

vulnerable to the effects of constant personnel change than areas with greater population. This issue deserves further thought, for it has denomination-wide implications.

These criticisms and questions, however, are minor in relation to Fortin's accomplishment in this volume. He has provided a model of thoroughness and analytical and interpretive acuity that hopefully will be followed by other regional studies of the denomination. *Adventism in Quebec*, while addressing a seemingly minor topic, will be helpful not only to historians but also to anyone concerned with the health and development of the church.

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Green, Alberto R. W. *The Storm-God in the Ancient Near East*. Biblical and Judaic Studies, 8. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003. xviii + 363 pp. Hardcover, \$42.50.

Alberto Green is Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Studies at Rutgers University, New Jersey. *The Storm-God in the Ancient Near East* is his first monograph, aside from a number of journal articles (e.g., "The Date of Nehemiah: a Reexamination," *AUSS* 28 [1990]: 195-209). The author received a Ph.D. in 1973 from the University of Michigan, with the dissertation "The Role of Human Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East," published in 1975 under the same title by Scholars Press. The monograph series in which the book is published is edited by William H. Propp from the University of California, San Diego, and includes such important contributions as *The Hebrew Bible and Its Interpreter*, *Studies in Hebrew and Aramaic Orthography*, and *The Structure of Psalms 93-100*.

In his introduction, Green points out the need for a systematic study of the *storm-god* motif, since it represents one of the most important concepts in the evolution of human religious experience, transcending sociocultural, geographic, and chronologic boundaries. The purpose of the book is to fill a current vacuum and provide an interpretation for the ideological and sociological importance of this motif throughout the ANE, following a geographic sequence from Mesopotamia (chap. 1), through Anatolia (chap. 2), Syria (chap. 3), and arriving, finally, at Coastal Canaan with a strong emphasis on the *storm-god's* relationship with YHWH (chap. 4). The author justifies this last delimitation on the basis of the scarce iconographic and epigraphic material from this region (6), and in this way follows the classic work on the same topic by A. Vanel, *L'iconographie du dieu de l'orage dans le Proche-Orient ancien jusqu'au VIIe siècle avant J.-C.* (1965), but enlarges the geographic panorama and adds a sociocultural interpretation. However, besides iconography, Green also takes into consideration epigraphic material of mythological, epic, or historical character. Correctly, the author observes that the relationship between the texts and images is not always an easy one to interpret, and suggests a methodology that looks for the points of contact between the various classes of data (3). An important detail in the interpretation of the motif is the presence of its semidivine attendants that are associated with the *storm-god* in both the literary and archaeological sources and provide, according to Green, a key element in deciphering the importance and function of the motif throughout the ANE (2). Methodologically, Green's study is a typological comparison of a phenomenon occurring in various cultures that are chronologically and geographically removed from each other, acknowledging the challenges that such a comparison presents (7). The author mentions from the outset that the form and function of the *storm-god* motif is a dynamic one, changing from region to region, and that a difference in the manifestation of the motif exists between the public and domestic cults (4). Therefore, any general conclusion

about the motif has to recognize the dangers of partiality and superficiality.

Chapter 1 begins with a geographic, climatic, and ecological description of Mesopotamia that, according to Green, constitutes an important element for the understanding of the *storm-god*. He presupposes a strong dependence of culture on its environment and, consequently, suggests a transferal of human necessities onto the gods in the form of dynamic divine attributes; see, e.g., the section “The Storm-Gods of Mesopotamia: Representations of Primary Human Concerns” (72-84), which has its counterparts in the other chapters. In this way, the associations with a variety of semidivine attendants, which appear in the iconographic sources in close proximity to the motif, can generally be understood as projections of the god’s functions: e.g., lion, bull, eagle with lion-head, and dragon portray various divine—but humanly desired—attributes, most often fertility and power. Nevertheless, as a universal marker for the presence of the *storm-god* motif, Green mentions the meteorological weapon constituted by a two- or three-forked bundle of lightning.

