

he writes as a believer who speaks out of the experience of his own suffering. For him, Job was not a "figment of a playwright's imagination," but "a real person . . . [.] an actual historical figure, a real-life man" (3). Lawson's own pain leads him to relate to the Job story not only as text for objective study, but intimately, as the text of personal experience.

Lawson's overview of the book of Job includes, *inter alia*, data on the book's historicity, as well as that of its chief protagonist, its authorship, style, content, and structure. Chapters proceed according to a standard Holman Commentary format of opening quotation and an eight-part treatment of each passage. Every chapter identifies a main idea along with one or several supporting ideas, an admirably rigorous undertaking exhibiting a consistently optimistic tone that may inspire some and trouble others. Further, each chapter contains a section on prayer, which has a climactic and concluding tone although the prayer section occurs as the fifth of the chapter's eight-part division.

The sentiment of Lawson's prayers illustrates his helpful, if sometimes facile, counsel born of idealized views of suffering and sovereignty: "All suffering is temporal" (129), "all suffering is useful" (130), "all suffering is Christlike" (130). This sequence is memorable, but its last item is a challenging notion, however consonant with Lawson's view of the book's main idea: tragedy provides "an opportunity to worship God for who he is" (14). The tragedy of Judas's betrayal, then, is to be seen as Christ's opportunity to worship God for who he is. Faith in divine sovereignty should not diminish personal Satanic or human culpability, nor should it purge the Job tragedy of its intolerable horror.

Lawson's idealized characterization on suffering frees him to urge again the ancient paradox: a war is on, the devil is not yet in hell, and Christians cannot afford to behave as though we live in peace time (23-25); at the same time, the carnage of Satan's mayhem and brutalization is carried out "by God's initiative" (15). This review will not resolve the paradox of the enemy who may only act according to his opponent's permission. What is certain is that Lawson's homiletical, if at times glib, counsel in this book grows out of his strong and experienced faith in divine sovereignty, and his commendable desire to nurture such faith in others.

In another example of suspicious submission, Lawson's advice on dealing with despair features castigation for Job because he keeps his deep pain to himself during a week of silence rather than sharing it with his friends (97). What do we make of this? One must wonder. For Lawson has elsewhere remarked that Job "needed friends who would listen to him and process carefully what he was saying. But no such care or consideration was given to him" (75). Lawson's somewhat confusing positions here may help us all sense how much further those right answers and good counsel are from our grasp at the time we need them most.

Given Lawson's faith in and commitment to a sovereign God, it is surprising that he bypasses an opportunity, in discussion of the second divine speech, to develop the theological implications of the behemoth and leviathan imagery (cf. the treatment of this topic in, e.g., John C. L. Gibson, "On Evil in the Book of Job," in *Ascribe to the Lord: Biblical and Other Studies in Memory of Peter C. Craigie*, ed. Lyle Eslinger and Glen Taylor, JSOTSupp 67 [Sheffield: JSOT, 1988], 399-419; Edwin and Margaret Thiele, *Job and the Devil* [Boise: Pacific Press, 1988]; and Smick, *Job*, esp. 4:1045-1055). Nevertheless, readers will attest to the success of Lawson's attempt by the edification they derive from this book. Readers will profit best from Lawson's work by savoring his theological insight and homiletical commentary rather than looking for mastery of the original language. It is the inspiration he brings to readers, enabling them to keep faith while under fire, which should be the measure of this book's success.

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Moloney, Francis J. *Mark: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2004. xiv + 224 pp. Paper, \$19.95.

Francis J. Moloney holds the Katharine Drexel Chair of Religious Studies at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He has written and edited more than a dozen books, most of them on the Gospel of John. The present volume is his

second book on Mark; the first, a full-scale commentary published in 2002 by Hendrickson, was winner of the 2003 Reference Book of the Year award by the Academy of Parish Clergy. Though *Mark* can be described as the work of a specialist whose qualities as exegete and writer have been widely acknowledged, this new book is expressly designed for nonspecialists (xi), as it offers a nontechnical treatment of issues, such as authorship, literary structure and plot, main themes, and its value for the church as a witness of the "good news" of Jesus Christ.

The book is structured according to the four elements of the title. Part 1 ("Mark") attempts to identify the author, date, and place of composition of the Gospel and the difficult relationship between history and theology one finds therein. Moloney does accept the traditional Markan authorship for two reasons: first, it is not evident that the John Mark of Acts 15:37-40 is the same Mark of the Pauline letters (Phlm 13-24; Col 4:10-11; 2 Tim 4:9-11) and, second, "Mark" was a common name in the Roman world (5). As for the date and place of composition, the Gospel was probably written in southern Syria around 70-75 A.D., since the discourse of chapter 13 presupposes that Jerusalem had already fallen.

Moloney also discusses Mark's contribution as a historian and theologian, giving a brief discussion of the history of interpretation of the Gospel accounts of Jesus from the Renaissance to modern times and highlighting the role played by modern disciplines, such as Redaction Criticism and, more particularly, Narrative Criticism. In so doing, Moloney prepares the reader for the main approach he follows in the remainder of the book.

