the book (p. 13). Furthermore, Longenecker discusses the similarities and differences between ancient cities, his work's predilection for Paul's writings due to their urban Roman contexts, and the basics regarding the archeological artifacts found in Pompeii and Herculaneum.

In the remaining portions of the book (parts 2-4), which comprises the bulk of his study, Longenecker surveys some of the Roman world's most prominent features (as illustrated in the Vesuvian artifacts), which he places under the broad headings of "Popular Devotion," "Social Prominence," and "Household Effectiveness." He discusses beliefs and practices tied to everyday life such as sacrificing to the deities, the promotion of the *Pax Romana* narrative, devotion to the Greco-Roman deities and mystery deities, life and death, and slavery. The reader gains a sense of how the Romans thought as well as what they valued. Longenecker identifies similarities and differences between the Roman and Christian perspectives, reaching the following conclusion: "[W]e have at times heard apostolic voices of the early Jesus-movement articulating perspectives that highlight the innovative

creativity of their theological worldview. Embedded in their discourse were certain ideological commitments that ran against the grain of perspectives and practices commonly entrenched within the Greco-Roman world. At much of the same time, however, we have also seen how some forms of early Christian discourse and practice were aligned in general conformity with the first-century contexts.” (p. 250)

The author intended to write an introductory work for a popular as opposed to scholarly audience, and several features support this aim. Longenecker presents many beautiful and relatively clear images of the artifacts discussed, as well as photos of structures and diverse materials from (mostly) modern Pompeii. He also directs readers to remarkable internet resources, such as the website, “Pompeii in Pictures” (pp. 28-30), that allows them to examine ancient artifacts discussed in the writing. Other features of interest to a non-scholarly readership include the Appendix (pp. 255-63), which shares forty-eight “things to consider,” that is, additional early Christian passages not discussed in chapters 4-19 that provide opportunities for further reflection on various topics (e.g., sacrifice and sin, peace and security), and a helpful Glossary of terms used in the book (pp. 265-67). Finally, the “Further Reading” section shares many valuable works for scholarly and non-scholarly readers alike (pp. 268-82).

Some may question several of his conclusions, such as the suggestion that Paul highlighted women in public leadership roles while later Christians altered his presentation (pp. 223-25). Nevertheless, by and large Longenecker provides a perceptive, masterful overview of the Vesuvian artifacts and their corresponding themes in relation to the New Testament writings.

Anyone who wishes to understand Roman and Christian thinking on key beliefs and practices will greatly benefit by reading *In Stone and Story*. Pastors will better understand ancient Roman values, longings, fears, and ethics, while professors in universities who teach Bible survey classes will come to appreciate the social, religious, economic, and political world within which Christianity emerged. This is an excellent teaching resource. Strongly recommended.

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***The Gospel as Manuscript: An Early History of the Jesus Tradition as Material Artifact.* By Chris Keith. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020, 296pp., \$74.00.**

In this volume, Chris Keith seeks to push back on the notion that illiteracy and the predominance of orality in the ancient world meant that texts and manuscripts were relatively unimportant. Rather, even in the midst of this social situation, texts and their physical manuscripts played a highly significant role in the transmission of the Jesus tradition. Noting that many scholarly approaches have “assigned a subsidiary role to the written word in the transmission of the Jesus tradition,” Keith aims to provide a “fuller portrait of textuality” that reckons with the functional and social dynamics of manuscripts in the earliest Christian communities (pp. 5-6).

Keith’s work provides a compendium of several currents in New Testament research. Central to these is the “material turn” in the study of early Christianity. He highlights the nature of the “textualization of the tradition” and the implications of this transition from a spoken to written medium. One of Keith’s contributions to this well-established field of general inquiry is his specific focus on the writing and reception history of the Jesus tradition in the earliest churches.

Two primary conceptual resources Keith employs are the “theory of ancient reading cultures” developed by William A. Johnson and the notion of “cultural texts as cultural memory” developed by Jan Assmann (p. 13). Alongside these starting points, Keith articulates the prominence of manuscripts in various social contexts (manuscripts as required elements of the reading culture) and also the strategic function they had in influencing the reception of the Jesus tradition (manuscripts as socially significant cultural texts).

The development of the “gospel” to the “Gospels” in the years that followed Jesus’s resurrection is a historical reality that requires careful consideration. Throughout his study, Keith explores the profound implications that this decision to commit the story and teachings of Jesus to writing had on the reception history of the gospel. In this regard, Keith draws out the implications of something contemporary readers take for granted: the textuality of the gospel story in written form.

After explaining the parameters of his study, Keith first establishes the significance of Mark’s narrative as the initial textualization of the Jesus tradition (ch. 3). In this social context, the composition of the Gospel of

Mark represents a radically influential moment. As a written text, Mark actualizes an “extended situation” that enables “a limitless number of reception contexts, giving new life to the tradition beyond the confines of orality” (p. 96; on the concept of an “extended situation,” see pp. 26-32; 85-96). Keith also emphasizes the way that Mark’s Gospel portrays itself with a strong “textual self-consciousness” (p. 98). After Mark’s narrative is written, the textualization of the Jesus tradition develops in earnest.

Keith next traces the proliferation of written texts about Jesus that followed Mark’s narrative. Subsequent works about Jesus’s life and teaching positioned themselves in relation to Mark’s Gospel and also sought to draw attention to the textual nature of their work. Keith focuses on what he calls the “competitive textualization” that occurs in texts that draw directly upon Mark’s narrative but also modify the tradition in ways that require explanation (pp. 103-105). He discusses the ways Matthew, Luke, John, and the *Gospel of Thomas* position their literary work in direct relation to other written texts (chs. 4-5).

In the last part of his book, Keith examines two of the social factors that enabled the earliest churches to function as a textual community. The public reading of the Jesus tradition is a practice that is well-established in the fourth century but begins in the first century (ch. 6). In turn, this public reading included a central role for manuscripts of biblical texts and played a key role in the self-perceived identity of the early Christian community (ch. 7).

A clear pattern throughout this study is Keith’s move away from explaining the origin of an ancient practice to demonstrating its resulting history of reception. There is an initial focus on the *origin* of the textualized tradition, but also a clear move to analyze the *effect* of that textualized tradition for writers and readers who were aware of its presence. For Keith, this focus on Mark’s “impact instead of his intentions” allows one to explore “not *why* [Mark] moved the Jesus tradition into the written medium but *what difference it made*” (pp. 12-13; cf. 73-99). This shift from motivated intention to effective history means that Keith’s overarching claims are minimal and tied to historical evidence that is more straightforward than hypothetical reconstructions (e.g., his tentative rejection of a “Q” source, pp. 75-77).

The historical and hermeneutical significance of texts, textuality, and the use of the written medium among the earliest churches are of perennial concern for the study of the New Testament. Some readers will likely

disagree with elements of Keith's historical-critical approach to the reception of the Jesus tradition in early Christianity (e.g., around issues of authorship and the nature of conflict entailed in some cases of "competitive textualization"). However, because of the carefulness of Keith's historical analysis, the modesty of his central claims, and the comprehensive scope of his scholarly engagement, this work should not be neglected.

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***Already Sanctified: A Theology of the Christian Life in Light of God's Completed Work.* By Don J. Payne. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020, 192pp., \$22.99.**

In *Already Sanctified: A Theology of the Christian Life in Light of God's Completed Work*, Don Payne, associate professor of theology and Christian formation at Denver Seminary, seeks to rescue the doctrine of sanctification. He makes the argument that positional sanctification as it has been termed within theological discussions, bears much more weight on the Christian life than previous discussions have allowed. The impetus for this book arises from years of both pastoral ministry and teaching within a seminary context. Specifically, Payne argues that "the present and future aspects [of sanctification] can be properly understood only in light of what has already been accomplished" (p. 7). This short text teases out this idea in biblical and practical perspective and serves as a helpful corrective, even if there might be some areas left unresolved in the debate.

Chapters one and two provide a brief history of the Reformation conversation on sanctification as it arose in contrast to late Medieval Roman Catholicism. Here Payne specifically looks at the two prominent reformers, Martin Luther and John Calvin, drawing conclusions from their thought on sanctification and justification as they relate to one another. Chapter two traces the line of thought a little further into later traditions such as Wesleyanism and the later Keswick movement, two movements highly influential within Evangelicalism. Payne could have said more on the history of sanctification within the Protestant Reformation. The pietistic