In combining the iconographic with the mythological and nonmythological data, the author observes a fusion and interchange of names and functions of the various *storm-gods* within the different Mesopotamian pantheons (cf. Martin G. Klingbeil, “Nombres y funciones de las deidades en la iconografía del antiguo cercano oriente y su importancia en los estudios bíblicos,” *Theologika* 11/1 [1997]: 160-183). A good example can be found in the discussion of the material from Mari (58-72), which mentions three different gods with different temples throughout the city (Addu, Ilu-Mer, and Dagan), which, however, display the same attributes and all represent the *storm-god* motif. Diachronically, Green suggests for Mesopotamia an evolutionary development of the motif, from which Adad, accompanied by the bull, emerges as the principal *storm-god*, although the iconographic and epigraphic sources do not always coincide with each other with regard to describing or portraying the god (88).

In Anatolia (chap. 2), one notices from the outset a lack of local iconographic or epigraphic material, which leads to a reconstruction of the motif for this region based on suppositions and the intent to fill the *lacunae*. It appears that the presence of the motif in Anatolia is mainly due to foreign influences related to migrations, such as the Assyrian traders who settled in Anatolia at the end of the third millennium B.C.E. Earlier indigenous representations of the motif show a water-god, which can be identified with the god Taru mentioned in Hittite sources as <sup>d</sup>IM. Later on, a syncretistic form of Taru appears in the *storm-god of Hatti*, characterized by the holy mountain and the bull as semidivine attendant. The proximity of the *storm-god* in Anatolia to the earth and fertility cult is attested in all existing sources, although this is unique within its larger ANE context for its notable absence of cosmic or meteorological identifiers that can usually be found in other regions. For Green, these differences can be related to the geographic and climatic peculiarities of Anatolia, being a high plateau with frequent seismological movements (89-93).

Moving south, to the upper Euphrates valley in northern Syria (chap. 3), with its frequent thunderstorms and floods, Hadad (Adad) emerges as the local adaptation of the *storm-god* motif from the beginning of the second millennium B.C.E. His attributes are clearly cosmic and warlike, connecting him with the Mesopotamian version of the god, who is named identically. For the environmental conditions in western Syria, Green suggests a drastic climatic change during the second millennium B.C.E., caused by a systematic deforestation, which was accompanied by a lowering of the water table and a desertification of the lowlands and coastal plains (153). This led to an adaptation of the *storm-god* motif in the god Baal-Hadad and, later on, Baal, whose main characteristic is

the fertility cult and the provision of rains in order to guarantee human survival in this arid region (284). The epigraphic sources confirm this transfer of names and functions: the mythological texts from Ugarit show Baal in his victorious battle against Yam (the chaos serpent) and, subsequently, against Mot (representing drought, sterility, and death), in this way stressing his central role in the fertility process. According to Green, Baal (-Hadad) represents the most popular version of the *storm-god* in the ANE during the end of the Late Bronze Age (c. 1200 B.C.E.).