Part 2 ("Mark the Storyteller") deals only with the text, tracing Mark's skills as a storyteller. In an initial chapter, and particularly on the basis of redactional devices, such as summaries, repetitions, and shifts of the action from one place to another, Moloney investigates the plot of the Gospel as two major narrative sections, with a midpoint at the confession of Jesus as the Christ at Caesarea Philippi (8:29-30).

Part 3 ("Mark the Interpreter") focuses on Mark's interpretation of the received primitive Christian tradition. The first chapter studies the fundamental questions of Mark's interpretation of Jesus: Jesus' preaching of God's kingdom and his identification as the Christ, the Son of God, and the Son of Man. The following chapter investigates Mark's interpretation of the Christian community. Moloney presents Mark as an interpreter who sees the significance of the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus in a way similar to that of Paul.

Part 4 ("Mark the Evangelist") traces the Gospel of Mark's place as one of the church's fundamental texts and assesses the ongoing relevance of its contribution to Christianity. The book concludes with a two-part bibliography, "Commentaries" and "Other Studies," and two helpful indices, "Modern Authors" and "Ancient Sources," which includes Bible references.

Frequently overshadowed by its lengthier neighbors, the Gospel of Mark has definitely found a place under the sun within modern Gospel scholarship, or, to use Moloney's analogy, the "Cinderella of the four Gospels" has become "a princess" (ix, 9). The reasons for this rise in status are not only the more historical concerns that were raised in the mid-nineteenth century concerning Gospel studies, but also the several literary and theological issues of more recent years. Few texts receive as much attention in contemporary NT research as does the Gospel of Mark, and Moloney's book is certainly a significant addition to the discussion. Written with clarity and an inviting style, the book tries to uncover what Moloney calls "the many layers of meaning" of Mark, and though Part 1 deals with more historical and critical issues, the book is essentially a literary and theological introduction to the second Gospel, which readers will find to be an excellent resource. Besides being easy to read, *Mark* is well-organized and substantially complete, covering all the issues typical of an introduction without getting lost in the midst of discussions that are too technical or minute. Greek words are judiciously employed and followed by the proper transliteration, and endnotes appear at the conclusion of each chapter. The number of pages corresponds to the intended purpose of the volume, and the price is reasonable.

Despite all its qualities, however, Moloney's book raises significant hermeneutical questions. One of the most provocative parts of the book is the detailed examination of Mark's supposed abilities as a storyteller (Part 2), that is, the way in which the evangelist seems to develop the plot of the Gospel. Moloney's option for two main narrative sections and their respective subsections is reasoned, interesting, and in a sense does help one to understand Mark's presentation of Jesus. At the end of the discussion, the reader may agree that this briefest of the Gospels, written in rough Greek, is indeed the final product of a deliberate literary and theological design of a creative writer and storyteller. It is important to remember, however, that though it is correct to treat the Gospel of Mark, or any other Gospel for that matter, as an account that has literary integrity, any attempt to organize its content and ascertain the narrative plot solely on the basis of its literary features is liable to the charge of artificiality, as it may result from our particular reading of the material and not necessarily from the author's own intentions.

Moloney is probably at his best when he discusses Mark as an interpreter, particularly his interpretation of Jesus as the Christ (chap. 6). After establishing that postexilic Judaism as a whole did not expect the Messiah and that those who did held divergent opinions, Moloney presents Mark's interpretation as theologically original and creative. He acknowledges the so-called Markan messianic secret, but his perception of it is that of a technique to make sure that Jesus' messianic status will not be understood in terms of his being a miracle worker. "To understand Jesus as a miracle worker," says Moloney, "is to misunderstand Jesus" (133). As is shown in the climactic episode at Caesarea Philippi and especially in the second half of the Gospel, Jesus is the Messiah, but only in so far as he is the suffering and vindicated Son of Man. That is to say, "it is on the cross that Jesus is the Messiah" (136). Unfortunately, Moloney's discussion of other aspects of Markan Christology, such as Jesus as the Son of God and the Son of Man, are not as captivating as this one. The evidence for a suffering Son of God in the same sense of Mark's Messiah is not persuasive. Another hermeneutical difficulty is that Moloney builds his entire argument on the assumption that, as an ingenious interpreter, Mark fashioned the traditions that came to him in order to tell the story of Jesus from a totally unique perspective (125, 186). There is no question that each Gospel provides a somewhat different portrait of Jesus, but, especially in the case of Mark, if its priority is assumed, it is not always easy to separate the writer's interpretation from the traditions he received; nor is it easy to separate his own understanding of the story from that which we ourselves read into the text. This means that we cannot claim to be able to present Mark's theological positions with absolute certainty, though we should not refrain from pursuing what seems to us to be the most relevant issues in his presentation of the gospel message.

