Reviews

Bavinck: A Critical Biography. By James Eglinton. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020. ISBN: 9781540961358 (cloth). xxiv + 450pp. £26.39.

The Dutch theologian Herman Bavinck (1854-1921) is one of the most significant theologians in the Reformed tradition. The recent publication (2003-2008) of his four volume *Reformed Dogmatics* in English has introduced him to a much wider audience and it is good that a new biography has been written to further that work of making Bavinck more widely known.

This biography is a significant contribution to our understanding, not only of Bavinck himself but of the whole neo-Calvinist movement of which he was a leader. We are indebted to the author, James Eglinton, Meldrum Senior Lecturer in Reformed Theology at New College in the University of Edinburgh. The detailed archival research undertaken and the depth of scholarship involved is impressive and apparent throughout, yet it is written in a most readable way, making it accessible to a wide audience of readers.

Previous biographies and biographical comments conspired to paint a picture of a 'divided' Bavinck. They spoke of an 'orthodox' Bavinck and a 'modern' (in theological and philosophical terms) Bavinck. Eglinton examined this thesis in an earlier volume, *Trinity and Organism* and found it wanting. He concluded that Bavinck lived as an orthodox theologian in a changing culture and remained a 'son of the Secession' (referring to the establishment of the Christian Reformed Church in 1834, of which his father became a minister). Given the 'collapse of the "two Bavinck" hermeneutic' (p. xx), Eglinton sets out in this volume to portray an 'integrated' Bavinck, who was both 'orthodox' and 'modern' at the same time, a truly scientific theologian. Eglinton's earlier book was concerned with Bavinck's theological method but now he turns to a full-scale biography.

As Eglinton demonstrates, Bavinck was born into early modern society and lived his adult years in late modern society. The most significant point of change being 1848, the year of revolutions, after which the Netherlands soon became a democratic state with a constitutional monarchy, significant civil liberties and a functional separation of church and state. His father and others having been persecuted (and some fined or imprisoned) for leaving the state church at the secession of 1834, Herman Bavinck grew up in a society where one could choose one's religious allegiance without fear of reprisals.

Throughout the book, one theme returns frequently, namely, the nature and location of Christian theology. Should it have a place in the university, or should it be taught in a Church-controlled seminary? Bavinck's life was somewhat framed by this dichotomy. He started his education at the Theological School in Kampen (the school of the secession church) but was dissatisfied and, after a year, went to the University of Leiden. Many of the Seceders were horrified and some were angry at his father for permitting this but Bavinck wanted a 'scientific' education and believed firmly that theology was the 'queen' of the sciences and ought to be at the heart of a university, influencing all of the other subjects.

The same dichotomy surfaced again in his teaching career. He began as a lecturer in the Theological School at Kampen but ended up in the Free University of Amsterdam which had been founded by Abraham Kuyper. He had previously turned down several offers from Kuyper to make this move, always hoping that the Theological School and the Free University would merge. Although Bavinck only served a short pastorate, he was actively involved in the church throughout his life and worked hard to seek the unification of his own Christian Reformed Church (Seceder) with Abraham Kuyper's Dolerende, which was finally accomplished in 1892. Bavinck's great concern thereafter was that the Theological School in Kampen (Seceder) and the Free University of Amsterdam (notionally Dolerende) should be united but in this he failed. Only when it became clear that this was not going to happen did he move to Amsterdam. In the Free University it was possible to do what was not possible in either Kampen or Leiden, namely, to work out a Christian Reformed theology which impacted on the whole of the academic curriculum and indeed, the whole of life.

Kuyper's vision of a Calvinism which is not defined purely in terms of soteriology (the 'five points') but rather impacts on all of thought and life, including science, medicine, the arts, literature, politics and everything else, was astonishing in its design and accomplishment. It led Kuyper to become a minister, to found a Christian newspaper, to establish a Christian political party, to create a Christian university and ultimately to become Prime Minister of the Netherlands. This understanding of the nature of Calvinism soon became known as neo-Calvinism and was taken up enthusiastically by Bavinck. One key element of this neo-Calvinism was the development of a Christian 'worldview' and this was a key theme in Bavinck's writing, both as a subject in itself and as a methodology for considering other subjects.

Like Kuyper, Bavinck was widely involved in promoting Calvinism, in his writing, in his ministry in the church, in his involvement in Kuyper's Anti-Revolutionary political party, in his time as editor of a Christian

newspaper and in his period of service as a (part-time) member of the Dutch Parliament.

Bavinck's main focus in his teaching career was Christian dogmatics. This accelerated later when other teaching responsibilities were withdrawn, enabling him to concentrate more directly on teaching and writing in this area. The legacy of this work is his *Reformed Dogmatics* but, given his vision for a Calvinism which impacts every area of life, he wrote and spoke widely on other matters: ethics, Christian education, Christianity and culture, psychology, philosophy, evangelism and foreign missions, the expansion of voting rights, education for girls, modernism and much more. He was also involved in the production of a new Dutch translation of the Bible. He truly was a polymath and his influence was widely recognised. He received a knighthood from the Queen of the Netherlands and was appointed to membership in the Royal Academy of Sciences. Indeed, when he visited the USA, as a distinguished Dutch visitor, he was granted a meeting with President Roosevelt.

In the final years of his life, Bavinck became more and more concerned by the influence of Marx and Nietzsche on Europe in general and the Netherlands in particular. He saw before his own eyes the disintegration of Christian culture and the replacement of religion by atheism. This being the case, he began to focus much more on an apologetic which sought to create a coalition to affirm Christianity.

Dr Eglinton has produced a fine volume which, as the various endorsements of the book affirm, is likely to be the standard biography of Bavinck for generations to come. What might we expect next? Clearly, it is not possible in a biography of this nature to expound in detail the 'content' of the *Reformed Dogmatics* and to compare and contrast it with other dogmatic writing in the Reformed tradition, such as the work of Cunningham, Orr, Heppe, Hodge and Warfield. Might Dr Eglinton consider writing a companion volume to Bavinck's *Reformed Dogmatics*, expounding the content, showing its distinctive moves and setting it in the wider context of Reformed theology? One can only hope...

Everyone who takes Reformed theology seriously should read this book. Scottish readers might well reflect on the differences between the Calvinism of Scotland and the neo-Calvinism of the Netherlands and consider how our own Scottish theology might be reviewed and reconstructed.

