Reviews

Geloofszekerheid. By Herman Bavinck and Henk Van Den Belt. Soesterberg: Aspekt, 2016. ISBN: 9789461535825. 324pp. £36.02.

Those unfamiliar with either Dutch or the writings of Herman Bavinck (1854–1921) may have missed the release of this important piece of scholarship from Henk Van Den Belt. *Geloofszekerheid* will, nevertheless, prove of interest to Anglophones who hold an interest in the theological questions surrounding the assurance of faith and have some secondary access to the language.

This volume brings together a range of shorter works in which Bavinck addresses the question of the assurance of faith. Included are the original and revised editions of *De Zekerheid des Geloofs*, (a work which may be familiar to English speakers through the translation by Harry der Nederlanden, *The Certainty of Faith* (St. Catherines, Ontario: Paideia Press, 1980), the original and revised versions of a lecture which to date has remained unpublished, a further article on the subject that Bavinck had written for the newspaper *De Bazuin*, and a Dutch translation of Benjamin B. Warfield's review of the original edition of *De Zekerheid des Geloofs* for the Princeton Theological Review. The volume concludes with a forty page essay in which Van Den Belt evaluates Bavinck's doctrine of assurance and demonstrates the way in which it seeks a middle path between rationalism and pietism.

Readers will be grateful for Van Den Belt's sensitive modernization of the nineteenth century spelling and grammar of the original texts, for the insightful guidance offered in the introductions to each text, the extensive background information provided in the footnotes, and for the various reproductions and photographs, especially the one of Bavinck at a dinner party steadfastly refusing to look at the camera. However, the particular value of *Geloofszekerheid* lies in its collocation of diverse material, which allows the reader to trace the development of Bavinck's thought. Van Den Belt is to be commended for the way he locates the development of Bavinck's thought within the context of the ecclesiastical tradition of the *Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk*. In this regard, Van Den Belt's treatment of the related question of *wereldmijding*, or 'flight from the world', is illuminating. Van Den Belt notes that while Bavinck's criticism of this tendency is a constant in his writings, Bavinck's later writings reveal a change of tone. For example, by 1901 Bavinck could also write, 'Terwijl de christenen in vroeger dagen om zichzelf de wereld vergaten, lopen wij gevar in de wereld onszelf te verliezen.' [Although Christians in earlier

times neglected the world around them, we run the risk of losing ourselves in the world.] (p. 96) These statements and others like them reveal an increasing caution regarding the Neo-Calvinist emphasis on cultural engagement, as typified in a striking warning Bavinck issued at the Gereformeerd Studenten Congres of 1918, 'Maar één ding hadden deze mensen op ons voor: die wisten nog wat zonde en genade was. En lopen wij wel eens niet het gevaar, dat wij, bij al onze toegenomen kennis en cultureel inzicht, dat ene gaan vergeten?' [One thing these people had on us: they still knew what sin and grace was. Do we not at all run the risk, that we, with all our increased knowledge and cultural insight, will forget that one thing?] (p. 256).

The concluding essay is also a particularly helpful aide for readers who may be unfamiliar with either the seventeenth century or the nineteenth century background to the question of the certainty of faith. Van Den Belt adroitly offers Bavinck's position in summary, namely, that one might distinguish yet not separate the reflex act of faith from the act of faith itself, that the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit is intimately connected with the believer's identity as a child of God (Gal. 4:6), yet has no material content of its own. If one were to ask for a little more, it would be for an analysis of the relationship between the certainty of the object of faith and the certainty of the reflex act of faith in the light of Bavinck's account of self-consciousness. In *The Philosophy of Revelation* Bavinck points out that it is through self-consciousness that a consciousness of an external world is given. Whether this stands in tension with the relationship Bavinck posits between the certainty of faith's object and the certainty of the reflex act of faith is a question worth pondering.

All in all, Van Den Belt is to be praised for furnishing the Dutch speaking world with an excellent resource not only for understanding Bavinck's approach to the doctrine of assurance, but also for understanding the contours of Bavinck's thought more broadly. Those without Dutch can hope that an English translation of this book is not too far away.

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Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost. By Craig S. Keener. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016. ISBN: 9780802874399. xxviii + 522pp. £39.99.

At the close of one of Professor David Fergusson's Gifford Lectures at the University of Glasgow in 2008, a challenge was laid at the door of the Pentecostal tradition to produce much more robust theology from its quarters. This book could indeed be a response to this challenge.

Keener's offering here is not a description of how Pentecostals do biblical hermeneutics; to do so would necessitate covering multiple divergent views. There is not one singular Pentecostal hermeneutic of scripture. What the author does provide instead is 'help articulat[ing] how the experience of the Spirit that empowered the church on the day of Pentecost can and should dynamically shape our reading of Scripture' (p. 4).

This can be accomplished by a two-fold process: (i) by the provision of a significant and sizeable critique of Keener's own tradition that has a reputation for, in extreme cases, being disinterested in the original message and context that scripture was received. Adding to this, the ravaging of the authoritative canon has on occasions taken place by preachers to purport their own agendas and ideas under the guise of the message being biblical. (ii) As a biblical scholar in a North American context, the author unsurprisingly purports that Pentecostals redress this imbalance by adopting a hermeneutic of historical-grammatical and historical-critical method. There is no way, the author insists, that Pentecostals can provide an interpretation of scripture for faith and life today without first grappling with and sourcing knowledge of what its first recipients understood by any given text. The majority of this book is dominated by the necessity to have this first move of interpretation fleshed out in order that the second move can legitimately be made.