tradition within Lutheranism that arose soon after the Reformation is important here, and the other reformed inheritors of Calvin's thought within Europe and the British Isles are also important to consider. I believe it would have been helpful to give readers additional coordinates to locate this discussion more historically, especially as it relates to Evangelicalism. Relying on authoritative sources such as Richard Lovelace might have been useful to elaborate this more for the sake of providing further context and background to the issue at hand. I question his conclusion that Westminster and its language of further sanctified, really and personally should be considered a "sliding scale." What the Westminster divines and other Calvinistic teachers would have called this would-be holiness, piety, or experiential theology. What was considered positional sanctification would have been subsumed into a facet of election and regeneration (from the *ordo salutis*) which was no less important a discussion even if they moved onto the experience of that in holy living. Payne asserts the confusion that results from "a psychologically subtle interface between trusting God and just the right manner and engaging the right type of disciplines" (p. 37). This is a helpful observation and sets up the rest of Payne's argument and work through the text he presents.

In chapter three, Payne begins to map the sanctification trail from the Old Testament understanding of consecration. According to Payne, the Old Testament rendering of holiness relates to "God's presence and purposes for the definitive orientation" (p. 55). Absent from this discussion is the idea of holiness and consecration in the book of Psalms. The material from the Psalms provides a wealth of data on how one walks in the way of the Lord and demonstrates a life that is set apart and consecrated to God. Admittedly, dealing with the Psalms is an enormous task for a survey chapter such as this, but in the opinion of this reviewer it is a major oversight. Additionally, the life of David as one who is positionally set apart for God's task and who demonstrates one after God's own heart would have been a helpful example to demonstrate and interact with Payne's thesis.

Chapter four moves to a New Testament overview of sanctification. Here Payne emphasizes the confusion, according to him, on how the imperatives given in the New Testament are often over emphasized to the neglect of the "accomplished aspect of sanctification" (p. 58). The consistent New Testament witness is that believers are sanctified as a primary identity marker. Paul to the Corinthians bases his pastoral injunctions on the reality that his hearers are washed, sanctified, and justified "in

the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the spirit of our God” (1 Cor 6:11; pp. 62–3). This includes therefore an “active presence and agency in their lives” (p. 63). Accomplished sanctification, however, is not contrary to personal growth and effort. Rather, as Payne argues, it is “framed by God’s covenant promises and faithfulness is brought about by the Holy Spirit” (p. 70).

In a few places Payne makes assertions that go unsubstantiated. For instance, he claims that Romans 12:1–2 “routinely appears to support the notion of progressive sanctification” within both academic and popular treatments of sanctification (p. 91). This may be true, yet no verification is given apart from a couple of references to Richard Longenecker’s commentary on Romans. He also categorizes the Reformed tradition of sanctification in a way that seems misleading. Quoting J. I. Packer, Payne asserts that there is an “existential conundrum” in desiring holiness and one’s awareness of their lack of holiness (p. 97). While this “reach exceeding grasp” may on the surface seem problematic, the intention is to affirm the positive which is one’s union with Christ and holiness based on that union. Additionally, the recognition of the Creator/creature distinction is one that leads to holy fear and holy living based on love. From my understanding, Packer’s intention is to demonstrate how Christians live out of their new identity “and the naturalness of godliness when one is a new creation in Christ.”¹ He also claims that John Owen’s view of sanctification, interpreted through his work *Mortification of Sin*, is too often interpreted negatively. This may be true, but no further reflection or citations are provided to support this claim. Payne has done a lot of work within Packer’s theology, and Owen’s influence upon Packer, so I would give him the benefit of the doubt in knowing more of the nuances contained within Packer’s thought and its influence on Reformed understandings of sanctification. It would have still been useful to expound on this idea in order to further verify his claims and demonstrate their veracity to his readers.

In part three, Payne teases out how accomplished sanctification and transformation go hand in hand. Transformation is inherent within sanctification but, according to Payne, transformation comes through various responses within the Christian life and community. In these final chapters, there is nothing immensely new or challenging in the understanding of spiritual growth. In fact, those who would affirm the notion of progressive

¹J. I. Packer, *Seeing God in the Dark: Unraveling the Mysteries of Holy Living* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 237.

sanctification would find much to agree with here. Payne reiterates the primacy of God's word, highlights the role of suffering, upholds the centrality of worship and community, and focuses on gratitude as vital to growth. Payne concludes that formation and growth should not be codified because we "will inevitably miss something and frustrate the process for those with whom the Spirit interacts in the Spirit's hidden manner" (p. 152).

Payne concludes with an urgent pastoral tone: "traditions that overly associate sanctification with transformation can either tacitly burden believers more than help them flourish or foster spiritual apathy and presumption" (p. 156). Payne's point is well taken, specifically that the idea of accomplished sanctification and the Christian's status as holy is overshadowed by the call to grow in holiness. I think readers should carefully listen to Payne on this point. However, I do not believe a stronger focus on accomplished sanctification erases the temptation for spiritual narcissism and moralism within the Christian life as Payne argues. Reformed views of sanctification still assert the role of accomplished sanctification as the mode of being for a Christian, though perhaps it is not practically stated as strongly as it should be. What Payne does well to remind readers is that while our theology of sanctification boxes may all be checked, the practical and pastoral implications need to be vigorously maintained while caring for those who are seeking to live a faithful Christian life in a fallen world mired by sin. A theology of sanctification is only good in so far as it elucidates the profundity of our union with Christ and his abiding presence by the Spirit in our daily lives. While I believe Payne could have provided much more historical and biblical discussion on this point, and provided verification of his assertions in key areas, this is still a text worth considering for students of theology. For those teaching on the doctrine of sanctification or Christian formation, pastors considering the practical impact of this doctrine, or interested readers seeking more insight on accomplished sanctification, Payne can be a helpful conversation partner.

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***The Trinity: An Introduction.* By Scott R. Swain. Wheaton: Crossway, 2020, 155pp., \$15.99.**

Published as one of the short studies in systematic theology, *The Trinity: An Introduction* is designed to serve theologians, pastors, and laypersons in “seeking to review the main contours of Trinitarian teaching” in the Bible (p. 20). Scott R. Swain, president and professor of systematic theology at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, meets the needs of all the readers by drawing “the basic ‘grammar’ of Scripture’s Trinitarian discourse,” which leads ultimately to the goal of learning how to praise, worship, and rejoice in the triune God (pp. 19-22).

Swain asserts that the readers must learn to read fluently the Bible’s primary Trinitarian discourse (p. 27). In relation to the basic pattern of the Bible’s Trinitarian discourse, Swain examines three patterns in the baptismal formula in Matthew 28:19: (1) affirming the existence of the one God; (2) identifying the three persons with the one God; and (3) distinguishing the three persons from each other (pp. 28-34).

In connection with the basic grammar of scriptural Trinitarianism, Swain considers three types of texts: (1) inner Trinitarian conversation texts, which means that “only the persons of the Trinity can make known the persons of the Trinity” (Matthew 3:16-17 and Mark 1:10-11); (2) cosmic framework texts which “set the entire cosmos, as well as the entirety of God’s work within the cosmos, in relation to the Trinity” (Genesis 1:1-2:3 and Matthew 3:16-17); and (3) redemptive mission texts, which are related to the “sending or mission of the Son (and the Spirit) to fulfill God’s redemptive purpose” (Mark 12:1-12 and Galatians 4:4-7) (pp. 38-50). From these observations, Swain proposes three important conclusions, which serve as the subjects for the rest of the chapters in the book.

The first conclusion is clarified by the statement in Deuteronomy 6:4: “The Lord is one” (p. 53). Swain explicates one God in his “unity of singularity” and his “unity of simplicity” (p. 53). This concept of “God alone” and “not composed of parts” in his being and attributes, Swain claims, is the oneness of God affirmed by the Bible’s basic Trinitarian grammar (p. 54). Thus, divine simplicity makes all of the one God’s external works indivisible (p. 59).

The second conclusion comes with the distinction of the three persons of the triune God in chapters four through six: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The characteristic of each person of the triune God shows the uniqueness

of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, while maintaining undivided cooperation by the unique relationship of the three persons.

The fatherhood of God is primary, unique, and transcendent, which means God's fatherhood is the pattern and unique model for every creaturely fatherhood in heaven and earth, not vice versa, and also transcends all creaturely limitations (pp. 70-71). Similar to the fatherhood of God, the sonship of the Son is primary, unique, and transcendent as well; namely (1) all other sons come into existence "fashioned after the Son's divine filial likeness"; (2) in relation to the Father, he is the only begotten Son; and (3) the Son's begetting is beyond the manner of creaturely begetting (pp. 78-79).

