

Reviews



MARK AS STORY: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NARRATIVE OF A GOSPEL, 3rd ed., by David Rhoads, Joanna Dewey, and Donald Michie. Fortress, 2012. Pp. 191. \$24.00 (paper).

During a decade and a half of university teaching, one book that I have used in my courses towers above the others: *Mark as Story*, the second edition. Apparently I am not alone in loving this book. In the “Afterword” of the third edition, Mark Allen Powell credits the first edition with launching his own passion for narrative criticism. In 2011, an SBL book twice the length of *Mark as Story* was issued to celebrate its contribution to the whole field of biblical studies (*Mark as Story: Retrospect and Prospect*, edited by Kelly R. Iverson and Christopher W. Skinner). So, when a new edition came out, I found myself hoping that they did not destroy what I loved about the earlier book, and skeptical that they could really improve upon it. Fortunately, the authors have succeeded in improving it in light of ongoing developments in biblical scholarship without losing the earlier magic that I prize.

I have on a couple of occasions heard some truly amazing guitarists, for example, Clapton and Santana. When I return from those concerts, I look at my own guitar and am fully aware of what I am *not* able to do with it. Many scholars of the Bible are like those virtuosos. They write books and do phenomenal things with biblical texts and contexts, but they leave their readers feeling dreadfully inadequate and fearful of even picking up the Bible to see what they might discover on their own. As my kids were learning to play musical instruments, we enjoyed getting together with a fam-

ily friend named Brian. He too was immensely talented and invoked wonder through his dexterity and skill, but he patiently taught the youth who sat with him how to play along and bring their skills to the next level. Even when my kids only knew songs with three standard chords, when Brian backed them up they sounded like they could be Clapton’s warm-up act. The authors of *Mark as Story* do for those interested in studying the Bible what Brian did for my kids’ musical interest. They provide a framework for understanding the narrative, observations about how setting, plot, characters, and conflicts shape the story, specific directions of how to pay attention when interpreting the text, and wonderful worksheets to take students to the next level of interpretation.

They achieve this by providing a compelling translation that maintains verbal threads so that readers notice repetition for themselves (I wish that a pdf of the translation were made available online to facilitate student exploration of these repetitions). The authors present their translation as a continuous story without breaking it up by chapter and verse. They have us first engage the full sweep of the story by inviting us to read it straight through in one sitting. And then they unpack the story’s dynamics, making our awareness of it more complex, yet without overwhelming us with that complexity. This is a book I have put in the hands of college students who knew virtually nothing about the Bible, but when they walk through the process outlined in light of a chosen pericope, allowing Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie to play back-up for them, they find themselves writing five pages of intelligent,

wise observations about that pericope that are the result of their own work and analysis. These fledgling interpreters consistently help me to see new things in the text that I have not noticed before and that even the authors of *Mark as Story* had not pointed out. The students leave the class knowing that the Bible is an instrument they can pick up and perform.

For those who already know these things about *Mark as Story*, you will be interested to know about new developments in the third edition. Three areas have received more attention in this latest edition. Each of these represents developments in the scholarly field in general. Most central is the awareness that, given literacy levels in the first century (three to five percent, according to the authors), this gospel was not silently read by those who knew its story, but was experienced as a lively and engaging performance. Thus, several terms from the second edition have been altered. "Author" has become "composer," storyteller

plays a more central role in understanding the narrator, and "audience" or "hearer" replace the "reader(s)." These subtle linguistic shifts come together to make a major change in understanding how the narrative makes its impact. At times, the seams between the second edition's assumptions and those of the third are visible, introducing minor discrepancies into the text. For example, the description of the narrator as "omniscient" is a literary term that overstates, in my opinion, how the narrator operates in performance. Yet even here, they have nuanced their understanding of the storytelling narrator from the second-edition description. Overall, the shift in understanding how media shape the message is quite successful.

Second, they take more clearly the cosmic dimensions of the story. Mark's Gospel is about the cosmic event of God breaking into God's good creation. They have shifted Markan interpretation from the passion nar-

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rative to the beginning, when God's rule breaks into the world. This is an important shift and one I would have liked to see even more developed in the course of the analysis.

And, third, they have taken seriously the imperial context of Mark's Gospel as the essential reality over and against which the Gospel was composed. Here their work follows a dominant development in New Testament studies. This focus enriches the analysis they offer and helps us understand what early audiences found compelling in this story.

