

Leaver surveys all the Reformation hymns he could recover, describing their musicality and (helpfully) translating many of the texts into English. He also quotes extant letters from the time which help to inform the context and impact of the hymns, noting that “the speed with which the early Wittenberg hymns (1523–1526) were taken up and reprinted in such places as Augsburg, Breslau, Erfurt, Magdeburg, Nuremberg, Rostock, Strasbourg, Worms, and Zwickau is quite extraordinary” (140).

Martin Luther, as already known, connected Reformation theology with familiar vernacular melodies to help believers to learn, and also to help in understanding new worship arrangements. In his book, Leaver quotes title pages which give liturgical instructions for many of the new hymnals. He also notes that

[f]our of the preachers in the Wittenberg churches in the months when German hymnody was being introduced, 1523/24, were also authors of new vernacular hymns: Martin Luther, of course; Paul Speratus, already a noted preacher, active in Wittenberg between 1523 and 1524; Justus Jonas, dean of the All Saints Church and Foundation from 1521; and Johann Agricola, who between 1523 and 1525 was catechist and preacher while teaching biblical exegesis at Wittenberg University (137).

The book is packed with fascinating information. Leaver quotes letters, reproduces musical notation, and theologically rich texts, thereby greatly underscoring the importance of the new hymns and how music played such a major role in the sixteenth-century Reformation. In an addendum, Leaver includes Luther’s prefaces for both his first and second hymnal, “*Spiritual Hymns Newly Improved for Wittenberg*” (165–167). The feuding between Luther and Karlstadt is also informed by Leaver’s study of Reformation hymnody. The weakest part of this impressive tome is Leaver’s occasional “why” and “how” speculation of and reasons for what was happening. However, overall, the book is an outstanding and informative contribution to this Reformation anniversary year.

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Mueller, Ekkehardt and Elias Brasil de Souza, eds. *Marriage: Biblical and Theological Aspects*. Biblical Research Institute Studies in Biblical Ethics 1. Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2015. 289 pp. Softcover. USD 14.99.

The book *Marriage: Biblical and Theological Aspects* is the first volume “in a series of books on marriage, sexuality, and family” (xiii), published by the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Since seven out of the eleven chapters were originally published in *Le mariage: Questions bibliques et théologiques*, edited by Richard Lehmann, most of the book is just a translation from French. In fact, it also replicates the French book title. The four additional articles were written by Kwabena Donkor (ch. 1), Zoltan Szalos-Farkas (ch. 6), Ekkehardt Mueller (ch. 10), and Miroslav Kiš and Ekkehardt Mueller jointly (ch. 11).

Unlike the French edition which divided the book into two sections, representing biblical and theological studies, the present book does not retain that division. In this version, both biblical and theological studies are intermingled. This does not necessarily demonstrate a lack of arrangement on the editors' part; the book simply seems to be structured differently, by areas of study rather than by type of approach. I detect the following division: Chapter 1: Religion and marriage; Chapters 2–4: Biblical studies on marriage; Chapters 5–6: Theological studies on marriage; Chapters 7–10: Issues on marriage—in particular, interfaith marriage (chs. 7–8) and divorce and remarriage (chs. 9–10); and Chapter 11 is a summary followed by three appendices: (a) An Excerpt from the *Church Manual* on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage, (b) Official Statements on Marriage and Related Issues, and (c) An Excerpt from the *Minister's Handbook* on weddings.

In the first chapter, Donkor, the author, contends that even though customs and laws change from culture to culture (11), a theological relationship exists between Scripture and church life, where the former plays a normative role over the latter's beliefs and practices (12–14). However, he does not insist on proving that the Bible elaborates on every detail of human life.

In the biblical studies section on marriage, Frank M. Hasel (ch. 2) develops a theology of marriage. He underlines that humans were created as sexual beings to have partnership only among two individuals of different gender. Consequently, all marriage that is not monogamic and heterosexual is a distortion of God's original plan for humanity (29). Corinne Egasse (ch. 3) provides biblical evidence to regard singleness as neither a higher, nor lesser, vocation. In other words, sexuality and spirituality are not mutually exclusive. Roberto Badenas (ch. 4) establishes that in Scripture "both the male and the female are given equal status, rights, and tasks" (75) and that conception is the biblical ideal before, and after, the fall.

In the theological studies section on marriage, both Thomas Domanyi (ch. 5) and Zoltan Szalos-Farkas (ch. 6) observe that "humans cannot be detached from sexuality" since they were created as "male and female" (102). But they point out that sexual expression is legitimate only in the context of marriage (105).

Also, both Hans Heinz (ch. 7) and Ángel M. Rodríguez (ch. 8) assure us that the term "unbeliever" in 1 Cor 7:15 and 2 Cor 6:14, respectively, refers not only to a person practicing a different religion, but also a different Christian denomination. Thus, Heinz and Rodríguez explore the delimitations of interfaith marriage. By doing a word study, Rodríguez discerns that the term *apistos* "unbeliever" in 2 Cor 6:14 is not confined to marriage, but to all permanent relations (170).