Keener's explicitly inductive method is a forensic examination of historical background in order that 'Pentecostals, charismatics and other people of the Spirit may add to hermeneutical wisdom already in place' (p. 7). Instead, he wishes to champion an 'experiential reading' of the text. This book invokes Pentecost as an appropriate hermeneutic because 'the entire church must be experiential if it wishes to be biblical' (p. 11). Whether it be early or late patristics, Reformers or Puritans, Keener stresses that the saints have always relied on the Holy Spirit for understanding and meaning through diligent study and the reception and delivery of preaching.

The author rightly wishes to draw into the discussion the Global South where Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Church are exploding in growth. Whether it be Latin America, the African continent or Asia, what the Spirit is saying in and through those churches through biblical interpretation is crucial. Western Pentecostalism must incorporate what the Spirit is saying through the canonical text in the Global South in order for a Pentecostal reading of the text to have its full force. This portion of the book provides something quite novel for biblical hermeneutics. It was reminiscent of Kirsteen Kim's pneumatological missiology.

Whereas the author does not leave any stone unturned, one is left feeling that its content could have been covered in half the length. Neverthe-

less, this book is a very accessible read and clear in its meaning. Thinking about Keener's proposal in the wake of five hundred years since the start of the Reformation makes me wonder how feasible it is to implement other than by the scholarly pastor. Does one need to be an academic historian or a classicist to hear the Spirit in the text?

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Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels. By Richard B. Hays. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-481-0491-7. xix + 504pp. £33.50.

Richard B. Hays's book, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1989), had a huge impact on the field of New Testament studies. The notion of 'intertextual echoes', along with Hays's seven 'tests' for detecting them, have played a significant (though not uncontested) role in biblical interpretation ever since.

Now Hays has produced a much larger volume that self-consciously builds on the earlier work (seen clearly in the parallel title and the similar cover art), this time considering the four canonical Gospels.

Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels appeared soon after the publication of a shorter volume dealing with much the same theme, entitled *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014). As Hays explains in his preface to the larger book, the material for the 2013-14 Hulsean Lectures (Cambridge), published as *Reading Backwards*, was in fact drawn from the draft manuscript of *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*. So, if you have already read *Reading Backwards*, you will have been given a good taster of *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*. If you have not yet read *Reading Backwards*, then you can afford to skip it and simply read the more fully developed work.

The book follows a consistent pattern. Following an introductory chapter that lays out the principles adopted in the book, there are four lengthy chapters on the four canonical Gospels: 'The Gospel of Mark: Herald of Mystery', 'The Gospel of Matthew: Torah Transfigured', 'The Gospel of Luke: The Liberation of Israel', and 'The Gospel of John: The Temple of His Body'.

Each chapter has five sections. These deal with the following issues (quoting Hays's bullet points on page 9):

- The Evangelist as interpreter of Israel's Scripture: overview
- How does the Evangelist invoke/evoke Scripture to re-narrate Israel's story?

- How does the Evangelist invoke/evoke Scripture to narrate the identity of Jesus?

- How does the Evangelist invoke/evoke Scripture to narrate the church's role in relation to the world?

- Summary conclusion: findings about the distinctive scriptural hermeneutics of the Evangelist.

Following the main chapters, Hays provides a brief conclusion. There are some seventy-four pages of end notes, some quite substantial, followed by a bibliography, an index of Scripture and other ancient texts, and an index of names. In the preface, Hays acknowledges significant help (particularly relating to the notes) from a number of academic colleagues as he worked to complete the manuscript during a period of serious illness.

In his introduction, Hays indicates his presupposition that 'all four canonical Gospels are deeply embedded in a symbolic world shaped by the Old Testament' (p. 10). In considering intertextual references, Hays employs the categories, familiar to many of his readers, of 'quotation', 'allusion', and 'echo'. At the heart of Hays's approach is the concept of 'metalepsis'. Hays explains (p. 11),

> Metalepsis is a literary technique of citing or echoing a small bit of a precursor text in such a way that the reader can grasp the significance of the echo only by recalling or recovering the original context from which the fragmentary echo came and then reading the two texts in dialogical juxtaposition. The figurative effect of such an intertextual linkage lies in the unstated or suppressed points of correspondence between the two texts.

In his conclusion, Hays states succinctly his notion of 'figural interpretation' (p. 359, italics are original):

> In short, *figural interpretation discerns a divinely crafted pattern of coherence within the events and characters of the biblical narratives.*

Reading *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* was a pleasure. Hays writes clearly and elegantly. The book is a rich collection of short studies of passages from the Gospels. Hays recognises that some of the cases he makes are stronger than others, but even where the reader may not always be convinced by Hays's argument, there is much to learn from his careful discussions of specific texts. Hebrew and Greek script is used both in the main text of the book and in the notes, but readers without Hebrew and

Greek should still be able to make sense of the discussion without much difficulty.

Combined with the detailed analysis of possible verbal correspondences in various texts, Hays offers a richly theological reading of the Gospels that will be of great benefit to preachers. In particular, he emphasises the high Christology that his studies suggest. For example, with reference to Matthew's Gospel, Hays writes (p. 175, italics are original),

> *Matthew highlights the worship of Jesus for one reason: he believes and proclaims that Jesus is the embodied presence of God and that to worship Jesus is to worship YHWH*—not merely an agent or a facsimile or an intermediary. If we read the story within the hermeneutical matrix of Israel's Scripture, we can draw no other conclusion.

