converted people will "break through sinful barriers of racism, class prejudice, and oppression [, and] its very existence has a powerful influence on society" (175).

For Sider, the separation between social action and evangelism is not only unbiblical, but also ineffective. Evangelism without social action is empty and implausible; social action without evangelism is shallow because it does not cause true transformation. In essence, "church people think about how to get people into the church, while kingdom people think about how to get the church into the world. Church people think about how the world might change the church; while kingdom people work to see that the church changes the world" (75). In the final analysis, Sider's *Incarnational Kingdom Model* suggests that "evangelism and social action are inseparably interrelated. Each leads to the other. They mutually support each other" (180).

Although Sider's suggested model might appear new to some, it is actually an old biblical model. The challenge is not so much for Christians to understand it as to practice it. A "right relationship with God, neighbor and earth" (190) is essential for the success of Sider's model. But what happens if there is no healthy relationship with oneself? This problem is most prevalent among those who have been lied to, marginalized, and kept in systems of poverty. What about those who are living in affluent societies and have material wealth, but who are lonely and "poor"?

Sider's book is an excellent wake-up call for (evangelical) Christians to start living the gospel in their daily lives.

Andrews University   RUDOLF MAIER

Van der Toorn, Karel, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, eds. *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible (DDD)*, 2d rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, and Boston: Brill, 1999. 998 pp. Hardcover, $120.00.

Eerdmans presents the revised edition of *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* as "the only major work describing the gods, angels, demons, spirits, and semi-divine heroes whose names occur throughout Scripture." First published in 1995, the present work has been expanded to include thirty new articles, while more than 100 articles from the first edition have been updated to reflect current research.

The impressive list of 100 contributors include such international scholars as Hans Dieter Betz (Chicago); Paolo Xella (Rome), Klaas Spronk (Amsterdam), and Wolfgang Röllig, (Tübingen) to name a few. The original impetus for such a work came from Michael Stone (Jerusalem), who desired to create a dictionary that would include all deities and demons of the ANE religions. However, this "ambitious project" was eventually limited to include only those gods and demons specifically mentioned in the Bible (xviii). As a result, major ANE gods are described along with lesser characters. For instance, although the god Euphrates plays a lesser role in ANE culture than does the Babylonian Marduk, both are presented because of their presence in Scripture. Other gods, despite their importance to ANE religions, are not separately listed. However, this imbalance is often corrected through cross-referencing, such as when Anu, the Mesopotamian god of heaven, is discussed under the subtitle "heaven" (xv).

Each article discusses the meaning of the deity's name, its religio-historical background, provides relevant biblical passages, and presents informative

bibliographical information. Cross referencing increases the value of this work.

Although the characters are presented in alphabetical order, the gods and demons are characterized by five separate categories: those mentioned by name in the Bible (i.e., Asherah, Baal, Hermes, Zeus), those mentioned as part of the composition of a personal or place name (i.e., Anat in Anathoth, or Shemesh in Beth-shemesh), gods mentioned in the Bible but who are not acknowledged as gods (i.e., the so-called "demytholozied deities" [xvi], who are mentioned in connection with usages such as the word *yārēah* derived from the name "Yarikh" the moon-god), gods whose "presence and/or divinity is often questionable" (xvi) (i.e., "by slightly revocalizing Isa 10:4, and altering the division of the words, Paul de Lagarde obtained a reference to Belti and Osiris where generations of scholars before had read a negation [*biltî*] and the collective designation of prisons [*ʾassîr*]" [xvi]), and human figures who allegedly arose to divine or semidivine status in later tradition (i.e., Jesus, Mary, Enoch, Moses, Elijah).

The *Dictionary* is a useful (and interesting) tool not only for biblical theologians, but as one who comes from a systematic background, I found that the book helped to indirectly explain certain relationships between the development of modern hermeneutics and its original Greek sources by providing dialogue about Greek gods and their traditions. Such is the case with the god Hermes, from whom the term "hermeneutics" is derived. In addition, the god Dionysus is the basis for the Greek cultic festival of ecstasy that Aristotle described in his *Poetics* and for which he described the process by which to reach the state of catharsis that brought the festival to its climax. The *Poetics* serves as the basis for modern literary methods of interpretation.

The work provides a valuable starting point for further indepth studies of ANE gods and demons. However, one criticism lies in the designation of the *Dictionary's* fifth category of gods and demons: that of attributing a divine or semidivine status to human figures such as Enoch, Moses, and Elijah. While some ancient traditions do appear to apply a mythological character to figures such as Elijah (i.e., in Jewish folklore he is presented as one who combats social injustice; in Jewish mysticism he is a supernatural being "not born of a woman" [284]), Scripture itself presents these individuals as historical figures. Their qualification as divine or semidivine in the *Dictionary* lies in their purported supernatural deeds or encounters. However, in spite of my reluctance to include human figures as deities, I found the documentation valuable as a launching point for further studies.

The more than 400 articles contained in this work are a tremendous contribution to understanding the *Sitz im Leben* of Scripture. I would recommend the *Dictionary* as a useful resource tool.

Berrien Springs, Michigan   KAREN K. ABRAHAMSON

Walton, John H., Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000. 800 pp. Hardcover, $29.99.

There are several different ways in which to relate extrabiblical texts from the Ancient Near East to the biblical text. Each of these has its strengths and weaknesses. A standard reference work is *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating*