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Editorial: Deuteronomistic Depression

Chris Wright

Bibles should carry a government health warning: 'Bible study can seriously damage your peace of mind.' That, at least, has been my experience as a result of prolonged over-exposure to the book of Deuteronomy during the past year in which I have been working on a commentary on it (for the forthcoming New International Biblical Commentary on the OT, from Hendrikson). A sabbatical term in the middle, which is supposed to be a time of quiet refreshment, was frequently fraught with spiritual and moral challenge and deep anger, as the implications of the book filtered through the detailed engagement with it. I have no idea how Josiah felt if it was indeed the book of Deuteronomy that was dusted off and read to him, nor would I dare draw comparisons, but I think I understand something about his response of despair and remorse as he listened to Deuteronomy and looked at his nation simultaneously. You shouldn't read your newspaper near the naked flame of the word of God if you want to keep cool.

My trouble is, of course, that I will insist on making this assumption that the Old Testament is actually relevant. If only I could take a couple of hermeneutical aspirins and dull the pain by locking Deuteronomy up in a BC time-warp, or by saying it only applied to Israel as the covenant people and so has no message for modern society, then perhaps I could while away the pages discussing whether this part of that verse is from the first or second Deuteronomist and why 'you' changes from singular to plural and back so fecklessly. Once allow the conviction to take root, however, that the description of Israel as a light to the nations is more than just a literary figure, that Israel as God's priesthood in the midst of the nations was meant to be some kind of model, that 'these things were written for our instruction,' then the fire of relevance starts burning in the bones. Then it becomes impossible to ignore the gaping chasm between the kind of spiritual, social, economic and political ethos and objectives portrayed in Deuteronomy and those pursued with Gadarene determination in the western world. Once again I beg the indulgence of international readers for focusing my reflections on the challenge of biblical ethics in a British context, but since the Bible itself is so ruthlessly particular I think it is justified.

The dominant concern of the opening eleven chapters of Deuteronomy is with idolatry. The ultimate claim on Israel was that they should acknowledge Yahweh alone as the living God. The monotheism of the shema (Deut. 6:4f.) was no armchair philosophy but a monumental challenge to all human polytheisms, and still is. The severity of the warnings against idolatry is not some hangover from primitive religion (to which culturally pluralized western confusion consigns them) but are born of graphic awareness of what idolatry does to a society. It is not just an argument over how many

gods exist. The shema does not say 'There is only one God', but (in effect), 'Yahweh alone is that one God,' Yahweh as he is characterized in the rest of the OT, and specifically in the redemptive history of Israel recounted and celebrated in Deuteronomy. Once that living God and his claims are rejected, then the resulting vacuum is filled with gods that are destructive and cruel. The Baalism of Canaan which, through its fertility cults, sacralized sex and sacrificed babies (Deut. 12:31), is alive and well in our society, with its commodification of sex and the suffering of children in so many ways. The April editorial (issue 18.3) commented on this in relation to the shiver of horror in Britain at the murder of two year old James Bulger and the subsequent trial and conviction of two eleven year old boys. The public debate has tried to allocate blame, to the extent of a government minister accusing the clergy of not teaching about right and wrong, and pundits have argued about the nature of evil. But the category of idolatry has not been recognized, let alone confessed. Yet it seems to me that the west is now well into the process of reaping the bitter harvest of the rampant idolatry of generations, of consumerism, individualism and privatism. With idolatry comes injustice, arrogance (Deut. 8:17) and self-righteousness (9:4ff.).

Chapter 15 is at the heart of Deuteronomy, not only structurally, but theologically and conceptually (cf. J.M. Hamilton: *Social Justice and Deuteronomy: The Case of Deuteronomy 15*, Atlanta: Scholars Press). It is the focus of a concern spread throughout the book for the economically weak and needy, and of a structural, systematic response to such need by practical measures related to debt, poverty, working conditions, etc. Significantly, God undertakes that if the nation will look after its poor, the nation itself will not be impoverished by crippling national debt (15:16). Current British policy is to try to solve its huge public debt by cutting back on social provision for the already poor, and to scapegoat in moral terms those already at the bottom of the ladder. The gap between rich and poor is greater than any time since the last century and getting worse. Attending a performance of Dickens' *Christmas Carol* recently made me wonder if its satire on the evils of his era has lost any of its force a century on. There is a callousness at the heart of our politics that is profoundly chilling, whether one thinks in Dickensian or Deuteronomic terms.

A major dimension of Deuteronomy's economic and social concern is related to the world of work. The fourth commandment is the only commandment to have a specific *purpose* (as distinct from a motivation) attached, which is 'so that your manservant and your maidservant may rest as you do' (5:14). It was intended specifically for the benefit of the working population. It was, as Harold MacMillan is reputed to have said, the first and greatest worker protection act in history. Alongside this, there is the law commanding just and prompt payment of wages to the most vulnerable workers (in Israel's case, the day-labourers, 24:14f.). Not only has the British government abolished virtually all restrictions on Sunday trading, in the interests of big business and to the detriment of the most poorly paid section of the workforce—shopworkers (it is noticeable in the OT how rejection of the sabbath principle went along with exploitation and profiteering: Isa. 58:3, 13, Amos 8:4–6); not only has it refused to agree to European standards of worker protection of wages and conditions; it has also stripped away the minimal protection of existing wage councils and is in the process of dismantling even some health and safety regulations which it previously put in place, including in the construction industry (very much against the spirit of Deut. 22:8).

One could go on to mention immigration policy and practice in the light of 23:15f.; the questionable integrity of the parliamentary and judicial system in the light of 16:18–20, 17:18–20; the appalling state of personal and family indebtedness inflated by easy-lending and unscrupulous ‘credit’ practices in the light of 24:6, 10–13; even our lamentable procrastination over antipollution and environmental standards in the light of 23:12ff. At whatever point one plugs in, it seems that Deuteronomy is pointing in one direction while our national life, from top to bottom, is pointing in the opposite. What then should be the role of the people of God today in the midst of such a God-excluding and destructive culture? That was the other challenging fact about Deuteronomy which impressed me this year—its *missiological* relevance.

Here is a document which addresses the people of God on the boundary of a huge cultural challenge. They were moving from the relatively mono-cultural wilderness life into the strange new culture of Canaan, with its technological achievement, its decadent but attractive religion, its pluralism and idolatry, its social and economic oppression. How, in relation to such powerful cultural challenge, would they fare? Would they preserve their love and loyalty to the one true living God and witness to his truth, integrity, justice and compassion, *for the sake of the nations* (cf. 4:5–8)? Would they remain committed to the uniqueness of Yahweh in the context of religious pluralism (cf. 4:32–40)? That was their mission. That mission remains for the people of God in every culture, including the late 20th century neo-paganism of the west. The relevance of Deuteronomy to the cross-cultural mission of the church is a theme you will not find in many commentaries. Until the next one!

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The origins of the worship of Christ

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Introduction

The great German scholar Johannes Weiss called the worship of Christ 'the most significant step of all in the history of the origins of Christianity'.¹ The American scholar David Aune has written, 'Perhaps the single most important historical development within the early church was the rise of the cultic worship of the exalted Jesus within the primitive Palestinian church.'² In this essay I wish to discuss the origins of this fascinating feature of early Christianity. I begin with a quotation from 1 Corinthians 8:5-6, from a letter of the apostle Paul written c. AD 52-55, scarcely 20 years after the death of Jesus.

Although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth – as indeed there are many 'gods' and many 'lords' – yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

In these words we find succinctly expressed the distinctive 'binitarian pattern' of early Christian devotion, in which Christ is revered along with God within a firm monotheistic commitment to the one God of the Bible. I would like to comment on a few important matters about early devotion to Christ reflected in this passage. After these comments, I shall then offer some observations on the historical factors that contributed to this binitarian pattern of devotion.³

Early devotion to Christ

(i) Scriptural background

First, the wording Paul uses here appears to be a deliberate adaptation of the ancient Jewish expression of faith in the one God of the Bible, the *Shema* (constructed from Dt. 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Nu. 15:37-41), whose initial words can be rendered 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord'.⁴ Over against the readiness characteristic of all other forms of ancient religion to worship the many deities of the ancient world, the Jewish stance may be called an 'exclusivist monotheism': the one God of the Bible is to be worshipped exclusively.⁵ This is the firm faith within which Saul of Tarsus was formed, and it is the commitment within which he continued to live as a Christian apostle. Here Paul rejects the other deities of the Greco-Roman world as 'so-called gods', and insists that there is only one true God.

But for Paul and for other Jewish Christians of the first few decades of the Christian movement, their monotheistic commitment to the one God of the Bible accommodated a second figure as worthy of devotion, namely the resurrected and exalted Jesus. That is, within the firm monotheism of these early Christians there was a definitive duality, of God the Father and

Christ. There was a binitarian 'shape' to their monotheistic faith and devotion. In this passage, without hesitation, Paul immediately follows his exclusivistic expression of monotheistic faith ('one God, the Father, from whom are all things') with an equally firm reference to the 'one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things'. It appears that Paul actually adapts the wording of the *Shema* to make room for both the one 'God' and Jesus as the one 'Lord'. This means that this passage exhibits a most exalted reverence for Christ, reverence expressed in terms normally applied only to God.

This is shown in the application to Christ of the titles and language used to refer to God in the OT. In this passage, Christ is the one 'Lord' (*kyrios*), using the title by which God is designated in Deuteronomy 6. In many other passages as well, Paul and other early Christian writers apply to Christ the language and functions associated with God in the OT.⁶ That is, the early Christians seem to use the most exalted language and conceptions available to them in their religious tradition by which to refer to Christ.

Over the 400 years following Paul, the early church struggled to develop doctrines adequate to express and to justify this binitarian monotheism. The Nicene Creed of AD 325 and the Chalcedonian Creed of AD 451 are the classic formulations.⁷ But well before these developments – indeed, driving these developments – was the binitarian pattern of early Christian devotion and worship reflected in 1 Corinthians 8:5-6. In other words, it is not an exaggeration to say that the 400 years of doctrinal controversy which followed Paul were essentially an attempt to form doctrine adequate to the pattern of religious life which had taken shape within the first 20 years of the Christian movement.

(ii) Early and undisputed

Secondly, we should also note that here as everywhere in Paul's undisputed letters (written between approximately AD 50 and 60), this inclusion of Christ in Christian devotional life is taken for granted as the established pattern. Controversies between Paul and other Christians are reflected in his letters, but there is no hint of a controversy over this matter. He has disagreements with other Jewish Christians over the divine plan of salvation for Gentiles, and does not hesitate to indicate that his own views are controversial. Consequently, the lack of any evidence of disagreement over the status of Christ is a most eloquent silence that suggests that the evidence of Christian devotion in the Pauline letters can be taken as representative of at least many circles of Christians beyond Paul's own churches.⁸

Indeed, there are strong confirmations that the devotional pattern involving both God and Christ goes back to the earliest 'layers' of the Christian movement. One of the most striking

pieces of evidence for this is the little Aramaic phrase in 1 Corinthians 16:22, *marana tha*, 'Our Lord, Come!'. This phrase is probably an invocation of the risen Christ by the gathered Aramaic-speaking Christian community, an invocation uttered as part of the worship gathering, a corporate prayer to the risen Christ. The fact that Paul uses the phrase in his letter to Greek-speaking converts and without translating it suggests that the phrase was already a piece of sacred Christian tradition, a liturgical formula carried over into Greek-speaking churches and preserved because it derived from the earliest circles of Jewish Christians.

In addition, there are other passages in Paul's letters commonly identified by scholars as pieces of Christian faith and practice from years earlier than the letters in which they appear. These include confessional forms such as 'Jesus is Lord' (1 Cor. 12:3; Rom. 10:9), and perhaps hymns such as the much-discussed passage in Philippians 2:6-11.⁹ It is also commonly thought that Paul's letter openings and closings, which feature both God and Christ as sources of grace and objects of devotion, take up the language of early Christian liturgy that had become well established by the time of his letters.

In my book *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (1988), I have described six major phenomena of the devotional life of the early Christians which show that this binitarian pattern was firmly embedded within the first decades of the Christian movement.¹⁰ These six phenomena are (1) early Christian hymns concerning Christ and probably sung to Christ, (2) prayer to Christ, (3) liturgical use of the 'name' of Christ, such as 'calling upon the name' of Christ (probably corporate invocation/praise of Christ in the worship setting) and baptizing 'in/into the name' of Jesus, (4) the understanding of the Christian common meal as 'the Lord's supper', which identifies this marker of Christian fellowship as belonging to Christ, (5) 'confessing' Jesus, another ritual probably set within the Christian community gathered for worship, and (6) prophecy in the name of Jesus and inspired by the 'Spirit of Christ'. Taken together, these things amount to clear evidence of a conscious and significant inclusion of Christ into the devotional life of early Christianity. They show a pattern of devotion in which Christ, with God, receives the sort of prominence and cultic actions that in monotheistic religion are normally reserved for God alone.

I wish to underscore the fact that 1 Corinthians 8:5-6 reflects the actual incorporation of Christ as an object of devotion in the worship life of early Christianity. In the context of this passage, the contrast is between reverence for idols on the one hand and, on the other hand, proper reverence for the one true God and the one Lord Jesus. Scholars have tended to focus on the doctrinal concepts of the early Christians. Perhaps it is to be expected that scholars, who spend their days developing ideas, would approach early Christianity primarily asking about its ideas and doctrines. Also, of course, the historical investigation of the NT emerged during the Reformation as Protestants contended with Rome and with one another over right doctrine. Consequently, scholars went looking first and foremost for doctrines and regarded the NT mainly as a record of early doctrinal developments.¹¹

The NT certainly reflects early Christian doctrinal developments, but it is also very much a record of the larger religious life of early Christianity. We must recognize that behind the NT lies, not primarily doctrinal discussions, but the mission, community formation and worship of the churches.¹² In the context of ancient Jewish scruples about worship, I suggest that the incorporation of Christ with God into the devotional life of the churches amounted to a momentous development. This development in the worship pattern of early Christianity is in fact a much more significant development than any of the christological doctrines, such as pre-existence and incarnation, with which scholars have usually been so very preoccupied. As I have argued in *One God, One Lord*, the ancient Jewish religious tradition made scruples about the legitimate object of worship the key dividing line between right piety and blasphemy.¹³ The acceptance of Christ with God as worthy of cultic veneration within the early years of Christianity and among Jews sensitive to the scruples of their ancestral religion can only be regarded as a most striking phenomenon. It deserves far more attention than it has been given in critical scholarship.¹⁴

(iii) Not pagan divinization

Thirdly, this treatment of Christ as worthy of divine honours cannot correctly be understood as a divinization of Christ after the pattern of pagan heroes and demi-gods. The people among whom Christ was first given cultic devotion were Jews loyal to their ancestral traditions, not pagans or syncretistic Jews who had assimilated to paganism. Although the doctrinal reflection on Christ continued and developed over several centuries, the essential steps in treating the exalted Christ as divine were taken while Christianity was still almost entirely made up of Jews and dominated by Jewish theological categories.