Perhaps one of Hays's most significant legacies will be a renewed emphasis within academic biblical studies on the coherence and interconnectedness of Scripture. In his conclusion he urges readers to become immersed in the texts of the Old Testament as the Evangelists were (p. 357, italics are original),

> What would it mean to undertake the task of reading Scripture *along with* the Evangelists? First of all, it would mean cultivating a deep knowledge of the Old Testament texts, getting these texts into our blood and bones. It would mean learning the texts by heart in the fullest sense. The pervasive, complex, and multivalent uses of Scripture that we find in the Gospels could arrive only in and for a community immersed in scriptural language and imagery.... But, alas, many Christian communities have lost touch with the sort of deep primary knowledge of Scripture—especially Israel's Scripture—that would enable them even to perceive the messages conveyed by the Evangelists' biblical allusions and echoes, let alone to employ Scripture with comparable facility in their own preaching and renarration of the gospel story.

I hope many teachers, students and preachers will read this book, consider carefully its ideas, and so take up Hays's challenge to enable themselves and others to engage with the Old Testament (and the Gospels) more fully and effectively.

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Intermediate Greek Grammar. By David L. Mathewson and Elodie Ballantine Emig. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-8010-3072-7. xxiii + 307pp. £21.99.

Many preachers who learned New Testament Greek around the same time as I did (that is, during the early 1990s) or earlier will probably have been taught a number of ideas that have since been questioned, challenged, or simply abandoned in recent scholarship. While it is by no means inevitable that the most recent scholarship is always correct on every point (since *all* scholarship, even that which is quickly overturned, is 'the most recent scholarship' at some point!), it would be wise for those who work with the Greek text of Scripture to become acquainted with recent discussion. That can be a daunting task for preachers (and students), particularly when it comes to technical studies in linguistics.

Baker Academic, like several other publishers, have recently provided some very helpful resources to help beginning and intermediate students of Greek to engage constructively with the best recent scholarship. In 2014, Baker published Rodney Decker's introductory volume, *Reading Koine Greek*. This foundational grammar for beginning students is notable for taking account of recent advances in understanding of Greek and for providing more information than would typically be found in an introductory grammar. For readers who have studied Greek in the past but who now feel they have forgotten most of what they learned and would like to remedy the situation, Decker's book may be the best option. For those whose Greek is somewhat stronger, on the other hand, this new volume by Mathewson and Emig would be worth considering.

That this new volume is intended to be, in some sense, as a companion to Decker's work is clearly seen by the cover design, with the similar colour scheme and Greek characters. It is a much more slight volume than Decker's, however, and is in a smaller format. The apparent intention is, following Calvin, to combine brevity and clarity.

The two authors are colleagues at Denver Seminary. They demonstrate expertise in current discussion of the language, taking account of recent and reliable scholarly work on Greek grammar (on, for example the middle voice and 'deponency'). In general, Mathewson and Emig take what they describe in the introduction as a 'minimalistic' approach to grammar (p. xix). They argue that many of the nuances of meaning in a particular passage of Greek come not from the grammatical forms employed but from the context, namely, the particular words that are used and their relationships to one another.

In addition to the short introduction, the book is composed of thirteen chapters dealing with various standard topics such as 'the cases'; 'the arti-

cle' (N.B., *not* the 'definite article'!); and 'prepositions'. The chapters are generally opened with a brief orientation to the topic, followed by more specific sections on sub-topics. Thus, for example, the chapter on cases provides two pages of introductory comment followed by sections that consider the nominative case, the vocative case, and so on. Within each of these sections, examples of usage are provided from the Greek New Testament, along with a translation into English. The particular feature under consideration is highlighted with bold type. Some examples are considered self-evident and are left to speak for themselves. Others have a comment (generally brief, though sometimes substantial) added underneath to draw the reader's attention to the key points. Typical of recent studies, there is also a chapter on 'the Greek verb system', in which the authors introduce the concept of 'aspect'. Another chapter that reflects more recent scholarship deals with 'discourse considerations'. This final chapter draws together a number of features highlighted in earlier chapters to show how the elements of a unit of text relate to each other to communicate the intention of the author. At various points throughout the book (often, but not only, at the end of chapters), there are 'For Practice' sections which generally provide a paragraph of Greek text for the student to work on. No annotations or vocabulary are provided for these and so students must make use of other reference tools to carry out the work.

Mathewson and Emig indicate in their introductory remarks that they became aware of the broadly similar project by Köstenberger, Merkle and Plummer, which was published as *Going Deeper with New Testament Greek* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2016). That both teams of authors pursued their projects to completion so that the two books were published within a few months of each other should be regarded as a double blessing for students of New Testament Greek. Both volumes are excellent in terms of the quality of the scholarship that they present (although, unsurprisingly, they approach certain topics in somewhat different ways) and in terms of their suitability for intermediate students. There is very little to choose between them and the ideal for any keen Greek student will be to possess both volumes! If a choice has to be made, then perhaps those who require more help to revive or develop their Greek will find the more expansive text by Köstenberger, Merkle and Plummer helpful, while those who feel more confident in their Greek knowledge will find Mathewson and Emig more concise and crisp in their discussions.

Mathewson and Emig have written a clear, well-informed guide to New Testament Greek Grammar that should prove helpful to intermediate students in a classroom setting and to those who wish to update

and improve their knowledge of Greek. There is no longer any excuse for reproducing outdated interpretations of Greek!