A.T.B. McGowan, Rutherford Centre for Reformed Theology

Exodus, Freedom to Serve God. By Antony Billington. (The Gateway Seven Series). London: IVP, 2019. ISBN: 978-1-78974-084-4 print; 987-1-78974-085-1 eBook. 80pp. £4.99.

Ezekiel, Living in the Light of God's Presence. By Antony Billington. (The Gateway Seven Series). London: IVP, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-78974-161-2. 80pp. £4.99

In the words of Tracy Cotterell, the series editor, '*The Gateway Seven* series selects seven books of the Bible representing seven genres: Proverbs (Wisdom), Exodus (Law), 1 Peter (Letters), Ezekiel (Prophecy), Ruth (Narrative), Mark (Gospel), and Revelation (Apocalyptic). The series, beginning with Proverbs, offers study guides for each of the books with a whole-life discipleship perspective. The mini-features sprinkled through the studies, along with the questions and thoughts for discussion, help you understand each book within its background and genre as well as the content of the book itself. Each study has been crafted with the same desire: to offer a gateway to a deeper love of God's word and richer insights into its implications for all of life, Monday through Sunday' (https://licc.org.uk/ourresources/gateway-seven-series/).

Crafted they are, carefully chosen and beautifully presented. Each study emerged from the 'Bible Days' LICC (London Institute for Contemporary Christianity) runs for leaders, preachers and church members. SETS member Antony Billington is Theological Advisor to LICC, which was founded in 1982 out of John Stott's desire to enable Christians and churches to engage with scripture and contemporary culture. Antony also pastors the Beacon Church, Ashton-in-Makerfield, and is thus very well-placed to approach three of these 'Gateway Guides.' So far, I have seen the first two; Proverbs is his third.

After an introduction to the series and the Bible book, participants are invited to identify the frontline where God has placed them, 'an everyday place where you live, work, study, or play, and where you're likely to connect with people who aren't Christians' (*Exodus* p. 15; *Ezekiel* p. 13). With that in mind, the studies recognise the size of the task and encourage us to read right through Exodus and Ezekiel in the six weeks the studies take. Then the studies begin.

The studies link with *The Bible Project* videos which 'say a lot and say it well' (*Exodus* p. 11; *Ezekiel* p. 8). Both Exodus and Ezekiel are big books to tackle in Bible study groups, and Antony has chosen to emphasize encounter with God and our purpose as his people. 'First thoughts' are followed by the selected text in full, questions to enable us to engage, commentary alongside, a story to show how a person or group have been

impacted by the text, and a review article (for example an overview of Exodus; a description of the prophet's role). Each section provides space to write impressions, notes and lessons, communicating the expectation we will take time to invest.

As we have come to expect from LICC, these are high quality, clear and insightful introductions to the message of each book and the range of writing that makes up the single scripture story. While we wrestle with how to connect and keep up with our culture, LICC's vision is for all our churches to recognise the potential impact of our congregations scattered during the week. I said before that I believe this to be the heart of a new reformation.

Both the writer and the layouts of these studies serve the text faithfully and communicate the message very clearly, and connect these Old Testament books through to Jesus and the further horizon of the New Testament. I cannot wait to use them in my congregation.

Mike Parker, Edinburgh

Anglicanism—A Reformed Catholic Tradition. By Gerald Bray. Bellingham WA: Lexham Press, 2021. ISBN: 978-1-68359-4369 print; 978-1-68359-4376 digital. 169pp. £23.99; Kindle £7.30.

Across almost all our historic denominations, significant realignments are going on. While established patterns crumble and change shape, new networks emerge. We need the ministry of perspective to discern where these changes fit with both the past and the future.

Gerald Bray brings just such perspective. He reveals his instincts as he dedicates this book to his 'Anglican students at Beeson Divinity School who are bearing witness to this tradition in an ecumenical and evangelical context'. This beautifully presented book is deceptively short, tightly packed from his years of teaching and research in church history and theology. A brilliant introduction to all things Anglican/Episcopalian, it offers a panoramic survey of the origins of Anglican church thinking, and as up-to-date a snapshot of contemporary movements within Anglicanism as you could wish for given the time-lags in publishing.

Bray's main thrust is to show Anglicanism is firmly in the Western, Protestant, Reformed Catholic tradition, despite the unusual circumstances of its separation from Rome in the sixteenth century, and thus 'an integral part of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church that is confessed in the Nicene Creed' (p. 54). He has written many times on the foundations of Anglicanism, notably in '*The Faith we Confess—An Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles*' (Latimer Trust, 2009). At the heart of this book is a fresh exposition of The 39 Articles of Religion, 'the Church

of England's confession of faith' (p. 16), which reached final form in 1571 and have been published in many Anglican Prayer Books since. Either side of this exposition is a comprehensive introduction ('What is Anglicanism?'), and three brief and immensely useful chapters on 'The Book of Common Prayer', 'Church Government (Ecclesiology)' and 'The Anglican World Today'.

Along the way, readers may find some surprises. On Page 1, 'Anglicanism as we think of it today is essentially a nineteenth century invention…' Page 10 reveals that calling the Monarch 'Defender of the Faith' was the title given to Henry VIII by Pope Leo X after the treatise he wrote against Martin Luther (*Assertion of the Seven Sacraments*). Page 15 examines the oft-heard assumption that 'Many modern Anglicans define their church as a "middle way" between Roman Catholicism and a Calvinistic kind of Protestantism [In Scotland, Presbyterianism]'; 'but this is incorrect'. And on page 16 we hear that *The 39 Articles*… preceded 'the more detailed Westminster Confession of Faith which was composed nearly a century later and began as a conscious attempt to improve the 39 Articles… [p. 22] *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, composed in 1646, was largely the work of members of the Church of England and in that sense can claim to be an Anglican document.'

I do have two tiny quibbles. Bray describes 'Anglicanism as Reformed, not Lutheran, Anabaptist, or *Pentecostal/Charismatic*' (p. 55). As I understand it, 'charismatic' is a stream running through churches and across churchmanship lines, including many Anglican churches, and not to be confused with Pentecostalism. And his description of churches like the Scottish Episcopal Church as 'Rebel' (p. 161) might better be 'Churches with Rebel roots' if many of my contemporaries are not to dismiss his analysis.

