

particularly with reference to 1 Cor 12:13. O'Donnell then seeks to show that from a purely grammatical standpoint Lloyd-Jones's interpretation of 1 Cor 12:13 as "For also *by* one spirit we all into one body were baptized" is at least possible.

James Dunn renews his earlier (and, according to Dunn, generally rejected or ignored) argument "that key New Testament phrases like 'baptized into Christ' (Rom. 6.3; Gal. 3.27 [Dunn focuses on these two cases in particular]) were intended, and are best understood, as metaphors rather than as descriptions of the physical act of being baptized" (294). Dunn argues that the specialized use of *baptizo* in the NT both for the initiatory physical act and in its metaphorical uses stems from John the baptizer, who used both senses in immediate proximity: "I baptize(d) you with/in water. . . . He (the one to come) will baptize you in/with Holy Spirit (and fire)" (303–4).

Derek Murray examines the eighteenth-century context that influenced Archibald McLean to pen the first writings in Scotland to espouse believer's baptism. It is of interest to those in the spiritual lineage of Alexander Campbell that, according to Derek, one of the chief influences on McLean was John Glas and his doctrine of the church. McLean followed Glas in arguing that "the visible church is confined to companies of people under discipline and walking in the ordinances of the Lord's house" (427). In spite of this doctrine of the church, Glas still favored infant baptism. McLean carried the implications of Glas's ecclesiology a step further, arguing that baptism should not be for infants but for believers and should be thought of as adding one to the visible church.

Unfortunately, the price of Cross and Porter's volume will keep it out of the hands of many who would otherwise find it useful. Many of the essays are stimulating contributions to biblical and historical understandings of baptism.

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Joshua, Judges, Ruth, by J. GORDON HARRIS, CHERYL A. BROWN, and MICHAEL S. MOORE. NIBCOT. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000. 373 pp. \$14.95.

This commentary series approaches the biblical text from the standpoint of "believing criticism" (x). The commentators are aware of major critical discussions regarding the biblical text, but they maintain an explicit loyalty to the divine authority and literary integrity of Scripture. The specific approaches adopted by the three contributors to this volume involve reliance on narrative and "canonical-historical" criticism. The results are mixed, although generally beneficial. Each commentator provides a brief introduction to background matters (historicity, literary unity, major themes). The commentaries proper treat the biblical text according to discernible literary units. The authors identify the narrative flow of each unit and the central ideas each develops. They deal with significant technical matters in a separate section for each unit or, when encountering more complex issues, in an occasional excursus.

Harris's introductory remarks on Joshua expose the strengths and weaknesses of his approach. He summarizes some of the debated issues regarding the historicity of the events recorded and the literary development of the book, but then he makes virtually no attempt to answer the questions he raises. For example, he uses archaeology to illuminate isolated events in the book, but at the same time concedes that the archaeological record in general "does not directly support the book" (6). Similarly, Harris leaves unresolved the question of the date of the book's composition, suggesting an exilic date in one instance (84–85) and assuming a Davidic date in another (89). A failure to address these issues more directly suggests that connecting God's actions with real history is unimportant, yet that seems to be an intent of the book, and it is the primary basis for assuming God's participation in current events.

Fortunately, some of the critical issues raised by Harris are discussed more adequately in Cheryl Brown's introduction to Judges. She too opts to read "the text as a whole" (130), but she deals more directly with issues of history and literary composition in the process. For example, she explains how questions regarding the date of the exodus-wilderness-conquest complex might be reconciled with the archaeological record (136–37). She assumes that the writer is inspired, but she also allows for the writer's use of literary conventions, the significance of which would be understood by the original audience. These include the use of hyperbole, the sequencing of coterminous events, and the juxtaposition of events for the purpose of comparison, as well as repetitions, wordplays, and subtle changes in syntax. She contends that the history in Judges (and Joshua, by extension) constitutes "theologically interpreted history" (131). Historical events are recorded as vehicles for communicating theological themes, themes that Judges shares with Joshua: covenant, faithful leadership, God's grace and sovereignty, the unity of God's people. In this light, one sees how these books connect with the biblical story that reaches all the way back into Genesis.

Michael Moore starts from a different vantage point to enter into discussion of the book of Ruth. Opting for a "canonical-historical" interpretation of the text, he reads Ruth within the narrative flow of the present (Christian) canon, particularly as a counterpoint to the closing chapters of Judges. Such an approach works at a certain hermeneutical level, but one wonders about its validity in discerning the inspired writer's intended message. It is well known that the book was secondarily placed in its present canonical position, yet Moore proceeds as if this placement were crucial to understanding the book's message. Moreover, Moore does not employ his approach consistently. His insights are based on comparisons with Judges (because it immediately precedes Ruth in the canon), but then he ignores—until the final section (4:17–22)—any comparisons with 1 Samuel. This is more significant than one might realize. Moore's analysis suggests that the author of Ruth intends to deflate anticipations regarding David's royal family, yet the ending of Ruth and most of 1 Samuel are highly supportive of David. A more balanced use of the canonical-historical approach would make

comparisons in both directions. This fact raises serious questions about the validity of Moore's insights.

These critical questions aside, all three commentators deduce very helpful lessons from the narratives they examine. For example, Harris shows how the preeminent place of the ark while crossing the Jordan River is but one of many indicators in Joshua of the supreme position of God in Israel. He also supplies a healthy foundation for addressing the troublesome issue of "holy war" in Joshua (45–46). Brown provides a good example of how one can utilize a narrative approach to navigate within the multiple interpretive layers of the text of Judges. She explains how God could have instructed several generations of Israelites with these events even before they were written down as Scripture. She further considers the author's purpose in putting these stories in their present arrangement during the late monarchic and exilic periods as a way of instructing a conquered and humiliated people. Additionally, she reveals principles illustrated in these stories that are appropriate to God's covenant people of every generation, especially Christians. Moore's comments and notes regarding the sociological aspects of Ruth's story should be very helpful to modern readers as well (see for example, his discussion of "Redeemer," 344–45). In particular, he emphasizes how Ruth's story provides positive role models for dealing with gender issues and the precarious social situation of foreigners, topics that should be of great interest to contemporary readers. These sorts of positive contributions by all three commentators make this book definitely worth considering as a study help.

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Worship in the Shape of Scripture, by F. RUSSELL MITMAN. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2001. 165 pp. \$16.00.

Worship in the Shape of Scripture is a welcome addition to the growing literature on contemporary worship, taking its place alongside such books as *A Royal "Waste" of Time* (Marva Dawn), *Blended Worship* (Robert Webber), and *Beyond the Worship Wars* (Tom Long). Mitman's goal is quite practical, namely, to respond to the query of "one pastor neighbor" who, "overwhelmed with the flood of new resources, pleadingly asked me over the backyard fence, 'But how do I put it all together?'" (6). Methodologically, Mitman proposes to adapt for liturgics the inductive approach that Fred Craddock brought to homiletics, asking, "Can the same mode of inductive interpretation in the creating of sermons also inform the crafting of liturgy in the shape of Scripture?" (8).

The first three chapters are preludes to, and preparation for, chapter four. In these opening chapters Mitman offers some insightful observations. He emphasizes that "the purpose of worship is not to legitimate our own experiences"; instead, "the primary focus of the worship event is on God," and "worship draws us into the presence of God" (26). Mitman also contends that "homiletics and liturgics . . . are wedded together in the proclamation event" (28); thus the whole worship service should be planned accordingly.



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