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Scottish Federalism and Covenantalism in Transition: The Theology of Ebenezer Erskine. By Stephen G. Myers. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2015. ISBN: 9781556355356. xxi +257pp. £24.

In the growing body of literature on the history of Reformed covenant theology, many works fall into the rut of being simply descriptive. They often limit their arguments to summaries of older works, rather than providing deep analysis and historical context. Thankfully, Stephen G. Myers's work on the federal and covenantal theology of Ebenezer Erskine (1680-1754) not only avoids this rut entirely, but provides us with insights from Erskine's thought that helps us understand eighteenth century Scottish theology, as well as a much clearer and deeper understanding of the '*Marrow* controversy.'

Chapter one sets the stage with an account of Erskine's life, and the political and ecclesiastical controversies that occurred early in his ministry. In Erskine's time, the Scottish church largely held to John Knox's view that the church and state were both to work together to bring about godly reform. In the Union of 1707, it was proposed that the established church of Scotland join with the established church of England. Upon this union, more controversy developed over the freedom clergy would have in both nations to worship according to their consciences. In this 'Abjuration Oath Controversy,' Erskine took the 'non-juror' position that this oath would require the minister to swear allegiance not only to the monarch of England, but also to the bishops he appointed. His role in these controversies made Erskine an influential figure who would later play an important role in the *Marrow* controversy.

Chapter two examines the issues that were involved in the *Marrow* controversy. This controversy centred on the republication of Edward Fisher's *The Marrow of Modern Divinity in Scotland*. The accusations made in this controversy were that those who supported the book were antinomian, and those who opposed it were legalists. Myers digs deeply into the issues of this controversy and highlights how the disputes were caused by very different conceptions of how the law relates to the covenant of works, if there is an intra-Trinitarian covenant of redemption, and the conditionality of the covenant of grace. James Hadow, who opposed the *Marrow*, held that grace in the covenant was 'mediate,' meaning salvation came by grace, but this grace 'was given through the means of the elect's divinely-enabled obedience to the Gospel Commands.' (pp. 66-67)

Erskine, in contrast held that salvation was 'immediate,' meaning it 'was given as a gift.' (p. 66) This look into differing strands of covenant theology involved in the *Marrow* controversy is an incredibly helpful contribution to our understanding of debates over the nature of antinomianism. This chapter focuses on the transition in 'federalism,' or covenant theology, in the Scottish church, and the differences between Erskine and Hadow are significant enough to cause divergence about the nature of the gospel. As Erskine stood with those who supported the *Marrow*, he became increasingly excluded within the church.

Chapter three looks at the transitions in Scottish 'covenantalism,' or the concept that the Scottish state had covenantal responsibility to God. Erskine transitioned to a new pulpit in Stirling, but was hesitantly received by the presbytery because of his reputation in connection to the *Marrow* controversy. He preached against the idea of ministers being appointed by secular patrons, and he was censured because of this sermon. Growing disputes about the link between church and politics, combined with being excluded from the established church by censure, led to Erskine and a few other members separating from the established church to form the Associate Presbytery. This was known as the Secession Crisis. Yet, although his situation greatly changed throughout these events, Erskine seems to have maintained a stable theology.

The last chapter traces Erskine's ministry into the 1740s, and records how his federalism and covenantalism play out in the context of separation from the established church. The key event here is the opposition of the new Associate Presbytery to the evangelistic work of George Whitefield in Scotland. Erskine's Associate Presbytery requested Whitefield come to preach in Scotland, which reveals that they had no theological qualms that prevented working with him. Yet, when Whitefield would not refuse to work with churches of the established church, the Associate Presbytery turned to vocal opposition of Whitefield. Erskine's view that the established church had violated its covenantal responsibility to God led him to be hostile to those who would work with that church.

Myers' book on Ebenezer Erskine is an important contribution to our understanding of Scottish Christianity in the eighteenth century. It will be useful for historians looking at the political tensions between church and state relations, but will also be helpful for theologians and ministers who want to understand the theological debates that drive disputes over antinomianism and legalism.

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God's Ambassadors: The Westminster Assembly and the Reformation of the English Pulpit, 1643-1653. By Chad Van Dixhoorn. Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2017. ISBN: 9781601785343. xxvi + 215pp. £33.50.

In the last decade, there has been a growing interest in the Westminster Assembly. The gathering met primarily during the English civil war, and has been most known for producing the Westminster Confession of Faith, as well as the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms. These documents are still used around the world as constitutional documents for many denominations, although predominantly Presbyterians. There is, however, growing interest not only in the documents the Assembly released, but the activities the Assembly conducted as well. Chad Van Dixhoorn gives us a good analysis of the ways in which the Assembly members worked to overturn the state of pulpit ministry in the Church of England and install ministers whom they found to be faithful in holiness of life and quality of preaching.

An increasing number of scholars argue that religion played a key role in causing the English civil war. Van Dixhoorn picks up that line of scholarship and argues that religious factors were not only an ideological concern for clergy in England, but they also had imminently practical concerns as well. The scope of this book covers what actions the Assembly members took because they were 'obsessed with pulpit reform.' (p. xv) Although not part of the initial charge in calling the Assembly, a committee was formed to examine ministerial candidates, and this committee was active for the entire life of the Assembly. The body of this volume explains the background and theory behind the activities of this committee.