This is shown, for example, in the larger context of 1 Corinthians 8-10, where Paul instructs his converts to avoid the worship of idols, reflecting the attitudes and the language characteristic of ancient Jewish monotheistic disdain for pagan religions. The early Christian readiness to worship Jesus cannot be seen as a late development: it begins within the first two decades of the church. It cannot be explained as the result of Gentile influences: it begins during the period when the church is essentially a new movement within the Jewish tradition. The worship of Jesus does not reflect a readiness to accommodate additional deities: the Christians among whom Jesus was first revered continue to show the disdain for pagan gods that characterized Jewish monotheism of the Greco-Roman era.

I wish to emphasize also that this inclusion of Christ as object of cultic/liturgical devotion was not intended or understood in any way as diminishing or threatening the sovereignty of the one God. Paul's language here suggests that for him the reverence of Christ is an extension of reverence for the one God. This is confirmed in other passages, for example Philippians 2:9-11, which emphasizes that it is God who has 'highly exalted' Jesus and given Jesus 'the name above every name'. The same passage predicts a universal acclamation of Jesus as 'Lord' (*kyrios*), likening Jesus' acclamation to the acclamation of God's universal sovereignty by using the wording from Isaiah 45:23 (another example of the use of OT language and passages concerning God to refer to Christ).¹⁵ My point here, however, is that this universal acclamation of Christ is also 'to the glory of God the Father' (2:11). There is absolutely no intention to reverence Christ at the expense of God the Father. Reverence for Christ is seen as reverence for God the Father.¹⁶

Likewise, in 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 Christ is portrayed as the risen Son to whom everything is to be made subject, including death. But note that it is *God* who puts all things 'in subjection under him' (15:27), making Christ's rule an extension of God's sovereignty. And the outcome of Christ's victory over all things is that Christ will deliver the kingdom to God (15:24), manifesting his subjection to the Father, so that God may be magnified above all (15:27).

This too shows plainly that the religious viewpoint of the early Christians was directly contrary to that of the pagan religious environment with its readiness to recognize many deities. The veneration of Christ as divine in earliest Christianity remained firmly within the tradition of Jewish monotheistic concern for the universal sovereignty and uniqueness of the one God of Israel. The incorporation of Christ with God produced an apparently unusual form of monotheism, but was never intended to violate the monotheistic commitment of the biblical tradition.¹⁷

Historical factors that shaped devotion to Jesus

If we have correctly sketched the binitarian devotional pattern of early Christianity reflected in 1 Corinthians 8:5-6, and if it reflects a development as important as I have asserted, then what could have caused this development? Unfortunately for modern historical enquiry, the early Christians did not spend a lot of time analysing the historical factors that led them to worship Christ, and they have left us no records of discussion about this matter. Therefore, we have to use what early Christian evidence we have and try to make inferences. In what follows, I offer my own reflections, which have been stimulated and informed very much by the work of many other scholars, to whom I am greatly indebted. I suggest that there were four major historical factors involved in shaping the binitarian pat-

tern of early Christian devotion, which involved the worship of Christ alongside God the Father.¹⁸

(i) *The ministry of Jesus*

First, we have to grant the importance of the ministry of Jesus. There are sharp differences among scholars about the precise features of Jesus' ministry and message, and it would take much more time than is available here to develop a very specific picture of Jesus' ministry.¹⁹ I suggest, however, that we must grant that Jesus had a very high impact on his followers during his earthly ministry. He summoned his closest followers to fellowship with him in his mission, and his own validity was the central question for both his followers and his opponents. His execution on charges against Roman order (probably as 'king of the Jews'), and his probable rejection by the priestly authorities as a false teacher or blasphemer (perhaps against the temple), further combined to make the question of Jesus' person the central one for his followers, even after his death. The choice was either to agree with his opponents and regard him as a failure, and perhaps even as a dangerous man (a false prophet and/or rebel), or to find in him the decisive figure around whom to gather before God.

In other words, Jesus' own earthly ministry and its immediate outcome produced a profound crisis in the lives of his followers. The apparently bold, even audacious, way he presented himself as decisive spokesman and representative of the divine kingdom made it difficult to take him as one teacher among others. The priestly and governmental rejection of him in the strongest possible measure available (crucifixion!) made the choice rather stark: either they were right and Jesus should be rejected, or they were wrong and Jesus was in fact God's decisive representative, with a validity far higher than those who condemned him. This crisis in the religious lives of Jesus' followers must be taken as one of the historical factors that contributed to him being at the centre of their religious life so soon after his earthly ministry.²⁰

(ii) *Jewish tradition: God's principal agent*

Secondly, ancient Jewish religious tradition provided the earliest Christians with precedents and a basic category for accommodating Jesus in a heavenly position next to God. I have discussed this at some length in *One God, One Lord*, and can only summarize that material here very briefly.²¹

In a variety of ancient Jewish texts we have references to this or that figure who is pictured as what we might call the divine vizier, God's chief agent. In some cases this figure is one of the heroes of the OT, such as Moses. Another such figure less well-known today is Enoch, around whom developed a very great deal of interest and speculation in at least some ancient Jewish circles. Such OT heroes are pictured as sitting on God's throne and exercising God's sovereignty on God's behalf as his appointed representatives.

In some texts we have a divine attribute such as Wisdom or the divine Word (*Logos*) personified and described as God's chosen representative, even as God's companion in the creation of the world (see, e.g., Prov. 8:22ff.; Wisdom of Solomon 9-10). There continues to be a debate among scholars as to whether the personification of these divine attributes was essentially a form of colourful religious language or represented a belief that Wisdom or the divine Word really existed as distinct beings.²² I tend to think that the language is highly rhetorical, but that is not the issue before us in this essay. My point here is that these references to divine attributes picture them in the role of God's principal agent, almost as God's partner in the exercise of his sovereignty over the rest of creation.

There are also important cases where a principal angel is portrayed in this position.²³ Indeed, I think that the idea of God having such a principal agent or vizier probably originated in connection with speculations about God's angels, and was then appropriated in speculations about revered OT heroes and divine attributes. In any case, principal angels are certainly portrayed as God's chief agent, his vizier, second only to God in

comparison with all other beings. In Daniel 12:1 we have a reference to 'Michael, the great prince' who will arise to lead the redemption of the elect in the last days. Even more striking, however, are references to principal angels such as Yahoel in the apocryphal writing called *The Apocalypse of Abraham*.²⁴ Here (10:3-4) Yahoel is appointed by God as the angel in whom the divine name dwells, as is indicated by his name, which is a compound of *Yahweh* and *El*, two names of the God of the Bible. The details vary from text to text, but this sort of principal angel who acts as God's chief agent is described as exercising divine powers and attributes. When such a being is described visually, there seems to be a deliberate use of language from the OT 'theophanic' accounts, such as Daniel 7, where God is pictured and manifests his glory. In some cases, the appearance of such a principal angel to a human causes the human being to confuse the angel with God until corrected, so much is the principal angel like God.²⁵

As texts such as *1 Enoch* show (esp. chs. 37-71), various motifs could be combined, from royal traditions about the Davidic king and messianic expectations, speculations about OT heroes such as Enoch, and principal angel speculations. My main point here is that, though the names and particular features vary across the many Jewish texts, we seem to have a recurring idea in them all that God can be thought of as having a specially chosen agent who is far above all other beings except God. That is, there seems to have been a widespread notion that pictured God as like a great emperor exercising sovereignty over all creation, with a massive and glorious retinue of heavenly beings to serve him. Also, as appropriate for a great emperor, God has a particular figure who holds the position of vizier, chief prince, principal agent of the divine sovereignty. The fact that a variety of identities were given to this figure, e.g. OT heroes, personified attributes, principal angels, shows that the basic idea of such a principal agent was widespread. It also shows that the principal agent position or category was a popular way of exalting this or that figure next to God within the fundamentally monotheistic orientation of ancient Jewish religion.

These traditions about God's principal agent allowed considerable scope for the exaltation of the figure put in this position. The principal agent or heavenly vizier is essentially the highest position imaginable without threatening the position of God or moving into a notion of multiple gods. I suggest that, when the earliest Christians became convinced through encounters with the resurrected Jesus that he was in fact really sent from God and had been chosen by God, the principal agent traditions provided them with a category for placing Jesus next to God in the divine plan. We have to allow for a powerful (and perhaps complex) interaction back and forth between their experiences of the risen/exalted Jesus and the Jewish monotheistic traditions I have referred to as principal agent traditions. The resurrection experiences convinced the earliest Christians that Jesus was totally vindicated by God against all those who had condemned him (see e.g. Acts 2:36). Also, as the one man singled out for eschatological glorification, Jesus was specially chosen by God to be the leader of the eschatological resurrection (e.g. 1 Thes. 1:10; 1 Cor. 15:20). But, I suggest, these experiences were interpreted with the aid of categories provided to the earliest Christians in their Jewish monotheistic religious tradition, though these categories were also adapted in the process. Among the traditions that were much used in the period of the origins of Christianity, there was the idea that God has a principal agent, exalted far above all others, second only to God in rank.

This category of principal agent seems to lie behind nearly all the christological terms and expressions used in the NT. Space permits me only a few illustrations. The text we considered at the beginning, 1 Corinthians 8:5-6, is a good example. All things come *from* God and are *for* God, but come *through* Christ. Christ is here the principal agent of creation and redemption. Likewise, in 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, Christ is the divinely designated leader through whom comes resurrection (15:22), and the one appointed by God to manifest the divine rule over all opposing forces (15:24-26). Christ rules by divine appointment, as God's chosen agent, and demonstrates his position as agent to God ultimately by subjecting himself to God (15:28). Even the most exalted christological expressions in the NT, such as John 1, Hebrews 1, Colossians 1, or in the book of Revelation, all seem

to be appropriations of the principal agent category we have identified.²⁶

In the Christian adaptation of Jewish divine-agent traditions and categories, however, there were momentous and apparently unparalleled developments. For one thing, it was an astonishing move to identify a recently executed contemporary as holding this position. I know of no analogy of an authentically Jewish group identifying its leader or founder as the heavenly vizier of God. The Qumran sect referred to its 'Righteous Teacher' with great respect (commonly thought to be a designation of the founder or some major figure in the history of the group), but this does not compare with what the early Christians made of the risen Jesus. The other examples of divine vizier in the Jewish tradition are either angels, divine attributes or heroic figures of the distant (and more glorious) past, such as Moses.

The principal agent traditions provide us with some of the religious background and may help us to understand what the earliest Christians were trying to say about Jesus. But these traditions do not explain *why* the early Christians said these things about Jesus. It would have been quite possible for them to have portrayed Jesus as the vindicated prophet of the last days, or even as the vindicated Messiah who is to return as God's chosen king over the elect. But something seems to have driven the earliest Christians to put the risen Jesus in the highest category afforded to them by their ancestral tradition, seeing him as God's heavenly vizier, second only to God both on earth and in heaven.

Moreover, nothing in the principal agent traditions prepares us for the worship of God's principal agent.²⁷ There is no evidence of cultus devoted to any of the other principal agent figures in Jewish tradition. There are no sacrifices to Moses, Michael, or Enoch in the Jerusalem temple of the first century. There are no prayers or hymns to such figures that seem to have been actually used in Jewish worship gatherings, no indication that in Jewish gatherings such figures were the objects of religious devotion. The Qumran sect speculated about the worship offered by angels in heaven but did not worship angels. They had a special common meal, but did not identify it with any principal agent of God. Nor were the initiation rites of any known Jewish group identified with the name of such a figure.

In the apocalyptic texts which show such interest in God's heavenly retinue, the prayers and worship are always directed to God alone. In fact, in several texts where a principal angel appears to a human being who initially confuses the angel with God, the angel corrects the human's confusion and refuses the attempts of the human being to offer him worship.²⁸ That is, in the very writings which show the strongest interest in God's principal agent and describe such a figure in glorious terms, there is a clear recognition that it is not appropriate to offer worship to this figure.

In short, though the principal agent traditions are important as the basic conceptual categories appropriated by early Christians in accommodating Jesus as God's uniquely chosen agent, these traditions do not suffice to explain all that happened. The early Christian development went beyond any analogy in the Jewish principal agent traditions, in identifying a recent contemporary as God's heavenly vizier, and in taking the momentous step of offering worship to this figure. We have to look for other factors that might have contributed to these unparalleled developments.

(iii) Experience of the glorified Jesus

A third historical factor, particularly important for the rise of the worship of Jesus, was the powerful effect of religious experiences in the earliest Christian circles. I have in mind the Easter experiences, subsequent visions of the glorified Christ and prophetic revelations and oracles in the name of Christ.²⁹ As is the case with all the material in the gospels, the stories of the disciples' encounters with the risen Jesus have all been shaped by the process of being retold and adapted by the individual evangelists. This makes it difficult to reconstruct the actual experiences of the disciples in any detail, though I think it most likely that real experiences do lie beyond these traditions.³⁰

Paul claims his own powerful experiences of the risen Jesus in 1 Corinthians 9:1 and 2 Corinthians 12:1. He describes his change from persecutor to advocate of the Christian faith as caused by a 'revelation' of God's Son (Gal. 1:15-16).³¹ Acts 7:55-56 attributes to the dying Stephen a vision of the glorified Christ 'at the right hand of God', and in Revelation 5 we have another, more detailed description of a Christian visionary's ascent into heaven, where he sees the glorified Christ receiving heavenly reverence with God. In short, the religious life of the earliest Christian communities was marked by many such powerful experiences of 'revelation'.

