

same time a determination to hold on firmly to those passages of Scripture which speak of these things. The solution advocated is to distinguish between one's ontological condition and one's human, moral condition. This sounds a bit like the view of one of Noble's other teachers, J. B. Torrance, who argued that sanctification involves becoming in ourselves what we already are in Christ.

In Chapters Six and Seven the subject is further explored through an exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity, particularly the economic Trinity. Chapter Six deals with the atonement and Chapter Seven deals with the Incarnation. This reversing of the normal order of the Person of the Son before the Work of the Son is actually quite fruitful, not least the way in which these doctrines are opened up from that Trinitarian perspective. In the chapter on the Incarnation we see again some familiar themes, not least the idea of Christ sanctifying our humanity by crucifying it. All of this is echoed in Chapter Eight as Noble helps us to see 'the gospel story, the story of salvation in Christ, as the story of God the Holy Trinity' (p. 199). In the final chapter, all of this is anchored in the life of faith and in the call to live holy lives by reflecting the life of the Trinity.

Anyone with an interest in the doctrine of the Trinity or the doctrine of sanctification (which should be all of us) will find benefit and challenge in this book. Noble is not simply a theologian but has a pastor's heart and this is reflected in his desire for Christians to become holy and so to serve the living God.

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Interpreting Prophetic Literature: Historical and Exegetical Tools for Reading the Prophets. By James D. Nogalski. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2015. ISBN: 978-0664261207. xi + 130 pp. £22.94.

Nogalski offers an exegetical guidebook on the Prophets designed for beginning students who lack training in the Hebrew language. The book addresses matters such as textual boundaries, keywords, literary genre, rhetorical issues, contextual factors, prominent themes, and hermeneutical approach. Two dozen charts pepper the pages, while endnotes and a Scripture index round out the volume. Because most primers on OT exegetical methodology concentrate on narrative literature, an introduction to the prophetic genre enriches the stacks. This little volume stands out as more concise and basic than Gary Smith's *Interpreting the Prophetic Books: An Exegetical Handbook* (Handbooks for OT Exegesis, Kregel, 2014). Nogalski's critical outlook colours the discussion.

In this manual, students will learn the benefit of reading multiple English Bible translations in their study of a textual unit. They discover

a valuable lesson concerning the nature of Bible translation: 'All translations involve some level of interpretation' (p. 11).

Syntactical and literary features of the Hebrew Bible come to the fore. Nogalski rightly warns readers about the debates concerning the function of syntactical connectors (p. 81). He expounds staircase parallelism (pp. 41–42) and points out puns. For instance, in Amos 8:2, the 'summer fruit' (*qayis*) signals that the 'end' (*qēs*) draws near (p. 86). 'Almond' (*šāqēd*) plays with 'watch over' (*šōqēd*), and the Hebrew of 'boiling' (*nph*) rhymes with 'break out' (*tipālah*) in Jeremiah 1:11–14 (p. 71). The author calls attention to reversals (or contrasts) in the book of Joel: dry streambeds (1:20) eventually flow with water (3:18); a lack of wine (1:5) becomes wine overflowing (3:18); and, distress and threats become peace and rest (p. 83). Fifteen pages discuss the ever-important issue of identifying the speaker of a prophetic utterance (pp. 24–39).

On the other hand, some literary techniques go undeveloped, such as inclusio, anadiplosis, and merism. The explanation of chiasmic parallelism fails to identify the exegetical significance of the device (pp. 42–43). In discussing the participle of the imminent future, Nogalski gives the impression that imminent action transpires only in the near future rather than the eschatological future (p. 24).

Not everyone will concur with the treatment of Bible places. The author regards Wadi Shittim in Joel 3:18 as symbolic, and assures readers that the valley of Jehoshaphat in Joel 3 constitutes an 'imaginary valley' (pp. 49, 55). Hyperbole marks the size of Nineveh in the book of Jonah, as it does the fertility of the land in Amos 9:13 (pp. 49–50, 89).

Interpretive conclusions remain unsubstantiated at times. For example, redaction played a major role in the formation of the prophetic corpus: 'the collections have been shaped with an eye toward their transmission for and reflection by later generations' (p. 4). Moreover, Obadiah's oracle describes the fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians in the sixth century (p. 104).

The author sees fewer predictions in the prophetic corpus than some scholars. He states, 'prophetic literature is not primarily predictive in nature. Rather, prophetic literature functions primarily as interpretive theological literature' (p. 14). Such a perspective coincides with the recognition of fewer messianic statements: 'Unfortunately, many churches and religious traditions have perpetuated a view that the primary purpose of the prophets was to foretell the coming of the Messiah' (p. 74).

Nogalski defines hermeneutics as 'The art of applying biblical texts to modern life' (p. 117). The chapter devoted to hermeneutics comes at the end of the book, suggesting that hermeneutics follows interpretation in the exegetical process. By contrast, other Bible readers distinguish herme-

neutics and application, and allow hermeneutics to inform their interpretation of a biblical excerpt.

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The Election of Grace: A Riddle without a Resolution? By Stephen N. Williams. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015. ISBN: 978-0-8028-3780-6. 229 pp. £17.99.

This volume began life as the Kantzer Lectures in Revealed Theology, sponsored by the Carl F. H. Henry Center for Theological Understanding at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. The Kantzer Lectures in revealed theology 'are intended to be the evangelical equivalent of the celebrated Gifford Lectures in natural theology' (p. vi). They are also intended to address theological issues in a way that is beneficial to the church and not simply to the academy. In this volume, Professor Stephen Williams of Union Theological College in Belfast addresses the complex and often disputed issue of divine election. As both a highly respected theologian and also a man of the church, Williams was an ideal choice to deliver the Kantzer Lectures.

One might imagine that everything has been said about the subject of election and that the various positions are, by now, set in stone. The great value of this book, however, is that Williams does not simply mount a defence of one of these existing positions but rather genuinely seeks to review the doctrine, biblically and theologically, in order to offer new insights and proposals.

Williams believes that the impasse between the Calvinist and the Arminian positions in respect of election may be partly because of the way in which the cluster of questions at the centre of the dogmatic discussion are set up and the way in which Scripture is handled. He sets off boldly, insisting 'Scripture is my authority and exegesis my guide' (p. 6) and he does so with considerable humour, as well as with significant doctrinal expertise and historical awareness.

Williams begins by considering election as found in the Old Testament. He makes the point that the election of Israel, so often seen as divisive and exclusive, has as its purpose the coming of the Christ. He writes, 'There is no hope for the world if the Messiah does not grace it with his presence, and no possibility of his coming into it without the prepared and particular connection of nation and history' (p. 26). He also argues that the doctrine of election as found in the Old Testament has primarily to do with communion with God, rather than addressing the postmortem fate of individuals. As he says, 'Personal communion subsists in a relationship enabled by privileged election' (p. 42). This election is (as the title

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EDITORIAL	1–4
Confident Faith and Today's Persecuted Church MICHAEL NAZIR-ALI	5–18
Sovereignty and Free Will in the Accounts of Terah and Abraham MICHAEL A. HARBIN	19–34
Diego Thomson in the Americas (1818-1844) BILL MITCHELL	35–52
John Calvin and the Gospel Offer DONALD JOHN MACLEAN	53–70
The Kirk, The Word, and the Text of Scripture LIAM JERROLD FRASER	71–78
BOOK REVIEWS	79–120



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