 Carlson and Evans have highlighted some of the important features in Matthew’s theological perspective that deeply affected his re-presentation of the Christian Gospel.

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Konradt’s monograph challenges a prevalent model for reading the Gospel of Matthew as an articulation of the church’s replacement of Israel as the people of God. According to this model, Israel collectively rejected the Messiah and incurred everlasting guilt (Matt 27:24–25). As a result, God transferred the kingdom from Israel to the Gentiles with the result that the Gentile church now constitutes the true Israel (Matt 21:43). The risen Jesus’ commission, then, to make disciples of all the nations (Matt 28:18–20), a statement that would seem to conflict with Jesus’ missionary instruction in Matt 10:5–6, arises out Israel’s failure to embrace Jesus as Messiah. Konradt argues that these “traditional theses of replacement” (p. 10) do not provide a convincing and integrated interpretation of the relationship between Israel, the church, and the Gentiles. In order to provide a better model, Konradt attempts to “comprehensively analyze Israel’s significance and position in Matthean theology and thereby bring to light the theological conception that lies behind the development from the Israel-oriented, pre-Easter ministry of Jesus and his disciples to the universality of salvation that appears in 28:18–20” (p. 14).

Konradt’s thesis unfolds in five chapters that present close exegetical analyses of major portions of Matthew. In ch. 2, Konradt demonstrates that Matthew’s major image for Jesus is the Davidic-Messiah-Shepherd whose ministry is for the lost sheep of Israel. This is seen in Jesus’ compassionate healing ministry (15:22; 20:29–34), his provision of forgiveness for Israel (1:21; 9:2–8), and his ending of Israel’s exile (chs. 1–2). Konradt shows that Jesus’ ministry is consistently focused on Israel alone (10:5–6; 15:24). Jesus’ commissioning of the twelve to gather the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” is part and parcel of the restoration of Israel. Jesus’ statements that they will not finish their mission to Israel until the Son of Man comes indicates that Jesus does not think of the mission to Israel coming to an end with the inception of the Gentile mission.

In ch. 3, Konradt shows that Matthew does not place the blame for the death of Jesus at the feet of Israel as a collective entity. Rather, Matthew “depicts a differentiated reaction to Jesus in Israel . . . intentionally distinguishing the authorities and the crowds from one another” (p. 135). Konradt compares Matthew with Mark and Q and shows that Matthew has redacted certain passages in order to direct Jesus’ criticisms at Israel’s leaders rather than at Israel as a whole (e.g., 3:5–10; 9:33–34; 12:23–24; 21:9–17). In contrast to Jesus’ Davidic-shepherding ministry, “the authorities have not taken care of the needy and have not sought out but rather excluded the lost” with the result that the crowds are “like a languishing, worn-down, shepherdless flock” (p. 138). Is-
rael’s leaders are contrasted with the crowds who are largely characterized positively as open to Jesus. Matthew 27:24–25—Pilate’s famous declaration of innocence and the ensuing cry “his blood be on us and on our children”—presents a difficulty for Konradt’s thesis as the narrative has Pilate washing his hands “before the crowd” in v. 24, but then in v. 25 it says that “all the people” declare blood-guilt for Jesus’ death. Konradt states: “The crowd gathered before Pilate does not stand for all Israel but rather serves as a cautionary example that displays the consequences of allowing oneself to be persuaded by envious authorities” (p. 165). Konradt emphasizes that Matt 27:25 is not the last word on Israel given that even after 27:25 there are positive characterizations of Jews.

Matthew’s differentiation between the authorities and the crowds is further seen in those places where Jesus warns of the negative consequences that will come to those who reject him (ch. 4). Jesus’ parable of the wicked tenants should not be understood as indicating a replacement of Israel by a Gentile church. Konradt argues that, while ἐθνός most frequently refers to a people or nation, it can also refer to a group of people. Given that the parables (Matt 21:28–22:14) are explicitly directed to the Jerusalem leaders who are also distinguished from the crowds, Konradt concludes that the disputed term refers to Israel’s leaders. The parables have as their purpose “disqualifying and delegitimizing the religious leadership” (p. 183), and this is why the following chapter (ch. 23) is entirely concerned with polemic against them. In their place, “the task of bringing about God’s reign through the instruction of the people about God’s will is entrusted to Jesus’ disciples” (p. 263). The destruction of Jerusalem does not serve to emphasize the guilt of Israel but it does show whose side God is on and functions as a warning to listen to Jesus’ disciples rather than the Jerusalem leaders. Konradt’s argument is predictable for other problem passages. For example, when Jesus speaks harsh words against “this generation,” he does not speak to collective Israel but only to the religious authorities. They alone are the “evil and adulterous generation” (11:16–19; 12:38–45).