In 1 Corinthians 14:26, Paul includes several such charismatic experiences as regular features of the Christian worship gathering. It seems likely that the worship gathering may well have been a characteristic setting for times when the glory of Christ was made known experientially.³²

I suggest that the only way we can account for devoutly monotheistic Jews taking the unparalleled step of offering worship to God's principal agent is to posit that they must have felt required by God to do this. They must have come to believe that it was not only permitted to offer devotion to Jesus, it was required of them. It may well be that they came to this conviction as a result of visions of Christ receiving reverence in heaven (as, e.g., in Rev. 5), and then patterned their own worship after the heavenly ideal. They may well have had divine confirmation given to them in revelatory oracles from God, endorsing Jesus as the divine agent and requiring the elect to obey God by reverencing Jesus. Certainly the history of religions seems to furnish analogous cases of major modifications to religious traditions arising from the powerful religious experiences of individuals and groups.³³

(iv) The effect of opposition

Fourthly, I propose that we have to allow for the effect of opposition. We may assume that earliest Christian reverence of Jesus was received quite negatively by at least some Jewish religious authorities, who probably regarded Christians as endangering the integrity of Jewish religion.³⁴ Paul's 'persecution' of Jewish Christians (from his pre-Christian standpoint, a form of religious discipline against Jewish Christians whom he saw as seriously problematic in their religious practice) is early evidence that Christian Jews encountered opposition right away. If opposition was, in part at least, directed against the Christian reverence given to Jesus (as I think quite likely), it is reasonable to suppose that one Christian response may well have been to withstand such opposition by emphasizing still more the importance of offering Jesus reverence. We may see a prime example of such a hardening of (Jewish) Christian convictions about the exalted significance of Jesus in the Gospel of John, which devotes a lot of space to the theme of opposition from other Jews directed against Jesus and those who revere him (e.g. Jn. 9).

Conclusion

In this discussion I have been able only to sketch the nature of early Christian devotion to Christ and the possible historical factors that prompted it. The attempt will continue to understand better how the earliest Christians interpreted Jesus' significance and the factors that influenced them to reshape monotheistic tradition to accommodate devotion to Christ. A vigorous dialogue (and sometimes heated disagreement!) characterizes the current discussion of the matter, and my own suggestions will not all be persuasive to everyone else engaged in the subject. In any case, I hope that I have helped readers to see how important this topic is in the development of early Christianity, and that some among research students will join in the investigation of the phenomena involved in the early Christian redefinition of monotheistic devotion to accommodate the worship of Christ.

¹Johannes Weiss, *Earliest Christianity* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 1:37.

²David Aune, *The Cultic Setting of Realized Eschatology in Early Christianity*, in *NovTSup* 28 (Leiden: Brill, 1972), p. 5.

⁷For a more extensive discussion of these matters, see my book *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press/London: SCM, 1988). Of course, the classical Christian doctrine is a trinitarian understanding of God. But the earliest developments in what became the doctrine of the Trinity had to do with incorporating Christ along with God the 'Father', both in doctrine and in the devotional life of early Christianity. The Spirit has never become an object of devotion in the way that God the Father and Christ were and are for Christians.

⁸See, e.g., R.A. Horsley, 'The Background of the Confessional Formula in 1 Kor. 8:6', in *ZNW* 69 (1978), pp. 130–134. On the evidence for early Jewish use of the *Shema*, see, e.g., E.P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE–66 CE* (London: SCM/Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992), pp. 241–251.

⁹See L.W. Hurtado, 'What Do We Mean by "First-Century Jewish Monotheism"?', in *Society of Biblical Literature 1993 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993 forthcoming), for discussion of the nature of Greco-Roman Jewish monotheism and for interaction with recent suggestions that the term is not appropriate. See also Yehoshua Amir, 'Die Begegnung des biblischen und des philosophischen Monotheismus als Grundthema des jüdischen Hellenismus', in *Evangelische Theologie* 38 (1978), pp. 2–19; and R.M. Grant, *Gods and the One God* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986).

¹⁰See, e.g., L.J. Kreitzer, *Jesus and God in Paul's Eschatology*, in *JNTSup* 19 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987); Carey C. Newman, *Paul's Glory-Christology: Tradition and Rhetoric*, in *NovTSup* 69 (Leiden: Brill, 1992).

¹¹English translations of these and other creeds are in H. Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963). Good surveys of the doctrinal developments are in J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960); and W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984).

¹²Here and in what follows, I draw upon the fuller discussion in my book *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (London: SCM, 1988), esp. pp. 93–124, to which I refer the reader for citation of recent scholarly literature.

¹³R. Deichgräber, *Gottes hymnus und Christushymnus in der frühen Christenheit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967); M. Hengel, *Between Jesus and Paul* (London: SCM/Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), pp. 78–96; R.P. Martin, 'Some Reflections on New Testament Hymns', in *Christ the Lord: Studies in Christology Presented to Donald Guthrie*, ed. H.H. Rowdon (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1982), pp. 37–49.

¹⁴*One God, One Lord*, pp. 100–114.

¹⁵It is still the case that the study of early Christian worship is left mainly to historians of liturgy, who in turn often focus on formal features of worship and attempt to trace origins of later liturgical practices, while neglecting the all-important question of the *content* and *objects* of early Christian worship as historically significant in the context of ancient Jewish monotheistic scruples. For a helpful introduction to historical investigation of liturgical developments, see now Paul Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship* (London: SPCK, 1992).

¹⁶Whatever one may think of particular positions advocated by the old *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* and scholars of similar orientation (e.g. Bousset, Weiss, Wrede, Deissmann), it seems to me that they can be applauded for this emphasis on the religious life of early Christianity.

¹⁷See also my essay, 'What Do We Mean by "First-Century Jewish Monotheism"?', in the first work referred to in n. 5 above.

¹⁸Other scholars who have pointed to the historical significance of early Christian worship of Christ include R. Bauckham, 'The Worship of Jesus in Apocalyptic Christianity', *NTS* 27 (1980–81), pp. 322–341; R.T. France, 'The Worship of Jesus: A Neglected Factor in Christological Debate?', in *Christ the Lord: Studies in Christology Presented to Donald Guthrie* (see n. 9 above), pp. 17–36. For responses to my emphasis on this matter, see, e.g., Paul A. Rainbow, 'Jewish Monotheism as the Matrix for New Testament Christology', *NovT* 33 (1991), pp. 78–91; J.D.G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways between Christianity and Judaism and their Significance for the Character of Christianity* (London: SCM/Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1991), ch. 10, esp. pp. 203–206. See my comments on Rainbow later in this essay. I do not find persuasive Dunn's attempt to play down the evidence of early Christian reverence of Christ in the worship setting. Also, his claim that Paul's letters convey no evidence that Jewish authorities found Christian reverence for Christ objectionable fails to take account of three things: (1) 1 Cor. 12:3 may in fact be such evidence, perhaps alluding to Jewish pressure to curse Christ (see W. Horbury, 'The Benediction of the *Minim* and Early Jewish-Christian Controversy', *JTS* 33 (1982), pp. 19–61); (2) Paul's letters are intra-Christian communications and the issues they contain are almost entirely intra-mural questions, so a paucity of information about Jewish attitudes toward Christian worship is not surprising, and is not by any means indicative of the absence of hostility toward Christian worship practices; (3) the gospel accounts of Jesus' trial and condemnation for blasphemy may well have been shaped by early Jewish-Christian experiences of being charged with blasphemy by synagogue councils, and may thus be indirect evidence of Jewish opposition to Christian reverence of Christ.

¹⁹David B. Capes, *Old Testament Yahweh Texts in Paul's Christology* (WUNT 2/47; Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1992), is a recent study of this phenomenon, but his discussion is flawed at some points by simplistic categories. See my review forthcoming in *JBL*. On Paul's use of *kyrios* as a christological title, see my article 'Lord', forthcoming in *The Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, eds. G.F. Hawthorne and R.P. Martin (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993).

²⁰Indeed, the classical dogma of the Trinity was essentially intended to teach the divinity of Christ while professing a monotheistic stance in which there is only one God, and in which reverence for Christ (and the Spirit) is seen as glorifying, not diminishing, the one God. But concepts of divine 'substance' shared by Father, Son and Spirit were appropriated and used later than the NT. Within the NT, the way of referring to Christ's divinity is more in terms of his status, glory, attributes and titles, which all amount to an honorific rhetoric of divinity.

²¹Of course, the classical Christian understanding of the Trinity grants the same divine 'nature' to Christ and the Spirit as to God the Father. But the functional subordination of Christ and the Spirit to God the Father expressed in these NT passages is also retained in classical trinitarian dogma as well.

²²Students should recognize that an attempt to analyse the historical process involved in the emergence of devotion to Christ is not necessarily in conflict with a view of the process as divinely directed and as conveying authoritative revelation. A committed Christian could be just as capable as anyone else of engaging in vigorous historical enquiry, and might have special motivation for wanting to understand in historical terms the process by which the truths he or she holds dear came to expression.

²³Personally, I find Dunn's discussion of Jesus' ministry and its connections with post-Easter Christian developments largely persuasive in *The Partings of the Ways*, chs. 3, 6 and 9. Among recent studies of Jesus' ministry, we may single out E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM/Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), as particularly influential, though some of his positions have received telling criticism.

²⁴For a classic discussion of the importance of Jesus' crucifixion for subsequent Christian estimation of him, see N.A. Dahl, *The Crucified Messiah and Other Essays* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1974), pp. 10–36.

²⁵See chs. 1–4 for references to primary texts and scholarly literature.

²⁶See now Saul M. Olyan, *A Thousand Thousands Served Him: Exegesis and the Naming of Angels in Ancient Judaism* (TSAJ 36; Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1993), esp. pp. 89–91.

²⁷On Jewish angel speculation, see *ibid.* and Michael Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien des jüdischen Engelglaubens in vorrabbinischer Zeit* (TSAJ 34; Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1992).

²⁸For introductions and English translations of this and many other relevant non-canonical Jewish texts, see J.H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1983, 1985).

²⁹On this phenomenon, see esp. R. Bauckham, 'The Worship of Jesus' (see n. 14 above).

³⁰My argument has been taken by E.E. Ellis (in a review of *One God, One Lord*) as promoting an 'Arian' christology, a suggestion I regard as bizarre on account of its anachronism, its use of dogmatic categories to evaluate historical enquiry, and the failure involved to recognize that I emphasize the innovative *adaptation* of divine agent traditions in the NT as summarized in the following paragraphs, an adaptation that involved the worship of the divine agent in the actions and terms normally reserved for God alone. This cultic development was in fact later the major factor that militated against Arian christology being accepted, as Arius could not justify the worship of Christ and still call himself a monotheist.

³¹This is a major point, for which I have argued in *One God, One Lord* in discussing the references to divine agent figures in the Jewish sources. See also my discussion in 'What Do We Mean by "First-Century Jewish Monotheism"?' (n. 5 above).

³²The evidence is discussed in R. Bauckham, 'The Worship of Jesus in Apocalyptic Christianity' (n. 14 above). The key references are *Apoc. Zeph.* 6:15; *Ascen. Isa.* 7:21–22; *Rev.* 19:10; 22:8–9.

³³J.D.G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* (London: SCM/Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975), is a good discussion of religious experience in early Christianity. On early Christian prophecy, see D.E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), though Aune focuses more on the form than the contents of prophetic speech.

³⁴The *narratives* have been so shaped. This does not necessarily mean that the *events* behind the narratives were created in the process.

³⁵See my essay 'Convert, Apostate or Prophet to the Nations? The "Conversion" of Paul in Recent Scholarship', forthcoming in *Studies in Religion/Sciences religieuses*, for a review of recent issues and literature on Paul's conversion.

³⁶See *One God, One Lord*, esp. pp. 161–168, for references to scholarly studies of earliest Christian worship.

³⁷Paul Rainbow's view ('Jewish Monotheism as the Matrix for New Testament Christology', pp. 86–87) that religious experiences can only reflect previously formed religious beliefs seems to me simplistic. To be sure, his view is correct for human experiences normally. But there are also perceptions that appear to be novel, introducing innovation, invention, 'revelation' in religion, experiences that seem to require (and help generate) revised or new understandings of things. On innovation, see, e.g., H.G. Barnett, *Innovation: The Basis of Cultural Change* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1953).

³⁸See my comments about early Jewish opposition to Christ devotion in n. 14 above.

Recent studies in Old Testament history: a review article

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I. Introduction

What is history? This is a difficult question at best, and separating the object of enquiry by more than 2,000 years makes the subject no easier. One can focus on sources textual, archaeological and (now) ecological in attempting to define the issue. One can also focus on the actors, their sociology, culture, religion and government, and thereby address the question. The following essay surveys several works by OT scholars addressing aspects of the history of ancient Israel, which were published in 1992 and 1993. We have a sample of the many directions in which the field is going, especially in terms of the variety of methods which are applied to the study.

These studies can be divided into two groups. The first endeavours to examine the relation of extrabiblical evidence of all sorts to the biblical text itself. This includes a volume reviewing the evidence for the earliest period of Israel's history (Shanks *et al.*) and a dissertation synthesizing the data from the postexilic period and providing new and innovative understandings of the missions of Ezra and Nehemiah (Hoglund). In between are those studies which approach traditional questions of the deuteronomistic history and seek to apply new methods and solutions to the vexed problems of extracting history from the biblical sources (Becking). In addition, there is an example of a form-critical approach which compares Ancient Near Eastern literature with biblical texts (Hurowitz). Although this may not seem to be a historical issue, the conclusions drawn have historical implications for the context in which the biblical text was written and for the details of that text. Finally, a synthetic study pulls together the variety of data in an attempt to create a comprehensive and critical account of the history of ancient Israel (Ahlström).

A second area of studies is those which argue for a complete separation of the Bible and history. The OT cannot be used to reconstruct Israelite history. Instead, the extrabiblical sources alone can be used, and they must be followed, however different their conclusions from traditional histories. The two volumes which represent these views are those of Thompson and Davies. Their publication has already created a flurry of scholarly and public debate. However, the reader who wishes to understand and especially to evaluate them should also be aware of perspectives such as may be found in the other books. As will become clear, the significance of the data and arguments from both groups of writers will serve to enhance and to refine both the methods by which one can explore Israelite history and the data which one must take into consideration.

II. The historical studies

Hershel Shanks, William G. Dever, Baruch Halpern, P.K. McCarter, Jr. and P. Kyle, **The Rise of Ancient Israel**. Washington, D.C.: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1992, ix + 166 pp., \$18.95.

