

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

temple passages in the nonbiblical Jewish documents. Wherever parallels between Revelation and the nonbiblical sources are not found in the OT, the nonbiblical parallels are considered more likely to be genuine.

A further issue for this study is the ambiguity of many of the crucial passages in Revelation itself. It can be difficult to determine whether a particular motif in Revelation is a temple motif or is grounded instead in throne-room, law-court, or synagogue imagery. Much scholarly debate has been devoted to this issue, particularly with regard to the throne scenes of Rev 4 and 5. In comparing Revelation with the OT, Briggs does not consider broad, structural parallels; rather he takes a more piecemeal approach, comparing specific motifs. First, he examines allusions to the temple in Jerusalem (11:1-2), then the concept of a visionary temple (1:12-16). He then examines references to the temple furnishings: lampstand, pillar, altar of incense, and ark of the covenant, and concludes with references to a heavenly temple and the eschatological temple.

After comparing his survey of the OT background to the temple motif with the nonbiblical Jewish sources, Briggs concludes that there are very few unique temple concepts that could have affected John independently of the OT. Possible examples of such unique concepts include 1 Enoch 90:28-29 (with its concept of temple pillars that may be reflected in Rev 3:12), a few concepts in the Apocalypse of Zephaniah (angelic thrones in heaven, the shining being of 6:11-15), the holy city as temple in the Temple Scroll, and the living temple notion in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. Not even these few parallels are certain to be genuine. It appears to Briggs, therefore, that John worked fairly exclusively with OT material in his use of the temple motif. Wherever Ancient Near Eastern temple concepts appear in Revelation, they seem to have been mediated to him primarily through the OT. Developments in temple ideology since the writing of the OT documents also seem to have had little influence on the composition of the book of Revelation.

Briggs notes an interesting anomaly. While the OT background to the temple motif seems to function as the primary source for Revelation, John modifies the motif in some surprising ways. There is no question, for example, that his picture of the New Jerusalem is heavily grounded in Ezekiel's picture of an eschatological temple. Yet there is no eschatological temple in the book of Revelation! How can the conflicting data be reconciled? Briggs believes that the concept of "temple" was a divine expedient from the beginning. A temple was a means of physical divine presence among a fallen people. But when God acted mightily in the earthly life and heavenly ministry of Jesus, the temple concept was first spiritualized in the context of the church and then completed in the eternal state of affairs. Thus Briggs concludes that the temple themes of the OT are not only the ultimate source of those in Revelation; they are also clarified within the book.

The book raises a number of issues in my mind. Given the preponderance of opinion that Revelation was written in the time of Domitian, it seems unfortunate that Briggs did not consider the possibility that works like 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra might be helpful windows into the process of thought reflected in Revelation. Perhaps they are no more pertinent to the temple motif in Revelation than Philo or Josephus proved to be, but Briggs's book does not deal with them. While later works cannot be "sources" for Revelation in the strictest sense, they can bear

witness to the influence of a tradition that may have affected earlier works as well (consider the role of Nag Hammadi studies within NT scholarship).

It is also disappointing that Briggs has limited himself to the temple concept in Revelation, since the Revelation may draw more on accounts of the Mosaic tent-sanctuary than the Solomonic temple. A larger examination of the effect of the entire Hebrew cultus on the language of Revelation could have expanded the purview of Briggs's work in a helpful way.

There is no evidence in the book that Briggs took into account the cultic nature of the visionary introductions in Revelation. The visions of the seven letters, seals, trumpets, and bowls are all prefaced by introductory scenes containing cultic elements. The unnumbered section of Rev 12-14 is also prefaced by the ark-of-the-covenant passage in 11:19. So there seems to be a cultic or temple pattern in Revelation that goes without comment in Briggs's book, but which would seem to be extremely significant to his investigation.

While there are a number of questions that can and should be raised about Briggs's approach, assumptions, and conclusions, this book is valuable in that it is the most thorough attempt thus far to address the sources of the temple motif in Revelation. Briggs's conclusion that the primary source of the temple motif is found in the OT coheres with work by Beale, among others, on the general use of the OT and other ancient backgrounds in Revelation. While John was unquestionably a child of his times, he was above all a student of the Jewish Scriptures. Briggs offers us a unique, though limited, window into the impact of John's prior reading on his authorship of the book of Revelation.

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Freedman, David Noel, and John R. Huddleston, eds. *Divine Commitment and Human Obligation: Selected Writings of David Noel Freedman*, 2 vols. Vol. 1: *Ancient Israelite History and Religion*, Vol. 2: *Poetry and Orthography*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997. Vol. 1, xxix + 545 pp. Vol. 2, xx + 269 pp. Hardcover, \$45.00, \$30.00.

Scholarship in biblical studies during the last half of the past century has witnessed tremendous changes and reversals in the approach to the text and its application to the modern world. In the postmodern era the hermeneutics of the Hebrew Bible has witnessed a transformation to narrative, ideological, and social-scientific criticisms, feminist interpretation, poststructuralism, and even deconstructionism. Although the basic presuppositions of the historical-critical method remain at the core of current proposals, the trend to divorce the text from any history is gaining a strong position in current theological writing and training across North America, where core training in biblical and Ancient Near Eastern languages, archaeology, and cultural backgrounds is becoming a rare phenomenon. The historic work of David Noel Freedman stands in stark contrast to these current trends. A student of W. F. Albright and for decades professor of Hebrew Bible at the University of Michigan, Freedman is currently Chair in Biblical Hebrew Studies at the University of California, San Diego. His impact in biblical studies comes from a variety of perspectives. As a biblical scholar, he has written scores of articles and reviews and contributed to numerous reference works. He is