

himself to the world, the effects of the gospel on and within the church become part of the *message*" (222).

Part 4 of *Evangelical Ecclesiology* presents responses to the previous three parts. In chapter 8, Paul F. M. Zahl responds to the previous chapters with the slogan "Low-Church and Proud" (213-216). Various aspects of his response have been mentioned above in my review of other chapters. In addition, Zahl writes: "I cannot be Protestant *and* Catholic. I cannot be evangelical *and* ecclesialogically 'high'" (214). "The point is, too much ecclesiology always turns to Christology-lite, soteriology-lite, gospel-lite. I wish to resist that" (216).

Richard Beaton, also mentioned above, responds in chapter 9 with a call for "Reimagining the Church: Evangelical Christology." "Evangelicalism is in the throes of an identity crisis. . . . It seems far from clear that a well-considered ecclesiology does indeed lie at the center of the movement and, even if it does, that this ecclesiology is robust enough to withstand the global forces that challenge it today" (217). Evangelicalism's legitimate emphasis on personal responsibility, when combined with the individualistic influences of modernity and postmodernity, threaten to push it away from historic Christianity. Beaton holds that "there is something odd about a discussion of ecclesiology from within what is very much a subset of broader Christendom" (222). Study of essential elements of ecclesiology should precede reflection on the various commitments of evangelicalism. Current models of core identity not only describe, but also shape, the identity of the church. Therefore, we would do well to reconsider primary metaphors used in the NT to describe the church. After listing several of the biblical metaphors, Beaton provides a useful overview of the historically grounded metaphor of the church as the people of God. Such a model fits with the narrative approach (Hunsberger); an eschatological framework for past, present, and future (Humphrey); and a response to postmodernism. I agree that "if the church is to reimagine what an ecclesiology might look like in the twenty-first century, it seems that part of that exercise will require a return to the biblical metaphors" (223).

Evangelical Ecclesiology is a useful introduction to its subject and can serve well as supplementary reading for a course in ecclesiology. The book goes beyond the important task of describing evangelical ecclesiology and provides prescriptions for its ongoing reformation, development, and even conversion. The indices of subjects and scriptural texts add to the value of the book. I recommend it to professors, students, and lay persons who are interested in understanding the unique and multifaceted evangelical perspective on the church, which is the body of Christ.

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MARTIN HANNA

Vance, Donald R. *A Hebrew Reader for Ruth*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003. x + 85 pp. Paper, \$12.95.

Donald Vance's *A Hebrew Reader for Ruth* provides the intermediate-level student of Biblical Hebrew with a basic grammar and a verse-by-verse syntactical analysis of the biblical text. Each verse is followed by Vance's translation of the original text, which is taken from the *Biblia Hebraica Leningradensia*. There follows a word-by-word analysis, covering morphology, lexicography, syntax, and a discussion that includes citations from standard grammars. The format is simple and immediately understandable. Vance's *Reader* helps students to make the transition from grammatical exercises in a textbook to reading the biblical text itself. His format also provides the student with additional verses for practice outside of class.

For the intermediate Biblical Hebrew student, the book of Ruth, with its standard grammar, engaging and dramatic story line, and frequent usage of feminine verb forms, is an excellent choice for a student's text. The author has maintained a high level of accuracy. There are few, and only minor, omissions. However, it would have been helpful to also indicate where a given form is pausal. A more specific omission is on p. 35, where a verb is said to be from the Št* stem. There is no entry in the abbreviations to tell the student that "Št*" stands for the Hišthapel* stem of the verb.

Computer programs, such as BibleWorks, Logos, and Accordance, provide instant details at a number of different levels. Vance's contribution is to provide a concise presentation of both the instant details and selected discussions of grammarians that captures the details found in computer software, but in a useful format designed specifically for the student to work independently. Worksheets that correlate with the book may be found online at www.hendrickson.com/academic.

Having listened to my students' praise of Vance's book, and having been duly impressed myself, I have found that while the book achieves the purpose for which it was intended, it cannot replace the intense word-by-word analysis that is done in a classroom setting. Vance often gives only a minimum of meanings for a word, which may lead students to believe that these are the only possible interpretations. In reality, the richness of a word's meaning may be understood fully only by comparison with similar usage elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.

There is no substitute for searching through the various grammars oneself, comparing one analysis with another, and coming across related words and concepts. While computers and books, such as the one under discussion, are helpful, I fear that students will tend to use these tools to produce superficial research and fail to probe the deeper, more subtle nuances of the text.

If Vance's book is used as a supplement—and not as the sole source for understanding the biblical text—the student is free to function at the deeper level of scholarship, while cultivating a sense of progress and security. Unfortunately, I know that many busy students go first to the reader and then do any additional work with whatever little (or nonexistent) time is left. "Crutches" and "training wheels" are useful, but students who never practice "walking" or "riding" on their own, will cripple their development. Controlling student study habits is an ongoing pedagogical dilemma for the teacher.

Pedagogical tensions and struggles do not devalue Vance's work. His book remains an excellent resource for the teacher and student, especially the independent student.

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CONSTANCE CLARK GANE

Water, Mark, ed., comp. *The Encyclopedia of Prayer and Praise*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004. xvi + 1184 pp. Hardcover, \$39.95.

Mark Water is a prolific writer on a variety of biblical and religious topics "made easy" for the public at large. In the last four years, he has edited several encyclopedias, including *The New Encyclopedia of Christian Martyrs* (Baker, 2001) and *The New Encyclopedia of Christian Quotations* (Baker, 2001).

The *Encyclopedia of Prayer and Praise* is a reference work, featuring prayers and writings about prayer. The author's aim is to bring together a collection of "edifying" prayers; he specifically confines himself to Christian prayer, which he defines as a prayer addressed "to one of the Trinity" (xiii). His emphasis is on the rich heritage of classic Christian prayers throughout the history of the church, from the first to the nineteenth century.