This volume contains the separate presentations of each of the authors at a symposium held in October 1991. The work is perhaps the most accessible of all the books considered here. The

initial chapter by Shanks introduces the subject, the history of its interpretation, and the basic elements which constitute the archaeological evidence for Israel's existence in the second millennium BC. Dever provides a useful survey with an identification and assessment of the major archaeological sites and artefacts and textual sources for Israel in the 13th and 12th centuries. He argues that early Israel was indigenous and indistinguishable from Canaan (although it may have included a small group of people from Egypt). The early settlers in the hill country who are identified by most as Israel are mostly homesteaders who have moved away from the collapsing Canaanite civilization in the lowlands. Respondents to Dever's position include I. Finkelstein, who argues that the archaeology and especially the settlement patterns analysis must be set in a larger chronological context of the Middle Bronze (c. 2000–1550 BC) and Iron II (c. 1200–1000 BC) Ages. Finkelstein mentions the larger geographical context in passing, but the full development of this is found in Thompson's work (see below). N. Gottwald's response stresses the sociological context and the need for a coherent theoretical model in which to locate the data. A. Zertal emphasizes the distinctive nature of the Mt Ebal site and challenges anyone to come up with a better explanation than that related to early Israel and the material in Deuteronomy 27 and Joshua 8.

Halpern's contribution to the book is a detailed study of the evidence for West Semites in Egypt in the second millennium and their relationship to the establishment of Yahwistic Israel (*i.e.* an Israel which believed in God, named as in the Bible) in Palestine. Halpern posits that the construction of the storage cities of Exodus 1:11 and various other details of the opening chapters of Exodus require Ramses II to be the pharaoh of the oppression and Merneptah to be the pharaoh of the exodus of Israel from Egypt. If this is so, then the mention of Israel in the Merneptah stele in Canaan during the fifth year of Merneptah's reign cannot be the Israel of the exodus. So Halpern argues that Israel was a displaced group of 'homesteaders' during the 13th century BC who migrated south from Syria through northern Transjordan and arrived in Palestine. Later, a group of escaped slaves from Egypt arrived and transformed Israel's beliefs with the 'myth' of the exodus, of the conquest and of the deity Yahweh.¹ However, the chief value of Halpern's essay is the detailed collection of evidence which he presents to locate the patriarchal accounts of Jacob and Joseph in the Hyksos period, the exodus in 13th-century BC Egypt, and the wilderness wanderings in the same period. Halpern's heavy reliance on oral traditions, until these things were written down in the 10th century, weakens his case, not only in terms of questions concerning the existence of any oral tradition in the Bible, but also in terms of its usefulness as a means of preserving such accurate detail in some cases and yet creating what he identifies as completely erroneous history in others. How can one know which is true and which is false?

Halpern's argument of an Iron Age (after 1200 BC) entrance of Yahwism into Palestine is the only point where P.K. McCarter disagrees (and perhaps his view that Judges 1 is a postexilic addition). He prefers a Late Bronze Age date (1550–1200 BC) because it was the only period when he can find a cultural continuum from Midian, where Yahwism originated, to the hill country of Palestine. In the Iron Age various nations with their own deities would have interrupted the flow of religious culture from Midian to Israel. In the panel discussion which follows, Dever takes exception to this last point, arguing that Israelite religion was the product of an evolutionary development in the

Iron Age (p. 149). Neither view is persuasive. It is not clear that a cultural continuum is required for religious influence. There is no certain evidence that this religious belief originated or was confined to Midian before the Iron Age. Further, Dever's view that the people created their own religion does not answer the question as to what they were doing before this religion was created. Every people in the Ancient Near East possessed a religion. It was an irreducible part of the culture.

This work has the weakness of being the product of a single school of thought, those who are heirs to the Albright tradition in America. The similar conclusions appear time and again. The strengths of the book are many. It is well written and neatly produced with many helpful photographs of the archaeological evidence, not to mention the map of Iron I sites in the hill country. At the same time it is a symposium with questions allowed and with a panel discussion. This allows for the examination of views which are put forward by the speakers. It is something which is helpful in the evaluation of new and differing ideas. Finally, the book is a readable introduction to the data on the critical question of the origins of Israel. Especially the chapters by Shanks and Dever provide some of the most useful summaries available. It is an introduction useful for students and an important balance to the views of Thompson and Davies.

Victor (Avigdor) Hurowitz, **I Have Built You an Exalted House: Temple Building in Light of Mesopotamian and Northwest Semitic Writings**. JSOT Supplement 115, JSOT/ASOR Monograph Series 5, Sheffield: Academic Press, 1992, 398 pp., £35.00/\$57.50.

Hurowitz presents a form-critical analysis of the story of Solomon's construction of the temple. He finds a common structure to temple-building stories in Sumerian, Akkadian and West Semitic (including Ugarit and the Bible) accounts. All of them include: a divine selection of a temple builder and a revelation of the command to build, an announcement of the intent to build by the builder, preparations for the building with the acquisition of materials, a description of the construction process and of the structure and furnishings of the temple, the entry of the deity into the completed temple, and the determination of destinies in divine revelation. All of these are found in this order in 1 Ki. 5-9.

Hurowitz's use of the comparative method is not limited to Ancient Near Eastern building accounts, however. In his search for comparative materials he observes how: (1) Assyrian inscriptions describing the return of the god to the temple parallel the return of the ark in 1 Ki. 8:1-11; (2) 1 Kings' details of the buildings and vessels have their closest similarities in Mesopotamian instructions for builders, in receipts and other administrative documents and in didactic school texts; (3) the negotiations between Hiram and Solomon preserve elements of epistolary style and form; (4) the date formulae in 1 Ki. 6-7 have close similarities with those of Phoenician and Aramaic building inscriptions; (5) the act of naming the master builder is also found in the Ugaritic Baal epic, in Enuma elish Tablet V, and in Mesopotamian grant documents.

These similarities lead Hurowitz to argue that at least some of the information which the author of 1 Ki. 5-9 drew upon was administrative and located in the archival records of Jerusalem. Even the longstanding assumptions regarding the Deuteronomistic composition of Solomon's prayer of dedication in 1 Ki. 8:12-61 are addressed, as the text is shown to have structural and conceptual similarities with other temple dedicatory prayers from Mesopotamia. In all the examples, concerns of dynastic stability and of the answering of prayers play key roles. However, unlike the Mesopotamian examples, Solomon's prayer does not base the requests for these concerns on the expectation of a reward for building the god a temple. Instead, it is based on the word of God with its account of the promises to David and the covenant with the people of Israel. Whether composed by the Deuteronomist or based upon an earlier source, the prayer of Solomon has transformed the content of the temple dedicatory prayers as known from Mesopotamia.

Although Hurowitz focuses on similarities in structures and phrases of 1 Ki. 5-9 and so does not provide analysis of the architecture or the specific furnishings of the temple, his learned

discourse on the literary context of the biblical account as well as his observations regarding its distinctive elements leave this reader convinced not only that the structural analysis is the correct direction for understanding these chapters, but also that the texts themselves are far richer in their sensitivity to detail than has been imagined.²

Bob Becking, **The Fall of Samaria. An Historical and Archaeological Study**. Sources for the History of the Ancient Near East 2, Leiden: Brill, 1992, xvi + 153 pp., GlD. 85.00/US\$48.75.

In contrast to those who take a fundamentally negative attitude toward the historicity of the biblical texts, Becking's method is to give a similar weight to biblical sources as to other Ancient Near Eastern texts. He begins with a description of Israel's political history from the reign of Jeroboam II until 731 BC, which he regards as Hoshea's first year. This is a useful review of the relevant Mesopotamian and biblical sources with an attempt to appreciate the contribution of both. Not all his arguments are of equal worth, especially his linguistic observations. Contrary to his assertions, no texts from third-millennium BC Ebla can be used to identify Palestinian place names of the first millennium. Also, however much other political and economic concerns may have been a reality in Israel, there is only one 'main cause' for Israel's loss of power and territory - Assyrian expansionism.

Becking notes the conflict between the Babylonian Chronicle, which attributes Samaria's destruction to Shalmaneser V, and the inscriptions of Sargon II, which claim that he did it. The author concludes that it occurred late in Shalmaneser's reign or early in Sargon's. He studies the reconstruction of H. Tadmor, understanding him to argue for two destructions of Samaria, in 722 and again in 720. He also notes N. Na'aman's view of a rebellion beginning in 722 but not put down until 720. Chapter 3 surveys the biblical evidence. Becking argues here for a conquest of Samaria by Shalmaneser in 723 and again, with annexation of Samaria to Assyria, by Sargon II in 720. The author maintains that a double campaign against the Jerusalem of Hezekiah also took place, in 715 and again in 701. Although the theory of a double campaign against Jerusalem is not new, a date as early as 715 is. Becking's rejection of Na'aman's negative evaluation of the biblical evidence is worth noting (pp. 52-53):

Except when it can be proved that the numbers for the reigns of the kings in the Book of Kings are part of a deliberate and meaningful compositional scheme and therefore can be considered as 'invention' of the redactors, the dates in the Book of Kings can only be considered as untrustworthy when they can be falsified by contemporaneous evidence. That means that as long as the numbers given in the Book of Kings coincide with Mesopotamian or Egyptian data there are no reasons to suspect them.

Becking concludes with a useful, though dated, survey of the archaeological evidence from Palestine.

In his final chapter, Becking concludes that there is no evidence of rebellion against the Assyrians from Samaria after 720 BC. Additional texts from Samaria and those Assyrian texts from Mesopotamia which mention Samaria are surveyed. The picture is one of provinces of Assyria at peace, perhaps struggling to pay some taxes but also with citizens able to own and to transfer private property in the form of real estate. Becking provides us with a careful review and methodology for the study of a particular historical problem. Although marred by a lack of editorial control on style and spelling, the work provides an important example of making full use of written sources.

Kenneth G. Hoglund, **Achaemenid Imperial Administration in Syria-Palestine and the Missions of Ezra and Nehemiah**. SBL Dissertation Series 125, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992, xii + 275 pp., \$29.95.

Hoglund begins with a historical survey of Judah under Assyrian, Babylonian and Persian rule from the eighth until the fifth centuries BC. He concludes that there was a minimal change in administrative structure for Judea with the advent of Cyrus and even with the administrative reforms carried out by Darius. Instead, Ezra and Nehemiah as imperial representatives

brought about a major reform in the fifth century in a Judea which was already a separate province. This reform was tied with mixed marriages. Its sources for study are to be found in Ezra and Nehemiah alone. These books are understood by Hoglund as a literary unit distinct from Chronicles. Ezra 1–7 contain authentic and largely unaltered documents. Although the books may include the memoirs of Ezra and Nehemiah, Hoglund follows T. Eshkenazi in affirming that there are no literary clues to distinguish those memoirs in the present text. He also follows the majority view that Ezra preceded Nehemiah and that both worked during the third quarter of the fifth century, under the Persian emperor Artaxerxes I.

Earlier proposals regarding the purpose of the mission of Ezra and Nehemiah are found to be wanting. Hoglund rejects views that: Xerxes gave the surrounding nations permission to attack a rebellious Jerusalem (J. Morgenstern); Palestinian hill country sites underwent violent destruction c. 475; Jerusalem was reorganized by Nehemiah as a province newly independent from Samaria; Ezra and Nehemiah were sent in order to induce loyalty among Jerusalem's citizenry.

Only Greek historians provide substantial literary sources from which to reconstruct the Egyptian revolt against the Persian empire in 454. After examining the purposes and structure of their writings, Hoglund credits the earlier historians, Herodotus and Thucydides, with more reliable accounts. The accounts of Ctesias and Diodorus Siculus are shown to be lacking in accuracy and probability.³

Hoglund's consideration of the archaeological evidence for the mid-fifth century in Palestine leads him to focus on about a dozen forts. Three of these can be identified with this period on the basis of the pottery. The remaining forts are associated by their similar construction techniques. Distributed throughout Palestine, the forts are located away from population centres and overlook major roadway systems. These factors, along with the relatively short period of occupation of the forts, lead Hoglund to argue that they functioned to provide a Persian response to the security threat created by the Egyptian revolt. The imperial forces who occupied these forts remained until the Peloponnesian Wars (431–404 BC) and eliminated any threat of attack from the Greek forces.⁴

Commenting on the mission of Nehemiah, Hoglund argues that the 'citadel by the temple' (2:8) was a Persian garrison. This, combined with the unusual permission to reconstruct a city's walls, suggests that Jerusalem became a collection and storage centre for Persian revenues. Nehemiah's responsibilities included the pacification and co-operation of the local population. His attempts to alleviate the economic suffering brought about by a famine, in the form of reduction in the interest paid on debts, reflects an imperial interest in local co-operation without the reduction of taxes. Ezra's concern was similar. Hoglund identifies 'the law of your god' with 'the law of your king' in Ezra 7:26, and finds here concern with the social cohesion of the whole community who are 'the house of God' in Nehemiah 10 and 13. Although it is impossible to identify the content of Ezra's lawbook, the ban on intermarriages resembles Deuteronomy 7:14. Citing parallels from other displaced and resettled ethnic groups in the Persian empire, Hoglund concludes that the ban was intended to provide a clear definition of the Jerusalem community and thereby to define the holders of the community's common property (*i.e.* its lands) and to ensure its political cohesiveness and its military security.

Hoglund provides a cogent thesis which is able to set the biblical account firmly within its Persian context, to take account of the archaeological and textual data and to overturn several widely held hypotheses. One of the most important contributions of this work is its ability to take full advantage of recent literary study of the biblical texts within the context of their critical use as historical sources.

Thomas L. Thompson, *Early History of the Israelite People from the Written and Archaeological Sources*. Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East 4, Leiden: Brill, 1992, xv + 489 pp., Gld. 215.00/US\$123.00.

This work represents a synthesis of a new perspective in the study of the history of the OT period which is sometimes

described as sociological. Its basic premise is that the biblical text is unusable as a source for ancient Israelite history. Instead, extrabiblical data must be investigated in order to understand it. Thompson's work is vast in scope. As a sociological investigation it can be placed within the tradition of Gottwald's 1979 study, *The Tribes of Yahweh*, and of Lemche's 1985 monograph, *Early Israel*. As a study which radically questions the historicity of the biblical texts, it lies in the tradition of writers such as R. Coote, K. Whitelam, Davies, Lemche and Thompson himself (*cf.* his *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives*, 1974). We will examine it in some detail.

The attempt to create what he calls a paradigm shift requires a clear knowledge of where the research has been in order to define how different one's own proposals are. A review of the scholarship comprises the first 170 pages. For Thompson, Albright idealizes the orthodox status quo. Of the five 'complexes' which Thompson believes constitute the Albright school and its thought, his critique of the form-critical assumption that poetry must predate prose is most convincing, if only because the distinction between the two is not a rigid one in Ancient Near Eastern and biblical writing. Thompson also critiques the distinction between Canaanites and Israelites (*cf.* Dever above), Israel's nomadic origins, and Albright's view that Israel became dominant in Palestine c. 1200 BC. This last point is the most disputed of those he makes.