The last geographic region examined by Green is Coastal Canaan (chap. 4), where, according to the author, YHWH's presence as the local *storm-god* can be observed in extrabiblical texts from the fourteenth century B.C.E., more specifically, as the earliest appearance, in a topographic list of Amenhotep III, which refers to "the Shosu-land of YHWH" (232) in the context of the Habirus's activities in Palestine during this period (232-236). Green does not connect the origins of Yahwism to the mythological thunderstorm nor to the fertility cult that has characterized the *storm-god* throughout the rest of the ANE, but rather sees his origin as a terrestrial and historic warrior-god at the end of the Late Bronze, who is leading a band of warriors in their conquest of Trans- and Cis-Jordan. However, it is in the OT that the author finds the most important evidence for the identification of YHWH with the *storm-god*, and the following passages are discussed in order to support this notion: e.g., Gen 49; Exod 15; Deut 33; Judg 5; Pss 18, 29, 68, 77, 89; and Hab 3. Green concludes that YHWH is being identified in these texts with El, the principal god of the Canaanite pantheon. In his reading of these poetic texts, one cannot but notice a strong mythological perspective in the interpretation of the poems, which appears to reflect the state of affairs in biblical interpretation of about thirty years ago, when the proposal of a general Canaanite background for biblical poetry was in vogue, especially in the publications of the so-called pan-Ugaritic school. However, more recent publications have sufficiently criticized and abandoned this approach as a paradigm for the interpretation of poetic texts. See, e.g., my published dissertation, where I engage three of the Psalms discussed by Green in a comparative study (*Yabweh Fighting from Heaven: God as a Warrior and as God of Heaven in the Hebrew Psalter and Ancient Near Eastern Iconography*, OBO 169 [Fribourg: University Press, 1999]). I furthermore discuss the three poems from the Pentateuch mentioned by Green in another study ("Poemas en medio de la prosa: poesía insertada en el Pentateuco," in *Pentateuco: inicios, paradigmas y fundamentos: estudios teológicos y exegéticos en el Pentateuco*, River Plate Adventist University Monograph Series in Biblical and Theological Studies, 1, ed. Gerald A. Klingbeil [Libertador San Martín: Editorial Universidad Adventista del Plata, 2004], 61-85). At this point, for the first time, the suspicion arises that the evidence presented by the author is not as up-to-date as the date of publication for the book suggests. Nevertheless, Green notices during the history of Israel a synthesis between YHWH and El and, later on, with Baal, the Syrian *storm-god*, based on the supposed cultural adaptation to its Canaanite environment that Israel went through from the twelfth to the tenth century B.C.E. (285). In this section of the book, the absence of epigraphic and iconographic material is notorious, especially if one considers that a number of studies have, meanwhile, been published that discuss the development of religious history in Canaan and Israel based on iconographic sources (e.g., Othmar Keel and Christoph Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*, trans. Thomas H. Trapp [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998]).

The last chapter summarizes the previous sections and presents a synthesis, followed by some final remarks on a comparison between YHWH and the *storm-gods* of the ANE. In conclusion, Green interprets the motif as a dynamic power responsible for

three major areas of human concern: the *storm-god* as the dominant environmental force upon which people depended for their survival, usually with dualistic characteristics and accompanied by various semidivine attendants that serve as his functional markers in the various geographic contexts; the *storm-god* as the foundation of centralized political power, usually legitimizing and validating the authority of the king as the instrument of divine government; and the *storm-god* as the foundation of a continuously evolving sociocultural process, symbolically projected through his accompanying semidivine attendants, basically the bull, dragon, eagle, lion, and the goddess of fertility (281-291). Almost as an afterthought, Green surprisingly notices in the last page of his final chapter that YHWH does not fit very well into this never-ending chain of changing names and functions of ANE deities and their semidivine attendants, and that there are three unique traits that differentiate the Hebrew *storm-god* YHWH from all the other *storm-gods* of the ANE: he is the Creator God of all, he acts in history and not in mythology, and he is the only god who does not need any semidivine attendants (292).

Green has to be congratulated for his attempt to reach a synthesis on such a diverse and methodologically difficult-to-capture theme as the *storm-god* in the ANE. The result is a work that has accumulated data from various disciplines (e.g., history, iconography, and epigraphy) and that has produced a coherent theory about one of the most important motifs in the religious *Weltbild* of the ANE. The multidisciplinary and sociocultural methodology is consistently followed through until the fourth chapter, where the author has to replace the iconographic and epigraphic sources with biblical texts, nevertheless applying the same mythological perspective in the reading of these passages, and consequently arriving at a mythological and evolutionist interpretation of YHWH, which the author himself seems to refute with his final observations.

Browsing through the extensive bibliography (293-333), one cannot help but notice that the majority of entries stem from the 1980s, with a few exceptions reaching as far as 1993, which raises the question of whether Green's research should not have been updated before going to press. A closer look at the iconographic sections does nothing to improve this impression: most of the iconographic data is based on Vanel's important but outdated work, which was published in 1964, and represents the "prehistory" of iconographic research. The author ignores completely Othmar Keel's and other publications from the Fribourg school, which over the years have developed a methodology of iconographic interpretation and, even more, have presented fundamental iconographic material for the discussion of the *storm-god* motif that has been ignored by Green. It is also surprising to see the low quality of reproductions of line drawings of iconographic objects from Vanel—especially if one considers that Green's book has been published by Eisenbrauns. I have a photocopy of Vanel in my archive that appears to be of better quality than some of the illustrations provided in Green's book.