In short, this book brilliantly and succinctly captures the essence of Anglicanism. It will be, in turn, helpful for Episcopalians and Anglicans to understand their family roots; a valuable summary for non-Anglicans, wondering what kind of animal we are; and infuriating for those who like their theology tied down more closely and their bases covered and for whom Anglicanism is far too open-ended. For me, therein lies its genius, its usefulness in both public worship and apologetics, and its flexibility and portability across global cultures.

Bray ends this book wondering what the future holds. He is very well aware of global distinctives and present fluidity: 'Whatever happens, Anglicanism is not static and is certain to look very different in 2100 from the way it appears now, though at deeper levels it may still be much the same… Quite what that will mean in practice, we shall have to wait and

see' (p. 166). Indeed, pray for us, and may we be obedient as the Lord leads us.

Mike Parker, Edinburgh

If Jesus is Lord: Loving our Enemies in an Age of Violence. By Ronald J. Sider. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019. ISBN: 9780801036286. xvi + 240pp. £16.99.

The recent five-year extension of the new START treaty between the United States and Russia may help to relieve anxieties of a possible accidental nuclear inferno. Nevertheless, a book on pacifism is timely, given that the rise in the number of smaller nations possessing atomic weapons means the fear of nuclear conflict has not gone away. Ronald Sider, a well-known pacifist advocate, provides in this book a strong stimulus and an important resource not only for fellow pacifists, but also for 'just war' defenders, to review their thinking and praying about war and peace in the 21st century.

The book begins with a review of Jesus' rejection of the military messiahship anticipated by his contemporaries. Sider goes on to note Jesus' dismissal of the crowd's desire to declare him king and his deliberate choice of peaceful symbolism in his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. This is followed by a review of the Sermon on the Mount, focusing on the command to love our enemies. Next there is an exploration of Jesus' other teachings, including his inaugural sermon in the Nazareth synagogue, his refusal to call fire down on inhospitable Samaritans, and his challenge to disciples to take up their cross. Sider then passes to review the teaching on peace in the rest of the New Testament, and follows this with an appraisal of texts considered to be problematic for pacifists, like 'I did not come to bring peace, but a sword' (Matt. 10:34).

The second half of the book focuses on examining issues arising in following Jesus as Lord in our violent age. For Sider, the overriding theological issue is that the New Testament derives Christian ethics from God's redeeming activity in Christ on the cross, rather than from the fallen condition of humanity. The author freely acknowledges that pacifism presents problems for thinkers like, C. S. Lewis and Oliver O'Donovan, who regard it as socially irresponsible. Needless to say, Sider robustly refutes such charges, before making the point that Just War Thinking also has its difficulties. The book ends with a review of Christians and killing in Church History.

This book has much to commend it. It provides an enthusiastic introduction to Christian pacifism, and does so by arguing biblically and theologically. It recognizes that pacifists and Just War advocates can, and

should, cooperate in many ways to minimize social violence and to reduce the threat of war. On the other hand, Sider's biblical interpretation raises some questions. For example, he grants minimal recognition of the state as divinely sanctioned, and in effect ignores its right to 'bear the sword' (Rom. 13:4) in self-defence. And when civil rulers do 'bear the sword', invariably their actions are characterized as 'violence' rather than 'force'.

Furthermore, making Jesus' command to love our enemies (Matt. 5:44) the master hermeneutic in understanding the Old Testament, bypasses some key features of Old Testament ethics. The fact that the command to love enemies and the prohibition of killing were already established in Old Testament ethics is glossed over, while, in contrast, divine commands to kill in specific instances are highlighted. The ambivalence of these divine directives undoubtedly creates problems for all Christian interpreters, not least for Sider. He quotes Greg Boyd's assertion that 'God allows the human authors of Scripture to choose to say things about God that are false' (p. 157). While appearing sympathetic to Boyd's stance, Sider also wonders whether it differs substantially from the view that says the Old Testament is wrong and must be rejected at certain points. His indecision leaves this important issue hanging in the air.

Sider's treatment of nonviolence and the atonement also raises questions. He readily affirms the reality of God's wrath against sinners and rejects divine child abuse theories, but he refutes Packer's assertion of propitiation being the only means whereby God's no could become a yes. 'An infinite, all-knowing, all-loving God could have chosen any number of ways to forgive us' (p. 189).

Sider's theology may in places be open to question, but his pacifist zeal will challenge his readers to become peacemakers, ready to pray more and to work harder for peace in our fallen, broken world.

Fergus Macdonald, Edinburgh

Mere Discipleship: Growing in Wisdom and Hope. By Alister E. McGrath. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2018. ISBN: 978-0281079940. xiii+158pp. £9.99.

In this book, Alister McGrath has gathered a series of lectures, addresses and sermons, given over the period of 2010–2017, which focus on the area of discipleship: specifically, what McGrath terms 'discipleship of the mind'. In chapter one, he explains, 'I want to commend a "discipleship of the mind", in which we deliberately and intentionally cultivate a Christian habit of thought, as part of the grace-wrought process of transformation by the gospel' (p. 3). Being a collection of public addresses, the style of writing is accessible at the popular level. This book would be useful to

those concerned about how the mind, intelligence and thought can impact and be shaped by faith in Jesus Christ; especially ministers or interested lay people. This book does not provide anything like a 'discipleship programme' but acts as a stimulant for further reflection.

The book is split into three sections. In section one, McGrath provides five reflections on this main topic: these include exploring the potential ways faith interacts with our minds; how the creeds or confessions of the Church provide a framework which shapes our understanding of faith; the importance of the Church community in guiding that understanding; the significant role of books as part of this faith journey; and using the image of a balcony and road to describe Christian discipleship. McGrath's argument is refreshing. His aim seems to be to reclaim ground which has perceived to have been 'lost' to atheism and secularism. He argues persuasively that the rational mind is as much a part of the journey of faith as, say, the 'heart', and that having faith in Jesus Christ does not require one to abandon intelligence or rationality. One criticism is that this section can feel quite dense and requires real focus from the reader in order to follow and grasp the depth of McGrath's arguments; which is perhaps to be expected given the encouragement to use the mind and intelligence in the pursuit of the Christian faith.