Part one and two focus on more traditionally historical matters. Part one gives contextual information about the Assembly, its calling and its relationship to Parliament. This is an incredibly helpful treatment of the troubles the Assembly faced, and explains how they often sought after results for which Parliament cared little. Conflict that 'godly' ministers and theologians had with Archbishop William Laud and his anti-Calvinistic impositions on the church were very much in focus. The Assembly was very much concerned to see the ministers of the Laudian persuasion replaced with ministers of the Reformed persuasion. Part two explores the debates and conclusions of the committee for examining ministers. This fascinating section of the book discusses the disagreements that took place about what the task of the minister really was to be and what qualified candidates for that task. There was an apparent suspicion of candidates because the Assembly members did not always trust their references

that testified to their holiness of life. The Assembly examined the candidate for character and also for ability. Learning was an important factor for the committee and they insisted that ministers be of a certain intellectual calibre. As informative as Van Dixhoorn's discussion is here for understanding seventeenth century concerns, it also gives us significant insight into why some modern denominations still insist so thoroughly on an educated clergy and rigorous vetting of ministerial candidates.

Whereas parts one and two discuss historical factors and debates that shaped the life of the Assembly's committee to examine ministers, part three looks into why they thought this was an important exercise at all. All the Assembly members thought preaching was of the utmost importance for the church. The designation 'ambassador' has particular significance (p. 116). Preachers were in fact sent by God to deliver his Word, going so far as to say, 'preaching of the Word of God is in a very real and proper sense the Word of God.' (p. 125) In this way, preaching is a true means of grace, or, a real encounter with the grace of God. The Assemblymen considered preaching to be the primary way that God used to bring people to salvation (p. 126). The emphasis of the Assembly on preaching was shaped by the conflicts with Laudianism in the 1630s. The Laudians had emphasized the sacraments as more important than the preached Word, and had put them in competition. The Assembly, by contrast, emphasized the preached Word as primary because 'the preached Word could be used for both the conversion and the strengthening of the Christian, the sacraments only for the latter.' (p. 130) The rest of the book explores the theory that undergirded the convictions held by the Assembly.

Van Dixhoorn's book is a very helpful examination of the concerns that drove the Westminster Assembly to change things not only at the confessional level of the church, but in the pulpits themselves. In contrast to Ireland, where Protestants attempted to enforce Reformation by imposition, this English synod worked to reform from the ground up. Instead of hoping that the confessional position trickled down into pulpits and then to people, they put confessional ministers directly into churches. Part of this, of course, has to do with greater resources available in England compared to Ireland, but it also demonstrates how thorough the concern was at the Westminster Assembly to reform the English pulpit.

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All that is in God: Evangelical Theology and the Challenge of Classical Theism. By James E. Dolezal. Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2017. ISBN: 9781601785541. 176pp. £15.99.

If you're looking for a readable, short, and well-written primer in the classical doctrine of God then this book will do the trick. In six chapters and a conclusion and at around 150 pages, this would be a good book for an intermediate class in systematic theology or the doctrine of God. It deals with some standard worries about the classical position, such as issues raised with divine simplicity in recent times by the likes of Alvin Plantinga. But it doesn't deal with *all* the difficulties (this is, after all, a primer).

For instance, in response to Ryan Mullins's worries that divine simplicity entails the denial of any real distinctions in the Godhead, though the divine persons are said to be relations that are real, the author simply asserts that divine simplicity doesn't deny real distinctions in God, only those distinctions that would imply composition. The reader is left to ponder how any distinction can fail to imply composition in God if it is a *real* distinction. Similarly, in responding to alternatives to the classical view of the Trinity, the author takes on what he calls 'theistic mutualism,' (what is more often called, 'theistic personalism,' the idea that God is just a very big person with distinct properties and states). But he doesn't mention the recent penchant for relative identity and compositional accounts of the Godhead, which are (to my way of thinking) the most promising alternatives to the classical 'Latin' versions of the Trinity discussed today.

A more methodological worry has to do with the motivation for the classical view. The author seems to think that it should be upheld because it is traditional. Theological tradition is often a good thing, of course. However, an appeal to tradition is surely an insufficient reason for holding a view. One surely needs some principled reason for holding to the classical theistic picture other than the claim that it is traditional. (For instance, there is a tradition of Arianism. But appealing to the tradition of Arianism is insufficient as a reason for holding that Arianism is orthodox.) The author may think that his appeal to a great cloud of witnesses going back to Irenaeus, and to a number of creeds and confessions, makes good on his claims about classical theism as traditional *and* orthodox. But it is not clear to me that the tradition speaks with one voice on these matters. And it is not clear to me that theistic personalists are not able to claim their own views are in conformity to the catholic creeds and (at least some) confessions of the particular traditions to which they belong.

Two other related points are worth mentioning in this connection. First, the author does a commendable job of showing how many of the ideas he sets forth can be rooted in Scripture, understood from a cer-

tain point of view. However, sometimes he seems a little too confident about what can be gleaned from Scripture on convoluted issues about the doctrine of God. It seems to me that Scripture is metaphysically underdetermined on matters like divine simplicity, or divine immutability, which is one important reason why there are such interminable theological debates about these matters. Second, the author seems to assume that the philosophy of Aristotle is the obvious choice for classical theists. But that is not at all obvious. Suppose the theologian thinks that there are significant drawbacks with notions like 'substantial form,' and holds to a different ontology from the Aristotelians. There are a number of such thinkers today, many of whom are theistic personalists. Is there no way to be orthodox in one's theology unless one is an Aristotelian? That is surely a step too far. Surely, no one—the author of this little volume included—wants to reify a particular (pagan) philosophy as the only way to rightly understand Christian theology? However, at times he writes as if Aristotle is the obvious choice—perhaps the default choice—for classical theists. And that is likely to be a stumbling block for at least some readers able to discern the philosophy behind the theology.