The distinctiveness of the Holy Spirit reveals Jesus Christ as the Father's beloved Son; moreover, it is the Holy Spirit who draws God's people to confess Jesus is Lord (p. 91). Unique to the Holy Spirit is his procession from the Father and the Son (pp. 97-98). Swain, by naming God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each of whose identity is derived from the relational origin within the triune God, shows how each person of the triune God is distinctive in the works of one God.

The third and final conclusion of the basic grammar of biblical Trinitarianism comes with the external operations of God, not like his internal operations in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Swain affirms "what is true of God's being is true of God's action as well," which means God's divine simplicity operates in a threefold order within undivided and inseparable works of God (pp. 108-9). Such an external act of the three persons is manifest in both appropriations and missions (pp. 110-19).

The last chapter of the book deals with the ultimate end of the triune God's work, which is internal and external. Scripture pictures the triune God as a builder who creates and sustains a home for union and communion with his redeemed children. Swain, however, asserts "the triune God himself, and the triune God alone, is the ultimate and final end of his sacred house-building project, of the marriage of Christ and his bride, and of the union and communion between the triune God and his people" (pp. 123-24). Finally, pursuing God alone in his works benefits God's beloved children (p. 127).

Swain seeks to unravel the mystery of the doctrine of the Trinity based on the "grammar" of Trinitarian discourse, which is exposed by Trinitarian textual patterns. The manner of unfolding the biblical Trinitarianism in context focuses ultimately on God alone and his glory while not

disregarding some critical contemporary issues. This short, but substantive volume, will serve to lead theologians, pastors, and laypersons to the true worship of God the Trinity. I am pleased to recommend this excellent book.

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***Sin and its Remedy in Paul.* Edited by Nijay K. Gupta and John K. Goodrich. Eugene: Cascade, 2020, xv+178pp., \$25.00.**

If you pick up a modern book on Paul, you will often see the author refer to the term “Sin/sins.” This language has become commonplace in the field, and it refers to the interplay between *Sin as cosmic power* and *individual sins of disobedience*. But, we must ask, do both of these ideas exist in Paul’s writings? If so, what is the relationship between the two? *Sin and its Remedy in Paul* seeks to answer these questions.

This book is the inaugural volume in the *Contours of Pauline Theology* series, edited by Nijay K. Gupta (professor of New Testament, Northern Seminary) and John K. Goodrich (professor of Bible at Moody Bible Institute). It brings together a diverse lineup of Pauline scholars and aims to explore “key texts and crucial topics pertaining to Paul’s theology and their explication in modern scholarship” (i). Six of the chapters are derived from papers that were presented at the Institute for Biblical Research in 2017 and 2018, and four additional chapters were subsequently added to round out the study.

In chapter one, Gupta provides an overview of sin (*hamartia* and its cognates) in Greco-Roman and Jewish Literature. He employs a responsible, descriptive methodology in his analysis, and his findings are illuminating. His survey of Greco-Roman usage of the sin word-group is broad, from Aristotle to Arrian, and he concludes that the *hamartia* word-group is not primarily religious language, but rather refers to any kind of error or mistake. When it comes to Jewish literature, rather than tackling the gargantuan project of a fresh analysis of Hebrew and Greek words for sin, Gupta builds on the work of Joseph Lam and Mark Boda in his analysis. While Gupta’s study does include a wide survey of the relevant texts,

conspicuously absent from the mix is any interaction with the Dead Sea Scrolls, particularly the *Community Rule*. Nevertheless, the chapter still provides illuminating results, and it serves its purpose as an introduction to the rest of the book.

The next three chapters are all devoted to Paul's letter to the Romans. The three authors (Martinus C. de Boer, Bruce W. Longenecker, and A. Andrew Das), though not in total agreement, generally trend away from an Augustinian sense of original sin and argue for the priority of Sin as a cosmic power over against a focus on individual sins of disobedience. Das's chapter on Rom 5:12–21 felt uncharacteristically weak. Though his survey of various models for "relating sin as a power to human activity" was helpful, he did not provide a strong conclusion or model of his own. Additionally, some of his references need updating, most notably his interaction with Thomas Schreiner's first edition of his Romans commentary, from which Schreiner has since changed his view on Romans 5. On the other hand, Longenecker's chapter on sin and the sovereignty of God is itself worth the price of the book. It was refreshing to read his argument for the priority of "Sin" without the exclusion of the reference to "sins," since so many other Pauline scholars argue from a mutually exclusive perspective. Whether or not you agree with all of his points, it represents seasoned scholarship and contains insightful analogies that will be helpful for teaching and preaching as well as contributing to the scholarly conversation.