Both Richard M. Davidson (ch. 9) and Ekkehardt Mueller (ch. 11) survey the biblical data for divorce and remarriage in the Bible. The former focuses on Old Testament passages, whereas the latter focuses on New Testament passages. They concur that divorce is tolerated, but never commanded. Hence, Mueller argues that people should not look for loopholes to get out of their marriages. Concerning divorce, he stresses that the only valid reason for divorce is

fornication, because 1 Cor 7:15 refrains a believer from initiating the process of divorce. Finally, Miroslav Kiš and Ekkehardt Mueller (ch. 12) examine the origin, nature, and purposes of marriage and its relationship to church life.

In addition, this book has the special characteristic of being the first Adventist work in English that puts together a theology of marriage. Although other Adventist works, such as that of Sakae Kubo, *Theology and Ethics of Sex* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1980); and Richard M. Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament* (Peabody, MD: Hendrickson, 2007), provide a theology of human sexuality, they were not the result of an international committee representing the mainstream views in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Also, Kubo's work does not interact with recent issues on marriage nor provides an exegetical examination of biblical passages, and Davidson's deals only with Old Testament passages.

Interestingly, the articles dealing with gender roles (chs. 2 and 4) agree that the Scripture presents an egalitarian view before and after the fall. While I concur with the authors (Hasel and Badenas), the use of the word "complementary" by Hasel (29), Badenas (75, 77, 98), and Zsalos-Farkas (128) should be reconsidered. At the present, sociologists call "complementary relationship" that relationship in which one partner dominates and the other submits. Thus, the term suggests a hierarchy of the sexes, something completely contrary to what the authors argue. Hence, if the idea is that of partners interchanging the decision-making power, they should use the expression "parallel relationship." In doing so, they will be in harmony with the proper argot currently used in social studies.

On the other hand, there are some hot topics completely passed over. For example, cohabitation is a big current issue, yet there is only one reference to it (201). Concerning homosexuality and transgenderism, just a few condemnatory references are found throughout the book (29, 198, 221, 266). Possibly, the editors considered it unnecessary to include articles on those topics because two other works dealing with homosexuality have been already published by the BRI (Ronald M. Springett, *Homosexuality in History and the Scripture* [Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1988]; Ekkehardt Mueller, *Homosexuality, Scripture, and the Church* [Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2010]) or because they will be included in one of the two upcoming volumes of the series.

Finally, it would have been valuable if any of the authors would have discussed whether Exod 21:26–27 justifies "abuse" as a reason for divorce, since there are a number of people who argue for the "triple As" (adultery, abandonment, and abuse) as valid reasons for divorce.

Regardless, these marginal observations do not negate the value of the book. They should simply encourage readers to look forward to the upcoming volumes, which most likely will include other, recent family issues. This book should be commended for providing an indepth analysis without using convoluted arguments. Hebrew and Greek words are transliterated and are mentioned only when necessary. In doing so, anyone (whether a theologian,

pastor, family professional, or church member) can benefit from its reading, enriching their biblical knowledge on marriage and related topics.

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Niesiołowski-Spanò, Łukasz. *Goliath's Legacy: Philistines and Hebrews in Biblical Times*. Philippika: Altertumswissenschaftliche Abhandlungen/Contributions to the Study of Ancient World Cultures 83. Translated by Maria Kantor. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2016. 321 pp. Hardcover. USD 71.00.

As the title indicates, Niesiołowski-Spanò's book essentially comprises a historical-critical study of all biblical sources concerning the Philistines and their often volatile relations with Israel and Judah. In the introduction, the author describes his moderately critical stance as one which, on one hand, argues that the biblical historians compiled and redacted their works largely during the post-exilic period, but also recognizes that these same writers were "characterized by a conservative desire to preserve the early heritage." Although the author states that "the Old Testament still remains a valuable source of getting to know the realities of the pre-exilic epoch" (xi), his overall assessment is nevertheless overwhelmingly negative regarding the historical veracity of its contents, especially in regards to later texts, such as those in Chronicles, lacking parallel passages in Samuel or Kings. He suggests that the biblical Philistines "had very little in common with the historically existing people bearing the same name" and are "presented in a very anachronistic way" by the Old Testament texts. Thus, the author concludes that "one can speak of the biblical picture of the Philistines but its connection with reality is mostly indirect" (180).

The author's approach, in turn, creates a potentially serious methodological crux that becomes immediately apparent when addressing his main research question. For better or worse, apart from archaeological data, the Hebrew Bible basically comprises our best, and often sole, historical source for the Philistines from the late twelfth until the seventh century BCE. Thus, the author supplements the relevant biblical accounts with rather suspect anthropologically based analogies from much later and dissimilar cultural contexts rather than limiting his search for comparisons to archaic Greek, Anatolian, and Levantine sources. He also readily draws parallels from Israelite relations with the indigenous peoples of Canaan, even though these accounts originate from the same "highly dubious" biblical sources he rejects elsewhere, which raises the issue of historical-critical selectivity in his argumentation. Moreover, the author launches several ventures into peripheral subjects that, while interesting, shed only a modicum of light upon the subject at hand. His historical treatment of Israelite-Philistine relations, which arguably should comprise the bulk of the book, covers merely 80 pages. The brevity of attention and, more importantly, the lack of historical credibility given to biblical narratives regarding the divided monarchy is particularly apparent