

participate, through the avenues of sight and sound, the uncomprehending disciples in Mark are offered the answer to their question about Jesus' identity prior to the Passion. And there Mark explicitly states that when a centurion *heard* Jesus' cry and *saw* how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!" (15:39). All this Melbourne passes by, even though it might support his view that evidence from both sight and sound was considered requisite to comprehension in the cultural milieu of early Christianity.

While Melbourne's position on Matthean and Lukan priority releases Mark from the onus of creating the disciples' incomprehension, it doesn't release Melbourne from the need to explain why Mark in several instances heightened the disciples' slowness to understand. Melbourne rejects Kelder's and Weeden's explanations but fails to offer any of his own.

Melbourne proposes that slowness of understanding was a common feature among Jewish and Hellenistic depictions of students. He appears to welcome this proposal as delivering Mark from the accusation of creating dull-witted disciples out of whole cloth. But can he ignore the obvious counter-proposal that Mark (or Matthew) was simply following a well-established *topos*?

Even more serious for Melbourne's agenda are the possible implications for the historicity of the Synoptic tradition. His survey of the Jewish and Hellenistic literature on incomprehension can be turned against his thesis. He suggests that the historical Jesus' disciples participated in the conventions requisite for comprehension. But other scholars less convinced of the historical basis of the Synoptics can point to the same conventions to give the credit of creating the impression of incomprehension to a developing Synoptic tradition.

In short, Melbourne tries to do and claim too much. He has raised some important questions without dealing with them adequately. At some point we who consider ourselves conservative regarding the historical Jesus must face the issues that this dissertation raises.

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Mulder, Martin Jan, ed. *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*. Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum; Section 2, vol. 1. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988. xxvi + 929 pp. \$79.95.

"Mikra" is a neutral term for what Christians call the OT and Jews call the Tanakh or simply the Bible. *Mikra* is the volume of the Compendia series that explores the most influential collection of literature in

the Second Temple period and beyond—the scriptures. Beginning with articles on the origins of the alphabet in the Middle Bronze Age (A. Demsky) and writing in the Late Second Temple and Rabbinic periods (M. Bar-Ilan), the volume continues with articles on the formation, transmission, and use of the Hebrew scriptures (R. T. Beckwith, M. J. Mulder, C. Perrot) and their translation into Greek (E. Tov), Aramaic (A. Tal and P. S. Alexander), Syriac (P. B. Dirksen), and Latin (B. Kedar). The second half of the volume treats the use of the scriptures at Qumran (M. Fishbane), in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha (D. Dimant), and by Philo (Y. Amir), Josephus (L. H. Feldman), other Hellenistic Jews (P. W. van der Horst), the Rabbis (R. Kasher), Samaritans (R. Boid), Gnostics (B. A. Pearson), and early Christians (E. E. Ellis and W. Horbury). Each article is well documented and concludes with a bibliography. Horbury's article includes a guide to patristic authors and their biblical expositions. Although there is an index of sources, the volume is crippled by the lack of a subject index.

As can be expected in a volume of this type, the various articles are uneven and lack integration, though contrasting viewpoints are fewer than might be expected. Editorial control was not tight; some authors rambled, and several duplicated effort. The volume needed a careful proofreading, especially as English is a second language to some authors. Misprints take on an element of humor when found in passages on textual criticism, such as the duplication discussing glosses on page 193. More damaging is the confused placement of Hebrew and Aramaic quotations on the top of page 203, making reading quite difficult.

In spite of these problems, the articles are substantial and cover the material well. Dirksen's article on the Peshitta strikes a careful balance between Targumic influence and independent translation, and Kedar's contribution on Latin scripture ably distinguishes translation from the Septuagint and direct translation from Hebrew. Amir makes the important point that Philo and others considered the Septuagint of the Pentateuch to be an inspired translation, while Boid's article delineates the different approaches of rabbinic oral law and Samaritan tradition to the Torah.

Ellis provides a corrective to the popular notion that the Apocrypha were accepted by the church as canonical. In his argument, he does not concern himself with quotations from these works in early Christian writings, but rather relies on statements about canon and authority. A threefold division of writings was held: canon, other good books, and "apocrypha." The books which we call the Apocrypha were placed in the second category as useful, but not canon. The term "apocrypha" was not applied to these useful books, but rather to the unacceptable books of the heretics. The chief weakness in Ellis' argument is the placement of the Apocrypha in the early codices of the Septuagint. Ellis' opposition to the three-stage theory of canon formation (pp. 680-685) duplicates Beckwith (pp. 55-58).

Occasional blatant inaccuracies occur, though these rarely detract from the main point. For example, Kedar states that Latin eventually became dominant over Greek in the Roman Empire (pp. 299, 301). That was true only in the Western Empire. The longer-lived Eastern Empire remained Greek. However, since Kedar's material rarely leaves the confines of the Western Empire, the problem is quite minor. Incidentally, Kedar demonstrates that Jerome did have a good grasp of Hebrew and was not tied to Origen's Hexapla.

Bar-Ilan's article on scribal practice is heavily weighted to rabbinic sources, which is inevitable since rabbinic sources contain the bulk of available information. Likewise, Mulder's article on transmission passes quickly over the pre-Masoretic period to concentrate on the Masorettes and other late text history. The reader, however, should be wary of depending on one strand of what was probably a highly varied tradition.

Another difficulty is Alexander's use of the Genesis Apocryphon as an example of a targum. The Apocryphon is no more expansive than many targums; but it changes the narrative to the first person, making the work pseudonymous, a dramatic departure from targumic method. Confusion here has hampered both targumic and pseudepigraphical studies.

In spite of its shortcomings, *Mikra* provides a good, comprehensive guide to the present state of research, including unsolved problems. Read critically, it will serve well as a useful reference work and a source for dissertation ideas.

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Noyce, Gaylord. *Pastoral Ethics*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1988. 208 pp. Paperback, \$12.95.

Since 1929, when N. B. Harmon published his *Ministerial Ethics and Etiquette*, few substantial works have appeared on the subject. There are several reasons for this: 1) The nature of ministry is hard to define. Some consider it a profession much like that of law or medicine, while others see it as transcending professionalism. 2) The wide range of skills expected from a minister requires an ethic in business, counseling, communication, leadership, and administration, in addition to that of personal life. 3) Finally, ministry as a vocation differs from church to church and from tradition to tradition.

If we keep these and many other factors in mind, we will soon recognize the value of the contribution made by the author of *Pastoral Ethics*. Gaylord Noyce, Professor of Pastoral Theology at Yale University Divinity School, makes a valiant effort to transcend the diversities and divisions within Christian ministry without reducing tensions and ending up with generalities and vagueness.