Thompson's analysis of A. Alt's work emphasizes his designations of Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BC) Palestine as Canaanite and of Iron Age (1200–587 BC) Palestine as Israelite. This is developed in the ideas of the amphictyonic tribal league which Israel supposedly formed, the Canaanite city-state, and transhumance nomadism as Israel's original lifestyle. R. Smend and J.H. Hayes have already challenged the idea of the amphictyony and restricted it to later Israel. G. Mendenhall developed the idea of city-states as encompassing the entire culture of the lowlands and much of the highlands. However, Thompson does not find the evidence to support this understanding of society in Late Bronze Age Palestine. Lemche has shown that transhumance nomadism and the dichotomy of society into urban and countryside elements (*cf.* Mendenhall and Gottwald) lacks full appreciation of the varieties and complexities of the society.

Thompson surveys the contributions of scholars from the middle of this century regarding the Israel of the second millennium BC: M. Noth's use of redaction criticism and his interest in the historicity of the judges; B. Mazar's application of recent archaeology and his dating of the patriarchal material immediately before the monarchy; R. de Vaux's extension of the Israelite conquest and settlement of Canaan to cover a period of much of the second millennium. The volumes of Thompson and of J. Van Seters from the mid-seventies challenged the assumptions of any second-millennium BC historiography in the patriarchal narratives of Genesis. This doubt was extended to the whole Pentateuch in the critiques of the documentary hypothesis by R. Rendtorff, E. Blum and N. Whybray, as well as Thompson. The studies of A.D.H. Mayes and of the 1977 volume on Israelite and Judean history (eds. Hayes and J.M. Miller) furthered the doubt that critical methods, as traditionally understood, could be used to extract historical information from literary sources. Literary analyses, such as those of D.M. Gunn and J.P. Fokkelmann, disassociated the biblical narrative from history. Lemche and G. Garbini extended this scepticism well into the period of the monarchy and as far as the accounts of the exile. All of this has served to bifurcate biblical literature and the history of Israel. Thus Thompson argues (p. 110):

Critically speaking, once the specters of literary form and historicity have been raised, there is no as yet discernible characteristic within the biblical traditions alone by which the historicity of any major segment can be ascertained. The character of the narratives themselves is not historical, and historicity – even historical relevance – cannot be assumed of them. . . . 'External evidence' is no longer a luxury but a necessity, and without it we simply cannot write a history of Israel.

Thompson reviews studies closer to his own method, *e.g.* Lemche's assertion that Israel did not write history before the exile, D. Hopkins' understanding of risk spreading and risk reduction in hill country agriculture, and Coote and Whitelam's view of the rise and fall of international trade as key to the

increase in the number of Iron Age I (1200–1000 BC) hill country settlements. Finkelstein's *The Archaeology of the Israelite Settlement* (1988) filled the gap of empirical evidence necessary to describe the era. However, Thompson considers without warrant his assumption that Israel's origins are to be found in the Iron Age I hill country settlements. Works by H. Weippert and G.W. Ahlström focus on the importance of regional studies within Palestine. Thompson concludes his survey of the previous scholarly literature with an approval of Lemche's 1991 publication regarding the Canaanites, that the Canaanites of the Bible are fictitious literary creations who have no relationship to those mentioned in Egyptian and other sources of the second millennium BC. As already noted, this work is problematic in that it builds too much on an ambiguous text.⁵

With Lemche, Thompson maintains that the biblical narrative is neither a history of the past nor a historiography of the context in which it was written. Rather, it is 'origin traditions' in which fragmented accounts are used to generate Israel's theology and self-understanding. Thus Thompson builds his own study on the results of the detailed research already done and on the assumption that the history of Palestine is to be written apart from any reference to the Bible.

Thompson begins his recreation of Palestinian (not Israelite) history using as his guide the ecological transformations brought about through cycles of wet and dry periods in the Eastern Mediterranean world. He stresses movements of linguistic and cultural influence rather than migrations or invasions (e.g. the Amorites) which lack corroborating evidence.⁶ Thompson attributes the reduction in Palestinian settlement size and population from the Middle Bronze Age to the Late Bronze Age to drier conditions which began in the 16th century. The political development of Egypt's empire in the Palestinian lowlands after the wars of Thutmose III was a response to a weakened Palestine. The unfortified nature of Late Bronze Age Palestinian towns may be due to the Egyptian presence (cf. Hoglund for a similar practice in the region during the Persian period). Thompson believes that, contrary to the assertions of Gottwald, the Palestinian towns (they were not large enough to be cities, let alone city-states) enjoyed a revival of prosperity under Egyptian control.

Following Alt, Thompson believes that it is necessary to study Palestine regionally and to recognize distinctive and unique aspects to the history and culture of each region. Palestine contains seven topographical regions. Each is considered in terms of the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron Age (i.e., c. 1200 BC). Most important in this study is the shift in settlement patterns which occurs in the central highlands, a shift which has been used by others to identify Israel. However, Thompson observes that the increased number of villages in the hill country matches a similar settlement pattern throughout the lowlands. It represents a shift in survival strategies from a few town centres in fertile regions to a dispersion of the diminished population across fertile and marginal lands, and the restructuring of that population into smaller, more economically viable social units. This new strategy was necessary due to the further drying of the climate, beginning c. 1200 BC.⁷

It is thus at the level of interpretation of this settlement data that most of the problems with his thesis emerge. Thompson suggests that distinctive material culture emerged in the settlement patterns of Iron Age I Ephraim (the southern half of the region in the central hill country), unlike other regions in Palestine. He attributes these distinctive cultural developments only to occupational gaps and to different economic activities at different sites, but not to any ethnic influence, whether from Israel or anyone else. Thompson argues that material culture cannot determine ethnicity. This may or may not be true, but he does not address either the burial evidence⁸ or the epigraphic evidence, which both suggest cultural influence from outside Palestine. Onomastics (personal names) from the Amarna Age demonstrate a dominant influence from the north (Hurrian, Anatolian and Indo-Aryan) at various levels of society throughout the hill country and in the Jezreel and the Jordan valleys. To designate this influence as 'very minimal' is to betray an agenda which discounts direct effects on the Iron Age I hill country from outside Palestine.

To argue (as Thompson does) that the Israel mentioned on Merneptah's stele (c. 1207 BC) has no relevance to biblical Israel

or to the Israel of any first-millennium BC sources requires a greater leap of faith than to believe that it does. In both millennia a gentile (name of a people group) spelled the same way is used of a group of people from the same geographical region who are opposed to powers outside the region. This is hardly coincidental. The same is true of Thompson's arguments regarding the Philistines.⁹

The author maintains that no political union could have existed in the time and place in which the Bible remembers the united monarchy of David and Solomon. This is apparently because the settlement of much of the Judean hill country had not yet taken place and so there was no population to support a kingdom. However, the lack of population is sometimes itself a motivation for wars of conquest, such as those undertaken by the Hittites to replenish their own population. Further, we do know that the Benjaminite region was settled at this time, as well as Jerusalem and Hebron along with other major sites in the Judean low hill country to the west. Caves near Bethlehem have revealed inscribed spear heads, indicating the presence of warriors in Iron Age I. These are the same regions from which the early leaders of a unified Israel emerged and where they had their centres of rule. What does it mean to argue that the population was insufficient? Was the population of Macedonia sufficient for an Alexander to create an empire, albeit shortlived, of the known world from Greece to India? Finally, announcements of the discovery of a ninth-century BC steel fragment at Dan which contains the phrase 'house of David' call into question all disputes concerning the existence of a David. This expression is used elsewhere (e.g. 'house of Omri') to describe a dynasty and the historical founder of that dynasty. Here, perhaps, is one more piece of evidence for a David in Israel and Judah.

Thompson also denies any historicity to the biblical accounts of the exile. His handling of the Assyrian and Babylonian accounts does not disprove the exile. The study of Becking serves as a better model in its recognition of the propagandist nature of these texts and, along with Hoglund, in its observations regarding the variety of motivations involved in deportation and resettlement. Cf. also the critique regarding the work of Davies below.

Having examined the history of Palestine, Thompson turns to the biblical text itself. Genesis to 2 Kings has no coherent plot development, theme, ideology or historiography. It is the product of antiquarian and traditionalist interests, a collection of a variety of tales and traditions within a redactional framework which may appear as a historiographic sequence. It is not historiography in the Greek sense of a critical intent to identify history. Thompson seems to be guided by the absence of a Hebrew word equivalent to the Greek *historia*. What is necessary to such a conclusion is a series of examples which can demonstrate exactly what is being done that is missing from the Hebrew Bible. Unfortunately, he does not provide the necessary and detailed analysis from texts, especially those Hittite and Assyrian sources which he does understand as historiographic.

Thompson's historical reconstruction includes emphases on: (1) the absence of any participation from outside Palestine in the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age I hill country settlement; (2) the insignificance of Jerusalem before the seventh century as attested by the absence of its mention in Egyptian itineraries and in the Kuntillet 'Ajrud inscriptions; (3) the implication that the deity Yahweh was a Persian 'import' from Samaria during the resettlement of the land; (4) the impossibility of a united monarchy under David and Solomon in the tenth century; (5) the view that the expansion of the population in seventh-century Judah was the result of the Assyrian resettlement of foreign peoples.

(1) and (2) have already been addressed. (5) lacks any specific textual or archaeological support: e.g., after Hezekiah, seventh-century Assyrian sources do not mention Judah, nor are personal Bible names from seals or the material culture suggestive of any group other than the indigenous inhabitants of Judah.¹⁰

Thompson's implication (pp. 411–412, 423) that state worship of Yahweh was a Persian-inspired import from Samaria and that thus the deity Yahweh was not recognized as such in any pre-exilic state worship in Jerusalem and Judah contradicts the epigraphic evidence from pre-exilic Iron Age Judah.¹¹ There

are no grounds to doubt the presence of Yahweh as chief deity in Jerusalem and Judah throughout the Iron Age. This point needs to be made as the book can be so interpreted. However, it is also important to note that Thompson does not deny the existence of Yahweh as a deity in Jerusalem and its environs during the Iron Age.¹² His point seems to be that Jerusalem did not exist as a political state and therefore there was no state worship. This view brings us full circle to the question of the role of the biblical evidence. To accept Thompson's conclusion is to deny any legitimacy to the portrayal of Israelite Jerusalem. It also takes a minimalist view of the population of Jerusalem in the eighth and seventh centuries BC and a particular view of what is required for a 'political state' to exist. The issue of the population of Jerusalem has not been settled. The question of what is necessary for a political state to exist is a sociological issue, and one which is also disputed. To base interpretative models upon uncertainties such as these leaves one open to charges of 'not proven' and to the possible presentation of a variety of other equally valid reconstructions.

Philip R. Davies, *In Search of 'Ancient Israel'*. JSOT Supplement 148, Sheffield: Academic Press, 1992, 172 pp., £22.50/\$39.50.

As Davies acknowledges, this work is a kind of popularization of Thompson's monograph. At the same time it brings together Davies' own distinctive contributions in attempting to forge conclusions about the emergence of the Hebrew Bible and its recognition as sacred scripture. With Thompson, Davies refuses to recognize value in historical criticism as a means to define the historicity of one text over against the lack of historicity of another. He also describes his programme of reconstruction as a paradigm shift. It is based largely on the assumption that almost no-one in Palestine for most of the first millennium BC could read or write. Thus by definition a book such as the Hebrew Bible is the product of a small 'élite' group of scribes in Hellenistic-period (third and second centuries BC) Jerusalem who write what those in power want them to say.

Davies suggests that the identification of literary artistry in a biblical narrative proves that it cannot be historical (p. 29). However, this negative relationship between literature and history is nowhere demonstrated. Instead, it is used to show how the biblical accounts of Sennacherib's attack upon Hezekiah are theologically based and therefore 'not historical' (p. 35). It is not clear whether or not he regards the Assyrian accounts as historical, for he does not comment upon their obvious theological emphasis. Where then does one extract the history? And what is history? Can we possess purely objective history? These questions are never addressed. Instead, Davies asserts that the Bible cannot be accepted as historical where there is not external witness to its testimony (p. 38). Yet much of Ancient Near Eastern history is made up of reliance upon single witnesses. It may be altered when such witnesses are shown to be unreliable or other witnesses are found; but one witness is better than none. Davies has not demonstrated the degree of (un)trustworthiness we should place in the Hebrew Bible's narratives.

The later monarchy, the exile and the period of Ezra and Nehemiah are each rejected as 'rash', 'fanatical', and 'pseudo-scholarship', and 'shown' to be without historical worth. Yet the arguments of Davies raise many questions as to their validity.¹³ He claims that Josiah cannot have decided to rule according to a law book because 'many around him who, owing their power to the institution of monarchy, would have prevented any such rash abandon' (p. 41). But by the same token, others in power may have supported it as providing them with responsibilities and powers. Neither argument is sufficient to establish or deny historicity. Here evidence is required.

A similar sense of the lack of evidence is present in his discussion of the exile and return. According to Davies (and Thompson), the sole purpose of deportation was to destroy nationality, alienating a people from their homeland, and there is no evidence that the same people were resettled in Palestine by the Persians. Davies cites works by Oded and Hoglund to support this thesis. However, this runs into conflict with the known practices of Babylonia and Persia, as exemplified in the

Wadi Brisa inscription, the Cyrus cylinder, the Neirab archive, and Herodotus' record of the Paeonians as suggested by Hoglund.¹⁴ This evidence parallels the experience of the Judeans as recorded in the historical books of Kings, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah. It, and the evidence from within Palestine (discussed above in the review of Thompson's work), needs to be addressed by Thompson and Davies before their alternative reconstruction (for which they have yet to provide parallel evidence) can be accepted.

