

he claims that he accepts the traditional Christian approach, Kessler has presupposed Scripture as mainly a human composition. Second, he has done a disservice by separating the theological streams into six categories. He himself acknowledges that some of these streams overlap at times; however, his primary purposes weaken OT theology. For example, he sees Gen 15:7-21 as different from Gen 17 (see 190-191), but in reality they are not different streams; these two passages are a continuation of the covenant theme. Kessler tries too hard to dissect the biblical text, using source criticism to do OT theology (see 517). Finally, Kessler's OT theology is based too heavily on the "Divine Call and Human Response." I was not convinced that this theology is found in all of the author's theological streams; in some streams, perhaps, but definitely not in all of them.

In spite of the book's weaknesses, readers will find great value in reading this book. It could be appropriately used as a textbook for graduate-level students. Kessler's book has challenged my thinking, and his contribution to OT theology will likely make a deep impact in the scholarly world.

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Knoppers, Gary N. *The Jews and Samaritans: The Origin and History of Their Early Relations*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. 352 pp. Hardcover, \$55.00.

North and south provide an important divide not only in the United States history. This geographical partition, with the power struggles, invasions, destructions and reconstructions connected to it, is also a hallmark of the history of Israel. In both cases the divide and its consequences shaped deeply the identity of its heirs and their conscience as a nation. Identity, in the case of biblical Israel, has been marred and/or highly neglected by biblical scholars, and Gary Knoppers desires to set it straight. For him the Samari(t)ans are legitimate Israelites with a long history of interaction with their southern Israelite siblings. The implications for the study of Israel's identity in the biblical texts are challenging, but not without basis.

Gary Knoppers is well acquainted with the history of ancient Israel during the monarchy and after it. For a decade being the head of the department of Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies at Pennsylvania State University, and since the summer 2014 Professor of Hebrew Bible at Notre Dame University, Indiana, his masterpiece is the two-volume commentary on Chronicles for the Anchor Bible series. Interested in the development of the divided monarchy and the Samari(t)ans' identity, especially after the demise of Israel as a nation at the hand of the Assyrians, Knoppers has written extensively about it, which makes him well qualified to guide the reader in a fascinating search for identity. As the title suggests, it is not the purpose of the book to set a full history of the relationship between southern and northern Israelites, but to focus on the most important period, its origins. Starting from the divided monarchy with the sons of Solomon till the Roman

period, Knoppers beautifully weaves the complex history of southern-northern relation in eight well-crafted and very objective chapters. Although not exhaustive in every sense, each chapter presents a compelling case and a clear progression of his main argument, which closely ties the development of the history of Jews and Samari(t)ans.

First he reviewed the traditional theory, which reads 2 Kgs 17 as a description of major bidirectional deportations or a “comprehensive northern exile” criticizing it in light of two kinds of data, the biblical literature and the material culture. The last is given more weight in his logic, because for him the major biblical texts (Deuteronomy, 2 Kgs 17 and Nehemiah) used to portray the Samari(t)ans as non-Israelites are very enigmatic and ambiguous. No wonder he first gives his “reinterpretation” of the data discussing the material culture of new archaeological findings (chaps. 2, 5, and 8) before presenting the related biblical passages of the historical period discussed chronologically from Assyrian to Roman time (chaps. 3, 4, 6, and 7). So, although one may find here and there questions unanswered by the author regarding a particular archaeological artifact, biblical verse, or historical development, in the larger framework the case he builds is very compelling.

From the material culture (chaps. 2, 5 and 8) his argument is, putting it simply, that there were Yahwistic worshippers who self-proclaimed to be Israelites during the Persian, Greek, and Roman periods. They shared cultural similarities with their southern counterparts (e.g., holy text—Pentateuch, place of worship—central sanctuary and later synagogues). And from the literary biblical data he argues that there is a mixed picture, which he sees as evidence that Samari(t)ans were not completely foreigners to the biblical authors. Chronicles and the Prophets show Samari(t)ans positively as part of a pan-Israelite family, not only because of progeny but mostly because of common religious beliefs (the theme of chap. 4—his focus is on Hezekiah and Josiah’s religious reform, which included all Israel); 2 Kgs 17 (chap. 3), and Ezra-Nehemiah (chap. 6) advocate a radical interpretation of Pentateuchal laws equating Israel to Judah. However, even in these passages one still can find certain acknowledgment that not only were there worshippers of Yahweh in the north, but that they were closely connected with the southern Israelites, especially priests (e.g., Neh 13); and the Pentateuch law of cultic centralization (chap. 7), which is very ambiguous and could be/were interpreted by either Judean (Zion) or Samari(t)an (Gerizim) to support their own political claims. After detailed textual critical analyses he concludes that the ambiguity of these passages “hides” an obvious picture, that there were Yahwistic Israelites in the North after the Assyrian invasion.

Bringing in extensive data (more than 650 references and fifty-four pages of bibliography) from the most relevant sources available in archaeology, history, language, and biblical interpretation, he is able to persuasively argue the close proximity between the Israelites in the South and North after exile. Textual critics, biblical historians, and interpreters cannot anymore ignore that Samari(t)an connection in their respective areas. The most important one, that he spends a whole chapter dealing with, is the formation of the

Pentateuch, which he argues is a product of this exact relationship. The Pentateuch was a shared document at first in both communities from at least the early Persian period, and only after the Hasmonean time was finally edited with the sectarian views as we have it today.

