

be carrying out atonement. In short, a more accurate and in depth description of some of the issues at hand would have increased the value of the discussions for both pastors and scholars.

Despite these criticisms, for the reader who is looking to get his or her feet wet in a sometimes confusing and ignored book of the Bible, Rooker's commentary provides such an opportunity. Perhaps this introduction will encourage the reader to visit other works on Leviticus which unwrap more completely the depths of theological meaning and purpose of this book which furnishes the vocabulary for much of the sacrificial work of Christ's death as presented in the Gospels.

Tim Pierce

Joshua, Judges, Ruth. (New International Biblical Commentary). By J. Gordon Harris, Cheryl A. Brown, and Michael S. Moore. Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 2000. 398 pages. Paperback, \$11.95.

This volume is part of a commentary series designed to break down barriers between the ancient and modern worlds so that the power and meaning of the Biblical material becomes understandable for contemporary readers. Naturally, it is written from the viewpoint of "believing criticism." As such, it hopes to enrich the life of the academia as well as the church.

The introductions to all of the books are very succinct and well done. Once the introductions are complete, the authors deal with their assigned book from a narrative criticism approach. The outlines for the various books are found in the commentary portion as each section of that particular book is being discussed. Technical matters are discussed in endnotes at the close of each of these sections. Brief but excellent bibliographies as well as scripture and subject indices are found at the end of the overall volume.

Even though the whole book is well done, the most intriguing part to this reviewer is the effort of the author on the part of Ruth to tie the story of Ruth into the last part of the book of Judges by seeing Elimelech as the third and last of three Bethlehemite wanderers (p. 300-302). Nevertheless, this is a very good commentary for anyone just beginning to study these three books.

Harry B. Hunt, Jr.

Paul and the Stoics. By T. Engberg-Pedersen. Louisville, KY: Westminster, 2000. xi + 435 pages. Paperback, \$39.95.

The author follows a ‘naturalistic’ and not a ‘theological’ approach to Paul’s thought and adopts a model that enables him to find anthropological and ethical parallels between Stoicism and Paul. Each individual (I) can be embraced by a new understanding (X) and, rejoicing the old (cf. Phil. 3), can commit oneself to a new self-conception (S). For the Stoics the transformation is effected by reason; for Paul by Christ.

Living within the closed worldview of the Enlightenment that excludes transcendence, he cannot accept the context of Paul’s theology at face value. For example, Paul’s idea that all Jews and Greeks are sinful in the way depicted in Rom. 1:18–3:20 is ‘preposterous’ (205f.). “But the risk [of sinning] is always there.” He reads through the rest of Romans and the letters to the Galatians and to the Philippians in accord with his model and finds a good number of parallels between Pauline and Stoic anthropology and ethics if one brackets out Paul’s apocalyptic and christological worldview.

If one agrees with the author’s presuppositions and method, including his model, one may learn to read Paul as he does. His deductive method, however, creates a model from his own imagination and then pours Pauline texts into it. But if one interprets Paul within the context of his letters, Stoic parallels, although present (e.g., 1 Cor. 8:6), are very probably mediated through Judaism and belong to the background and not to the essence of his thought. A proper hermeneutic must, I think, seek presuppositions as well as the data from Scripture. This the author does not attempt, and the transformed Pauline thought that he creates I find difficult to recognize from the New Testament.

E. Earle Ellis

The Paul Quest. By Ben Witherington III. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000. 347 pages. Hardback, \$24.99.

Professor Witherington sees 4 sources to be probed in his quest for the historical Paul, the 7 letters undisputed by scholars in the Baur tradition, the 6 other canonical letters, the book of Acts, and later ancient non-canonical sources. Apart from the more acetic picture in the non-canonical literature, he finds the “major differences” that others have



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