

some letters already present in Greek use were reshaped under Phoenician influence.

Following a brief conclusion concentrating on the Greek alphabet, Bernal includes a one-page appendix consisting of a letter sent in 1915 by his grandfather, Alan Gardiner, to his grandmother, after Gardiner presented a paper on the transmission of the alphabet. The letter gives a brief insight into the personalities and issues of the period. Following the bibliography is an index of authorities cited.

The chief difficulty of Bernal's thesis is the presence of long silent periods in the record. Of course, such silences already exist in the accepted models. Also, many of the important epigraphic finds are not archaeologically datable, so these "silent" periods may not be quite so silent. However, Bernal goes to extremes when he derides what he calls a "fetish for attestation" (p. 64). Although available evidence is limited, this is one "fetish" which needs to be more popular.

The inertia against which Bernal is moving is very great. His work is carefully done and has great merit. *Cadmean Letters* is an important contribution to the study of the alphabet's transmission. As Bernal stands alone in this field, his work should be read critically. More important, it should be read.

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Clines, David J. A. *Job 1-20*. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 17. Dallas: Word Books, 1989. 651 pp. \$24.99.

Because the Book of Job is one of the greatest works of world literature, most commentary writers approach it with trepidation. Clines considered his task "nearly as dangerous as composing a ninth symphony" (p. xi).

In a commentary on Job one looks quickly to examine the author's views on a number of problems: relationship of the prose story and poetry dialogue, the alleged 'disarray' in the third cycle of speeches, the place of the poem on wisdom in chapter 28, and whether the Elihu speeches constituted part of the original composition. (See C. S. Rodd, "Which Is the Best Commentary? Part iv: Job," *Expository Times* 97 [1986]: 356-360.)

Clines is not dogmatic, but he believes it probable that the author of the prologue and epilogue story is also the poet of the dialogue, and that he wrote the prose deliberately for its place in the book.

Since the commentary covers only the first twenty chapters of Job, the third cycle of speeches is not addressed. From the outline in the introduction, however, it appears that Clines does not resort to re-arrangement of the text. On the other hand, he does allow for the possibility of "dislocation in the

course of scribal transmission," and for the theory that the poem on wisdom should be attributed to Zophar (though he does not consider that a solution). He believes "one must acknowledge the possibility that the Book of Job has been subject to expansion" (p. lix).

In a departure from the practice of earlier commentaries on Job, Clines devotes only a page to the problem of suffering. That reflects today's trend. The "problem of suffering" theme is considered the motto only for those approaching the book for the first time. Clines does spend nine pages on "The Moral Order of the World." He sees the argument of the book as addressing the question of whether there is any moral order in this world, "whether there is any rule whereby goodness is rewarded and wickedness is punished" (p. xxxix).

The commentary on each section is preceded by a fairly exhaustive bibliography related to that passage. Works listed in these bibliographies are not listed in the general bibliography unless they are referred to more than once. The bibliographies on the separate passages are extremely helpful.

Next comes Clines' translation of the passage, followed by fairly detailed philological notes. A commentator on the book of Job must wrestle with the meaning of many *hapax legomena*. Clines shares that struggle with his readers, also supplying the conclusions of other scholars.

The author also provides an adequate discussion on the form/structure/setting of each passage, after which the commentary proper appears under "Comments." Lastly, Clines supplies an "Explanation." The person who wants nothing more than a quick survey of what is happening in sequence is advised to read in succession the explanation at the end of each section.

One significant discussion that is missing is on the historical context of Job, namely, on the date and authorship of the book. Interestingly, Clines omits this because he believes the primary question is the meaning or interpretation of the book. He spends all his time and effort in that area. Questions of date, authorship, and sources he considers extrinsic to the book itself. Certainly the meaning of the book is more important than its history. Dates are important in locating theology in history, but Clines claims to know nothing of either the author or the date of Job's composition. His guesses, he asserts, would not be better than those of others. His attitude toward the problem of unlocking the mysteries of the historical context seems correct in the light of the contradictory results from other researchers' studies.

Clines' major contributions to the study of Job are his bibliographies (better than anything else in print) and the comprehensiveness of his material. One cannot but look forward to his second volume.