The interesting characteristic of this book is that it does not have a formal conclusion as a separate chapter summarizing its content and pointing to some implications of the thesis presented. I acknowledge that the chapters are so well integrated to each other that a final summary is not needed, but I missed the application part in the end. Although for a scholar in the area of Samaritan studies the implication may be obvious, and although he mentions at least one implication of his ideas—regarding the formation of the Pentateuch, it could be a favor for the general public to show in the end other consequences of his thesis for biblical studies, which are very important.

Thus, I would like to highlight just three issues, all related to identity formation: one regarding definition of terms, the other two regarding prophetic-theological interpretation. In the quest for Israelite identity he shows that the best term to be used regarding the Northerners is Samaritans and not Samaritans (geographically restricted). He also clarifies that in the Hebrew Bible the most predominant view about identity is of a pan-Israelite notion related to religious beliefs. That this is not a small issue, see the confusion of usage of terms and definition in prophetic interpretation (who/what is Israel in biblical prophecy?), the heated debate on Josephus about how to translate properly the Greek term *ioudaios* (Daniel R. Schwartz. *'Judean' or 'Jew'? How should we translate IOUDAIOS in Josephus?* in: Jörg Frey, Daniel R. Schwartz, and Stephanie Gripentrog. *Jewish Identity in the Greco-Roman World*. pp. 3-27 [Leiden: Brill, 2007]; Steve Mason. "Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism: Problems of Categorization in Ancient History." *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 38 2007, 457-512.), and on how to understand Paul's stance on Gentiles and Israel/Jews (Kim, Seyoon. *Paul and the New Perspective: Second Thoughts on the Origin of Paul's Gospel*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001). Leaving academics aside, one can just look at the modern state of Israel, where the issue of identity is still a complicated one when a new case for *alyah* comes up in court. The question that always lingers is, Who is a legitimate Israelite? What/who is an Israelite anyway? ("Jewishness: Who is a Jew?—Competing answers to an increasingly pressing question." *The Economist*. 11th January, 2014). The data *Jews and Samaritans* brings together cannot be ignored—Israelism was not monochrome in Antiquity. This fact has been affirmed time after time by the studies of Second Temple Period, and it is reiterated through another angle by Knoppers.

Another implication from Knoppers' exposition is regarding sacred geography and the sanctity of Jerusalem. This has divided early and modern Christians in their prophetic interpretation, ecclesiological definition, and realization of the work of the Messiah (Christ) in the New Testament-foundational issues in Christianity. In chapter 7, *The Torah and "the place(s) for Yhwh's name"* Knoppers argues that the foundational document of Israel, the Pentateuch, does not define a specific place of worship. Jerusalem's

sacredness is a later one. In light of Jesus' phrase in John 4:21-24 and the book of Hebrews, Christians need to consider, what role modern Jerusalem (geography) has in biblical interpretation and how this shapes the definition of how humans are connected to, and who belongs to the people of, God. Apparently disconnected but very much related to sacred geography is the definition of the identity of God's people, or how one draws the borders to define who are "Israelites." As Knoppers' wordplay in the subtitles of chapter 6 suggests, should we talk of the enemies within or without? Describing the history of Jews and Samaritans in the Persian period, with Sambalat (Samaritan) and Jerusalemite priests closely connected, he demonstrates that there was more to be feared from within than from outsiders—non-Israelites. It was only later in the Greco-Roman period with a clear geographical and textual boundary, that the enemies became "outsiders." The realization of this principle may be relevant as biblical scholars interpret the motif of the enemy or "antichrist" in biblical prophecy, which unfortunately has been mostly related to Antiochus Epiphanes, a complete "outsider."

And finally it would be good to pay attention to Knoppers' interpretation of Ezra-Nehemiah in its Persian context in the light of Seventh-day Adventist perspectives of Dan 9, including that of Ellen White (*Prophets and Kings*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2010). There is something worthy of further research. Overall, I highly recommend Knoppers' *Jews and Samaritans* for his intriguing, objective, and sound interpretation of an issue which has so many ramifications regarding religious identity.

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Norton, Anne. *On the Muslim Question*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013. 288 pp. Hardcover, \$24.95.

"The Jewish question was fundamental for politics and philosophy in the Enlightenment. In our time, as the Enlightenment fades, the Muslim question has taken its place" (1). With this assertion, Anne Norton offers her opening salvo.

Since 2001 and the beginning of the "war on terrorism," Americans have been obsessed with the threat of Islam coming to its shores, either in the shape of "kamikaze-type" attacks or as immigrants. Much of the heat of the issue has lacked a clear understanding of the realities. Anne Norton's provocative book deals more with the questioners than with the question. While she sheds light on Islam and Islamic beliefs and practice, she asks the readers to examine their own biases and information sources. The very question should focus attention on the questioner in the search for greater mutual understanding.

The Jewish question asked what we should do with the Jews and what possible place was there for them in Western societies. As time went on, Norton suggests, the West became more Jewish and the Jews became more