The rest of the book covers 1 Corinthians (Alexandra R. Brown), 2 Corinthians (Dominika Kurek-Chomycz), Galatians (David A. deSilva), Colossians and Ephesians (John K. Goodrich), 1–2 Thessalonians (Andy Johnson), and 1 Timothy (George M. Wieland). DeSilva's chapter on the human problem and divine solution in Galatians was especially insightful. He has a firm grasp on the contours of Galatians, and the discussion of the "elemental spirits" (*stoicheion*) in Gal 4:3, 9 brings clarity to a particularly difficult section of Galatians. Wieland provides a fascinating study of sin as "misalignment of the household of God" in 1 Timothy. He detects an echo to Num 15:22–31 in Paul's reference to sinning in "ignorance" (1 Tim 1:13); nevertheless, he rightly concludes that ignorance does not mean innocence. On the downside, while Wieland celebrates the value of treating the so-called "pastoral epistles" individually (148), with the exception of a few footnotes (e.g., 150, n. 11) the book neglects coverage of sin in 2 Timothy and Titus, making the project feel incomplete.

Overall, the book succeeds in its purpose to provide an accessible yet rich treatment of hamartiology in the Pauline letters. This book would work well as a textbook for a Pauline theology class or perhaps even a systematic theology class. Pastors and lay leaders would also benefit from having this book as a resource on the shelf.

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***The Gospels (Photo Companion to the Bible).* By Todd Bolen. 4-volume collection. DVD. Updated. BiblePlaces.com, 2020, \$299.**

The educational value of an accurate, high quality Bible picture for a sermon or Bible lesson is immense. No matter how well one describes a Tyrian shekel, the Pontius Pilate inscription, the Mt. of Olives, or Gordon's Calvary—showing a picture is far better. Viewing a picture avoids the inevitable inaccuracies that often occur when listeners try to picture the object or place in their minds.

For over a decade, BiblePlaces.com has offered collections of biblical pictures online and for purchase on DVDs. Todd Bolen founded BiblePlaces.com and is professor of biblical studies at The Master's University, Santa Clarita, California. In this new collection, *The Gospels (Photo Companion to the Bible)*, are pictures from Bolen as well as A. D. Riddle (graduate student, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School) and Steven D. Anderson (PhD, Dallas Theological Seminary)—both longtime contributors to BiblePlaces.com.

The format of this product makes illustrating the Gospels easy for the pastor and Bible teacher. Over 10,000 photographs are arranged by Bible chapter and verse. Each Gospel chapter includes a slide show with 40-230 photographs. Many verses have multiple pictures, but not every verse has a picture since multiple verses may refer to the same place or item. For instance, Matthew 1 has 48 slides: 1:1 (10), 1:6 (1), 1:11 (4), 1:16 (2), 1:18 (13), 1:19 (3), 1:20 (1), 1:22-23 (2), 1:24 (3), and 1:25 (9). Parallel verses in the other Gospels contain a good balance of new pictures along with some repetition of the same pictures.

1. *Benefits of this collection.* The collection is convenient and saves time from searching the Internet or other sources for appropriate, current pictures for an upcoming sermon or lesson. All pictures are in a PowerPoint slide show, so they are easy to cut and paste into your own slide show. Updates are also included via the website. The most recent one was June 6, 2020. The purchaser of this product has free lifetime updates.

This collection is a useful teaching tool. One may be unsure about what to depict for a certain Gospel verse, but this resource often has several suggestions. The many aerial slides give a helpful perspective with labels for important sites and routes, such as slide 3 in Matthew 2 that labels the Church of the Nativity and Rachel's tomb in Bethlehem, as well as the nearby Herodium. Slide 19 in Luke 2 is a satellite image of the Levant that depicts the two possible routes taken by Joseph and Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem. The use of professional black and white photographs from the American Colony from the 1900-1930s gives two fascinating perspectives: how much Israel has changed in the last 100 years (especially in the appearance of sites like Gordon's Calvary), as well as how much it has *not* changed in the last 2,000 years (the Bedouin lifestyle, Samaritan lifestyle, etc.). Most slides have beneficial descriptions in the notes section.