In section two, McGrath presents the views of four other theologians on the theme of discipleship: those of Dorothy Sayers, C.S. Lewis, John Stott, and J.I. Packer. McGrath explains that the inclusion of these other perspectives stems from his awareness that theological thought interweaves and intermingles. He is, therefore, endeavouring to present perspectives on discipleship which go beyond his own experience. The inclusion of 'other voices' does add breadth and further affirms McGrath's encouragement to think broadly and critically about discipleship.

The final section contains four sermons. Beginning with the idea of discipleship of the mind, McGrath leads the reader toward the hope of the Christian faith, arguing that this hope, while foolish to some, is not unintelligent; it is robust and can be believed credibly. Ending the book with sermons provides a pastoral grounding for McGrath's arguments, which is particularly useful for a Church setting.

If you come to this book seeking a discipleship programme for the mind, you will be disappointed: McGrath does not provide this, nor is that his intention. His aim is to encourage Christians to think and reflect further on how their minds are part of their journey of discipleship: and he certainly achieves this aim. This book is, therefore, a welcome and thought-provoking contribution into the field of discipleship and is a helpful reminder not to neglect the role of the mind in following Christ.

Stuart Love, Clincarthill Parish Church, Glasgow

Preaching Hope in Darkness: Help for Pastors in Addressing Suicide from the Pulpit. By Scott M. Gibson and Karen E. Mason. Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2020. ISBN: 9781683594116. 288pp. £23.99.

This book landed on my desk for review at a time when I have been grieving with a dear friend over the suicide of his 24-year-old son. The devastation for the loved ones of a suicide victim can scarcely be overstated. It is traumatic, destabilising and incapacitating. Sadly, it is also increasingly prevalent and in the UK is now the commonest cause of death in men under 50. If pastors have not already dealt with suicide, they are likely to be faced with this tragic reality sooner or later. Furthermore, as pastors preach week by week to their congregations, it is almost certain there will be listeners who have contemplated or even attempted suicide in the past, or are currently struggling with suicidal ideation. As the authors point out, this is a topic discussed infrequently in our churches and preached about even less.

Happily, the title of this book is misleading and it concerns so much more than pulpit preaching. Gibson's background as a homiletics professor is reflected in valuable preaching advice together with sample sermons. Mason brings her expertise in suicide prevention to the entire pastoral task, not just the pulpit. This combination makes the book more a manual for pastoral care. Each chapter starts with a case study, connecting what is said subsequently to real life example. There is solid practical advice on pastoral care (especially visiting), dealing with families, medical staff, or congregations with questions—as well as advice on and worked examples of preaching for funerals of suicide victims, preaching to a congregation in which there has been a suicide, and, perhaps most challengingly, preaching to prevent suicide. A holistic approach is evident throughout in which spiritual, emotional and mental health are not separated and pastors are advised when to seek help from mental health professionals.

The theme of suicide prevention dominates. The authors recommend 'seven fences' for building a church culture suffused with the Gospel that does everything possible to discourage suicide and gives people reasons to live. (These are preaching and teaching on: connection to others; the worth and dignity of every person; hope; moral objections to suicide and reasons to live; self-control to develop the habit of choosing life; grief and suffering; and, lastly, encouraging people to reach our for help. Each of these is explained in more detail.)

The authors explicitly address the issue of an emerging generation demonstrably more emotionally fragile than those before and in which suicide rates are rising. A whole chapter is devoted to ministering to youth

and young adults and, in an appendix, there is also a Bible study programme on the 'seven fences' for youth groups (though this may need 'translation' to the UK culture).

Overall, this book is a call to churches to be the sort of communities in which people are connected, are able to be honest and vulnerable, and are able to lament together over the pain and sorrows of life. It is an extended plea for properly biblical community as the environment most likely to dissuade people from suicide and give them reasons to live.

Apart from the misleading title, I have only one other criticism. It is striking that in a book that rightly advocates high levels of pastoral responsiveness and intense relational involvement in the lives of hurting people, there is no warning of the dangers. Many reading this review will know that responsiveness without boundaries and relational involvement without self-awareness of one's need to be needed (and enjoyment of helping) is a recipe for pastoral burnout and personal disaster. A discussion of how to care and pastor well and wisely recognising these common pitfalls would have made this a much better book. Similarly, an expanded section addressing ways in which the church may serve the wider community and be light in the increasingly emotionally and mentally dark places of our contemporary culture would have been helpful.

In summary, this is a really helpful and Gospel-centred book. It can be read profitably by any established pastor, but may be most helpful for those in training. At several points in the book the authors highlight mistakes made mostly by the young, inexperienced and overconfident. We may pray this book finds its way into the hands of such young pastors! It deserves to be widely read and those who do read it will not only become better preachers as a result, but they will become wiser, more sensitive, better informed and more loving pastors.

Mark Stirling, Chalmers Institute, St Andrews

Angels: What the Bible Really Says About God's Heavenly Host. By Michael S. Heiser. Bellingham, WA. Lexham Press, 2018. ISBN: Print, 9781683591047; Digital, 9781683591054. xx + 223pp. £16.99.

Dr Heiser's *Angels* is the most recent of several books he has written about the unseen and supernatural beings of the Bible. This is not a long book, but it is a piece of serious scholarship. It is a relatively easy to read, and well ordered. Starting in the Old Testament, he examines the range of terminology used to describe the heavenly host. He moves on to look at developments in Second Temple Judaism, then reviews the language about angels in the New Testament. He concludes with some consideration of the various myths that have arisen in our contemporary culture.

Any reader interested in finding out more about angels would find Dr Heiser's book very informative and thoughtful.

Dr Heiser, a specialist in Hebrew and Semitic languages and history, sets out his stall in his introduction. 'Why should we care about angels? Because angelology helps us think more clearly about familiar points of biblical theology. God's supernatural family is a theological template for understanding God's relationship to his human family of believers—and our greater importance compared to them' (p. xv). The book is an extensive assessment of the Bible's teaching seen through the supernatural worldview of the ancient world.

The opening chapters of the book look at the terminology of the Old Testament as a basis for framing a theology of 'the heavenly host'. There is a hierarchy of spiritual beings in heaven of which angels make up but one, if significant, part. There are also 'ministers', 'watchers', the 'host', 'mediators', 'cherubim', and 'seraphim'. Angels form part of the heavenly or divine 'council' ('assembly') whose members variously serve, advise, and witness to God's decisions and actions. Angels have a particular role as 'messengers', appearing on earth in human form at key moments of the Bible story, representing, or 'imaging', God himself. Readers will be familiar with the occasions in the Bible story when angels appear as messengers in human form.