The second half of Davies' book addresses the formation of the Hebrew Bible, something which he argues should be set as late as the Hellenistic period. He suggests that a collection of 'colleges' existed at Jerusalem and that, from these institutions, the diversity of the Hebrew Bible emerged. But which is more difficult to believe: that in Palestine, where scrolls and most written materials were doomed to perish from the effects of the climate, little of the Hebrew Bible remains in extant sources before the Hellenistic period; or that a large apparatus of colleges flourished in the late Hellenistic period without leaving one clear witness to their existence? Davies' discussion of the formation of the canon and of the concept of a canon in Judaism also assigns these items to a late date near the turn of the era. Yet he never engages with the most important recent work on the subject, that of R. Beckwith. Thus the problems with his thesis are never discussed, nor are the main issues in the debate brought into focus. This is a work which will convince the convinced but leave the sceptical unsatisfied. If, as Davies intends, it is used as an introductory text into the subject, it should be balanced with a volume such as that by Shanks *et al.*

Gösta W. Ahlström, *The History of Ancient Palestine from the Palaeolithic Period to Alexander's Conquest* (ed. D. Edelman). JSOT Supplement 146, Sheffield: Academic Press, 1993, 990 pp., £60.00/\$90.00.¹⁵

The 1993 date of publication is misleading. Unfortunately, problems with its publication delayed the work's appearance by more than half a decade, and sadly, it appeared posthumously. Thus this work is actually the earliest of those reviewed here. However, it is considered last because it represents the most impressive synthesis of any recent work on Israelite history, bringing together available textual and archaeological data as well as interacting with a vast quantity of European and North American scholarship. The achievement is breathtaking and all readers are in the debt of the editor for seeing the work through to publication.

It is not possible to provide a complete review of this work. Such a task would require a book in itself. Instead, a few of Ahlström's ideas will be traced. Like Thompson and Davies, he is sceptical of the biblical text as a source for history. He is unwilling to allow it to serve such a purpose in any period before the united monarchy, *i.e.* before the first millennium BC.

The work is organized chronologically. It is actually several books, each focusing on a separate period: the second half of the second millennium BC and the appearance of Israel, the rise of the monarchy, the divided monarchy, and the Persian period. After an initial chapter on prehistory (by G.O. Rollefson), Ahlström outlines the archaeology and history of the third and second millennia BC. He presents an impressive catalogue of archaeological data and emphasizes the many features of Palestinian culture which reflected international trade throughout the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. Useful excurses summarize what can be known of Amorites, Hyksos, Hurrians, *etc.* A whole chapter is devoted to the Arameans and the Transjordanian peoples. This material is an important counterbalance to the current tendency in scholarship to stress the insular nature of Palestine, especially the hill country, during many of these periods. On the other hand, Ahlström's negative evaluation of the historicity of the patriarchal material is not warranted. This is not so much because he overlooks evidence as that he cannot provide substantial evidence to deny their existence. The usual arguments are dragged out, but these have been answered before.¹⁶ In a review of the 14th-century BC Amarna letters (pp. 239-251, 276-277), Ahlström makes the important observation that the theory of a peasant revolt against the cities of Palestine, as proposed by Gottwald and others to

explain the origin of Israel, cannot be deduced from the textual evidence.

Ahlström's study of the 12th century BC is coloured by his attempt to argue that the mention of Israel on the Egyptian Merneptah stele (1207 BC) is one of a land rather than a people. His literary analysis, which is not the only one which can be applied to this text, cannot overturn the evidence of the determinative attached to the name, which is normally used to designate a people, not a territory. Although this section is not entirely satisfactory in its discussion of the emergence of Israel, it does serve admirably to detail the international trade and migrations of the period. A useful review of the evidence for the Sea Peoples and the disappearance of various empires is provided. Ahlström is able to make use of Finkelstein's study of the settlement patterns in the hill country of Palestine. He suggests that the increased population was the result of migrations from the north as well as due to a withdrawal of people from the lowlands. However, if Thompson's analysis of similar settlement patterns in some lowland areas is correct, then the latter part of this explanation is less likely. The population of the hill country in the 12th century could have included peoples from the north, but it could also have included refugees from Egypt, just as the coast seems to have been occupied by 'Sea Peoples' who were driven from Egypt.

One of the most common assumptions which drives Ahlström's analysis is that the biblical history is written from a biased perspective and therefore cannot be correct. Thus the well-known pattern in the book of Judges, involving apostasy, oppression, repentance, and a judge's deliverance, 'proves' that the work 'cannot be used for writing history' (p. 375). This confuses the historical with the literary. All historians write with a bias and all seek to find common motives and causes underlying what may at first appear as different and unrelated events. It is not justified to deny historical value on the basis of literary quality.

Although Ahlström accepts the historical possibility of figures such as Saul, David and Solomon, like Thompson he rejects the existence of a tribe of Judah before the monarchy on the basis of sparse population in the Judean hill country. He suggests that David's influence may indeed have extended to the Euphrates and that the challenges to his rule from Absalom and others did take place. The study of Solomon's reign provides many useful details and comparisons with the Ancient Near East. It complements Hurowitz. What is more open to question is the degree of polytheism which was present in the temple from its inception. It is not clear that Baal, Asherah and other deities were worshipped there. The Ezk. 8 text cited to support this conclusion describes the temple at a much later date.

For Ahlström, this period saw the beginning of 'biblical historiography'. From the united monarchy onward his work takes on the appearance of traditional historical criticism, involving a sifting of the biblical sources to determine what is early and what is late. In addition, his view that the texts are ideologically tendentious leads to acceptance as historical 'truth' fewer accounts than might be expected.

Sociologically, Ahlström does not recognize any difference between Israelites and Canaanites, believing this to have been an artificial and late distinction. Therefore, like Bloch-Smith (see n. 6), he identifies 'Israelite' religion before the exile as polytheistic. The reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah were mythical creations of a later editor who used historical sources. These sources indicated only that these kings acted in politically expedient ways. Thus Hezekiah moved the idols and cultic items from the high places to Jerusalem to protect them: he did not have in mind a permanent reform. All such interpretations deny any type of exclusive worship of Yahweh before the exile, and that requires a considerable amount of editorial activity on the biblical account during and after the exile. There is no more empirical evidence for this than there is for the view of Thompson and Davies that they are largely concoctions of the Hellenistic periods.

Ahlström's discussion of the post-exilic period anticipates some of Høglund's work insofar as it integrates the work of the main biblical figures, especially Ezra and Nehemiah, into the

overall history and strategy of the Persian empire. Less convincing are Ahlström's conclusions that Nehemiah's governorship was completely separate from and preceded the mission of Ezra (because they could not both rule the society at the same time, p. 882), and that Ezra's 'law of Moses' was a Persian innovation (because the people had to be instructed in it). Cross and others have argued for retaining the traditional Ezra-Nehemiah sequence.¹⁷ The extrabiblical evidence is subject to a variety of interpretations. The people of Jerusalem could easily have forgotten some of the religious instruction which their ancestors had followed.

This remarkable study concludes with 95 pages of indices. Ahlström was an independent thinker and his work reflects both the strengths and weaknesses of this approach. Used with caution, it provides the most complete and up-to-date archaeological and historical synthesis available in English.

III. Concluding observations

In concluding this survey of ancient Israelite history and historiography, the following points may be noted.

1. Those works which depend upon a traditional historical-critical methodology in the study of Israelite history have the advantage of studying specific periods and of demonstrating control over all the sources of that period. This is especially true of Becking, Høglund and Ahlström.

2. Form-critical and literary studies continue to have an impact on understanding the past and on the interpretation of events. In the case of Hurowitz in particular, the arguments are intrinsically probable on the basis of the wide variety and quantity of comparative literature which betrays a similar structure. Literature is incapable of self-verification as to its historical content. The appearance of a variety of literary forms normally used in reports or other documents of historical value, as well as the identification of Ancient Near Eastern structures and themes in longstanding texts ascribed to the Deuteronomist, raise fundamental questions about the traditional identification of Deuteronomists as having purely theological motives.

3. Thus the literary method does raise questions about the traditional identification of sources and documents within the biblical texts. Without extrabiblical comparative evidence, it is unwise to build a literary or historical hypothesis on such 'documents'. This is fundamental to Thompson's critique of critical biblical research.

4. The literary quality and style of a biblical text cannot determine anything about its historical worth.

5. The real value of the work of Thompson is to expand our methods for investigating ancient Palestine or Israel by bringing to bear data on the Mediterranean climate and its cycles over extended periods of time. Thus the period is given a larger ecological context, both chronologically and geographically. Like Bloch-Smith and Ahlström, Thompson is an example of a scholar who provides a thorough and disciplined examination of extrabiblical evidence before bringing these data to bear upon questions of the biblical text.

6. The danger of this approach is the tendency to focus on one area and to dismiss other evidence. As noted, both Thompson and Davies need to address extrabiblical data which challenge some of their interpretations. Without such consideration, their hypotheses cannot carry cogency. Sociological models, like all other hypotheses, lack validity unless they can integrate all available data from the period concerned.

7. If the studies of Thompson and Davies (and to a lesser extent those of the other authors considered here) prove anything, it is that historical conclusions drawn from traditional critical methods applied to the Bible cannot be assumed. It is necessary instead to master and to orchestrate the expanding quantity of extrabiblical data with methodological rigour and to follow the direction in which the evidence leads. However, this itself creates problems and the need for broader strategies to address historical problems.¹⁸

These issues of Israelite history and historiography require the present generation of scholars, as well as future generations, to accept the challenge of studying and mastering the academic disciplines of Ancient Near Eastern archaeology, philology and history, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of social science methodologies and literary approaches.

¹This is not new. It is developed in greater detail by de Moor in his *Rise of Yahwism*.

²Cf. Hurowitz's comments (p. 247n.): 'The biblical author is exceptional in his attempt to describe in words three-dimensional objects and concretize them for his readers. His Mesopotamian colleagues and counterparts make no such attempt. The degree to which the biblical author has achieved or missed his goal of concretization should not influence our appreciation of what the goal actually was. Reading a Mesopotamian description of a building will bring the complaining scholar to appreciate the relatively informative nature of the biblical descriptions.'

³He concludes that two leaders of ethnic groups in the Western Delta led the revolt. Following initial military success, they laid siege to the traditional and satrapal capital at Memphis. They appealed to the Greek fleet of 200 ships which was approaching Cyprus. The Greeks, eager to follow up earlier victories against Persia and to gain access to the Eastern Mediterranean, responded with the entire fleet. At this external threat on their Western provinces, the Persians sent naval and land forces. They relieved the siege, defeated the opposition, destroyed the Athenian fleet (along with its reinforcements which showed up too late to provide aid), and they captured and executed one of the leaders of the rebellion. Three years later, in 451, an assault by Athens on Cyprus also failed. This led to a watchful stand-off between Athens and Persia, and to continued concern by Persia to reinforce its defense of its western provinces.

⁴In making this argument, Hoglund rejects the interpretation of E. Stern and others whose focus on the forts in the Negev and in the Judean hill country led them to find here a defensive system arrayed against southern enemies of Judea, such as Edom. In addition to problems with the specific locations of forts in these regions, Hoglund's thesis provides a better account of their distribution throughout the whole of Palestine.

⁵Cf. a critical review of this thesis in *Themelios* 18.2 (January 1993), p. 24.

⁶Reiterating his (1974) view that Middle Bronze Age (c. 2000–1500 BC) movements would have been from Syria to Mesopotamia rather than in the reverse direction (an attempt to disprove the migrations of Gn. 11–12), he goes on to deny any significant Hyksos power in Palestine or any Egyptian political presence there as a result of wars which overthrew the Hyksos. As already noted (cf. Halpern above), there is strong evidence for West Semitic presence in Egypt at this time, so attempts to disassociate Egypt and Palestine in the mid-second millennium BC are not warranted.

⁷Thompson only briefly mentions the problem of where all the additional people came from to populate these villages. It is debated (cf. Shanks *et al.* above) whether or not an indigenous population was sufficient to provide for the settlement increase.

⁸Cf. E. Bloch-Smith, *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead* (JSOT Supplement 123, Sheffield, 1992).

⁹As for the terms 'Canaan' and 'Canaanite', to assert that there was no unified city-state culture of the lowlands and valleys which stood over

against a hill country culture ('Israel') is to conclude nothing different than what is implied in the biblical texts, which continually stress the diversity of people groups in Palestine (Amorites, Jebusites, Perizzites, *etc.*) and emphasize an assimilation of Israel and Canaan from very early in Israel's presence in the land (cf. Jdg. 3:5-6).

¹⁰Cf. N. Na'aman, 'Population Changes in Palestine Following Assyrian Deportations', *Tel Aviv* 20 (1993), pp. 104-124, who argues the opposite of Thompson. Using textual and archaeological evidence he finds no indication of any attempt to build up the region of Judah during the seventh century. As to the absence of Jerusalem in the Egyptian accounts of pharaoh Sheshonq's (= Shishak's) campaigns, this absence seems to be characteristic of earlier New Kingdom itineraries as well. Yet the New Kingdom was the era of the Amarna letters from Jerusalem to the pharaoh which describe an Egyptian garrison present at the city. Jerusalem was important enough to have an Egyptian scribe and armed forces. Thus the lack of mention cannot be used to define the status of Jerusalem in the Iron Age. Lack of mention in the Kuntilet 'Ajrud inscriptions, actually graffiti at a caravanserai outside the borders of Judah, is hardly significant.

¹¹This includes the following evidence from Judah before the exile: the exclusive use of the (shortened) name of Yahweh in the extrabiblical (and biblical) attestations of Judean personal names which include a divine name; salutations which bless people in Yahweh's name (and no other) as found on letters (ostraca) from Arad and Lachish; the divine name as found in the 'Aaronic blessing' (Nu. 6:24-26) inscribed on the Ketef Hinnom amulet; the divine name as found on the traces of 'house of Yahweh' on the Jerusalem pomegranate.

¹²Personal communication from the author.

¹³His comments on the Judges period of Israelite history follow Thompson's, which have already been addressed.

¹⁴Cf. Hoglund (1992), pp. 20, 27, 238.

¹⁵At the time of writing this review, Fortress Press had announced the publication of a North American edition by the same author, *The History of Ancient Palestine*.

¹⁶For example, the absence of archaeological evidence for early second-millennium settlement at Beersheba, like that at Haran, is not proof the places did not exist. Just as extrabiblical records attest the existence of Haran, so the biblical records may suggest that a site at or near Beersheba existed, although the vicissitudes of archaeological preservation and excavation have not yielded evidence for it. Among the problems with the historical reconstruction of Genesis 14, Ahlström does not mention that (1) the early or mid-second millennium BC is one of the latest periods in the Ancient Near East when such a coalition travelling long distances could have occurred; and (2) the name Tidal, clearly related to that of Hittite kings such as Tudhaliyas, disappears after the demise of the Hittite kingdom c. 1200 BC.

¹⁷F.M. Cross, 'A Reconstruction of the Judean Restoration', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 94 (1975), pp. 4-18. Ahlström is aware of this article and interacts with it.

