

that the agent does not believe in order to serve the agent's purpose" (3). Intentionality is essential, which is why the author deals only with biblical passages where this factor is present. He seeks to discover the rationale behind the positive view of some deception in Genesis.

Williams concludes that Genesis positively describes only those events of deception in which the perpetrator was previously wronged and uses deception "against the one who has done the wrong in order to restore shalom" (55). In such cases, deception functions "to restore their own situation to what they would have been had they not been disrupted" (221). Thus deception is justified when it functions to restore the well-being of the person, family, or faith community. When deception distorts shalom, it is viewed negatively.

The book of Genesis, with its particular view of deception, is set apart from the rest of the biblical narratives where deception is present because the social structure is different, e.g., the nation of Israel was not yet formed (75). While the biblical material clearly condemns deception, in some instances even God deceives (62-66). It is interesting that in the later Jewish literature, a deception event is viewed positively when it includes divine involvement, a positive motivation on the part of the deceiver, and a negative evaluation of the character of the deceived party (136).

Interestingly, an Egyptian proverb from *The Instruction of Ankhsheshong* states that "there is none who deceives who is not deceived." This fits the pattern that Williams has discovered in Genesis. It is comforting that prophets speak about the splendid future where there will be no deceit (66).

Not all scholars will agree with assessments of deception passages, but the author should be commended for his diligent categorization and thorough analysis. Nevertheless, one wonders why he omitted the Dan 6 narrative about Daniel and his deceitful enemies in his discussion of deception in the book of Daniel (70).

In theological ethics, one has difficulty accepting the view that the end justifies the means because such a "principle" can excuse or justify almost any kind of behavior. It is true that our author is careful in his description of the deception process, but I wish that he would provide more penetrating insight into the question of whether the end justifies the means. Williams correctly warns not to judge Genesis deception phenomena from our modern cultural standpoint (223). Nevertheless, we could raise the following questions, which go beyond the scope of the present study: What is the border and safeguard for accomplishing lasting shalom? Social norms change, therefore, what are the implications for modern ethics? Perhaps, he is planning to do this in a future publication. In any case, Williams's research deserves to be taken seriously by those interested in ethics and new directions in biblical studies.

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Zevit, Ziony. *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallaxic Approaches*. New York: Continuum, 2001. xx+821 pp. Hardcover, \$150.00.

Zevit's *magnum opus* is the most comprehensive discussion of Israelite religion to date, involving systematic integration of textual, epigraphic, iconographic, and archaeological data, and seeking to apply a balanced methodological approach to

an area of study that has often been beset by controversy and methodological extremism (see also more recently Zevit, "Three Debates about Bible and Archaeology," *Biblica* 83 [2002]: 1-27). Since not everyone will agree with Zevit's conclusions or even his premises, his work will undoubtedly provoke reaction, but hopefully it will move the discussion beyond pitting one discipline against another, as has often been the case (as in the debate between "minimalists" and "maximalists"). He issues a call to a multidisciplinary approach that is open to hearing the biblical text, looking at the extrabiblical literary data, and paying adequate attention to the material culture (cf. my comments in "Methods and Daily Life: Understanding the Use of Animals in Daily Life in a Multi-Disciplinary Framework," in *Daily Life in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Richard Averbeck et al. [Bethesda, MD: CDL, 2002], 401-433). This approach involves risk because an interdisciplinary focus is necessarily less than the total of the specialized disciplines that it brings into mutual intellectual relationship (cf. Jonathan Z. Smith, "Religion Up and Down, Out and In," in *Sacred Time, Sacred Space: Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, ed. Barry M. Gittlen [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002], 4). However, this risk is worth taking if we want to understand and integrate.

The book is divided into ten chapters of various lengths. It also includes an appendix regarding the Khirbet Beit Lei inscriptions, which provides a good photograph and drawing by Zevit; an extensive bibliography; and several helpful indices covering subjects, authors, and transliterated foreign words. A scriptural index also includes references from apocryphal literature, DSS, classical authors, and rabbinical sources. Zevit states in his preface that the book is intended for a wide audience, including undergraduate and graduate students of disciplines such as Bible, archaeology, and history, as well as seminary graduate students, pastors, rabbis, and scholars (xiii).

In terms of methodology, chapter 1 is the most significant. The author acknowledges the methodological disparity and (often) disengagement between philological, historical, and archaeological research and describes the distinct reigning paradigms in these disciplines. Zevit then provides his definition of Israelite religion, emphasizing the worldview of the ancients, which he views as necessary in order to understand religious expressions (15). He also refers to "Israelite religions" (plural), acknowledging the existence of different, often competing, religious expressions in Israel. The historical time frame embraces the Iron Age (1200-587 B.C.). To review recent scholarship concerning methodology, Zevit describes several distinct approaches (30-73), ranging from a modernist paradigm, presupposing an original historical reality, to a postmodernist paradigm, which questions historical reality in view of the supposed dominant ideological traces and strands. Zevit opts for a modernist approach, which acknowledges "coexistent competing worldviews and allows for some sort of structured pluralism" (75). He eschews "theological" or "antitheological" biblical texts as historically irrelevant (79), although one wonders upon what criteria such texts are assigned to these categories.

In the following chapters, Zevit examines specific religious expressions as evidenced in the material culture and texts. First, he investigates cult places (81-121), supplying a helpful catalogue of criteria for defining the presence of a cult

place in the archaeological record (81-83). He concludes that there is clear evidence for cultural and religious discontinuity between LBA and IA I (113ff.), but allows for non-Israelite influence on Israelite religious thought and ritual practices (119).

