

however, been significantly updated and now interacts with the major commentaries published on the Gospels since 2002. It has also been significantly expanded, and now includes an extra 100 pages of commentary beyond that provided in the first edition. The decision to treat the Synoptic Gospels in parallel is a unique contribution of this volume. The authors certainly respect the distinctive voice of each of the three Synoptic Gospels, but provide a real service by showing how the three Synoptists provide mutually complementary portraits of Jesus. In the preface they explain that “By working with a synopsis and juxtaposing one Gospel with another, we hoped to highlight the similarities and differences in a way that handling each Gospel separately could not achieve” (pp. xv–xvi.). The result is a detailed demonstration of the symphonic harmony that we have in the Synoptic Gospels. The decision to treat the Gospel of John separately represents a wise recognition of the Fourth Gospel’s distinctive portrait of Jesus. Of course, not every reader will agree with every exegetical decision, but the volume provides a consistently evangelical commentary on all four Gospels and, as such, is a resource unparalleled in recent evangelical Gospel scholarship.

The volume also provides a number of useful aids that enhance its utility as a reference work, including a select bibliography and indices of subjects, modern authors, and references to Scripture and other ancient sources. Particularly helpful is a detailed chart listing “Gospel References by Unit” (pp. vii–xiv), which allows readers to easily locate the discussion of any given Gospel passage. One loss in the second edition is the synthetic “Theological Portrait of Jesus,” which formed the final part of the first edition. This is understandable, given the constraints of space, and the fact that it has now become its own book (D. L. Bock with B. I. Simpson, *Jesus the God-Man: The Unity and Diversity of the Gospel Portrayals* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016]). All in all, the second edition of *Jesus according to Scripture* provides an excellent, up to date, and solidly evangelical introduction to the Gospels and their testimony to Jesus.

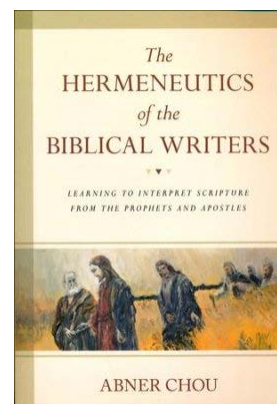
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Abner Chou. *The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers: Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2018. 251 pp. £19.43/\$23.99.

Troubling. Weird. Random. Creative. Misguided. Terms such as these characterize the apostles’ use of the OT, according to some Bible interpreters. Abner Chou, on the other hand, depicts the apostolic use of the OT in other terms: brilliant, sophisticated, careful, logical, and rational.

Chou serves as the John F. MacArthur Endowed Fellow at The Master’s University in Santa Clarita, California. He has written a commentary on the book of Lamentations in the Evangelical Exegetical Commentary series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2014), as well as the monograph, *I Saw the Lord: A Biblical Theology of Vision* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013).

The thesis of the book is that we ought to interpret the Scriptures in the same way that the apostles and prophets did, because they always honored the authorial intent of prior revelation (p. 22). They never attempted to alter the original and fixed meaning



of Scripture, therefore Christians can and should imitate their hermeneutic. The apostles and prophets did not play fast and loose with the OT—they handled it contextually. Put another way, the authors of Scripture used grammatical-historical hermeneutics: “Literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutics is not a modern formulation but how the biblical writers read Scripture” (p. 23). Expressed as an equation: the prophetic hermeneutic = the apostolic hermeneutic = the Christian hermeneutic. Chou says, “my thesis resonates with Beale, Kaiser, Carson, Hamilton, Caneday, and Bock” (p. 23).

The author defends three presuppositions that should govern our interpretive approach to the Bible, especially regarding the NT use of the OT (ch. 2). First, our job as Bible readers is to seek the author’s intent (pp. 26–30). Postmodernism, deconstructionism, and skepticism mitigate this endeavor. More specifically, Chou argues from Scripture that no distinction exists between the human author’s intent and the divine author’s intent (*contra* the *sensus plenior* theory).

Second, a distinction does exist between the meaning of a passage (illocution) and its significance (perlocution) (pp. 30–34). If an apostle drew upon an OT significance rather than an OT meaning, and we fail to observe the distinction, we might wrongly accuse him of violating the original OT context.

And third, later biblical writers used earlier texts (or a network of texts), a literary technique known as intertextuality (pp. 35–40). Every book of the Bible contains intertextual connections (p. 51). If we miss a connection, we miss the author’s full intent. The reader can detect intertextual connections by observing intentionally-chosen linguistic triggers, and by applying Richard Hays’s classic criteria for identifying literary allusions and echoes (*Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989], pp. 29–32).

Chapter 3 contends that the OT prophets excelled as masterful exegetes and theologians. As scholars, they were intimately acquainted with previous revelation, and they handled it with impeccable accuracy and precision. This supposition sets up chapter 4, which addresses the question, “Did the prophets speak better than they knew, or better than we give them credit for?” Chou maintains the latter, suggesting that the prophets understood their own place in redemptive history. When God used their mouths, he did not bypass their minds.

The apostles, like their prophetic predecessors, handled the OT contextually (ch. 5). In other words, no hermeneutical shift occurred at the Christ event, or in the move from OT to NT. Hence, the *sensus plenior* theory constitutes a failed attempt to explain the relationship between the Testaments. Having established this principle of continuity, chapter 6 explores the rationale of the NT writers in their use of the OT.

The treatise exhibits many obvious strengths. For one, the author builds his case in a logical and step-by-step manner. He shows a willingness to discuss presuppositions that affect biblical interpretation. Moreover, the writer devotes a generous amount of space to addressing common objections to his own viewpoint. He does not dodge controversy; instead, he deals with the most disputed passages, such as the use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15, the use of Jeremiah 31:15 in Matthew 2:18, the use of Zechariah 11:4–9 in Matthew 27:6–10, the use of Amos 9:11–12 in Acts 15:15–17, and so forth. The copious documentation in the footnotes enables the reader to see how the author’s ideas fit within the field of study. He interacts with leading hermeneuticians, exegetes, and theologians.

Obviously, readers may at times explain perplexing texts differently. In a helpful way, the author invites his readers to consider whether “Edom” in Amos 9:12 represents all the nations, as he suggests (p. 147). In addition, he recognizes the presence of an interpretive device known as “corporate solidarity,” in which an individual (e.g., Messiah) represents a people group. According to the author, this device

occurs in texts such as Genesis 3:15 and Hosea 11:1 (pp. 84, 107). Proposals such as these inform the audience of various interpretive options.

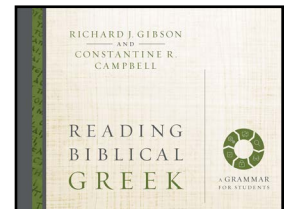
The absence of indexes stifles the usefulness of the book, and it discourages other researchers from interacting with the book in their own writings. The omission of a Scripture index especially devalues a book of this nature—a book in which the choice of biblical excerpts plays an important role. For example, where, if anywhere, does the author discuss Paul’s “allegorical” treatment of the OT (Gal 4:24)? Without an index, who knows?

Does the author prove his thesis? Absolutely. As one of the promotional blurbs puts it, “Whether Chou’s explanations of how the Bible’s writers use earlier Scriptures [convince] readers to embrace his understanding of difficult texts, his most central thesis ought to convince readers” (p. 1). Without hesitation, I eagerly commend this book to serious Bible students who have an interest in the interrelatedness of the Scriptures. Professors could adopt the volume as a textbook for undergraduate- or graduate-level courses in hermeneutics, biblical theology, or the NT use of the OT.

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Richard J. Gibson and Constantine R. Campbell. *Reading Biblical Greek: A Grammar for Students*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. xiii + 129 pp. £22.99/\$34.99.

One of the newest additions to the expanding market of Greek grammars is *Reading Biblical Greek*, an innovative first-year grammar written by Richard Gibson and Constantine Campbell. The main hallmarks of the textbook, Gibson explains, are “clarity, convenience, and currency.... The quest for clarity is reflected in the visual layout.... Convenience accounts for the apparent minimalism of the material.... In terms of currency, the material also seeks to reflect the latest developments in verbal aspect, middle lexical forms, and other issues without burdening the beginner with detailed discussions better suited to intermediate-level study” (p. vii).



In addition to the textbook, Zondervan has also published a corresponding DVD set containing a brief overview of each lesson as well as a workbook designed to be used alongside of the grammar. Rather than students translating an eclectic assortment of New Testament passages or sentences that have been invented by the authors, the workbook divides the Greek text of Mark 1–4 into small units which students systematically translate as they make their way through the main textbook. In addition to the text of a portion of Mark’s Gospel, each section in the workbook provides grammatical helps and a list of vocabulary words that have not been previously introduced.

The volume is organized in a noticeably different fashion than the majority of grammars currently in print. Rather than a single chapter designated for each major grammatical subject, Gibson and Campbell divide the material into 83 short lessons, the majority of which are placed on a single, extra-wide page (some lessons are divided and placed on two pages). For most lessons, the material is divided into three columns, though some contain only two. In the first column the authors introduce the selected subject with a short explanation of key concepts and the fundamental grammatical rules. The objective of this column is to provide the reader with essential information relating to a specific grammatical