In the last chapter of the book, Moloney takes his literary approach even further by positing a kind of reader-response criterion to affirm the ongoing relevance of Mark for the Christian church. Once again, he points to some narrative devices, such as anonymity, which would have the function of challenging and encouraging the reader to become a disciple of Jesus. He also takes the abrupt ending of the Gospel at 16:8 as a deliberate strategy to stress the generally negative portrait of the disciples in the Gospel, which he terms "the good news of human failure." But, what kind of "good news" is this? According to Moloney, the "good news" resides precisely in the fact that the restoration of the disciples does not take place within the limitations of the text itself, but among the readers of the text (195). The disciples' failure is thus seen as a perennial invitation to future readers. It is possible, however, that besides the enormous text-critical difficulty posed by Mark 16:8, many contemporary Christians would prefer to find the enduring value of the gospel message not in the literary or interpretative skills of the evangelists, but in the life and message of Jesus himself which, though calling for a human response, is not necessarily dependent upon it.

These considerations mean that those who are not entirely satisfied with the results of narrative criticism will probably not feel comfortable with some of Moloney's conclusions. This, however, does not change the fact that his book does offer new perspectives on the background, structure, literary character, and theology of Mark's

Gospel. College or seminary students will find it a helpful resource. The author's trust that professional scholars also discover something of value in it (xi) may be true as well, especially for those who use the same approach.

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Paul, Shalom, Robert A. Kraft, Lawrence H. Schiffman, and Weston W. Fields, eds. with the assistance of Eva Ben-David. *Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov*. Supplements to *Vetus Testamentum*, 94, 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2003. xxxvi + 849 + 89 pp. Hardcover, \$186.00.

In the realm of scholarship of the Hebrew Bible, the LXX, and the DSS, Emanuel Tov needs no introduction. He has contributed immensely to all three of these areas, and this impressive volume honors him for his lifelong commitment to academic excellency and leadership. A five-page biography prepared by W. W. Fields introduces us to the honoree, and an extensive eighteen-page bibliography of Tov will leave the reader amazed at his scholarly productiveness (xix-xxxvi).

This *Festschrift* of about 850 pages reads like a Who's Who of textual studies. The contributors are internationally distinguished, highly esteemed scholars. *Emanuel* is organized into three parts, appropriate to the major interests of Emanuel Tov. Part 1 deals with Qumran (31 essays), part 2 with the LXX (12 essays), and part 3 with the Hebrew Bible (13 essays, of which nine were written by Jewish scholars).

A novelty in the publication of *Festschriften*, as far as I know, is the separate *Index Volume*. Its size of 89 pages may justify such a decision, although one wonders why a single volume of about 940 pages would not have been technically possible. It contains an index of ancient sources (74 pages), with major parts on the Hebrew Bible/OT (32 pages) and the DSS (30 pages). An index of names, in which Tov alone has fifty-five references as the most extensive entry, shows that his views, as befits the occasion, are frequently referred to or discussed in his *Festschrift*. All in all, the editorial team has to be thanked for a carefully edited volume.

In reviewing this *Festschrift*, it would be impossible to do justice to every single essay, for each merits careful study. Rather, I will select one essay from each of the three parts to whet the reader's appetite. In his essay on Gen 15:6 (257-268), J. A. Fitzmyer discusses the two interpretations of the second half of this verse—whether YHWH reckoned it to Abram as righteousness or Abram reckoned it to YHWH as righteousness—and lists supporting texts for each interpretation (see Neh 9:7-8; Sir 44:20; 1 Macc 2:52; *Jubilees* 14:6; Gal 3:6; Rom 4:3, 9). Fitzmyer points out that the parabiblical text of 4Q225, which rewrites parts of Gen 15 and dates to 30 B.C.–20 A.D., uses in line 8 the Nip^{al} form וַיִּרְשָׁב “was reckoned” (according to the *editio princeps*). The passive meaning corresponds to the LXX version of Gen 15:6 (ἐλογίσθη, “was reckoned”). Fitzmyer suggests that 4Q225 may reflect a Hebrew *Vorlage* varying from the MT, or, at least, that the passive verb form in Gen 15:6 was known in pre-Christian Palestinian Judaism, which would explain why the LXX, Paul (in Gal 3:6 and Rom 4:3, 9), and others could have used such a tradition.

One of the essays of a more general nature is by R. Sollamo, who puts forward four reasons—in my view the main reasons—why LXX studies are significant (497-512). First, the LXX provided the basic *Vorlage* for many ancient Bible translations and thus plays an important role in the transmission history of the Bible. At the same time, it functioned as a vehicle for transmitting the Hebrew-Jewish religious culture into the European culture. Second, the LXX formed a bridge between the Hebrew Bible and the NT for it became the source of much of the NT writer's language and theology. Hence, Sollamo claims that the study of the LXX is a *conditio sine qua non* for the studies of the NT language, textual history, and theology. With regard to theology, Sollamo does not believe that the LXX translators created a special septuagintal theology, but their theological understanding surfaces when the literal translation of their Hebrew *Vorlage* runs counter to their theological thought (e.g., with anthropomorphic imagery for God). With regard to vocabulary, he points to two septuagintal terms that were influential for the NT writers: κύριος for the tetragram and