Before moving on to consider what the New Testament says, Dr Heiser spends two chapters examining the development of Jewish thought about angels in the intertestamental period, showing how Jewish language and literature remained largely consistent with Old Testament vocabulary for God's heavenly agents. Then, in the third section of the book, he deals with the New Testament, analysing the language used there of the heavenly host. There is significant continuity with the Old Testament understanding of angels as 'messengers', with the added sense of acting as guardians or protectors. Some particular thorny issues in New Testament angelology are discussed, for example, who the angels of the seven churches in the opening chapters of Revelation are.

For centuries Christians have been fascinated by angels, and over time various myths and misconceptions have arisen. The book ends by considering and challenging these myths, for example, the extent to which we may think of angels as eternal, fallen or imperfect beings. Helpfully, *Angels* challenges the popular preconceptions of angels as having wings, carrying harps, being always female, and the idea that each one of us should have one as our 'guardian angel' (predominantly the view of some Christmas cards, Nativity plays, and the popular media). It rightly takes angels much more seriously than that, and strives to form a proper view of this part of the supernatural world, free of superstition.

Angels is helpful, but should be approached critically. I was grateful to Dr Heiser for making me think much more purposefully and carefully about angels, and their significant place in Scripture. I have a better view of heaven, and the variety and activity of its spiritual occupants. But, absorbing as this can be, I see the danger of being distracted by this from the central message of Jesus Christ and his Gospel. Surely angels are minor characters when compared with the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apostles, and Jesus himself? I remain concerned at Dr Heiser's preoccupation with his subject. In addition, at times he assumes rare interpretations, for example, Genesis 1:26 ('Let us make man in our image') is a reference to the Trinity, and not, as he states, about angels helping God in his act of creation.

If you know relatively little about angels, and want to find out more, and to come to a better, informed biblical understanding of them, this book will prove helpful. However, it should be approached critically.

Andrew Anderson, Oxford

The Fundamentals of Hebrew Accents: Divisions and Exegetical Roles beyond Syntax. By Sung Jin Park. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-108-79098-7. xv + 178pp. £26.99.

In this textbook, Park examines the Tiberian Hebrew accent system (*te'amim*) as found in the 'twenty-one' prose books of the Old Testament. The book is intended for intermediate Hebrew students in an eight-week course. The Palestinian and Babylonian accent systems appear in Appendix B while he mentions the accents used in Psalms, Proverbs, and the poetic portions of Job in Appendix C. Park's volume was published in the same month as *Basics of Hebrew Accents* by M. Futato. I will compare these volumes throughout this review.

Park begins by presenting the names and symbols of the twenty-eight Tiberian accents as well as highlighting the most important. He argues that the *soph pasuq* is the disjunctive accent delineating the verse (pp. 4–5; *contra* Futato p. 28). The accents fall either on the stressed syllable (normal), before (post-positive), or after it (pre-positive). Park discusses the Hierarchy Rule (i.e., accents govern different domains) and the Dichotomy Rule (i.e., a disjunctive can be divided by another disjunctive that is in a domain lower than it) in chapter two. Chapters three and four illustrate the conditions under which disjunctive accents can be substituted to produce 'variegated musical neumes' (pp. 23, 33).

The conjunctive accents (chapter five) were not originally part of the Tiberian Hebrew accent system but developed to connect the words between disjunctive accents. Unlike the disjunctive accents, they do not

have a pattern of hierarchy. Most disjunctive accents take two or three conjunctive accents and prefer certain conjunctives.

In chapter six, Park discusses the Simplification Rule, Division Rule, Spirantisation Rule, and the Nesige Rule. According to the Simplification Rule, a conjunctive accent can replace an excessive amount of disjunctive accents to smooth the reading process. According to the Division Rule, a phrase of two words may be further divided by a disjunctive accent if one of the words is phonologically long. According to the Spirantisation Rule, a word beginning with a *begadkefat* letter 'softens' when preceded by a conjunctive accent but 'hardens' when preceded by a disjunctive (Park references Judg. 1:8 on p. 85— *wayyillaḥamu* [conjunctive] *vene yehudah* [disjunctive] *birušalaim* 'The sons of Judah fought against Jerusalem…'). Finally, according to the Nesige Rule, a *maqqef* causes the stress to retract to avoid the juxtaposition of two stressed syllables.

Park examines the primary function of the disjunctive accents in chapter seven. He argues that accents do not always correspond to Hebrew syntax nor do they all mark stress. Subsequently, Park argues that Prosodic Analysis provides the proper avenue to comprehend the Tiberian accentual system. This is the study of the intonation and stress of an utterance. Prosodic analysis can be similar, but not identical, to syntactic analysis. For example, the phrases appearing in Genesis 14:12; 19:1; and 23:10 are syntactically identical (i.e., Conjunction w + Subject + participle of *yšb* 'to dwell' + *b* prepositional phrase with the object being a location) but there are different accents in each context (p. 107). Thus, the Masoretes mark the phrase differently in each case. After presenting criteria for connecting disjunctive accents and intonational phrases (p. 109), Park then tests his criteria on Isa. 1:10 (pp. 111–112). Additionally, Park includes analysis from Performance Structure which notes the boundaries of utterances. The most prominent break in an utterance is usually in the middle of the sentence and in the middle of each half sentence. This is where the disjunctive accents surface. Thus, Park suggests that accents mark the pauses for proper recitation (p. 115). He suggests that there is a general linguistic connection between intonation and musical melodies (pp. 139–140).

In the final chapter, Park argues that the Masoretic accents aids exegesis. For example, the accents clarify ambiguous meaning such as the placement of the phrase 'in the wilderness' in the second line of Isa. 40:3 (pp. 118–119; *contra* Futato pp. 84–86). The accents can emphasize words or phrase as does the disjunctive accent after *zo't torat* 'this is the law' in Leviticus 6:2, 7; 12:7; and 15:32. This break illustrates which 'instruction' is under discussion (p. 121). The accents can create a dramatic effect

such as the slow-motion account of Ehud stabbing Eglon in Judges 3:21 (pp. 128–129).