This third edition assures that the music of Mark is not overshadowed by the interpreter's commentary. It also ensures that this Gospel will play on and, for this, the authors deserve our heartfelt thanks.

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JEWISH INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE, ANCIENT AND CONTEMPORARY, by Karin Hedner Zetterholm. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012. Pp. 187. \$32.00 (paper).

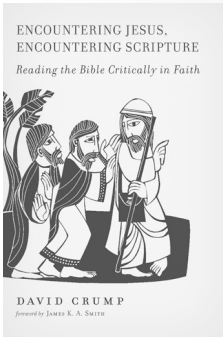
In her well-written, concise, informative book Karin Zetterholm has provided a great service to all who seek to understand and serve a living God while taking ancient texts to be authoritative, normative, or especially serious for our faith. For Christian preachers and teachers, her book is important for two reasons. First, Zetterholm introduces us to the literature of Jewish biblical interpretation, a body of literature that is often, at best, unfamiliar. Second, as she draws us into this world of biblical study and interpretation, Zetterholm corrects common misunderstandings and misrepresentations of Jewish devotion to Scripture. She helps her readers see the convictions that undergird varied interpretive positions among Jews. In an excellent final chapter she lays out how interpretive methods lead to varied conclusions about contemporary issues

between particular expressions of Judaism (Orthodox, Conservative, Reform) as well as within them. Alert Christians will recognize many of the same questions, assumptions, and theologies of revelation and anthropology that shape our own highly diverse claims about what the Bible says.

Zetterholm's focus is on the work of the rabbinic period, ca. 70–600 C.E., a period beginning with the destruction of the second temple and marked by a need to reinterpret the ancient texts for a very different world. It is precisely interpretation that provides the crucial link between ancient texts and the faith of Israel and how Jews live and believe today. Her explorations begin with a rabbinic parable (5) that speaks of the "added value" of transformation of an original (wheat and flax in the parable) into a brand-new form (a loaf of fine white bread covered with a fine linen tablecloth). "The essence of Jewish tradition," she says, "can be characterized as an ongoing dialectical process between divine revelation and human creative interpretation" (5).

Differences in interpretation depend primarily on the weight given to text, context, and beliefs about revelation. Zetterholm discusses with care and subtlety how an understanding of oral torah developed in which the whole body of rabbinic teaching was given orally to Moses at Sinai, versus the conviction that humans are active agents in creating meaning with God. Although the authority of rabbinic tradition is different according to these two understandings, in both traditions human reasoning is a highly valued component in discerning divine truth. The rabbis realized that having multiple interpretations of one text could be a problem, but insisted that such a reality was already known in Torah, quoting Ps 62:12, "One thing God has spoken; two things have I heard," and Jer 23:29, in which God's word creates "fiery sparks" as a hammer does when it strikes a rock. These sparks are the "many senses inherent in each and every verse" (35).

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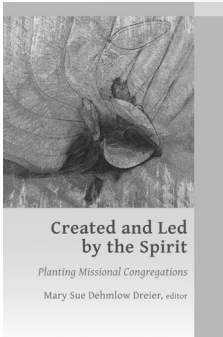
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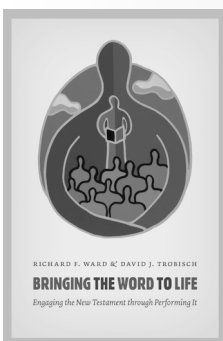
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In a further chapter, Zetterholm provides abundant information concerning the development and use of sources of Jewish biblical interpretation, helping readers with descriptions of the form, content, and history of the Mishnah and Talmud. She then goes on to talk about methods of interpretation used among the rabbis, laying out, among other things, some of the assumptions about the biblical text. She sees four basic assumptions, based on James Kugel's work, namely, that Scripture is fundamentally cryptic, fundamentally relevant, perfect, and harmonious, and that it is in its entirety divinely inspired (72–73). She then examines how these assumptions are used in interpretation, making use of the Binding of Isaac (Gen 22) as a case study.