¹⁸Gottwald observes (Shanks *et al.*, p. 74): 'Realistically, how can any single scholar hope to thoroughly explore and evaluate the adequacy of a complex cross-field theory treating several classes of evidence? One can only proceed by constant reference to the input of other scholars, both in formulating theory and in evaluating theory within a feedback loop of ongoing discourse. This means that biblical and extra-biblical textual scholars, archaeologists, historians of institutions and ideas, and social theorists need to be in regular communication.'

Introductory resources for the interaction of science and Christianity

Steve Bishop

The following list of resources is intended to facilitate the study of the interaction of science and Christianity. It is not an exhaustive list. I apologize for its far too British flavour.

Bibliographies

Nigel M. de S. Cameron, 'Talking points: Science versus religion', *Themelios* 8.1 (1982), pp. 26-27

Includes, as an addendum, a bibliography by John C. Sharp. Works cited there will not be included in this listing.

Christians in Science Education, *List of Resources for Teachers on the Relationship between Science and Faith* (CISE, 1991)

Available from CISE, split into eight categories, including Miracles, Evolution, The nature of human personality and Environmental issues.

Contemporary Issues in Science and Christian Faith: An Annotated Bibliography

This resource book is published by the American Scientific Affiliation. It includes a list of video and audio tapes and a list of speakers, as well as hundreds of books.

Isis: an international review devoted to the history of science and its cultural influences

The final issue of the journal *Isis* each year carries an extensive bibliography, one section of which lists journal articles and books that deal with the historical aspects of science and faith.

J.M. Kerr, 'Bibliography: Cosmology and theology', *Modern Churchman* Vol. 32 (3) (1990-91), pp. 64-70

A useful article dealing with recent cosmological books and how they relate to theological issues.

John M. Templeton, *The Humble Approach: Scientists Discover God* (Seabury Press, 1981)

Contains an extensive bibliography (c. 1300 works) which takes up almost half the book.

Who's Who in Theology and Science, compiled and edited by the Templeton Foundation (Winthrop Publishing Co., 1992)

An international 'User's Guide' to people, organizations and journals active in the science-theology dialogue.

Christian works: books and articles

Serious works: books

Peter Addinall, *Philosophy and Biblical Interpretation: A Study in Nineteenth Century Conflict* (Cambridge University Press, 1991)

William H. Austin, *The Relevance of Natural Science to Theology* (Library of Philosophy and Religion, Macmillan Press, 1976)

Examines, and finds deficient, the claim that science and religion are two distinct realms of thought that have no bearing on each other.

Ian G. Barbour (ed.), *Science and Religion: New Perspectives on the Dialogue* (SCM, 1968)

Religion in an Age of Science (SCM, 1990)

The first volume of the 1989-91 Gifford Lectures.

Oliver R. Barclay (ed.), *Christian Faith and Science* (UCCF, 1988)

A collection of papers presented to various Christians in Science conferences. (Previously published as *Science and Christian Belief* in 1985.) Contributors include: Boyd, Hooykaas, MacKay, Russell and Tyrell.

John Hedley Brooke, *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives* (Cambridge University Press, 1991)

A 'historically based commentary' on the relationship between science and religion. Finds the 'conflict' and 'harmony' models inadequate and suggests that 'theological and scientific concerns have been mutually relevant in the past'. Also contains an extensive bibliographic essay.

Vincent Brummer (ed.), *Interpreting the Universe as Creation: A Dialogue of Science and Religion* (Kok Pharos, 1991)

Stanley Jaki, *Science and Creation: From Eternal Cycles to an Oscillating Universe* (Scottish Academic Press, 1974)

—, *The Road to Science and the Ways to God* (The Gifford Lectures 1974-5 and 1975-6) (Scottish Academic Press, 1978)

—, *The Origin of Science and the Science of its Origin* (Scottish Academic Press, 1978)

—, *Cosmos and Creator* (Scottish Academic Press, 1980)

—, *The Purpose of It All* (Scottish Academic Press, 1990)

Jaki is both a scientist and a theologian, and has doctorates in theology and physics. He is Distinguished University Professor of Sefton Hall University in New Jersey and specializes in the history and philosophy of science. A full bibliography and an introduction to Jaki's writings has been written by P.E. Hodgson: *Science and Theology: An Introduction to the Writings of Stanley L. Jaki* (Science and Theology Seminar Papers No. 3, Farmington Institute, 1987). See also 'Theologian-physicist: Stanley L. Jaki', *Occasional Papers No. 24* (Farmington Institute, nd (1988?)).

Christopher Kaiser, *Creation and the History of Science* (Marshall Pickering, 1991)

David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers (eds.), *God and Nature: Historical Essays on the Encounter Between Christianity and Science* (University of California Press, 1986)

Includes a 12-page bibliography split into historical periods.

David N. Livingstone, *Darwin's Forgotten Defenders: The Encounter Between Evangelical Theology and Evolutionary Thought* (Eerdmans/Scottish Academic Press, 1987)

Examines the response by evangelicals to evolution in the 19th century.

Donald MacKay, *The Open Mind and other Essays: A Scientist in God's World*, ed. Melvin Tinker (IVP, 1988)

Eighteen of Professor MacKay's essays are gathered together here. MacKay was an advocate of complementarity as a description of the relationship between science and Christianity.

—, *Behind the Eye* (Blackwell, 1991)

MacKay's 1986 Gifford lectures, published posthumously.

John Magnum (ed.), *The New Faith-Science Debate: Probing Cosmology, Technology, and Theology* (Fortress/WCC, 1989)

This book is the result of a consultation organized by the Lutheran Church in America in 1987.

Mary Midgley, *Science as Salvation: A Modern Myth and its Meaning* (Routledge, 1992)

A.R. Peacocke, *Creation and the World of Science* (Clarendon Press, 1979)

— (ed.), *The Sciences and Theology in the Twentieth Century* (Oriel Press, 1981)

—, *God and the New Biology* (Dent and Son, 1986)

—, *Theology for a Scientific Age: Being and Becoming – Natural and Divine* (Basil Blackwell, 1990)

—, Two review articles on 'God and the New Biology' appear in *Science and Christian Belief* Vol. 1 (1989) by J.W. Haas, Jr (pp. 161-166) and by Alister E. McGrath (pp. 167-171). A response by Peacocke appeared in the following issue.

John Polkinghorne, *One World* (SPCK, 1986)

—, *Science and Creation: The Search for Understanding* (SPCK, 1988)

—, *Science and Providence: God's Interaction with the World* (SPCK, 1989)

These three books represent a trilogy from the pen of a former Professor of Mathematical Physics, now an Anglican priest. Polkinghorne's work is very important; however, I find his explanation of reality as a 'noetic world' – a complementarity world of mind/matter – and his view of humans as mind/matter amphibians unsatisfactory.

—, *Reason and Reality: The Relationship between Science and Theology* (SPCK, 1991)

More heavyweight than his 'trilogy', and deals in more detail with some of the issues raised there.

Colin Russell, *Cross-currents: Interactions Between Science and Faith* (IVP, 1985)

A book for the layperson on the history of science, written from a Christian perspective.

Douglas Spanner, *Biblical Creation and the Theology of Evolution* (Paternoster Press, 1987)

Angela Tilby, *Science and the Soul: New Cosmology, the Self and God* (SPCK, 1992)

Tie-in with the BBC TV mini-series 'Soul'.

T.F. Torrance (ed.), *Belief in Science and in Christian Life: The Relevance of Michael Polanyi's Thought for Christian Faith and Life* (Handsel, 1980)

—, *The Ground and Grammar of Theology* (University Press of Virginia, 1980)

—, *Divine and Contingent Order* (Oxford University Press, 1981)

A full bibliography of Torrance's work is to be found in: Torrance *Scottish Journal of Theology* 43 (1990) pp. 225–262.

Howard J. van Til, Robert E. Snow, John H. Stek, Davis A. Young, *Portraits of Creation: Biblical and Scientific Perspectives on the World's Formation* (Eerdmans, 1990)

A collaborative volume produced under the auspices of the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship. 'This is the best book to my knowledge on the relation of modern cosmology and contemporary natural science (astronomy and geology particularly) to the biblical account(s) of creation' (Langdon Gilkey). Contains a critique of 'creation science' and an illuminating discussion on the interpretation of the first few chapters of Genesis.

Richard T. Wright, *Biology Through the Eyes of Faith* (Apollos, 1991)

One of a series sponsored by the Christian College Coalition. 'The book . . . is the outcome of the honest struggle of a devout Christian and skilled biologist to arrive at wholeness, integrity – to arrive at the point where he sees how his faith and his biology fit together' (Nicholas Wolterstorff, in the Foreword).

RECOMMENDED: Barbour (1990); Brooke (1991); Polkinghorne (1986, 1988, 1989, 1991); Russell (1985); Wright (1991).

Popular and introductory books

R.J. Berry (ed.), *Real Science, Real Faith* (IVP, 1991)

A number of scientists who are Christians explain how science and their faith cohere.

Adam Ford, *Universe: God, Man and Science* (Hodder, 1986)

Roger Forster and Paul Marston, *Reason and Faith* (Monarch, 1989)

An apologetic written to answer the questions that arise from the science-faith debate. The Christian authors accept a rationalistic Baconian view of science. Contains 17 pages of bibliography.

Tim Hawthorne, *Windows on Science and Faith* (IVP, 1986)

An accessible introductory work.

Peter Hodgson, *Christianity and Science* (Oxford University Press, 1990)

A short but helpful introductory booklet, aimed at sixth-formers.

John Houghton, *Does God Play Dice?: A Look at the Story of the Universe* (IVP, 1988)

'The exploration of this book brings together, so far as I am able, two important strands of my life – namely my experience and my career as a physicist and my experience as a Christian' (the author, p. 9).

Ernest Lucas, *Genesis Today: Genesis and the Questions of the Bible* (Scripture Union, 1989)

An examination of Genesis 1–11 in the light of science.

Mike Poole, *A Guide to Science and Belief* (Lion, 1990)

Highly illustrated, popular treatment aimed at school pupils.

Russell Standard, *Doing Away with God? Creation and the Big Bang* (Marshall Pickering, 1993).

Chris Wiltsher, *Everyday God Everyday Science* (Epworth, 1989)

Journals

The following journals are largely devoted to the relationship between science and religion:

Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith (formerly *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*)

Published by the American Scientific Affiliation, Box 668, Ipswich, MA 01938, USA

Science and Christian Belief

'A journal concerned with the interactions of science and religion, with particular reference to Christianity.' Published on behalf of Christians in Science and The Victoria Institute by the Paternoster Press, Paternoster House, 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW. Recent issues have included articles by C.A. Russell, D.M. MacKay, R.J. Berry, J. Polkinghorne and A.R. Peacocke. Also has a useful book review section.

Zygon (subtitled: *Journal of Religion and Science*)

Joint Publication Board of Zygon, c/o Rollins College, Winter Park, FL 32789, USA

Progress in Theology

A recently launched quarterly newsletter produced by the Templeton Foundation's Center for Humility Theology.

Robert L. Hermann is the editorial coordinator. The newsletter seeks to 'promote greater awareness of the impact of new developments in the sciences on traditional religion, and to encourage a more open and experimental approach in theological thinking to both theologians and scientists'. Editorial offices: P.O. Box 668, Ipswich, MA 01938, USA.

Also of interest is the *Expository Times*. C.S. Rodd the editor has an interest in the subject and often his 'Talking Points from Books' section deals with recent relevant publications. See, for example:

Vol. 97 (May 1986) review of Polkinghorne's *One World*;
Vol. 99 (June 1988) reviews of Spanner, *Biblical Creation*, Berry, *God and Evolution*, and Livingstone, *Darwin's Forgotten Defenders*;
Vol. 100 (July 1989) reviews of Polkinghorne's *Science and Providence* and Johnson's *Genesis, Geology and Catastrophism*;
Vol. 102 (August 1991) review of Polkinghorne's *Reason and Reality*;
Vol. 103 (January 1992) reviews of Addinall, *Philosophy and Biblical Interpretation*, and Brooke, *Science and Religion*.

Christian Scholar's Review (published by Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI, USA) devoted their Sept. 1991 issue (Vol. XXI) to 'Creation/Evolution and Faith'. It included articles by Alvin Plantinga, Howard van Til and Pattie Pun.

The *British Journal for Religious Education* has devoted an issue to science, technology and religion: Vol. 13 (1) (1990). It contains articles by Mike Poole, Helmut Reich and Russell Stannard, among others.

'Physics and faith' was the subject of a special feature in *Physics Education* Vol. 22 (1) (1987). This included articles by John Polkinghorne, Mike Poole and Colin Russell.

Articles

A number of relevant articles written from a Dooyeweerdian (Reformational) perspective are available from the Institute of Christian Studies, 229 College St, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 1R4, Canada:

W. Brouwer, 'Christian commitment and scientific theories' (ICS, nd (1977?))
Tim DeJager-Seerveld, 'Greene's anti-reductionist ontology: an inquiry into the foundations of biology' (ICS, 1982)
J.H. Diemer, 'Miracles happen: toward a biblical view of nature' (ICS, nd)
T.H. Leith, 'Faith and scientific theory' (ICS, 1985)
Del Ratzsch, 'Abraham Kuyper's philosophy of science' (ICS, 1987)
Egbert Schuurman, 'Technology in a Christian-philosophical perspective' (ICS, 1979)
Robert E. VanderVennen, 'Reflections on Christianity and chemistry' (ICS, nd)

Also written from a Dooyeweerdian perspective is a valuable series of unpublished papers by Dr Arthur Jones; these are available from Dr A.J. Jones, Oak Hill School, 16 Cotham Park, Cotham, Bristol BS6 6BU, UK:

'Science in faith: an outline of a Christian approach to science teaching' (1992)
'Discarded images? An introduction to the philosophical commitments that have shaped Western science through more than two millenia' (1991)
'Connectedness and continuity: the pagan roots of evolution' (1990)
'The Galileo affair: modern myth and ancient idolatry' (1991)

Denis Alexander, 'Science and scientism', *Third Way* Vol. 16 (1) (February 1993), pp. 21-25

John T. Baldwin, 'God and the world: William Paley's argument from perfection tradition - a continuing influence', *Harvard Theological Review* Vol. 85 (1) (1992), pp. 109-120

David S. Caudill, 'Law and worldview: problems in the creation-science controversy', *Law and Religion* Vol. 3 (1) (1985), pp. 1-46

Stephen R.L. Clark, 'Philosophers and popular cosmology', *Journal of Applied Philosophy* Vol. 10 (1) (1993), pp. 115-122

William Lane Craig, 'God, creation and Mr Davies', *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* Vol. 37 (1986), pp. 163-175

—, 'Barrow and Tipler on the anthropic principle vs. divine design', *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* Vol. 39 (1988), pp. 389-395

—, "'What place, then, for a creator?": Hawking on God and creation', *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* Vol. 41 (1990), pp. 473-491

—, 'The origin and creation of the universe: a reply to Adolf Grünbaum', *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* Vol. 43 (1992), pp. 223-230.

