

pass. For the reasons mentioned above, I recommend this book as a great introduction to the DSS in general, as well as a good collection of articles helpful to the understanding of particular topics related to Israelite beliefs, the canon of Scriptures, and Christian origins.

Berrien Springs, Michigan

RODRIGO GALIZA

Cosgrove, Mark. *The Brain, the Mind, and the Person Within: The Enduring Mystery of the Soul*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2018. 180 pp. Softcover. USD 18.99.

*The Brain, the Mind, and the Person Within* is not a textbook on the neurosciences, nor does it aspire to solve the mysteries of the soul. The subtitle puts it well: *The Enduring Mystery of the Soul*. Cosgrove does not want to solve the mystery. Rather, his aim is to establish and call attention to it. *The Brain, the Mind, and the Person Within* is a textbook on awe, attempting to re-enchant those who have gained the impression that the brain is almost fully understood and that the person within has been shown to be an emergent product of matter relating to itself in very complex, but ultimately scientifically explicable ways.

For a number of reasons, *The Brain, the Mind, and the Person Within* is a good introductory book for Christian scholars and students who haven't had much contact with actual neuroscience, but wonder about the matter of consciousness and mind. It is written in non-academic language (as much as possible when talking about the brain) and also uses the less formal endnotes rather than footnotes. Furthermore, at the end of each chapter, the reader is presented with two suggestions for additional reading. Each chapter starts off with a fascinating little scientific anecdote, often giving insights about cutting edge research from somewhere around the world. The writing is exuberant, bordering on poetic, as Cosgrove tries to impress upon his audience the sheer complexity and wonder contained in the three pounds of grey goo-ish stuff in our cranium.

A chapter of special interest to Cosgrove's Christian readership should be chapter six: "God Spots on the Brain: Putting God Back Where He Belongs." This chapter describes the role of the parietal and temporal lobes in the spiritual experience. It is a fact that spiritual exercises are associated with increased activity in these areas of the brain. Furthermore, temporal lobe epilepsy can cause strong religious experiences. This can be replicated by a device, called a god helmet, that produces electrical activity in the temporal lobes.

These observations have been taken by some as evidence that religion is a consequence of overactive neurons. Cosgrove argues against this idea by giving a plausible alternative. If there are brain regions especially equipped and capable of connecting human consciousness with what is experienced by the person as spiritual, then there may be an actual spiritual dimension to connect to, just as there is an actual visible world, which can be experienced via our visual sense. Basically, it comes down to this: if there is a God-Creator, it is likely he has made our brain with the necessary properties to contact us

when necessary. If there is no God-Creator, this is some weird phenomenon that needs further explanations as far as its function in human evolution is concerned.

The topic Cosgrove speaks about most extensively, though, is the problem of consciousness, or rather the problem of explaining how consciousness comes about. In neuroscience, this is called “the hard problem.” As Cosgrove describes on many occasions, it is easily possible nowadays to relate certain behaviors, sensory inputs, or categories of thinking to areas within the brain. However, that does not explain how we have a conscious experience of it all. It is also clear that we lose consciousness under certain circumstances—and that, too, is then mirrored by certain phenomena measurable in the brain. But, and this is Cosgrove’s primary contention, the physical phenomena of the brain do not make the person, nor do they cause our consciousness. Cosgrove argues that there is something that is not mere matter involved in our being persons, a non-physical, non-chemical entity (38) that somehow fuses with the brain to generate consciousness, but is not part of it. This assumption he calls a top-down approach (13–14) to neuroscience. It is opposed to the common materialist notion of “bottom-up” or emergentism—the contention that consciousness emerges from matter alone.

Cosgrove’s suggestion is mainly based upon the apparent inexplicability of consciousness and the unified complexity of the person behind the brain. To simply continue working with a materialist assumption, hoping that all will become clear later on, he calls a science of the gaps (19). The brain is so complex and mysterious that it is naïve to believe that one day we will find the answer for consciousness in the matter of the brain. However, this contention is to be viewed with some skepticism, as far as this reviewer is concerned. The fact that, so far, we have not been able to explain it does not show with any degree of certainty that there is no explanation, or that we are not biologically equipped to find it. Consequently, there is no obvious logical connection between the observation of our current non-understanding of consciousness and the idea that there is no explanation to be found in the matter of the brain. Nevertheless, Cosgrove’s case, though not a tight proof, remains strong when one considers the scope of things to be learned.

The Human Connectome Project is the state-of-the-art attempt to map out the neurons and axons of the brain. It is a very ambitious project indeed and may take decades to complete its work, because so far, the process of accurately collecting and reproducing the data is slow and tedious. Once it is finished, it can be used to greatly further our understanding of ourselves. As was the case with the Human Genome Project, faster and more cost-effective methods for viewing and reproducing the architecture of the brain may be found in the process. But, does this bring us closer to solving “the hard problem?” Cosgrove likens the Human Connectome Project to an effort to understand New York by mapping its streets and measuring the traffic (39). It gets you somewhere, but nowhere close. There are dozens of different neurons, firing according to different rules, that will not be mapped in the Connectome. According to Roger Penrose, there are possibly processes within the neurons

which use quantum effects to determine the behavior of the cell, as well as Glial cells that influence whole regions of neurons at once by releasing transmitter chemicals into the brain. Furthermore, the brain is not static. It displays amazing plasticity, especially in childhood, but at other times also, should the need arise.

If there were any place, therefore, to speculate about the impossibility of humans' understanding of something, it would be in regard to consciousness and the brain. This is a point which should be well-received by all Christians. Even though science has progressed substantially, creation remains full of wonder and mystery, a fact which is not likely to change even as our knowledge about ourselves increases.

Given this point, I do find one problem with the general direction that Cosgrove takes in his approach to the hard problem. Even if consciousness is an exceedingly hard problem to explain, there is no logical necessity to the assumption that a nonmaterial entity, a.k.a. the soul, must have an active part in it. This is neither necessary from a scientific, nor a Christian point of view. Specifically, in light of the discussion concerning God Spots on the brain, this reviewer sees no reason why a Christian God-Creator would not, or could not, use the properties of the matter he created to imbue his creatures with the ability to communicate with him, or to experience consciousness. The question of how consciousness might arise, with or without non-material support, is not settled as far as this discussion goes. However, because we know little, yet experience much, we remain in awe. This is what Cosgrove sets out to show. It is the great takeaway from *The Brain, the Mind, and the Person Within*, and the reason why I would recommend it to all who are interested in neuroscience.

Graz, Austria

VALENTIN ZYWIETZ

Ellis, Dirk R. *Holy Fire Fell: A History of Worship, Revivals, and Feasts in the Church of the Nazarene*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016. xxii + 227 pp. Softcover. USD 31.00.

This monograph presents a significant contribution to the field of liturgical scholarship, not only for the Church of the Nazarene, but also for denominations in the Wesleyan tradition, free-church traditions, and the broader discipline of liturgical history. This volume builds upon current liturgical methodology that blends the reading of liturgical texts with ritual descriptions, utilizing a variety of sources, in order to evidence a rich history and theology of worship. The author, Dirk Ellis, teaches at Northwest Nazarene University (Nampa, Idaho), and brings a pastoral tone to the work, creating an engaging and relevant study for a broad audience. Ellis based this work on his doctoral dissertation, which he completed in the department of Discipleship and Religious Education at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University.

The book comprises the historical section of Ellis's dissertation, with updated language to speak to the Nazarene church at large regarding the