For Christian readers, this section is worth the price of the entire book. Not only do we see important Jewish methods of study and great theological themes that emerge from them, we also see how deeply rooted in Scripture, method of study, and theology are our understandings of the person and work of Jesus. Isaac understood as a willing sacrifice, as an atoning sacrifice for all of Israel, was familiar to Jews before, during, and after the time of Jesus. This sense of Isaac was derived from scriptural study shaped by theological convictions about God and God's written word.

In addition, Zetterholm examines biblical interpretation in the Gospels and in Paul's letters. Looking carefully at a number of parables found in similar form in Jewish sources and in the Gospels, she separates the layers of original parable from those of later Christian interpretation. These later layers move away from their Jewish connections and begin to cast the "bad guys" of the parable as the Jews over against Jesus. For instance, in the parable of the vineyard (Matt 21:33–46; Mark 12:1–12; Luke 20:9–19), she points out that Matthew changes the vineyard from being seen as Israel to the vineyard as the kingdom of God in verse 43. Since this interpretation uses different language than is customary for Matthew, Zetter-

holm calls upon her fine acquaintance with contemporary scholarship to note that some believe "kingdom of God" language in v. 43 is an editing of Matthew's gospel, indicating a third layer increasingly hostile to Jews.

All this careful reading is seen as characteristic of the need to hold tradition and adaptation together for Jewish (and Christian) Bible readers. In her final sections, Zetterholm offers the rare opportunity for most Christian readers to consider how "scriptural" is interpreted by contemporary Jews. She looks at two case studies where Christians have had to wrestle with texts that seem to prohibit something outright (homosexual behaviors) or guide the faithful in matters that would have been inconceivable to their authors (medical ethics). To read her descriptions of the various ways Jews have engaged Scripture around these issues is to see a passionate commitment to God whose mercy, kindness, justice, and creative power are glimpsed by us in precisely the same stories that seem no longer to speak to whom we know ourselves to be as lovers of God.

There is no way to escape this wrestling match. Zetterholm seems to suggest that we take it up with the zest and confidence of a people called by God to do so, with clarity about our assumptions and charity toward one another. This book will help to promote both of those things.

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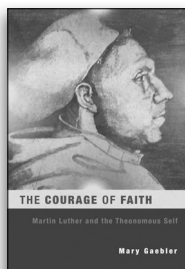
THE CHARACTER OF CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURE, by Christopher R. Seitz.
Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. Pp. 218. \$23.00 (paper).

Carrying forward the prodigious efforts of Brevard Childs, our author has given a sterling treatment of the subject of the Bible as a two-Testament canon testifying to one God and one Lord Jesus Christ. Among the chief



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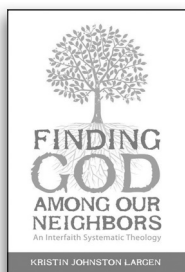
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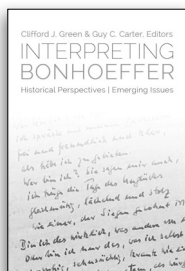
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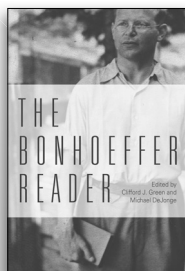
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major works by Childs during the latter part of the twentieth century were *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, *The New Testament as Canon*, and *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, concluding with his final book, *The Church's Guide for Reading Paul* (2008). Helpful too for the reader, in this regard, would be an important work by Daniel Driver, *Brevard Childs Biblical Theologian: For the Church's One Bible* (2010), which gives a detailed examination of Childs's literary achievements and an analysis of his works.

Seitz called Childs's work "the most brilliant proposal for theological exegesis offered in recent memory" (in *Word Without End* [Baylor University, 2004], 109). He spoke as a former student of Childs, and was, and is, a master in his own right. In his preface, he writes that he has "endeavored to wrestle with the form of the two-testament Bible and to understand its unique character. There is nothing else like it" (13).

The book is laid out in a series of seven chapters, the first being (by far) the most extensive (64 pages). This deals at length with the canonical approach and biblical interpretation. There are two Testaments in the Christian Bible, and each must be given a proper place in our reading of Scripture, while at the same time each has a distinctive message it proclaims. The Hebrew Canon is written, to begin with, by and for the nation of Israel; it proclaims the truth and existence of one Lord, Creator, covenant-maker, and Redeemer. The Greek New Testament opens with a tying-together statement, saying that Jesus Christ is "the son of David, the son of Abraham" (respectively the greatest king of Israel, and the father of the Hebrew nation), and, later in Matthew 1:23, that he is God come in the flesh. Seitz gives due consideration in this opening chapter to several issues: the relationship between the Testaments, including text-critical observations; the possibility of doctrinal lenses, namely, that we do not read neutrally; and, finally, biblical theology. Each of these is important to the study at hand.