This book provides a useful introduction to a neglected topic. The exercises ask the student to identify and produce the accents to aid the learning process (*contra* Futato p. 100). Park's line drawing arrangement of the accentual hierarchy of disjunctives is more illustrative than Futato's tree-diagram. There are a few minor issues with this volume. Park's presentation is at points a bit terse and unclear in the first six chapters. The first six chapters do not provide a translation of the copious Hebrew examples discussed because they focus on the Tiberian accents. A translation would have reinforced the emphasis and breaks inherent in the system (though this should not be a significance hinderance to the student). Nonetheless, this resource will help students of the Hebrew text gain an appreciation for the Tiberian accentual system.

Josiah D. Peeler, University of Edinburgh

Basics of Hebrew Accents. By Mark D. Futato, Sr. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2020. ISBN: 978-0-310-09842-3. 113pp. £10.99.

Futato provides a clear and engaging introduction to the Tiberian Hebrew accent system found in the Old Testament. His work targets the intermediate student of biblical Hebrew who has just finished an introductory grammar (p. 13). Futato's volume was published in the same month as *The Fundamentals of Hebrew Accents* by S. Park. I will compare these volumes throughout this review.

In chapter one, Futato introduces the accents, their position (impositive, prepositive, and postpositive), and their jobs. He argues that there are three jobs which accents do concurrently. They mark word stress, mark the sense of the text (i.e., syntax), and aid in chanting. Chanting is connected to the sense of the text. Thus, the phonologic stress of a word, syntax, and musical considerations work together in the accentual system. He does not believe that *soph pasuq* is a disjunctive accent (*contra* Park pp. 4–5) as it does not mark word stress or appear consistently in Hebrew manuscripts (e.g., Aleppo Codex).

Futato sketches the disjunctive accents in the next chapter. He notes that the system is 'binary' by which he means there is 'continuous dichotomy' (p. 34). The text divides into two parts from the sentence level down to the phrasal level. He divides the disjunctive accents into four groups (i.e., group one and two are major disjunctives and groups three and four are minor disjunctives) alluding to the 'kingly' terminology often utilized to describe the hierarchy of power within the disjunctive accentual system. He uses a tree-diagram to represent the various levels of division in the

verse. He explores the conjunctive accents in chapter three. Throughout these two chapters, summaries appear at the end of each smaller section within the chapters, so the student is not overwhelmed by the material. The exercises at the end of each chapter provide a guided reading through a few verses to illustrate what reading with the accents means. There are exegetical and theological comments attached to these guided readings.

Futato argues that the accentual system provides a Masoretic ancient commentary on the text. He suggests there are subtle, significant differences, and errors when the reader follows the accents. An example of a subtle difference is the *atnakh* in Genesis 1:1 on *'elohim* 'God'. This is to emphasis the polemic nature of the creation account. It is Israel's God, and not another god (e.g., Marduk), who created the world (p. 68). Regarding significant differences, he notes that Genesis 6:4 provide parenthetical information regarding the *nefilim* and their presence before and after the flood (pp. 79–81). Moreover, the disjunctive between 'the Aramean' and the participle *'obed* illustrates that this should be read as a participle ('an Aramean was pursuing my father') instead of as an attributive adjective ('a wandering Aramean') in Deuteronomy 26:5 (pp. 81–83).

Futato contends that the Masoretes made mistakes when accentuating the Hebrew text. For example, he believes that the Masoretes have mistakenly separated the phrase 'in the wilderness' in Isaiah 40:3 when compared with the similar construction in Isaiah 40:6, the Septuagint and the Vulgate of Isa 40:3, and the New Testament (e.g., Matt. 3:3) quotation of this verse. Thus, this phrase should go with the first part of the verse, not the second (pp. 84–86; *contra* Park pp. 118–119). Also, *massa'* is the name of a location in North Arabia where Lemuel is king in Proverbs 31:1 instead of referring to an oracle (also *massa'*) which his mother gave him (pp. 87–89).

In chapter five, he describes the accents in 'the three' (Psalms, Proverbs, and the poetic sections of Job). There are three hierarchal groups instead of the four in the 'twenty-one'. After covering these accents briefly, he goes through Psalm 29 and comments on the accents in this text. He overviews Yeivin's guides for dividing the text in Appendix one and suggests resources for further study in Appendix two.

Futato's presentation is student-friendly and clear. It is more accessible for the beginning student than Park's volume. Throughout the individual discussions of the accents, he places a representation of the accent beside its name (contrast the approach of Park to discuss the accents without representing them after their initial introduction). His exegetical insights remind the student there is a reward to learning the system. This volume

would be a welcome addition to a beginning Hebrew course since most introductory textbooks do not include this material (p. 13).

Josiah D. Peeler, University of Edinburgh

The Case for Biblical Archaeology: Uncovering the Historical Record of God's Old Testament People. John D. Currid. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2020. ISBN 9781629953601. xiii + 263pp. £23.99.

The title of the volume states the intent: to make a case for studying biblical archaeology, not in order to prove the Bible, but 'to confirm, illuminate, and give "earthiness" to the Scriptures' (p. 3). Three major sections survey the history and practice of archaeology (part 1), the physical geography of the land (part 2), and varied aspects of ancient Israelites society illuminated by material remains, including architecture, ceramics, and burial practices (part 3). The book is written in such a way as to include beginners but also provides much of interest to those already knowledgeable about the culture and history of the ancient Middle East. A summary of key terms, discussion questions, and guidance for further reading closes each chapter.

I found Currid's book interesting and I'm grateful to him for deepening my knowledge of the biblical world. If nothing else, *The Case for Biblical Archaeology* reminded me of the presence and activity of different people groups in the promised land for millennia before Israel settled there; in some ways, our spiritual forbears were latecomers in the ancient Middle East. Numerous interesting details are presented throughout: the exact location of the Lachish ostraca amidst the burnt remains in a guard room between the inner and outer gates of the city (the record of communication between the two military commanders under the looming presence of the Babylonians remains forever poignant to me); the remains of 20 distinct layers of human occupation found at Megiddo from the Neolithic period to the Persian period; the role Napoleon played in sparking interest in Egyptian artifacts; the contrasts in the physical geography of Israel, which contains both the deepest place on earth (the Dead Sea stands 1300 feet below sea level) together with mountains reaching 9000 feet; the development of bronze age plowshares, which helped Palestine become an early centre for the exportation of fruit and wine; a 10th century abecedary which testifies to the presence of Hebrew as a language as scribes practice writing it. I was also unaware of the crucial role which the remains of pottery plays in dating different strata within a tell. In these and other ways, the Bible did appear more 'earthy' to me after reading.

