

ture into "the world in front of the text." This suggests that one should take seriously a first "naive" reading of the text, testing this with the help of critical methodologies. Interpretation is not completed, however, until one ventures into a postcritical understanding of the text with a similar naive appropriation of its meaning. Although this is not as objective as traditional paradigms, the author suggests that it "can in principle be regarded as solidly rational."

The final model presented is a theological approach written by Bailey himself. He suggests that "theological hermeneutics look not behind the text, in the text, or in front of the text, but above the text," stressing the vertical rather than horizontal authority.

This is not a book easily read at one sitting. The various models demand time for reflection. While every chapter offers useful ideas, the crucial question of the "locus of meaning" needs further examination. The reader and expositor must decide whether the meaning of a passage lies "behind the text, in the text, in a world universal consciousness, in the listener, or somewhere in the interaction of these points. Is truth behind, within, or in front of the text?" Admittedly, the task is not simple, because the questions may impose an artificial structure on the way one seeks the answers.

Even though each chapter contains an actual sermon developed through the method it presents, not all chapters are equally clear and thorough. The chapters on canonical and philosophical models showed a particular lack of clarity.

The volume could also be strengthened by giving biographical information about the writers of each chapter. The introduction in the flyleaf claims that "each model is based on the most recent research by international scholars in a wide variety of fields: biblical studies, philosophy, theology, history, sociology, literature, homiletics, communication theory, and others." Some of the authors are better known than others. Knowing something about the authors could increase understanding of their material.

The basic issue that the book raises needs some further examination. The question of the "locus of meaning" seems apparent in all the chapters. Despite its limitations, the book is helpful in raising the concerns of the exegete. The text may be used as supplementary reading for homiletics classes.

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Baloian, Bruce Edward. *Anger in the Old Testament*. American University Studies, series 7, Theology and Religion, vol. 99. New York: Peter Lang, 1992. 225 pp. \$45.

The topic of the wrath of God is an important, albeit somewhat neglected, subject of Biblical theology, and therefore this recent study should be welcomed as a needed investigation. *Anger in the Old Testament* is an apparently unrevised

version of a dissertation written under noted Old Testament scholar Rolf Knierim at the University of Claremont in 1988. Baloian examines both human and divine anger, from both psychological and theological viewpoints, based on biblical passages that explicitly mention anger. He gives special attention to the motivation, purpose, and results of human and divine anger in the OT. Thus, this work is a thematic study and not a philological one (15, n. 19-20).

The book is well organized. After a short introduction, which offers an unfortunately incomplete review of previous research (2-4), Baloian begins his investigation with an assessment of human anger (chap. 2). Chapter 3 deals with divine anger in the OT. Chapter 4 correlates human and divine anger, discussing the theology of anger and its rationality. Chapter 5 reflects briefly on implications drawn from tradition-history and concludes by giving a theological summary of the whole study. An addendum on divine and human jealousy is followed by two helpful charts. The first chart lists all the words for wrath in the OT, including their distribution (verbs/nouns) and reference to God or man. The second chart lists all the occurrences of *divine* wrath in the OT, and categorizes them as to the motivation for wrath, the object of that wrath, the grammatical usage of the Hebrew root, the roots of the Hebrew terms used, and finally the results of divine wrath in the world.

Baloian's analysis of the motives of human and especially of divine anger is particularly helpful. He convincingly shows that Yahweh's wrath is not capricious and irrational (103-104, 106) but rather is motivated by God's desire to reestablish relationships as well as to dispense justice (122). His analysis of the imprecatory Psalms shows that imprecation was done with rational and legal justification, in the context of prayer, which made it subject to God's veto, and that the profession of trust portrays it as an act carried out in the context of faith in the person of Yahweh (77-79). Baloian also succeeds in refuting the view, propagated by A. T. Hanson and C. H. Dodd among others, that anger is just an impersonal force, the automatic, inevitable process of sin working itself out in history. Instead, the biblical material depicts (divine) anger as controlled by a will. It is not the reflex of an irresistible fate or universal principle, but the guarantee that a personal God is involved with His people (98, 97, 104, 79, 81-92).

Although there is much to be learned from Baloian's research, it has some significant omissions. One wonders why the word studies in the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, and especially the detailed discussions in the *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, to name but two major works, have apparently not been consulted at all. Furthermore, a number of important articles, books, and even dissertations that deal with anger in the OT do not appear even in the bibliography. Baloian's failure to indicate his awareness of these materials gives the impression that his research is not comprehensive.

Baloian accurately states that wrath is primarily spoken of in the context of covenant (82). Given the statistical dominance of the relationship between wrath and covenant, and his recognition that other scholars have also noted this, it is surprising that Baloian devotes only about one page to this crucial

aspect (72-73). Further analysis of this significant relationship should prove to be a worthwhile investigation.

Questions may also be raised about Baloian's methodology. He begins with human anger and proceeds from there to the anger of God. In light of Baloian's claim that verbs or nouns for wrath are used some 518 times with God and only some 196 times with man (189), one wonders whether it might not have been more appropriate to first investigate divine wrath and then move to human anger to explore the implications of the divine example.

Lastly, the whole book testifies to careless editing. Numerous inconsistencies occur in punctuation, word spacing, line spacing, and font sizes. There are also a number of misspellings, cryptic or missing Hebrew transliterations, and incomplete bibliographic entries. A cursory comparison with the original dissertation shows that not all these shortcomings can be attributed to the author himself. It surely deserved more careful editorial workmanship. Scripture and subject indexes would have enhanced the usability of the book.

Despite the above-mentioned deficiencies, Baloian should be applauded for having taken up this marginalized aspect of biblical theology, which nevertheless has many crucial ramifications.

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Beetham, Frank. *An Introduction to New Testament Greek*. London: Bristol Classical Press, 1992. Distributed in the United States by Focus, Newburyport, MA 01950. x + 374 pp. \$23.95.

Black, David Alan. *Learn to Read New Testament Greek*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992. xii + 210 pp. \$19.99.

Mounce, William D. *Basics of Biblical Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993. *Grammar*: xiii + 446 pp. \$24.99. *Workbook*: vi + 186 pp. \$10.99.

Three beginning-level Greek grammars have been added to an already bewildering variety. These three, however, deserve mention if not adoption. Frank Beetham has given his textbook the subtitle: "A Quick Course in the Reading of Koine Greek." His stated aim is "to enable many more people to read the gospels in the original Greek with the aid of notes such as are provided by Zerwick & Grosvenor" (i). The book is designed to be covered in one year. Beetham divides his text into three "phases" with 10 "sections" each. Each section is subdivided into two or three parts, each with its own vocabulary and exercises using the grammar and vocabulary learned. Through section 21, English-to-Greek exercises are included, some with NT texts by which to check them. The Greek-to-English exercises begin to incorporate NT translation from section 14; notes accompany unfamiliar forms.