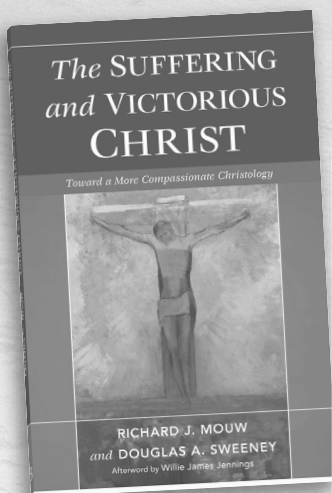
A key query at the outset is: What is "biblical theology"? Our author surveys a number of answers to this question, ranging from James Dunn to H. Hubner and P. Stuhlmacher, to B. Childs, to A. J. M. Wedderburn, to O. Hofius. He insists that the critical element is to put in the foreground *the character of the relationship between the Testaments* (96, italics his) as the center of treating the subject of biblical theology. We need to maintain a "more evaluative" position, particularly with respect to the relation between historical description and theological significance, and to evaluate how the message of the OT does Christian theological work. And while the church may naturally feel a greater tie-in with the NT, it should be noted how the early church, in the first four centuries, gave great attention to texts like Proverbs 8 and Genesis 1, for example.

Another point to consider is Paul's use of the OT. Is it something we can or should even try to imitate? Christ did what he did, in Paul, "according to the Scriptures" (as in 1 Cor. 15:3–4). Apart from "imitating Paul," as he frequently calls his readers to do, can we imitate his exegesis of the OT? From a cultural or revelatory point of view the answer might be no, but from a more literal fashion, using historico-grammatical exegesis, the answer could well be yes (a point made by R. Longenecker in his *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*, 1975, and elaborated on by Seitz, 104–109).

There is also the example, given with emphasis by the risen Lord himself, in Luke 24, of how the Christian reader is to interpret/understand the OT. "And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (v. 24); and "that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled. Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures" (vv. 44–45).

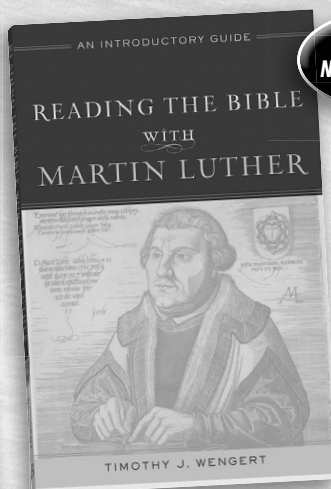
One final illustration, where Seitz sums up some critical point: we need to see the OT as Christian Scripture; we need to employ the rule

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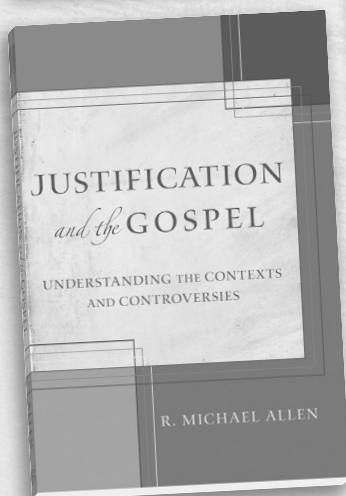
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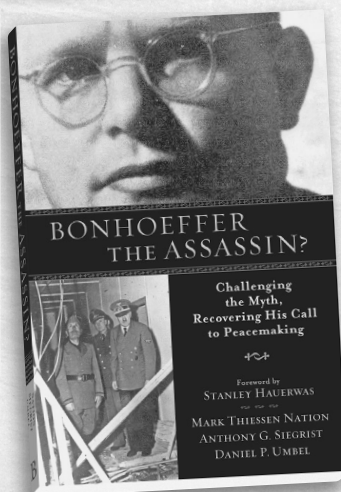
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of faith, both as a historical reality and as a point of reference in modern studies of the authority of Scripture; to see the importance of the way the OT is used in the NT and its theological consequences; and to have a healthful understanding of the NT as canon, within a greater two-Testament witness. It is vital to view and understand the two Testaments of Scripture as mutually informing, mutually influencing witnesses.