Those with serious worries about divine simplicity and how it 'fits' with the Trinity may not find the answers they are looking for in this book. But those who want to get a sense of why so many today continue to find in classical theism a broadly coherent picture of the divine nature will find here a good place to start. I certainly read this work with profit and will be recommending it to students.

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Death in Adam, Life in Christ: The Doctrine of Imputation. By J. V. Fesko. Reformed, Exegetical and Doctrinal Studies. Fearn: Christian Focus, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-78191-908-8. 332pp. £12.99.

The choice of the doctrine of imputation for this first study in the new R.E.D.S. (Reformed, Exegetical and Doctrinal Studies) series reflects the author's conviction that imputation is 'of vital importance for a right and robust understanding of the doctrine of justification and ultimately the gospel.' (p. 275)

Fesko is also joint series editor. The series preface promises new studies 'informed by rigorous exegetical attention to the biblical text, engagement with the history of doctrine, with a goal of refined dogmatic formulation', alongside 'warm, pastoral application' (p. 11).

This first volume follows the recipe well, and is a promising start to the series.

Structurally, the book consists of three parts: I: History of the Doctrine; II: Exegesis; and III: Dogmatic Formulation. These are bounded by a general introduction and conclusion, but the reader is also helped by introductions and conclusions to each chapter, as well as separate 'summaries' appended to each part. The summaries are particularly useful as Fesko builds his argument and deals with alternative views and objections. His first summary in Part I is in the form of a series of twelve 'issues' (questions) raised by his historical study, to which he then offers answers on the basis of his exegetical and dogmatic conclusions at the end of Parts II and III. This structure gives the whole book a sense of direction and coherence.

Fesko's stated intention is to defend 'the thesis that the doctrine of immediate threefold imputation (Adam's guilt to all human beings, the sins of the elect to Christ, and Christ's active and passive obedience to the elect) is a biblical doctrine' (p. 22).

In Part I, Fesko explains that it was in fact the Roman Catholic theologians Catharinus and Layñez who first taught the ideas of an Adamic covenant and covenantally imputed original guilt (p. 50; pp. 73-74), although these ideas were picked up and developed by many in the Reformed tradition, following the magisterial Reformers.

Fesko's survey of the post-Reformation period includes analysis of the controversies surrounding the views of Johannes Piscator and Josua Placaeus, and the responses of Beza, Rollock, and Roberts, among others. Notable in this section is Fesko's discovery of a 'crucial piece of grammar' (a comma!) in the original of WCF which was removed from later editions of the confession: the comma seems to indicate that chapter XI of the confession contains a clear reference to both the passive and the active righteousness of Christ (p. 95).

Fesko's basic thesis will be familiar to many Reformed readers, perhaps from such works as John Murray's *The Imputation of Adam's Sin* (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1977). But, Fesko parts with Murray in his insistence that imputation must be understood in the context of a twofold covenantal structure which, he says, 'clothes the doctrine in the robe of the blood, sweat, and tears of redemptive history' (p. 22).

Indeed, it is a covenantal structure which Fesko argues in Part II is the basis for several examples of 'the individual-corporate dynamic' in scripture, including Achan's sin, David's census, and Daniel's Son of Man (pp. 177-81). In each case, the covenant binds the one to the many, so that the actions of the one are imputed to the many. Close analysis of other 'imputation texts' in the Old Testament (pp. 181-93) amounts to a convincing demonstration that the concept of imputation is not limited to the Pauline epistles.

When Fesko turns to the New Testament, he gives close attention to Romans 4, Romans 5:12-21, and 2 Corinthians 5:17-21, arguing that these texts must be interpreted with the Old Testament background in mind.

The final, doctrinal, section is lucid and persuasive, exhibiting the influence of Meredith Kline on its biblical theology, but going beyond Kline (on a nevertheless thoroughly Klinean trajectory) in a fascinating and original section on the role of the Holy Spirit in imputation (pp. 261-63).

According to Fesko, Adam must be an historical person. Fesko does not offer an extended case for Adam's historicity, but he demonstrates (in response to Barth, Enns *et al*) that the historicity of Adam is a 'pillar' of the doctrine of imputation: move it, 'and the doctrinal edifice comes crashing down' (p. 235).

Fesko interacts with contrary views both past and present throughout the book, including, most recently, Oliver Crisp (pp. 266-69). His omission of any representatives of the Federal Vision, while briefly explained in the preface (p. 15) is nevertheless to be regretted, in this reviewer's opinion.

Fesko's concluding section on the pastoral value of the doctrine of imputation is useful and heartening, and it comes across with all the more force given the depth and breadth of the foundations laid throughout the book. This is an impressive and comprehensive treatment, and deserves a wide readership.

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Philip Doddridge and the Shaping of Evangelical Dissent. By Robert Strivens. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015. ISBN: 978-1-4724-4075-4. 196pp. £65.