While Green has covered geographically most of the ANE with a strong emphasis on Mesopotamia, one awaits an explanation for the exclusion of the Egyptian evidence with relationship to the *storm-god*, considering that the motif is widely represented in this region by the god Reshef, who also underwent a local Palestinian adaptation process (e.g., Izak Cornelius, *The Iconography of the Canaanite Gods Reshef and Ba'al*, OBO 140 [Fribourg: University Press, 1994]).

The contribution of *The Storm-God in the Ancient Near East* is most significant with regard to the synthesis and interpretation of the epigraphic material, especially from Mesopotamia and Syria. However, there is a lack of updated bibliographical material, and the chapter on Canaan lacks epigraphic and iconographic data. When the author

tries to force his perspective of the religious history of the ANE onto the data, which does not correspond to his established methodology, the resulting interpretations appear unsatisfactory. Aside from these specific comments, I would recommend the book for the bookshelves of students of epigraphy, iconography, and religious history, since it brings together a wealth of divergent material from various disciplines that almost transform it into a reference work.

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Gulley, Norman R. *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena*. Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 2003. xxx + 810 pp. Hardcover, \$49.99.

Norman Gulley is Research Professor of Systematic Theology at Southern Adventist University, Collegedale, Tennessee, and past president of the Adventist Theological Society.

In fifteen chapters, Gulley introduces the issues that precede theology proper. He is thoroughly evangelical, fully conversant with ancient and modern sources and ideas, and capable of elucidating very difficult subjects. Millard Erickson pens the foreword. Helpful are initial purpose and summary statements, chapter outlines, and introductions and conclusions for each chapter. The bold headings provide not only structure, but good aesthetics as well. The layout of each slightly larger than 9" by 6" page is pleasant to the eye; the print is crisp and readable with ample white space. The text runs across each page in one large column with centered bottom page numbers.

Gulley first shows the impact philosophy and science have had on theology by introducing the idea of a timeless God, who cannot break into our phenomenal world. Later, to Descartes, Hume, and Kant, God was inward, subjective, and unknowable. Man's reason was elevated above the Scriptures. Resulting philosophies, such as pragmatism, existentialism, and logical positivism, are critiqued next, with a discussion of various aspects of theological language. These philosophical theories, Gulley asserts, cannot rival the understanding of truth and absolutes that come from biblical revelation. He perceptively evaluates Grenz and Guy, finding their view of community wanting, carefully meeting their points one by one.

In chapters 4 through 6, Gulley defines and gives the parameters of theological study. He argues that the Scriptures are the sole basis for theology, and it has its own presuppositions and methods. Gulley remarks: "The disciplines of science and philosophy begin with a given, a first principle. In theology that given is a self-revealing God in Scripture" (246). Gulley notes the place of general revelation, its strengths and limitations, and also the importance of seeing the propositional nature of Scripture. His understanding of Barth, Torrance, and Bloesch is remarkable. He kindly but firmly demonstrates their weaknesses with clear and cogent explanations.

Gulley insists on both the divine and human aspects of the Word. But rather than use the word "inerrant" to describe Scripture, he prefers the term "trustworthy." "Scripture is trustworthy because Scripture is revelation" (329). He writes: "It must be admitted that Scripture has a human side with errors that defy resolution at this time. However—and this is crucial—these are not major errors" (330). I will discuss below some objections to this statement and offer some points for clarity.

Chapter 9 considers authority. God is Creator, and "by virtue of His position He is the source of all other authorities. . . . The Bible is as authoritative as He is because it represents His truths" (361-362). Gulley rejects authorities such as church, reason, and