In the final two chapters, Konradt examines Israel’s relationship to the Gentiles (ch. 5) and the church (ch. 6). Konradt argues that the ministry to the Gentiles does not arise out of Israel’s failure; rather, Jesus’ commission in 28:16–20 has been foreshadowed from the very beginning with the reference to Jesus as Abraham’s Son (1:1), the inclusion of Gentiles within Jesus’ genealogy (1:2–17), and through Jesus’ successful encounters with Gentiles throughout the Gospel (8:5–13; 8:28–34; 15:21–28). But the ministry to the Gentiles does not begin until the risen Christ is shown to be the Lord of all peoples and this is rooted in the saving death of Jesus (1:21; 26:28–29). The mission to the nations is rooted, furthermore, in Israel’s Scriptures and presumes the ongoing significance of Israel’s election (Gen 12:1–4; Isa 8:23–9:1; 56:1–8). Konradt argues that Matthew never presents the church and Israel in a competitive relationship, meaning that the former does not replace the latter. Rather, both engage together in the missionary task. Israel has a privileged role in God’s salvation-history of election, but “on the other hand, he places the nations and Israel on the same level soteriologically in their common access to salvation brought about in Christ” (p. 347).

Konradt presents a powerful synthesis of Matthean ecclesiology and shows that interpretations of the Gospel that succumb to an easy assumption that sees the church (and/or Gentiles) and Israel as competing entities with
the former replacing the latter cannot explain numerous nuances of Matthew. Overall, I found Konradt’s argument to be persuasive on a number of levels even though there are some remaining difficulties. For example, Matt 27:24–25 still appears problematic to me, and I would assume some will not be convinced of his interpretation of Matt 21:43. Though the volume is copiously researched, given the amount of work that has been devoted to Konradt’s topics, a brief history of research section detailing the views of the major players in the field (e.g., Overman, Saldarini, Luz, Stanton) would shed further light on Konradt’s own interpretive moves.

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Paul Foster and his colleagues have edited a hefty volume that is focused on the Synoptic Problem. It is dedicated to Christopher Tuckett, to whom the topic is very dear. These lengthy, detailed studies constitute a very important contribution to this subject. David Catchpole writes a word of appreciation, which highlights important moments in the honoree’s life and career. A list of Professor Tuckett’s main publications follows. John Kloppenborg provides a brief but very helpful introduction, recalling some of the major moments in the scholarly discussion of the Synoptic Problem, from the Oxford meetings in William Sanday’s lodgings at the end of the 19th century to the discussion today. He then places the papers of the volume under review in context with brief comments.

The balance of the contributions are divided into five parts. In part 1, we have Christopher Tuckett, “The Current State of the Synoptic Problem” (pp. 9–50); Kloppenborg, “Synopses and the Synoptic Problem” (pp. 51–86); Andrew Gregory, “What is Literary Dependence?” (pp. 87–114); and Peter M. Head, “Textual Criticism and the Synoptic Problem” (pp. 115–56).

In part 2, we have David B. Peabody, “Reading Mark from the Perspectives of Different Synoptic Source Hypotheses: Historical, Redactional and Theological Implications” (pp. 159–86); David C. Sim, “Matthew and the Synoptic Problem” (pp. 187–208); John C. Poirier, “The Composition of Luke in Source-Critical Perspective” (pp. 209–26); M. Eugene Boring, “The ‘Minor Agreements’ and Their Bearing on the Synoptic Problem” (pp. 227–52); Robert H. Stein, “Duality in Mark” (pp. 253–80); Mark Goodacre, “The Evangelists’ Use of the Old Testament and the Synoptic Problem” (pp. 281–98); Duncan Reid, “Miracle Stories and the Synoptic Problem” (pp. 299–320); Charles W. Hedrick, “The Parables and the Synoptic Problem” (pp. 321–46); William R. G. Loader, “Attitudes to Judaism and the Law and Synoptic Relations” (pp. 347–70); and William E. Arnal, “The Synoptic Problem and the Historical Jesus” (pp. 371–432).

In part 3, we have Robert A. Derrenbacker, Jr., “The ‘External and Psychological Conditions under Which the Synoptic Gospels Were Written’: Ancient Compositional Practices and the Synoptic Problem” (pp. 435–58); Alan Kirk,