Paul Helm, 'The contribution of Donald MacKay', *Evangel* Vol. 7 (4) (1989), pp. 11-13

W. Russell Hindmarsh, 'The faith of a physicist', *Expository Times* Vol. 82 (Dec. 1970), pp. 68-70

—, 'Science and Christianity', *Expository Times* Vol. 85 (March 1974)

P.E. Hodgson, 'The implications of quantum physics parts I-IV', *The Month* (1984); also available as *The Science and Theology Reprint Seminar Papers No. 1* (Farmington Institute, nd)

—, 'Science and creation', *Occasional Papers No. 17* (Farmington Institute, nd)

—, 'Pierre Duhem: historian of the Christian origin of science', *Occasional Papers No. 30* (Farmington Institute, nd)

Stanley Jaki, 'Christ and science', *Downside Review* Vol. 110 (April 1992), pp. 110-130

F. LeRon Shults, 'A theology of chaos: an experiment in post-modern theological science', *Scottish Journal of Science* Vol. 45 (1992), pp. 223-235

David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers, 'Beyond war and peace: a reappraisal of the encounter between Christianity and science', *Church History* Vol. 55 (1986), pp. 338-354

David N. Livingstone, 'Changing science concepts', *Christian Scholar's Review* Vol. XVII (4) (June 1988), pp. 361-380

E.C. Lucas, 'Scientific issues related to the understanding of Genesis 1-3', *Themelios* Vol. 12.2 (1987), pp. 46-51

—, 'God, GUTs and gurus: the new physics and New Age ideology', *Themelios* Vol. 16.3 (1991), pp. 4-7

Mary Midgley, 'The Idea of salvation through science', *New Blackfriars* Vol. 73 (1992), pp. 257-265

—, 'Strange contest: science versus religion', in *The Gospel and Contemporary Culture*, ed. Hugh Montefiore (Cassell, 1992)

James Moore, 'Speaking of "science and religion" - then and now', *History of Science* Vol. 30 (1992), pp. 311-323

John Polkinghorne, 'Not just any old world', *The Tablet* 23 (January 1993), pp. 102-103

Mike Poole, 'Science and religion in the classroom' (Parts 1 and 2), *Spectrum* Vol. 14 (1) (1981), pp. 13-17; Vol. 14 (2) (1982), pp. 24-32. These two papers have also been published as a booklet by the Association of Christian Teachers, 1984.

—, 'Science education and the interplay between science and religion', *School Science Review* Vol. 67 No. 239 (1985), pp. 254-261

—, 'Beliefs and values in science education: A Christian perspective' (Parts 1 and 2), *School Science Review* Vol. 71 No. 256 (1990), pp. 25-32; No. 257, pp. 67-73

—, 'The Galileo affair', *School Science Review* Vol. 72 No. 258 (1990), pp. 39-48

—, 'Life and soul of the universe?', *Third Way* Vol. 15 No. 5 (June 1992), pp. 23-25

Del Ratzsch, 'Space travel and challenges to religion', *Monist* Vol. 71 (1988), pp. 101-113

Walter R. Thorson, 'Scientific objectivity and the listening attitude', in *Objective Knowledge: A Christian Perspective*, ed. Paul Helm (IVP, 1987), ch. 4

David Wilkinson, 'Time, the universe and everything', *Third Way* Vol. 13 No. 5 (June 1990), pp. 22-24

Patrick A. Wilson, 'Explaining a finely tuned universe', *Christian Scholar's Review* Vol. XXI (4) (June 1992), pp. 408-415

Christopher D. Wiltsher, 'Science and theology from an Arminian perspective', in *Freedom and Grace*, ed. Ivor H. Jones and Kenneth B. Wilson (Epworth, 1988)

Philosophy of science: Christian and non-Christian

Important works by Harre, Kuhn, Lakatos, Polanyi, Popper and Toumlin were cited in John Sharp's bibliography. Specifically Christian works are denoted by an asterisk.

Baruch A. Brody and Richard E. Grandy (eds.), *Readings in the Philosophy of Science* (Prentice Hall, 1989)

A useful selection of primary sources. Split into four sections: Theories; Explanation and causality; Confirmation of scientific hypotheses; Selected problems of particular sciences.

A.F. Chalmers, *What is This Thing Called Science?* (Open University Press, 1976)

—, *Science and its Fabrication* (University of Minnesota Press, 1990)
The latter elaborates on the former's critical scrutiny of science. In it he develops his own understanding of science that stands midway between glorification and denial. The former provides a valuable introduction to the philosophy of science.

*Roy A. Clouser, *The Myth of Religious Neutrality: An Essay on the Hidden Role of Religious Belief in Theories* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1990)

Superlatives fail when describing this book! A powerful exposé of the myth of neutrality, it also shows how a distinctive biblical perspective for theorizing can work.

Paul T. Durbin, *Dictionary of Concepts in the Philosophy of Science* (Greenwood Press, 1988)

From 'analogy' to 'vitalism': each entry has a useful list of references and sources of additional information.

Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method* (Verso, 1975)

Outlines Feyerabend's anarchistic philosophy of science: there is no scientific method and anything goes.

Bas C. van Fraassen, *The Scientific Image* (Clarendon, 1980)

Aims to develop a 'constructive empiricist' alternative to scientific realism.

Derek Gjertsen, *Science and Philosophy: Past and Present* (Pelican, 1989)

Explores the interplay between science and philosophy.

Ian Hacking, *Representing and Intervening: Introductory Topics in the Philosophy of Natural Science* (Cambridge University Press, 1983)

Provides a defence of realism, which it splits into two parts: realism about entities and realism about theories.

*Clarence W. Joldersma, *Beliefs and the Scientific Enterprise* (M.Phil. thesis) (Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto, 1983)

Presents a valuable summary of Kuhn, Polanyi and Gerard Radnitzky, and then develops a composite model of the scientific enterprise. Has a useful list of primary and secondary sources.

Peter Kosso, *Reading the Book of Nature: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science* (Cambridge University Press, 1992)

An introductory work, suitable for the non-specialist.

Janet A. Kourany, *Scientific Knowledge: Basic Issues in the Philosophy of Science* (Wadsworth, 1987)

A valuable set of readings focused around four issues: explanation; the validation of scientific knowledge; historical development of science; and realism versus anti-realism. Includes articles by van Fraassen, Toulmin, Popper, Duhem, Lakatos, Kuhn, Laudan and Hacking.

Larry Laudan, *Science and Values: The Aims of Science and their Role in Scientific Debate* (University of California Press, 1984)

'In sum, this is a book about the role of cognitive values in the shaping of scientific rationality' (p. xii).

Jarrett Leplin (ed.), *Essays on Scientific Realism* (University of California Press, 1984)

Provides an overview of the realism/anti-realism debate, with contributions from McMullin, Putnam, Hacking, Laudan and van Fraassen.

John Losee, *Philosophy of Science and Historical Enquiry* (Clarendon, 1987)

Explores the relationship between philosophy of science and history of science.

Henry Margenau and Roy Abraham Varghese, *Cosmos, Bios, Theos: Scientists Reflect on Science, God, and the Origins of the Universe, Life, and Homo sapiens* (Open Court, 1992)

Contains the responses of 60 scientists on six key questions, including ones on the relationship between science and religion, and their view of God.

*J.P. Moreland, *Christianity and the Nature of Science: A Philosophical Investigation* (Baker, 1989)

Comes to the conclusion that science has no method or definition, and develops an eclectic approach to the realism/anti-realism debate. Has an invaluable 13-page bibliography.

W.H. Newton-Smith, *The Rationality of Science* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981)

Useful criticisms of Popper, Kuhn, Feyerabend and Lakatos. He defends a realist or 'temperate' rationalist view of science.

R.C. Olby, G.N. Cantor, R. Christie, M.J.S. Hodge (eds.), *Companion to the History of Modern Science* (Routledge, 1989)

A mammoth compendium dealing with all aspects of science. Includes articles by John Hedley Brooke on science and religion and David Livingstone on geology, as well as important summaries of the history, sociology and philosophy of science by acknowledged experts in the field.

*Ted Peters (ed.), *Cosmos as Creation: Theology and Science in Consonance* (Abingdon, 1989)

The various authors, who include Peacocke, Barbour and Pannenberg, deal with issues such as cosmology, creationism and the big bang.

*Del Ratzsch, *Philosophy of Science: The Natural Sciences in Christian Perspective* (IVP, 1986)

'The purpose of this volume is to give Christians an initial understanding of what natural science is, what it can do, how and why it works, and what it cannot do' (p. 11).

Holmes Rolston III, *Science and Religion: A Critical Survey* (Temple University Press, 1986)

Has chapters on modern physics, biology and psychology.

Drusilla Scott, *Everyman Revived: The Common Sense of Michael Polanyi* (The Book Guild of Lewes, 1985)

Provides an excellent introduction to the thought and work of Michael Polanyi.

T.D. Singh and Ravi Gomatam (eds.), *Synthesis of Science and Religion: Critical Essays and Dialogues* (The Bhaktivedanta Institute, 1987)

An interesting collection of 32 essays and four interviews, many of which were presented at the World Congress for the Synthesis of Science and Religion, Bombay, January 1986. The diverse participants/authors include the Dali Lama, Brian Josephson, Harvey Cox, Jurgen Moltmann and Fritjof Capra.

*Marinus Dirk Stafleu, *Theories at Work: On the Structure and Functioning of Theories in Science, In particular During the Copernican Revolution* (University Press of America, 1987)

The sub-title provides an adequate summary; Stafleu offers a Dooyeweerdian perspective on theories.

RECOMMENDED: Chalmers (1976); Clouser (1991); Hacking (1983); Joldersma (1983); Kourany (1987); Moreland (1989); Newton-Smith (1981); Olby *et al.* (1989); Ratzsch (1986); Stafleu (1987).

Organizations

American Scientific Affiliation P.O. Box 668, Ipswich, MA 01938, USA. The purpose of the ASA is 'to investigate any area relating Christian faith and science' and 'to make known the results of such investigations for comment and criticism by the Christian community and by the scientific community'. They publish a journal (see above, p. 17), a bimonthly newsletter and an occasional publication: *Search: Scientists Who Serve God*.

Christians in Science c/o UCCF, 38 De Montfort St, Leicester LE1 7GP. Formed in 1943 as The Research Scientists' Christian Fellowship; today its membership is open to 'all Christians with a scientific training or a professional interest in science'. They produce a biannual journal, together with the Victoria Institute: *Science and Christian Belief*. Two subgroups of the CiS have been established: Christians in Science Education and History and Philosophy of Science Group:

Christians in Science Education John Bausor (secretary), 5 Longcrofte Road, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 6RR. Produce a twice-yearly newsletter.

History and Philosophy of Science Group Rev. Michael Roberts (group secretary), The Vicarage, Chirk, Wrexham, Clwyd LL14 5HD.

Farmington Institute for Christian Studies Manchester College, Mansfield Road, Oxford OX1 3TD. Produces a number of publications which occasionally deal with science and religion.

Society of Ordained Scientists Secretary: Rev. Derek Leyland, St Helen's Vicarage, Churchtown, Garstang, Lancs PR3 OHS. Originally a 'society' of scientists who are also ordained Anglicans, it is now open to all ordained ministers of the church. A newsletter is published three times a year.

Creation science

The advocates

E.H. Andrews, *Christ and the Cosmos* (Evangelical Press, 1986)

Wayne Friar and Percival Davis, *A Case for Creation* (Moody Press, 1983)

J. Kerby Anderson and Harold G. Coffin, *Fossils in Focus* (Zondervan/Probe, 1977)

John M. Moore, *How to Teach Origins (Without ACLU Interference)* (Mott Media, 1983)

H.M. Morris, *Scientific Creationism* (Master Books, 1974)

The critics

Michael R. Johnson, *Genesis, Geology and Catastrophism: A Critique of Creationist Science and Biblical Literalism* (Paternoster Press, 1988)

Ashley Montagu (ed.), *Science and Creationism* (Oxford University Press, 1984)

Robert E. Snow, 'A critique of the creation science movement', in *Portraits of Creation*, H.J. van Till *et al.*

Suggests that there might be two kinds of 'creationists': the extremists, e.g. Moore and Morris, and the moderate and balanced, e.g. Friar and Davis.

Howard J. van Till, Davis A. Young and Clarence Menninga, *Science Held Hostage: What is Wrong with Creation-Science AND Evolutionism* (IVP (USA), 1988)

Science, technology and Christianity

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Ian Barbour, *Ethics in an Age of Technology* (The Gifford Lectures 1990-91) (SCM, 1992)

The second volume of his Gifford Lectures (1989-1991).

Steve Bishop, 'Towards a Christian view of technology', *Spectrum* Vol. 23 (1991), pp. 9-15

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Paul Marshall, 'Modern technology: idol or divine gift?', *Evangelical Review of Theology* Vol. 10 (1986), pp. 258-269

Stephen V. Monsma (ed.), *Responsible Technology: A Christian Perspective* (Eerdmans, 1986)

An indispensable book.

Carl Mitcham and Jim Groote (eds.), *Theology and Technology: Essays in Christian Analysis and Exegesis* (University Press of America, 1984)

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Parker Rossman and Richard Kirby, *Christians and the World of Computers: Professional and Social Excellence in the Computer World* (SCM/TPI, 1990)

A study book; each chapter comes with suggestions for study and reading.

Egbert Schuurman, *Technology and the Future: A Philosophical Challenge* (Wedge, 1980)

Not an easy read but worth persevering with. Presents a Christian critique of Junger, Heidegger, Ellul, Meyer, Weiner, Steinbuch and Klaus.

Organizations

Society, Religion and Technology Project Church of Scotland, Department of Ministry and Mission, 121 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4YN, Scotland

Beliefs and Values in Technology Education Ruth Conway, Coordinator, Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham B29 6LQ

A network for those interested in technology, values and religion.