At the same time, the book's detail and thoroughness feel something of a weakness, because some chapters and sections go on apparently only

for the sake of completeness, or to fill out the available data from archaeology. For example, the second section moves from north to south in the land of Israel, summarizing the archaeological data from different sites and relating it to the OT—when possible. Some sites (e.g., Tel Regev in the Jezreel valley) are not mentioned in the OT; one gets a summary of the work done at the tell and the author moves on. I found myself skimming as I read. At other points, I found myself wishing for more interpretation and analysis from the author as opposed to the presentation of data. For example, knowing that Sisera's battle with the king of Hazor (Judg. 4–5), Saul's battle with the Philistines (1 Sam. 29–31), and Josiah's ill-fated conflict with Pharaoh Neco (2 Kings 23) all happened at the same site (the Jezreel valley) is interesting; but does it make us read these texts differently? Similarly, a summary of burial practices in Palestine before Israelite occupation is interesting, as well as Israelites continuing the practice of cave burials from their Canaanite forbears (p. 225); but does this influence how we read Pentateuchal legislation relating to burial practices? Perhaps a failure of ancient Israel to distinguish itself from the surrounding peoples? We are not told.

Like an archaeologist, Currid lays out for us, in orderly fashion, the material remains from the ancient Middle East. A summary-like and relatively accessible book of his kind is very valuable for bringing the bible alive to us as we can more easily visualize its historical truth. However, there was a missed opportunity: it could have been helpful interested to hear how Currid himself reads the OT in light of the data which he presents.

Eric Ortlund, Oak Hill College

Ani Maamin: Biblical Criticism, Historical Truth and the Thirteen Principles of Faith. By Joshua Berman. Jerusalem: Maggid Books, 2020. ISBN: 9781592645381. 368pp. £22.99.

The title, *Ani Maamin*, is a transliteration of the Hebrew phrase 'I believe'. In this work, Berman writes for a popular Orthodox Jewish audience, seeking to reassure his readers that they may believe what the Tanakh (the Old Testament) teaches. As for evangelical Christians, for Berman, an Orthodox Jew, the challenges brought by source criticism, accusations of inconsistency, and others are of concern. In this work he addresses many such issues. Although the target audience are Orthodox Jews, much of what he says may be valuably read by an evangelical Christian audience. While there are likely other works written from a Christian perspective covering these issues, reading a book such as this may give a bit of an insider perspective to how they are viewed in the Orthodox Jewish

community. This book could be of interest to those wanting to know how Berman addresses these issues, and to learn more about Orthodox Judaism and how Berman suggests the community handles these issues.

The book is broken up into two major sections. Part 1 consists of seven chapters dealing with the Tanakh (OT) in its historical context. Part 2 consists of a further four chapters looking at the historical background and application of the rabbinic thirteen principles of faith, with particular reference to the principle of Torah from Heaven. Berman concludes his book with an afterword, 'When we are left with questions'. I focus on Part 1 as it will be of wider interest to SBET readers.

Part 1 begins with a short chapter arguing for a rabbinic mandate to understand the Torah (first five books) in their ancient near eastern context. He moves on in Chapter 2 to discuss whether it is 'history'. This includes an examination of what we today expect from history-writing and what we should expect from the Torah in its ancient context. Berman writes, 'We take it as axiomatic that the reporting of an event stripped down solely to its factual components will not accurately convey the message that we need to take from the event. Instead, we approach our texts seeking how the Almighty has authorized that these events be told' (p. 42).

In Chapter 3, Berman examines the Exodus, looking at the evidence for it as a historical event and some of the scholarship surrounding it. He spends a few pages discussing difficulties with and a solution to the large census numbers. He suggests that such numbers may have been used symbolically to indicate the status of various tribes at times, rather than exact numbers. This would not indicate an attempt to mislead because it would have been expected that numbers be used in that manner. Berman then turns to the initial escape from Egypt and shows how the biblical story contains many parallels to Rameses II's propaganda about the Battle of Kadesh. As such, he argues that God demonstrates his power during the Exodus to the Israelites and the Egyptians who would have well known the story of the pharaoh's defeat of the Hittite army at Kadesh with supposedly godlike powers. At the exodus God is shown to be the true God with real power.

In Chapter 4, he examines some narrative inconsistencies between Deuteronomy and the earlier books. He shows how in ancient Near Eastern treaties it was common practice to restate a treaty for a new generation, restating the story to bring out the point the suzerain was trying to make. It was also expected that the vassal would read the original treaty and compare them. Whether or not one accepts Berman's analysis of the biblical situation, it is definitely worth considering his arguments carefully.

In Chapter 5, Berman spends some time critiquing source criticism with reference to the flood story of Genesis. He argues well that the source critical view is inherently unsustainable. He finishes off the first section with a chapter on legal inconsistencies between Deuteronomy and the earlier books and a chapter titled 'But is it Divine?' These chapters will be of greater interest to those specifically interested in a Jewish response.

This work was a fascinating read. Berman's work is a good example of scholarly exhortation and may well encourage people about the reliability of the Tanakh (Old Testament). While there are other works written from a Christian perspective on a similar topic, it can be helpful to see how the issues are addressed by others who maintain a similar commitment to the reliability of the biblical texts.

Philip D. Foster, Edinburgh

T.F. Torrance in Recollection and Reappraisal. By Bruce Ritchie. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications (imprint of Wipf & Stock), 2021. ISBN: 978-1-7252-7643-7 (pbk). xviii + 279pp. £23.

There have been many articles, books, dissertations, symposia and festschriften published in respect of the life and theology of T.F. Torrance but this one is unique. The Rev Dr Bruce Ritchie, a Church of Scotland minister, missionary, writer and theological teacher, reflects upon all that he heard and learned during the years (1973-1976) he spent as a student of Christian dogmatics, in the classroom of T.F. Torrance. For the avoidance of doubt, this is not an exposition of the published writings of T.F. Torrance, although many of them are quoted, this is a reflection on classroom lectures, the main source material being the meticulous notes he took as a student and the handouts he received.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the book is the way in which Ritchie describes the transitions which took place in his own thinking, as a direct result of those classroom encounters. In particular, he compares and contrasts the Calvinist theology which he learned from his minister, John Riddell in Jedburgh (as reinforced by James Philip in the church he attended as a student), with the theology he was taught by T.F. Torrance. He describes how, at first, he was not persuaded that Torrance's theology was true to Scripture and outlines the problems he had with Torrance's understanding of some key Christian doctrines. As time went on, however, he came to understand more deeply what Torrance was trying to do and became convinced that he was right on most of these issues. It is this fascinating theological pilgrimage which makes the book so readable and so challenging.

