

than are any conventional theological classes. This is because the department of Religious Studies attracts students interested in all kinds of religion. OT teachers may take advantage of this, for not just religious studies students, but all humanities students, may be brought to read and enjoy OT once they can be helped to appreciate the centrality of the Bible to English culture (Wenham).

In section three, entitled "Communication," Baker recommends an inductive approach to learning Biblical Hebrew, and Lawless applies learning and teaching principles to some of the book's essays. Lawless responds to Hess's advocacy of the modular approach by suggesting that the key to maximization of biblical understanding would be to teach students choosing between optional modules how to make linkages between different units of study. The book concludes with twenty-eight pages of annotated bibliography covering lexicons, history, literary approaches, and commentaries on individual books.

Not everything in this book is new. Nor is it as pertinent to American theological training as it is to the English experience. Its emphasis on the transcendence of the Word over method or context is noteworthy. Articles such as those by McKeown, with his suspicions of systematic theology, Barker, who sees the NT as the OT's God-given horizon, and Lawless, who responds to several of the earlier papers, should engender much stimulating discussion. Glaser, on reaching Islam through the OT; and Carroll, on contrasts between an arrogant though stagnant West and a deferential yet dynamic two-thirds world, have much to teach. On the other hand, I remain somewhat dubious about the value for the book of the piece entitled "From Student to Scholar" (111-121), a personal reflection offering less instruction than Williamson's article on theological graduate study.

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LAEL CAESAR

Hill, Andrew E. *Malachi: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible Series, vol. 25D. New York: Doubleday, 1998. xliii + 436 pp. Hardcover, \$37.95.

Andrew Hill's preface to this well-balanced commentary suggests something of an apology. Conceding LaSor's insight that all interpreters labor under *a priori* convictions, he signals from the outset his own scholarly position as one of "believing criticism." For him Scripture is both the work of many human authors, and of "one Author" (xii). In investigating the biblical material, he acknowledges or "substantiates," rather than proposes or "reconstructs" biblical history (xiii). He hews close to the MT, with appropriate citation of variants, rather than anachronistically explaining modern suggestions as though they were portions of the ancient text. However, occasional bracketed insertions in his translation of the MT occur as "amplification of a cryptic word or phrase," which partly suggests his own failure to grasp the text's full sense (11)! His work employs the various strategies of the historical-critical method as long as they do not of necessity vitiate "the basic tenets of 'orthodoxy'" (xiii). He expects that such candor on his part will enhance reader appreciation for, and understanding of, his approach to biblical scholarship (xii). Hill's clarification is not inappropriate, only less common than it might be.

After addressing a variety of basic considerations, including authorship,

literary integrity, genre, structure, message and theology, the commentary proceeds to reflect upon some historical, political, social, religious, and theological implications of situating the book of Malachi within the Persian period. Hill's date for the composition of Malachi to "a round figure of 500 B.C./E." (83) refines his earlier position of between 515 and 458 B.C./E. The more precise conclusion emphasizes his continued reliance on control corpora drawn from literary analysis and relative chronology rather than social conditions, religious practices, and historical events referenced by an absolute chronology. Hill finds one helpful analogy for the political instability and social disorientation of early postexilic Judaism in Eastern Europe's recent political ferment in the aftermath of the Soviet era. That so much could have happened there so quickly shows his pre-Nehemiah date for the book of Malachi to be more realistic than earlier thought (83, n. 4).

Hill offers three outlines of the book of Malachi: (1) The eight segments of the thematic outline correspond to (2) the book's rhetorical progression according to a series of six disputational oracles, chiasmically structured, each of which consists of at least one declaration by the deity, a refutation by the accused (whether leadership or people), and a rebuttal by the deity. (3) The third outline situates Malachi within the interrogative discourse pattern of the Haggai-Zechariah-Malachi corpus.

Among numerous noteworthy features may be mentioned Hill's glossary—136 definitions of particular profit to the reader whose specialization may not be biblical or literary studies; a section in the introduction on the study of Malachi in the NT, as well as its liturgical use in Judaism and Christianity; four appendices on (1) "von Bulmerincq's Categories for Dating Malachi," (2) "Typological Analysis of the Postexilic Prophets," (3) "Intertextuality in the Book of Malachi," and (4) "Vocabulary Richness in the Book of Malachi"; and eight pages of photographs and illustrations demonstrating Malachi's links to Persian history, or comparing the temples built by Solomon and Zerubbabel. For these, artist Hugh Claycombe receives gracious and deserving commendation (xv). Hill's political correctness requires use of a plurality of abbreviations (OT/HB; B.C./E.; A.D./C.E.). Transparent [self-deprecating] honesty concedes limited familiarity with the text's Coptic, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Armenian witnesses. Nevertheless, this is no indictment of Hill's work since, despite their undeniable exegetical significance, Tov finds these of limited value for textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible. Somewhat surprisingly, Hill ignores the NASB, preferring the NAB as a contemporary reference point for "formal equivalence" readings, along with the more predictable choice of the NRSV.

Hill's use of Hasel (1978) overlooks later revisions (1982, 1991). More intriguingly, one reference to works by Hayes and Prussner, and Ollenburger, Martens, and Hasel may be taken to mean that these furnish examples of "avoiding the actual enterprise of 'doing' theology" (46). This is clearly not what Hill intends. The same paragraph later states that Hasel's work is among the most helpful he has encountered while negotiating the "precarious narrows" of OT/HB theology. Other minor criticisms of the book may also include the glossary's explanation of "fientive" with "see also *stative*" (xxvii), although no "*stative*" is anywhere to be seen.

Hill's commentary may be admired for the author's competent handling of Malachi's Hebrew text, the stable maturity of his interpretive tone, his view of God as the center of OT theology, and even for the novelty of his dating

scheme, particularly because of the uncommon conclusions to which it leads him. The breadth of scholarship for which the Anchor Bible series continues to be respected is honored again by this volume. But whether or not Hill, Childs (1986), and Barth (1991) all belong to the same "new biblical theology" school (46) will remain unresolved if membership in this club simply rests in a claim to take history and revelation seriously, for few, whether in theology or OT/HB studies, would disqualify themselves from any school on these accounts. Neither avid practitioners of the historical-critical method, nor those who view it as an unwarranted assault on orthodoxy may be expected to describe themselves as viewing either history or revelation unseriously.

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LAEL CAESAR

Jasper, David, Stephen Prickett, and Andrew Hass, eds. *The Bible and Literature: A Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999. xv + 333 pp. Paperback, \$62.95.

Weathers, Stephen, Jack Welch, and Darryl Tippens, eds. *Shadow & Light: Literature & the Life of Faith*. Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 1997. 391 pp. Paperback, \$33.95.

Two interesting literature anthologies have recently appeared. They differ greatly, and so would classes in which they might be used.

*The Bible and Literature: A Reader*, edited by David Jasper and Stephen Prickett, is published by Blackwell, which is known for its theoretical and cultural studies, so it is not surprising that the book's approach is essentially literary and secular. Jasper is Dean of Divinity at Glasgow University and editor of the journal *Literature and Theology*. Prickett is an English professor at Glasgow.

Please note the "and" in the title, rather than the more common "as." *The Bible and Literature* presents eighteen passages from the KJV—from the Creation stories of Gen 1–2, to nine verses on Jacob's wrestling match, to the entire Song of Songs, to Rev 21—and, following each passage, from six to fifteen literary selections that allude to, reshape, or draw from the story. Sometimes these selections are fine, and perhaps little-known, poems that approach the story with devotional intent. Other selections are quite unexpected, such as that taken from Jacques Derrida's *Of Grammatology* as comment on John 1. Many of the authors are famously unbelieving, and others twist the biblical text to their own agendas. A number of selections are drawn from literary criticism rather than literature *per se*, but of course the postmodern approach grants the theoretical the status of the literary.

To read what modern authors have made of the biblical text can be disturbing, yet also invigorating. I can imagine this book sparking lively class discussions. As it is aimed at readers with little biblical knowledge, including the KJV text is a good idea. The thorough critical apparatus is also helpful. In addition to a good general introduction, Prickett has contributed a long introduction to "Biblical and Literary Criticism: A History of Interaction," and Jasper another on "Literary Readings of the Bible: Trends in Modern Criticism." Each passage from the Bible is followed by a "Commentary" on literary approaches to the reading and a bibliography of selected criticism. These help make this book a good introduction for seminary students who