

of the message (the main errand of the messenger), preceded by some necessary legitimizing formula such as "I am the messenger of XX," or "Hear the word(s) of XX." This is the heart of his work. Finally, the review and/or critique of the credentials of a messenger and the reliability of the contents of a message are all effectively treated by the author. Thus, Meier allows the reader to accompany the messenger sympathetically throughout all of the stages of the communication chain. It is an effective way of soliciting the reader's support for the study he has undertaken.

Despite Meier's decision to see the beginning of the Persian period of domination as his later boundary—a period which provided a marvelous synthesis for all about which his study is concerned—this is an understandable decision and it has resulted in a good work. Read in conjunction with works appearing in the last decade on the subject, this book will become one of the standard works on communication theory and *praxis* in the ancient Semitic world. His lucid presentation is a welcome addition in a field of inquiry which has been neglected for far too long.

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An Adversary in Heaven: sātān in the Hebrew Bible, by Peggy L. Day. HSM 43. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988. Pp. xi + 177. \$17.95 (\$11.95 for members).

In this book, Peggy Day challenges what she perceives to be a "developmental" approach to the problem of *sātān* in previous studies of the concept in the Hebrew Bible. Undaunted by centuries of Jewish and Christian teaching, Day argues an intriguing case that there is in fact no single Satan to be found in the Hebrew Bible, but a plurality of satans, each enacting overlapping adversarial roles within the mysterious fraternity of Yahweh's celestial assembly.

Relying strongly on the research of Robinson, Wright, Cross, and Mullen, Day examines four primary passages (Num 22:22–35; Zech 3:1–7; Job 1–2; and 1 Chron 21:1–22:1), studying each one against the nature and characteristics of ancient Near Eastern divine assemblies, particularly those of the Canaanite variety. Her conclusions are clearly, if rather prematurely stated in the introduction to the book:

We must divest ourselves of the notion of Satan if we are to accurately perceive how the noun *sātān* functions in each of the passages under examination. . . . The noun *sātān* could mean both "adversary" in general and "legal accuser" in particular, and it was used to refer to various beings both terrestrial and divine when they played either of these adversarial roles. . . . There is not one celestial Satan in the Hebrew Bible, but rather the potential for many. . . . We certainly should not speak of a single developing character or personality. To do so would be to speak from within the worldview of our pre-critical Jewish and Christian predecessors (p. 15).

Fleshing out the contours of this manifesto, the remainder of the book contains relatively few surprises. What follows are a series of exegeses of the texts in question, each of which concludes by restating and reinforcing this basic thesis. An appendix speaks briefly to the problem of how Beelzebul came to be used as a proper name for Satan in the NT.

In an opening chapter on etymology (7 pages), Day argues that the *nûn* in *štn* should be read as the third radical of the trilateral consonantal stem *štn*, rather than as a suffix (*-ān*) to a geminate or hollow stem (*contra* Baur & Leander). In chap. 2, attention is directed to the meaning of the term *šātān* in five contexts which speak relatively clearly of *terrestrial* accusers (1 Samuel 29; 2 Samuel 19; 1 Kings 5, 11; Psalm 109). Day houses this discussion within the parameters of a rather sketchy description of Israelite law, then raises the specific question whether, in spite of several alleged ancient Near Eastern parallels, one ought to speak of “professional accusers” in the ancient Near East at all. Should this be critically impossible, then it naturally follows that one certainly should not introduce such “evidence” into linguistic discussions of the term *šātān* in the Hebrew Bible.

Having dispensed with these preliminaries, the bulk of Day’s study consists of four exegetical analyses of the relevant texts about *celestial* satans, some more convincing than others. Unfortunately, these analyses cannot be given the kind of detailed consideration they deserve here. Yet, because at times the methods used to structure these chapters are problematic enough to cause one to get lost in the chaff while searching for the wheat, a word or two about methodology does seem in order.

In chap. 4, Day wishes to show that the she-ass story in Num 22:22–35 is relatively younger than the rest of the Balaam cycle, and does not stem from J. This point is important to her thesis, because she wishes to show that, if the Numbers 22 tradition is in fact late, then developmentalists like Rivkah Kluger cannot be correct (because most of their hypotheses are based on an early date for the she-ass story). The manner in which this point is argued, however, is diffuse, roundabout, and ultimately distracting.

