

strongly identify with specific doctrinal convictions that don't always arise naturally out of the text of Revelation. While the verse-by-verse commentary is generally objective and text-based, there are times when Beale seems to force the text in the direction he needs it to go. I first gained this impression through the use of Aune and Beale in graduate exegesis classes. Most of my students are conservative Christians in faith-orientation. I expected, therefore, that they would appreciate Beale's spiritual approach to the text more than Aune's detailed objectivity. To my surprise, when they had applied their exegetical training to a specific text first, then consulted Aune and Beale, they almost always felt that Aune had come closer to exposing the intention of the text. Beale seemed to them more inclined to manage the result in favor of a particular belief structure.

An example of this can be found in Beale's discussion of Rev 3:5. This text says that the one who continually overcomes (present participle) will not have his name removed from the book of life. The most natural reading of this text implies that those who do not persist in overcoming can lose their position before God. Beale spends five pages (278-282) seeking to show that a doctrine of "once saved always saved" is not endangered by this text. Aune, by way of contrast, has no such difficulty with 3:5 (vol. 1, 223).

Since neither my students nor I am free from subjectivity, the above observation is not meant to detract from the massive contribution of the whole volume; it is expressed only as a caution to the reader. What I would love to see is a commentary on Revelation that would maintain Aune's standards of detailed objectivity while carrying the spiritual and theological punch of Beale. Until someone creates such a work, these two commentaries will complement each other well.

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Blouin, Francis X., Jr., ed. *Vatican Archives: An Inventory and Guide to Historical Documents of the Holy See*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. xl + 588 pp. Cloth, \$150.00.

The documents produced by the Roman Catholic Church are of great significance for researching the development of Christianity. For a long time scholars have desired easy access to all materials of the Vatican Secret Archives (Archivio Segreto Vaticano [ASV]). Since the reign of Pope Benedict XV (1914-1922), these archives have been partially opened, but they have not been available in an organized way. Several reference guides have been developed that list holdings of medieval and Renaissance records in the ASV, yet none of these embraces in "a single work the totality of historical documentation that might properly be considered Vatican archives" (xv).

Blouin and his research team of archivists and historians of the Bentley Historical Library of the University of Michigan accepted the challenge of organizing the ASV records so that they can be easily accessible. At the request of Josef Metzler, O.M.I., prefect of the ASV, Blouin's team has used modern computer database technology to present information on surviving documentation generated by the Papacy in a standardized format.

The project has produced an impressive reference guide that contains a

complete printout of the resultant database. This database also identifies documents related to the Papacy in the Archives of the State of Rome, the various Vatican congregational archives, and Vatican documents found in Dublin and Paris. While the guide provides a comprehensive overview of extant historical documentation generated by the Papacy since the ninth century, the major part of the archives extend from the sixteenth century to the present.

The introduction to the guide is extremely useful because it leads the reader into an archival mind-set. It provides a historical and analytical framework for the entries and provides insight into the nature and activity of a given office or agency.

The guide is organized around the bureaucratic organizational structure of the Papacy that was established under Pope Sixtus V in 1588. It identifies more than 450 agencies of this church-state government that functioned between the years 800 and 1960. The documents have been divided into the following categories: The College of Cardinals, Papal Court, Roman Curia, Apostolic Nunciatures, Internunciatures and Delegations, Papal States, Permanent Commissions, and Miscellaneous collections.

Entries are of two types. The first type describes the history of the agency; provides background on the office, agency, institution, family, or person; and lists additional scholarly references. The second type describes the series of records that the agency has generated. Each record of the series descriptions includes the database ID and what is accessible in the RLIN database of the Research Libraries Group (USA), inclusive dates of documents in the series, the amount of shelf space taken up by the series, the way the series is organized, the scope of contents, references to several previous guides to the ASV and other collections of papal documentation, a listing of all official indices and inventories, notes on a variety of information, and the physical location of the records.

The guide has some limitations for researchers. One is caused by the Vatican policy not to allow documents less than seventy-five years old to be researched. All records produced after January 22, 1922, are inaccessible. This means that the agencies created by the curial reforms of the Second Vatican Council, the reforms of Paul VI and John Paul II, and the governmental structure of the Vatican created in 1929 at the time of the Lateran Treaty have not been included in the guide. While the guide was authorized by the prefect of the ASV, it represents a complete overview of the holdings of the ASV as seen by the project staff during the academic year 1989-1990, and one should be aware that it has not been considered an official inventory of the Vatican archives.

The researcher should also keep in mind that location of the materials before 1922 may be problematic when there are no finding aids listed. Not all the examined materials in the repositories have been fully processed. While the holdings of the various repositories continue to evolve, no provision has been made for the maintenance of the project database. One can only hope that the Vatican, which has not contributed financially to this large project, will feel some responsibility to the world of scholarship in keeping the database current.

Anyone wishing to research these valuable materials should be aware that access to the archives is a privilege granted upon a written application to the prefect of the archives.

Although the database is comprehensive and will do much to promote a

deeper understanding of the history and government of the Papacy, scholars should keep its limitations in mind when they arrive at historical judgments. Throughout history many Vatican documents have been lost. For example, due to prohibitive transportation costs, only 2,200 of 3,200 chests of documents removed to Paris by Napoleon were returned. Some documents may have been sold for scrap paper. Others, especially those pertaining to the Inquisition, were "deliberately destroyed by the papal commissioners dispatched to oversee the transfer and eager to see the legacy of the Inquisition extinguished" (xxi). Some materials remained in the Archives Nationales in Paris. So any historical judgments based on the remaining documents will be tentative.

The guide concludes with three appendices, a 44-page double-columned bibliography, an indispensable index of agency names, an index of series titles, and a chronological index. It will be a valuable addition to any person or institution having an interest in the history of the Christian church.

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Briggs, Robert A. *Jewish Temple Imagery in the Book of Revelation*. Studies in Biblical Literature, vol. 10, ed. Hemchand Gossai. New York: Peter Lang, 1999. xvi + 275 pp. Hardcover, \$52.95.

Jewish Temple Imagery in the Book of Revelation, by Robert A. Briggs, is a revision of his 1996 dissertation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, under the direction of Gerald Borchert. Briggs's purpose is to demonstrate not only that the primary Jewish temple motifs come together and fit in Revelation, but also how they do so, what they signify, and the fact that they are consummated there. He calls his book a "backgrounds" study, in which he examines the sources of the temple imagery in Revelation. He has chosen, however, to limit his work to the OT and nonbiblical Jewish sources, such as the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Philo, and Josephus. He evaluates the relative significance of these sources for the author of Revelation, concluding that the primary source is the OT.

Briggs begins with a brief examination of the fundamental meaning of the word "temple" in the Ancient Near East. He concludes that a "temple" is a palace of the god(s), the *axis mundi*, and ultimately a microcosm of the universe itself. Briggs then turns to the issue of the date when Revelation was written, arguing that documents written after that time cannot serve as "sources" of Revelation. He argues for the minority position that Revelation was written in the late sixties rather than in the time of Domitian. Such a position causes him to exclude from consideration as "sources" works such as 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra.

Briggs then addresses the problem of how to evaluate potential parallels or allusions to earlier literature, adopting the approach of Charles Hedrick. He, therefore, takes as a working assumption that John was familiar with and grounded in the OT as Scripture. So all clear temple parallels between Revelation and the OT are accepted as genuine. If a particular temple parallel is also found in a nonbiblical Jewish source, that parallel is "trumped" by the OT reference, which is considered the primary source of the concept. Briggs's procedure, then, is to carefully survey the OT background of the temple motif first. This information is then compared with