The collection includes hard-to-find pictures. It can be challenging to locate a picture of a 1st-century AD Roman axe head or some chopped-down Judean tree stumps to illustrate Matthew 3:10. This resource has both (Matt. 3, slides 58-59). In addition, there are pictures of sites or scenes no longer available today, such as the reconstruction of a first-century AD boat on the shore at En Gev (John 6, slide 48), and the many wonderful American Colony photographs.

Accuracy is assured. Even if one might find a needed picture on the Internet, it may be misidentified or have an erroneous description. It can also be challenging to verify Internet pictures.

2. *Suggestions for improvement.* Here are some ways to make this helpful product even better. First, offer pictures in widescreen format (16:9 ratio) when possible—the aspect ratio of modern monitors. Second, provide more picture options. For instance, there are some great aerial and grotto photographs of the Church of the Nativity, but there are no pictures of the beautiful altar inside the church (Luke 2, slides 28-53; Matt. 2, slides 3-17). Third, provide cross references. For instance, on each picture of the Sea of Galilee boat, it would help to know there are additional pictures (slide 3 in Matthew 9, slide 143 in Mark 6, and slide 49 in John 6). However, there

is a good variety of pictures, and the present format serves the intentions of the producers of this fine product.

3. *Recommendation.* *The Gospels* (Photo Companion to the Bible) is a useful tool for pastors and Bible teachers who want to add interesting and unique pictures to their sermons and lessons. It is convenient, creative, well documented, and accurate. For the busy pastor or teacher who needs accurate, quality pictures to illustrate specific verses of the Gospels, this is a valuable resource.

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***Preaching to People in Pain: How Suffering Can Shape Your Sermons and Connect with Your Congregation.* By Matthew D. Kim. Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 2021, 223pp., \$24.99.**

This book is well-timed. It was published right as the world is recovering from a pandemic and churches are filled with people dealing with suffering in many forms. Kim encourages preachers with a timely challenge to faithfully expound the Scriptures dealing with pain and also assists preachers with helpful thoughts related on how to do so. The author reminds us that preachers preach both on pain and in pain.

The book is organized in two parts. The first part deals with identifying the pain that preachers and congregations face, and the second part outlines 6 types of pain people commonly face and how to address them from Scripture. With each type of pain, Kim includes a message on how to address that particular type of pain. Each sermon is outlined with 3 principles from the text. Finally, each chapter concludes with helpful questions to guide discussions on pain and suffering and summarize the content of the chapter.

In part one, Kim details the types of pain the people face. The book primarily addresses six types of pain (p. 24; although page 37 includes a subsequent, though similar list containing seven types of pain). Kim calls for transparency from preachers (p. 6 and pp. 12-15) and models that throughout by identifying both his own struggles with physical pain (pp.

101-2) as well as those of his family (p. 106), and also with the intense grief over the murder of his brother (pp. 45-46 and pp. 128-129).

Kim calls on preachers to take an “inventory of pain suffering” in their congregation (pp. 24-25). He recommends creating a spreadsheet delineating the types of pain from which parishioners suffer that will allow preachers to pray for, care through, and preach toward the kinds of suffering that are impacting the congregations they serve.

Kim recommends nine preparatory questions to guide preachers through preaching on pain. These questions are introduced in chapter three and form the bases for each chapter in part two. The author encourages preachers to use these principles as a template “to preach more intentionally on pain and suffering” (p. 36). The nine questions are:

1. Which passage will I preach on?
2. What type of pain/suffering is revealed in the text?
3. How does the Bible character or biblical author deal with the pain?
4. How does this pain in the text deal with our listeners pain?
5. What does this pain say about God and his allowance of pain?
6. How does God/Jesus/the Holy Spirit help us in our suffering?
7. How can our preaching show care and empathy?
8. How can we share this pain in Christian community?
9. How will God use our suffering to transform us and bring Himself glory?

In part two, Kim addresses each of the six types of pain individually. The sermons included in each chapter outline the principles he addresses and model the principles taught therein. The sermons chosen are from both testaments and cover multiple genres.

The research for the book is thorough, but not disproportionate. In addition, preachers will find a number of good illustrations interspersed throughout (although the one on pages 121-122 would be both strengthened and more accurate by being updated).

The principles taught in this work are faithful to Scripture, modeled by the author, and helpful for preachers. The book contains many helpful suggestions for pastors and preachers alike. The issue addressed in the work

is one that all preachers will face and more should attend. This is a work that preachers will find valuable for their library.

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