Readers eager to know more about the renowned Philip Doddridge (1702-51), pastor of Castle Hill Church, Northampton and tutor in a notable Dissenting Academy associated with it have not been particularly well served in recent decades. After a series of publications regarding Doddridge emerging from the researches of Geoffrey Nuttall between 1950 and the late 1970's, there was only—until very recent times—the biography of Doddridge by Malcolm Deacon (1980) added to the store. The dearth of attention would appear to have been part of a general decline in the study of Nonconformity in the eighteenth century—a tendency perhaps reflective of a decline in the vitality of this once-formidable movement. Since the passing of Nuttall in 2007, there have only been the several insightful studies of Alan Sell to shed light on eighteenth century Nonconformity's significance for theology and church history.

Yet this review has begun with the qualifier, 'until very recent times'. Strivens's fresh investigations, which are reflective of his doctoral research carried out through the University of Stirling, can be seen to be part of a renaissance of investigation of Doddridge and eighteenth century Nonconformity unfolding across the last decade. On the one hand, there is the collaborative arrangement now existing between Dr. Williams's Library Centre for Dissenting Studies and the Queen Mary University Centre for Religion and Literature in English with which is associated the work of Prof. Isabel Rivers. This collaboration has already produced several important volumes with the all-important volume *A History of the Dissenting Academies in the British Isles* soon to be released. Strivens, while working independently of this consortium, shows himself to have been abreast of this scholarship and conversant with the resources at Dr. Williams's Library. On the other hand, there does seem to be some recent stirring among historians of Nonconformity as reflected in the recent volume edited by Robert Pope, the *T&T Clark Companion to Nonconformity* (2016).

Strivens's approach to his subject can be categorized as one of reassessment. As he makes clear in an illuminating introductory section (pp. 1-19), Doddridge and his legacy are contested. His interpreters have been divided between those who have construed Doddridge as standing largely in continuity with the preceding Puritan Nonconformity which endured the 'Great Ejection' of 1662. and those who have seen in the Northampton tutor the harbinger of the eventual theological latitude which more and more characterized Nonconformity in the nineteenth century. While Strivens's loyalties are with the first group, the methodology he employs in reaching a fresh assessment often requires him to take a revisionist stance as and when the evidence calls the conventional wisdom into question.

As the subsequent chapters make plain, Doddridge was (chap. I) a great admirer of Richard Baxter (1615-1691) whose practical works he especially treasured. Yet in matters theological, his position was more akin to that of the 'moderate Calvinist', John Howe (1630-1705). This position stood in closer continuity with the earlier Reformed position, yet *without* any predilection for the use of confessions of faith or creeds. Doddridge could also be on friendly terms with confessional Calvinists such as Thomas Ridgley (1667-1734) without occupying strictly identical ground. Doddridge's position was also carefully staked out so as to safeguard against the high Calvinist error of antinomianism.

Though Congregational Independents such as Doddridge had a confessional legacy to draw on from the preceding century (i.e. the Savoy Confession of 1658), the Northampton tutor espoused the belief

(chap. II) that everything important to be believed for salvation was evident in Scripture. Strict creedal subscription might drive apart persons who—agreed on the heart of things—might differ over the articulation. As regards the doctrine of the Trinity, Doddridge's position cannot be described as robust; as to the divine Sonship, he was content to navigate between the twin heresies of Socinianism and Arianism.

A reader will not be surprised to learn that Doddridge (along with other tutors in the Dissenting Academies) interacted with John Locke (1632-1704). His volume, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), soon challenged older, more Aristotelian works for a place in the academy curriculum (chaps. III-IV). While Doddridge and other Nonconformist tutors welcomed the new and refreshing emphasis represented by Locke, they were at the same time alert to the limitations of Locke's approach as it impinged upon theological questions. Locke's approach was so dependent on empirical observation and so wedded to the employment of reason in weighing what was believable that it did not sufficiently safeguard the reality of things known only by revelation. Doddridge, like Isaac Watts before him, insisted that the soul of man is to be accepted as eternal on biblical grounds—even though empirical observation cannot buttress this confidence.

Doddridge both in voice and in print was accustomed to extol the importance of proclamation; he was insistent that Christian prose (spoken or written) should be characterized by simplicity and plainness—while eschewing things coarse. He wanted his young charges to find acceptance in polite society while focusing above all on clarity in gospel communication (chap. V). Yet Strivens feels bound to acknowledge that Doddridge both as a very young man, and subsequently, often fell below his own articulated standard. His sermons and practical writings were quite capable of displaying artifice and literary flourish—even when the author conceived of a purer ideal.

Doddridge both by his own devotional habits and by his practical writings inculcated a quite intense devotional ideal entailing private adoration of God, meditation on Scripture and sung praise (chap. VI). He was just as keen that there be devotional exercises for the entire household; one of his most popular publications, the *Family and Closet Expositor* (commencing 1739) was intended to supply help for thoughtful family Bible readings. In this respect, Strivens shows that Doddridge's ideals were essentially those of his Puritan forbears.

Examined last of all is the question of what may be inferred about Doddridge's eventual legacy (given his short life) by the circle of friendships he maintained. (chap. VII). Here, Strivens is at pains to point out that Doddridge kept at arm's length persons of speculative theological

views, preferring instead the intimate friendship of those who, like himself, were moderate in their Calvinism as well as those whose orthodoxy was measured by their confessional loyalty. It is here that Strivens comes closest to opening up the question on which the inquisitive reader will be seeking guidance: what of Doddridge's legacy given the relative fragility of the moderating theological position he chose to maintain?

