Book Reviews

127

Book Reviews

(including 10:15-16 and the resurrection of Lazarus); and 12:23-32. Thus, though this work is not a commentary on the Fourth Gospel, it does cover significant sections of the work and should not be seen as narrowly focused on a single passage. Furthermore, Dennis also develops the various expectations of restoration, forgiveness of sins, and release from “slavery” to foreign nations that are found in a multitude of Jewish works. This collection of background information alone makes the work useful.

This reviewer found the book clear and readable (at least by scholars) and the combination of narrative and historical methodologies appropriate to the task. Those methodologies allowed Dennis to look at the Fourth Gospel against the period of its final composition when, according to thesis, the temple had been destroyed and the people scattered, and thus the irony of much of what is said would be clearly evident. Of course, those proposing a different context would therefore have to evaluate this work differently. Not all of the exegesis was convincing—in some of the passages, Dennis seems to see his themes appear more obviously than this reviewer did—but that is the typical myopia of someone pursuing his thesis. Yet, one should quickly add, the majority of the exegesis is convincing, and Dennis appears to have established his thesis. In a period when others, such as (notably) N. T. Wright (who has not published major work on the Fourth Gospel), are discussing Dennis’s central theme in other contexts, this work makes a significant contribution, shedding light not only on the Fourth Gospel but also on NT theology as a whole.

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This volume had its genesis at the 2002 meeting of the Cambridge Tyndale Fellowship New Testament Study Group. Scholars gathered to take stock of Fourth Gospel scholarship. The result was the dozen essays presented here, most of them questioning the status quo in one way or another and all seeking to arrive at fresh perspectives regarding current scholarly investigation into the Gospel of John.

David Wenham begins with a survey of where things are and need to go. He puts his finger on five issues: the history versus theology question; the socio-historical background of John and the community that produced it, if there was one; understanding of the baptismal and eucharistic passages in John (especially John 3 and 6); narrative readings of John; and John 13 as an example of a Johannine passage with multiple levels of meaning. Wenham’s chapter serves to introduce the entire volume by drawing “attention to some questions in which old scholarly approaches and attitudes may have hampered our understanding of John’s Gospel and where new thinking seems called for” (p. 2).

Peter Ensor’s chapter, “The Johannine Sayings of Jesus and the Question of Authenticity,” challenges the hoary notion (kept alive in the Schweitzer-
Käsemann-Ashton-Casey-Lüdemann line of research) that the Fourth Gospel preserves little authentic dominical material. Through careful textual study and adjustment of criteria of authenticity, he concludes that "the wholesale historical skepticism concerning the authenticity of Jesus' Johannine sayings, which characterizes much of contemporary Johannine scholarship, is unwarranted" (p. 33).

Richard Bauckham's essay, "Messianism according to the Gospel of John," reviews evidence for Jewish messianic expectation in the Second Temple era. There were eschatological hopes surrounding David, Elijah, and the Mosaic prophet (cf. John 1:19–21). Bauckham concludes that the author of the Gospel of John "knew pre-70 Jewish Palestine accurately and intended to set his story of Jesus plausibly within that chronological and geographical context" (pp. 68–69).

Andreas Köstenberger in "The Destruction of the Second Temple and the Composition of the Fourth Gospel" recasts an earlier Trinity Journal article (26/2, 2005). Multiple lines of evidence converge, he argues, on the likelihood that "the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70 provides an important recent historical datum that likely impacted the composition of the Fourth Gospel" (p. 107). Widely accepted views of date of the Gospel of John and its message need to take this apparent fact seriously.

Andrew Gregory contributes "The Third Gospel? The Relationship of John and Luke Reconsidered." He examines the possibility that Luke's Gospel makes use of John. This of course involves the vexed question of the relationship between John and the Synoptics generally. He concludes that either Gospel may have drawn from the other; the evidence permits either hypothesis. He offers sagacious concluding comments (pp. 132–34) on the implications of our limited knowledge of the rise of the Gospels, insisting that our uncertainties in no way imply that we should pull back from robust appropriation of all four Gospels read "in the light of the Spirit and in the light of each other and of other early witnesses to the impact of the man from Nazareth who was and is the Christ whom Christians worship and serve today" (p. 133).


A full bibliography and three indexes conclude this valuable collection of essays that belongs in every biblical studies library, public or personal, supporting serious study of the Gospel of John.

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