I heartily commend this book to its readers. Some may find it daunting in terms of its historical and theological analyses; some may find its frequent long sentences irritating. But by diligent and even repeated readings, much help can be afforded—intellectually, historically, and spiritually. Pray for the Holy Spirit to minister through its words.

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FINDING THE HISTORICAL CHRIST,

by Paul Barnett. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009. Pp.194. \$22.00 (paper).

Barnett offers this third volume in his series *After Jesus*, in which he explores first-century Christianity. After a brief methodological chapter, Barnett draws upon the following sources to establish Jesus as the “historical Christ”: the Gospels, non-Christian sources, “the Jerusalem biographical tradition,” and Paul’s letters. His primary argument is that it can be established historically that Jesus was the Messiah during his earthly life and not simply acknowledged as such by his followers after his death.

Barnett begins by investigating via second-century usage which Christian gospels were earliest, and concludes that the canonical Gospels were being circulated by the second generation of Jesus’ followers. Barnett suggests that each Gospel attaches itself to a “mission leader” in the early church (Peter, James, John, and Paul), with auxiliary NT writings at-

tached to that leader and Gospel (e.g., James as mission leader with Matthew’s Gospel, and the book of James as the related literature). Whether or not his entire hypothesis can be sustained, Barnett succeeds in sketching a picture of early Christianity that suggests more connections between various NT writings than are usually admitted by traditional form criticism.

Barnett examines the “hostile” sources for Jesus or his later followers, which include the Jewish historian Josephus, Tacitus, and Pliny. From these sources, Barnett confirms basic parameters of Jesus’ (and the Baptist’s) ministry, death, and later worship by Christians.

Barnett’s chapter on oral sources behind the gospels examines early kerygmatic formulas in 1 Cor 15 and Acts 10 and 13. He attempts to demonstrate a “common biographical thread” in Pauline and Petrine material from John the Baptist’s preaching to Jesus’ death, resurrection, and Jerusalem appearances (72). Barnett suggests that these common biographies were early and set the sequential and ideological patterns for the written gospels.

Turning to the canonical Gospels, Barnett affirms Papias’s testimony that Mark recorded his recollections and interpretation of Peter’s teachings (107). Barnett suggests that Mark 11–16 was likely written as a discrete narrative in the early 40s (by Mark and Peter), while chapters 1–10 were a later addition based on Peter’s testimony. This hypothesis is supported, for Barnett, by the thematic references to Peter, the irregularly occurring vivid descriptions across Mark, and the evidence of Jesus as rabbi, grounding Peter’s continuation of Jesus’ teachings in Mark.

Barnett examines the Lukan prologue (1:1–4) to indicate that Luke draws upon a number of narratives that themselves arise from eyewitness testimony. For Barnett, at least three of these narratives can be identified from source criticism: Mark, Q, and L (unique Lukan material). Since these sources provide

some independent attestation of certain biographical details and christological affirmations, Luke is a dependable source for the historical Christ.

Taking on the most contested gospel for historical use, Barnett affirms John as a credible source about Jesus. Barnett highlights the major events common to both Mark and John. He draws upon details unique to John in narrating these events to suggest that these details are “surprising” (i.e., not promoting John’s theological interests) and so credible. Barnett also argues that, if John is independent from Mark, the accounts of common events in Mark and John provide independent attestation. Finally, Jesus’ self-portrayal in John is more understated than John’s portrayal of Jesus and so sits “rather closer to the synoptics’ presentation than we may have assumed” (174).

In his chapter on Paul, Barnett concludes that Paul was convinced that the historical Je-

sus was the Messiah before his death and resurrection, evidenced by Paul’s use of traditional language of “Christ [vs. Jesus] crucified.” He also provides evidence that Paul knew various details about the life, teachings, and character of the pre-resurrected Christ. Finally, Barnett traces what he calls “Christ’s radical influence on Paul” (197), examining, for instance, Jesus’ (and Paul’s) understanding of God as father and “Christ’s radical affirmation of women” (205). A specific concern here is Barnett’s tendency to paint first-century Judaism rather monolithically and in clear contradistinction to Jesus and Paul. Yet recent work by scholars like A. J. Levine brings caution and nuance to the conversation about how Christianity differed from Judaism in the areas Barnett discusses.

Barnett’s final chapter analyzes Markan information on first-century life in Galilee. He argues that Mark’s “incidental references” cohere with what is known about Galilee from

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nonbiblical sources. Barnett concludes the book with an appendix on the gospel genre and a summary chapter in which he reaffirms his historical and personal conviction that “the historical Jesus was the Christ, both in his own mind and eventually also in the minds of the disciples” (269).

Barnett offers his readers a comprehensive proposal evaluating the NT writings as credible sources for historical reconstruction of Jesus as the Christ. He works with a broad range of sources, including second-century Christian and non-Christian writings, Josephus, papyri, and the NT texts. Along the way, he provides interesting historical insights and proposals, though the whole of his argument may not be compelling except to those already prone to accept his general assumptions about the reliability of the NT sources. For instance, Barnett uses Paul’s affirmation of the pre-resurrected Jesus *as Christ* to *prove* that the pre-resurrected Jesus was indeed the Messiah. Yet opposing scholars would likely acknowledge that *Paul believed this affirmation*; they would simply disagree with Paul! Barnett’s historical arguments do not always lead fully to his conclusions.

In the end, the pastor or church leader will likely find much of value in this book due to Barnett’s extensive knowledge of the sources that surround the New Testament as well as Barnett’s abilities to draw constructive holistic proposals from the textual and historical details of these sources.

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THE THEOLOGICAL AND THE POLITICAL: ON THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD, by Mark Lewis Taylor. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011. Pp. 256. \$35.00 (cloth).

Mark Lewis Taylor, Maxwell W. Upson
Professor of Theology and Culture at Prince-

ton Theological Seminary, has offered a provocative text in his latest book, *The Theological and the Political: On the Weight of the World*. The major objective of this project is not obscured by the title; rather, the title reveals the heart of the project in a nutshell. Taylor seeks to offer the reader a vision of how the *theological* and political collide. He begins the book by presenting a distinctive break with what he calls “theology” as defined as the work of a guild, which draws from history and doctrine to construct its discourse. Taylor wants to move past this concept and turn from “theology” to what he calls the “theological.” The “theological,” he contends, is inextricably bound to the political, for the *theological* attends not to doctrine and history but to those bearing the weight of the world—those suffering under oppression.

Taylor, then, does not see the political as just politics, but as a reality bound in social practice that delivers agony and strife. So Taylor pushes us to see agony as the true text of the theological enterprise, and not doctrine and creeds. Taylor has many harsh things to say about such theologizing that attends to guild discourses of doctrine, creed, and history. His ultimate concern is that these perspectives take on such a heavy, nonmaterial view of transcendence that they escape the world and therefore perpetuate what he calls agonistic practices. Using French social theory and poststructuralism, Taylor wishes to make what he calls the agonistic, those oppressed by the practice of the political, the text of the theological enterprise.

Yet, Taylor doesn’t wish to only crash all conceptions of transcendence on the rocks of imminence, but rather to offer a way between these dichotomies, seeking a narrow path between the rock cliffs with what he calls “transimminence.” “Transimminence” is the practice-centered move into the political to hear and act for those living under the weight of the world.

Taylor begins this journey in chapter one

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by providing a rich discussion of Foucault and Derrida, using their discourse as a way of prioritizing those in agony, pushing the reader further to see the agonistic as fertile ground for the theological. It is in this chapter that Taylor writes most lucidly, using his own story of working in a prison to give significant flesh to his argument; he articulates an experience he had with a man in prison. Yet, this narration only lasts for a few pages, to disappear into rich, but difficult, academic prose. This reviewer yearned for Taylor to continue with the narrative shape he gives the reader in these few pages, but alas, it was not to be. The author chooses obscure (made-up) academic words and quotes from French intellectuals over reporting the acts and words of those truly living in agony. If Taylor had done the latter, the book would have sung a tune hard not to seek harmony with. Yet, instead, in the remainder of chapter one and into chapter two, Taylor discusses the problems with transcendence, otherworldliness, white/male dominance, and the many problems with sovereignty. In chapter two the author also offers a significant discussion of Bourdieu.