This question, alas, lies beyond the scope of Strivens's most helpful reassessment. It is to be hoped that on the basis of the even-handedness demonstrated in this work, we may expect a second Doddridge volume from this author. When one realizes that Doddridge's *Course of Lectures on the Principal Subjects in Pneumatology, Ethics and Divinity*—both in contemporary hand-copied manuscripts and (after 1763) in eventual print format—became a principal resource in Nonconformist academies (whether Presbyterian, Baptist, or Independent) across the land, one senses that there is a further story to be told about the legacy (for good or ill) of this Northampton tutor.

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The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theology, 1600–1800. Edited by Ulrich L. Lehner, Richard A. Muller and A. G. Roeber. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-19-993794-3. xv + 668pp. £112.50.

In *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theology*, Ulrich Lehner, Richard Muller and A. G. Roeber have brought together forty-three scholars to offer an invaluable and wide-ranging overview of theology in the period from (loosely) 1600–1800. This volume contains forty-two essays that introduce readers to a variety of issues in early modern theology, ranging from studies of key theological concepts, such as predestination and providence, through to discussions of the interaction between theology and philosophy.

The volume is divided into three parts. Part I contains three essays that set the context for the rest of the volume. Ronnie Po-chia Hsia's essay examines the developments in Protestant and Catholic missions from 1500–1800, and serves as a valuable reminder that discussions about early modern theology cannot neglect a global perspective. Ulrich Leinsle's chapter introduces readers to the various sources, methods and forms for early modern theology, observing that the latter two were often linked. Paul Shore examines the development of the confessional state noting the importance of the 'interplay of secular and religious forces.' (p. 54)

Part II contains twenty-six essays that constitute the heart of the volume. The first twenty of these essays explore specific aspects of Cath-

olic, Reformed, and Lutheran theologies, while the remaining six offer overviews of Anabaptist, Arminian, Jansenist, Moravian, Pietist, and Socinian theologies. Through these contributions, readers are introduced to the key theological debates in the early modern period, its leading cast of theologians, and the current state of scholarly research.

It is worth mentioning two chapters from this section by way of illustration. Jean-Louis Quantin's essay on 'Catholic Moral Theology, 1550–1800' offers an insightful glimpse into the competing approaches to determining issues of morality within early modern Catholicism. Quantin traces the rise and fall of probabilism as a key form of Catholic moral theology. Probabilism allowed individuals to act against their own conscience if they thought that the opinion of another was more probable. Quantin shows how it grew out of Catholic casuistry, but ultimately fell from favour after it was criticised by the Rigorists, who accorded more weight to Scripture and the church fathers. Quantin's essay skilfully guides the reader through the key debates in this nuanced area of early modern Catholic theology. Crawford Gribben's essay on 'Early Modern Reformed Eschatology' is a similarly fine example of how a potentially complicated area of theology is introduced clearly and concisely in this volume. Gribben plots the development of Reformed eschatology, showing how it was initially defined in opposition to Catholic beliefs about purgatory and Anabaptist ideas about the millennium, but that 'millennial theory... became almost creedal' (p. 267) in seventeenth-century England. Gribben observes 'a cooling of eschatological hopes' (p. 268) after the Thirty Years' War, but notes that the eighteenth-century revivals helped to drive eschatological interest again. The fact that contributors are able to explore the development of theological ideas over two centuries, or more, in their essays is certainly one of the strengths of the volume.

The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theology is arguably at its strongest though, when the chapters facilitate some degree of comparison between the different theological confessions. For example, Marius Reiser, Carl Trueman, and Benjamin Mayes each contributed a chapter on scripture and exegesis (in Catholic, Reformed and Lutheran theologies respectively). Since these chapters cover similar ground, it is possible for the reader to consider the similarities and differences between these traditions. That being said, not every topic receives such equal treatment across confessional lines. While the Catholic and Lutheran views on the sacraments are the subjects of dedicated chapters, the Reformed position is simply incorporated into a broader chapter on 'Church and Church/State Relations in the Post-Reformation Reformed Tradition'. Ian Hazlett's discussion of the sacraments in this chapter offers a helpful overview, but

a more comprehensive examination of their place in Reformed thought would have been beneficial for readers.

Part III contains thirteen chapters focusing on the interplay between early modern western theologies and other religions, churches, and philosophies. Stephen Burnett's chapter on 'Western Theologies and Judaism in the Early Modern World' underscores the confessional dynamics at play in this period, by noting that the authors of anti-Jewish polemical works were 'shaped by the need to establish clear theological boundaries between themselves and other confessional churches, schismatics, anti-Trinitarians, and atheists, as well as with Judaism.' (p. 474) Both Burnett's chapter and Emanuele Colombo's contribution on 'Western Theologies and Islam in the Early Modern World' also note the increase in language learning during this period, as Christians sought to enhance their understanding of Judaism and Islam, and to refute their opponents, by mastering Hebrew and Arabic. Other chapters in this section also consider the interaction of philosophers, such as Descartes, Leibniz, Wolff, Spinoza, Rosseau, and Kant, with early modern theology. Regardless of what one may think of their conclusions, it is clear from these chapters that these philosophers were deeply engaged with the theological issues of their day, and that some even sought to defend certain theological ideas. Ursula Goldenbaum notes, for example, that, 'Leibniz and Wolff after him developed their metaphysics to address the challenge modern science posed to the theologies of all three Christian denominations.' (p. 561)

In short, *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theology* is an impressively wide-ranging and detailed volume that packs a huge amount into less than seven hundred pages. As a result, it will almost certainly be a key point of reference for scholars and students of both theology and early modern history for quite some time.

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