Chapter 3 focuses upon the architecture of cult places (123-266). This is one of the largest individual chapters and provides some helpful definitions and classifications (see also Garth Gilmour, "The Archaeology of Cult in the Ancient Near East: Methodology and Practice," *Old Testament Essays* 13 [2000]: 283-292). Zevit discusses possible cult sites outside of Israel, including Tell Qasile, Tell Miqne, Edomite Horvat Qitmit, and Bethsaida-Geshur (Et-Tell). Following is a study of Israelite sites, such as Ai, Arad, Beer-Sheba, the Bull Site, Tell Dan, Mt. Ebal, Ein Gev, Hazor, Jerusalem, Lachish, Mikdash and Tell Michal, Megiddo, Ta'anach, Tell el-Far'ah (North), and Tell Eton. It seems that a socially sensitive interpretation is warranted, recognizing that religion was practiced differently at home, village, sanctuary, urban temple, and extraurban sanctuary (265). It is fascinating that Zevit's (rather convincing) argument is partially based upon the distinctions found in Deut 13:2-16. Interestingly, while referring to region (difficult to define), family, and city, he seems to overlook Deut 13:12 (Eng. 13:11), which refers to Israel as a whole. Could it be that this reference to the nation does not fit the overall evolutionary reconstruction of Israelite religion, or has it just been overlooked?

Chapter 4 discusses the material and textual aspects of cultic artifacts (267-349), including figurines, altars, ceramic stands, model shrines, scarabs, and seals. While recent studies of figurines focus more upon family religion and the function of women in Israelite religion (cf. Elizabeth Ann R. Willett, "Infant Mortality and Family Religion in the Biblical Periods," *DavarLogos* 1 [2002]: 27-42), Zevit does not sufficiently emphasize this angle. Although the author rightfully maintains that the function of horns on Israelite altars is not explicitly explained in the biblical text, he has missed the important work of Margit Linné Süring, *Horn-Motifs in the Hebrew Bible and Related Ancient Near Eastern Literature and Iconography* (Andrews University Seminary Dissertation Series, 4 [Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 1982]).

Chapter 5 focuses on cultic sites involving inscriptions, including the Judean Desert cave adjacent to Ein Gedi, a tomb at Khirbet ElQôm near Lachish, a building atop Kuntillet Arjud in the eastern Sinai, and a tomb at Khirbet Beit Led. This chapter contains a detailed discussion of the paleography and content of these inscriptions, which share cultic function and written reference (at least in three cases) to YHWH, Ba'al, El, and Asherah.

Chapter 6 deals with Israelite religions in Israelian and Judahite historiography and historiosophy, concentrating on the so-called Deuteronomic historian. Concerning Israel, Zevit concludes that religion was only nominally dependent on the king (457), as in New Kingdom Egypt. Concerning Judah, the author proposes a distinct model, where the king exercised almost complete control over the temple and often also attempted to govern aspects of the cultic/religious life of Judahites beyond the confines of the temple (479).

In chapter 7, Zevit considers Israelite mantic religions in distinct literary, social, and historical contexts, concluding that prophetic religion involved an immanent god, and was highly individualistic and dynamic (510). Chapter 8 comes at Israelite religion from an interesting angle, portraying it through enemy eyes.

Zevit understands the "enemy" in this context to be the critical prophet. He discusses sixty-five prophet oracles that address religious practice, i.e., ritual, mostly from a negative perspective, and presents a handy list of possible religious activities, deities, and objects that were criticized (583-584).

Chapter 9 discusses the names of Israelite deities as found in biblical and epigraphic sources. In particular, he focuses upon the theophoric elements present in personal and topographical names. Through examination of non-Yahwistic names, he reaches two interesting conclusions: the spread of Yahwism in Israel is pre-Davidic (607), and the plurality of distinct cult places and forms indicates lack of a strictly conventional way of celebrating YHWH. Thus, Zevit argues for a minimal Yahwism (or perhaps "surface Yahwism"), which had not replaced older (or newer) loyalties to other deities. Clearly, the biblical evidence concerning constant rebellion and apostasy could be interpreted along these lines.

The final chapter represents a synthesis of evidence culled from the earlier sections and should be prescribed reading for all graduate classes on Israelite religion. It is basically a historical reconstruction of the different strands of Israelite religions as understood by Zevit. Of course, as a reconstruction, it is susceptible to reductionism.

Zevit's work is characterized by careful scholarship, relevant documentation, and didactic presentation that includes two maps and more than one hundred superb figures. The two-column layout of the wider than usual volume also makes for easy reading. The author generally has a good grasp of the involved fields, although once or twice I would have wished for a stronger methodological basis when he utilizes data from an adjacent discipline, e.g., in his use of iconography. Zevit generally follows the traditional dating schemes that have become credo in biblical scholarship, e.g., Deutero-Isaiah, Trito-Isaiah, J-E-D-P. But it is clear that he is not overly concerned about these dating issues. In a sense, this makes his work susceptible to circular reasoning as specific phenomena are correlated to specific biblical writings. This tendency has been checked in some chapters with a marked focus upon datable extrabiblical materials (both archaeological and textual).

I have profited tremendously from Zevit's monumental work. It provides a welcome collection of important threads concerning Israelite religion and ritual. The high price of \$150.00 will limit its market penetration, but hopefully Continuum will soon publish a paperback edition that will be more accessible to cash-strapped scholars. We can wish for more studies focusing on Israelite religion and utilizing Zevit's multidisciplinary approach to integrate the different data sets without excluding any. In any case, congratulations to the author on his great achievement!

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