Chapter three takes a more constructive turn, as Taylor discusses art. He articulates that the text for the *theological* is agonistic (agony brought by the social practices of the political). But the material textuality of the agonistic is the artistic expressions of those in oppression. It is turning to these pieces (not doctrinal history or even the biblical text) that is the job of the *theological* theologian. Chapters four and five flesh this out by looking at Guatemalan poetry as it articulates torture. These two chapters examine deeply the experience of torture through the art of the tortured, leading Taylor to rework his very concept of the cross and other theological positions.

The Political and the Theological is without question a deep and important book and one that offers academics in the guild—the guilds Taylor rails against—much to think about and consider. It is a wonderful piece of academic

work, but the irony is that this is its limit. Though the theory provides a vision of the *theological* that moves beyond the guild and into those concretely suffering, it is difficult for this reviewer to see how this book would be applicable and readable to any such audience. It is not that it is hard, but that it is obscure, with its many made-up academic phrases. I can imagine that most pastors would find this text significantly challenging to read. If they will take the risk and wade through it, they may find treasures within, but the journey will be treacherous.

This reviewer has some other questions in relation to Taylor's argument as well, questions that surround the need to depart from all creedal, doctrinal articulations. I agree that if theology is only a human-constructed history, then it may be time to move past it. But, if God is an active presence in the world, and if creeds and doctrines are practicing believers' past articulations of their experience of the mystery of this active God, then doctrine and creed can be placed in discourse with our own, even agonistic, experience, allowing experience to critique the doctrinal, but also the doctrinal (as articulations of divine action) to push against the experiential.

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WALTHER'S HYMNAL, CHURCH HYMNBOOK FOR EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS OF THE UNALTERED AUGSBURG CONFESSION, translated and edited by Matthew Carver. St. Louis: Concordia, 2012. Pp. 440. \$39.99 (paper).

In 1839, Saxon Lutherans came to St. Louis with the Dresden Pastor Martin Stephan (1777–1846) as their bishop. He took absolute authority and was accused of misconduct, so they deposed him. Pastor C. F. W. Walther (1811–1887) became their leader. In 1847 they

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organized the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. In the same year they published the *Kirchengesangbuch für Evangelisch-Lutherische Gemeinden ungeänderter Augsburgischer Confession*. Walther prepared it for his congregation in St. Louis, but it became the hymnbook of the Missouri Synod. It contained 437 hymns and was edited by Walther on the basis of earlier hymnals than the one they brought with them from Dresden, the *Dresdnisches Gesangbuch* (Dresden, 1796), which was a product of the Enlightenment. As Carl Schalk notes in his *Source Documents in American Lutheran Hymnody* (St. Louis, 1996), p. 71, Walther's editorial intent was to include hymns "pure in doctrine" for "universal acceptance" in "the orthodox German Lutheran Church," intended for "public worship," with "Christian simplicity...of a truly Christian poetry." Rhythmic chorale tunes, which were a symbol of orthodox Lutheran practice, were presumed.

Matthew Carver, a translator of German literature, has translated the *Kirchengesangbuch* from its printing of 1892. He did not translate everything in the hymnal. These are omitted: the Antiphons, the biographical squibs in the index of authors, the liturgical Prefaces, Luther's Small Catechism, the Augsburg Confession, and the Epistles and Gospels for the Church Year (which were given in full). These are added: an appendix of supplementary tunes (in four-part harmonizations), an index of English first lines, and an index of translators. Most of the tunes are not included. They are cited, as in the German book, at the head of

each hymn. Carver adds sources for them either in English hymnals or in the appendix of supplementary tunes.

Carver relied on English translations that have been used in the Missouri Synod, especially those found in *The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941). For "about 120 hymns, and an uncounted number of additional stanzas" (xv) he made the translations himself.

This book makes available responsible English translations of all the hymns in the *Kirchengesangbuch*. Though many of these are readily available in translation elsewhere, putting them together like this makes it easy to find them without extensive searching, gives English speakers a sense of the *Kirchengesangbuch* as a whole, and provides complete translations of all stanzas. These positive attributes are balanced by questions about the choice of English style. Elizabethan English is used throughout. That does two things: it gives the texts a stilted character that does not match the more personal character of the German, and in our context makes the male pronouns stand out. The nineteenth-century users probably would not have experienced either the distance we feel or the heavy male emphasis. If used with those recognitions, the book is a valuable tool for anyone who is interested in this source.

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