First, without even noting the work of Kalisch, Liver, and Rofé—Jewish scholars who have consistently and persistently challenged the whole Wellhausenian approach to the Balaam cycle—Day belabors once more the source-critical questions about the Balaam cycle. Then, simply accepting without question one view of Combination I at Deir ‘Allā (McCarter’s/Hackett’s), Day asserts that the Deir ‘Allā tradition “proves” (p. 53) that Balaam need not be construed as a Mesopotamian diviner. This is alleged because “the Balaam of Num 22:22–35 does not perceive that the unusual behavior of his own she-ass bodes personal calamity for him.” By contrast, she claims, the Deir ‘Allā Balaam reports the atypical behavior of animals to *his* audience (DAT I:7–16) with a keen appreciation for the calamity such behavior always presaged.

This entire argument is quite tenuous, and one wonders, in spite of the disclaimer on p. 62, what it really does to advance the argument of the book. How does Day know whether the speaking of Balaam’s ass was read as non-calamitous or whether the message uncovered at Deir ‘Allā was perceived as calamitous? Upon what evidence are such sweeping conclusions based? Further, how can one draw such conclusions about the behavior of Mesopotamian or any other type of ancient Near Eastern seer on the basis of one textual comparison, without even citing a single divinatory or incantational text in support? Simply citing a couple of secondary studies is dangerous. To go on to draw conclusions from these inevitably biased studies is simply unacceptable.

To put it another way, since the primary tool for exegeting the she-ass story seems to be *literary* analysis, why introduce material here which probably cannot be engaged effectively by means of such a methodological approach?

Similarly irritating *culs-de-sac* appear in the chapters on Job, Zechariah, and 1 Chronicles (though it must be admitted that the chapter on Job is the best of the lot, brilliantly conceived and written). Too often there is a disjointed feeling to the flow of the book as a whole which just a bit more attention to methodology might easily have prevented.

At any rate, the foregoing criticisms should not be overemphasized. This is a delightfully provocative work by an insightful young exegete on a very important question. To ask, as Day dares to do, whether a personal Satan even *exists* in the Hebrew Bible is at least startling and at most profound. Such a question immediately raises a whole series of corollary questions within those of us who are vitally concerned about the problem of evil in the cosmos. Biblical scholars, philosophers, theologians, and pastors may someday find themselves unable to avoid reading this book. It is no great exaggeration to suggest that the thesis proposed herein, if taken seriously, could conceivably realign all future discussion of the primary textual evidence. At the very least, *An Adversary in Heaven* deserves to receive serious, engaging, and critical consideration.

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Wandel der Rechtsbegründungen in der Gesellschaftsgeschichte des antiken Israel: Eine Rechtsgeschichte des "Bundesbuches" Ex xx, 22–xxiii, 13, by Eckart Otto. StudBib 3. Leiden/New York/Copenhagen/Cologne: Brill, 1988. Pp. viii + 107. Hf1 40 (\$20) (paper).

Otto's two goals in this study are to trace the redactional history of the Book of the Covenant (BC) into its present form, and, in the process, to investigate the history of law in Israel in order to uncover what legitimates law in a pluralistic society.

The present literary structure of BC plays an important role in Otto's redaction-critical study. He argues in chap. 3 that the pre-dtr form of BC (Exod 21:2–23:12) consists of two distinct legal collections (21:2–22:26 and 22:28–23:12), each of which is in chiastic form as a result of independent redactions.

The tradition history of Exod 21:2–22:26 is examined in two stages within chap. 4. First, four separate collections of law (21:2–11, slave laws; 21:12–17, laws of capital punishment; 21:18–32, laws concerning bodily harm; and 21:33–22:14, *šallēm*-laws) are interpreted through a three-part analysis of their present structure, tradition history, and legal history to probe the earliest stage of law within the setting of the family and its development within larger judicial institutions. The *šallēm*-laws in 21:33–22:14 provide a representative example. Otto argues that the present structure of this unit alternates between casuistic laws of restitution (21:33–36; 22:4–5, 9–14) and laws of sanction (21:37–22:3, 6–8). This alternating structure provides insight into tradition history, because it shows a change in the function of casuistic law, from being simply restitution between family members at a time of conflict to more systematized criminal law now sanctioned by the cult and aimed at larger social units than the family.

The second part of chap. 4 traces the redaction by the Jerusalem priesthood of the four original collections and additional uncollected laws (20:24–26, altar law (?);



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