At the same time, Ritchie does not dismiss his earlier theological convictions. He writes, 'Over the years, two theological streams have fed my Christian faith' (p. xv). That is to say, the Calvinism of his youth and the theology of T.F. Torrance, combined to develop his understanding of Christian theology. It seems clear that part of his mission in writing the book is to bring some rapprochement between these two 'tribes' within Scottish Reformed theology. For that reason, Ritchie tries very hard to reconcile the two streams. This is not an easy task but Ritchie tries to show that these streams are not necessarily contradictory and, with deeper insight, can be seen to help one another.

After a Foreword by Robert Walker, nephew of T.F. Torrance and editor of two volumes of his uncle's classroom lectures (*Incarnation* and *Atonement*) Ritchie divides his work into four sections. 'Part One: Recollection' has three chapters, reflecting on his time in theological college. 'Part Two: Methodology' has four chapters, in which there is an exploration of what it means to call theology a science, the need to adopt an appropriate methodology and an exploration of the concepts thus developed. 'Part Three: Christology' has five chapters and is given over to the centrality of the Person and Work of Christ in Torrance's thinking. 'Part Four: Reappraisal' has four chapters and focuses on several key issues related to Christology, not least the ideas of history and time. Finally, there are four appendices. First, an outline in detail of the Dogmatics Course over the three years of study, including reading lists, essay titles and lectures attended. Second, all the exam papers for the Dogmatics course, which Ritchie sat during those years. Third, a list of the speakers and topics covered at the Firbush conferences, led by Robert Walker, where Torrance's theology was expounded and examined. Fourth, since the exegesis of 2 Corinthians 5:21 was so important to the discussion in the earlier part of the book, a breakdown of what some major theologians and biblical scholars have said on the subject.

Given that one purpose of the book is to suggest ways in which the 'two streams' of Ritchie's theology might be reconciled, perhaps we might focus in on three areas where the jury remains out.

First, Ritchie argues that at no point did Torrance want to replace the notion of penal substitutionary atonement, rather he simply used ontological categories to deepen and enhance the biblical teaching on substitutionary atonement. Ritchie says, 'By critiquing Reformed theology's almost exclusive reliance on the forensic/legal model, Torrance wanted to strengthen – not weaken – the concept of substitutionary atonement in which Christ bore the penalty of the wrath of God against sin. Torrance's aim was to reinforce the notion of substitutionary atonement, not dilute it' (p. 136). Again, 'At no point, did Torrance displace the forensic/legal

by the ontological. Rather his concern was to show that when we grasp the core ontology of the situation, all models of the atonement – including the forensic/legal one – gain even greater strength and profounder depth' (p. 137). Anyone who has read Torrance's book *Scottish Theology* will undoubtedly find this interpretation hard to believe. In that book and in various other writings, Torrance could be quite vitriolic in his antagonism towards 'Westminster Calvinism', including its notion of penal substitution. The idea that he was simply trying to strengthen and improve the penal substitutionary theology, does not exactly leap out from the pages of his writing!

Second and related to this, throughout the book Ritchie supports Torrance's insistence on the atoning significance of the incarnation. In other words, the incarnation was not simply a means to an end but was itself where atonement takes place, albeit culminating in the Cross. Torrance argued that, by dint of the incarnation, divinity and fallen humanity are united in the Person of Christ and so are reconciled. Human beings share in that reconciled life through union with Christ. Herein lies the problem. As Dr Duncan Rankin demonstrated in his Edinburgh PhD thesis, to achieve this Torrance requires two different positions on union with Christ: an incarnational union and a spiritual union. This is to say nothing of the complete absence in Scripture of the idea that incarnation brings atonement. In Scripture, the focus for atonement is on the Cross.

Third, this emphasis on the incarnation leads Torrance/Ritchie to adopt an ahistorical position. In other words, the emphasis on the incarnation leads Torrance to reinterpret historical realities. Ritchie writes, 'For Torrance, the Hebrew vocabulary used by the Old Testament to describe atonement (*goel*, *kipper*, *padah*) was a vocabulary necessitated by the person and work of Jesus Christ… in the providence of God it was the once-for-all atoning work of Christ which had in fact driven these concepts, and their vocabulary, back into Israel's understanding of God's redemptive purposes. Thus, the Old Testament atonement liturgy was what it was because of Christ, not *vice versa*' (p. 96). This 'historical reversal' is seen elsewhere. Ritchie writes, 'Calvary made Bethlehem possible, and it was the death and resurrection of Jesus which created the very possibility of his birth – not vice versa – though all come together as one dissoluble reality' (pp. 164-65). Again, 'Therefore, though Bethlehem precedes Calvary in historical time, the argument outlined above has indicated that Calvary is ontologically prior to Bethlehem in terms of causation' (p. 182). Finally, 'Hence, it is the atoning action of the cross and resurrection, which enables the incarnation to occur at Bethlehem' (p. 184). When Ritchie comes later to discuss Christ and time, this approach is driven even further. He argues that historical time is

only made possible by the resurrection and triumph of Christ and says that 'there exists no space-time *apart from* that which was brought into being through the event of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ' (p. 202). Such an approach turns the chronology and logic of the redemptive-historical development we see in Scripture on its head. It is the direct result of Torrance's view that everything must be viewed from the perspective of Christology.

Despite these areas of disagreement, one thing which is very clear in this book is Ritchie's theological competence and his commitment to serious analysis of disputed questions. When we consider the appendices and examine the reading lists, the essay and exam questions and the lectures he attended, this should not surprise us. Rather, one is likely to conclude that standards have fallen and that obtaining a good degree in theology today, requires much less rigour than when Ritchie studied under his mentor, T.F. Torrance. May the debate continue!

A.T.B. McGowan, Rutherford Centre for Reformed Theology