

and interests of each author and the issues in the psalms assigned to them. Jacobson and Tanner include in footnotes many extensive comments on issues of text-criticism or Hebrew syntax that deClaissé-Walford does not match in her sections. The footnote discussions, however, seem appropriate for the particular psalms. For example, Tanner treats the thorny issue in Psalm 22:16 (i.e., what does “my hands and feet like a lion” mean?) with a lucid discussion and a list of helpful secondary literature (230). Jacobson likewise discusses the semantic and text-critical problems of Psalm 8:2–3 in appropriate detail. For her part, deClaissé-Walford offers in appropriate essays detailed explanations of theories concerning Israel’s performance of certain psalms. She gives an extended and cogent explanation of Sigmund Mowinckel’s theory that the so-called enthronement psalms (Psalms 47; 93; 95–99) were part of a New Festival in Jerusalem, like psalms that celebrated Marduk’s kingship in Babylon’s Akitu festival (427–429).

The book is replete with comments drawn from recent theories about the literary structure of the Psalter and sometimes the authors assume the validity of those theories rather than demonstrating it. For example, the comment that “Book five of the Psalter tells the story of ancient Israel as it returns from exile” (989), assumes a coherence of organization and purpose in Psalms 107–150 that seems overconfident. Much in this segment of the Psalter suggests a post-exilic setting for the collection and that the “return” from captivity was paramount for psalm editors (see the language of Psalm 107:3, “those from the lands he gathered in, from the east and from the west...”), but “tells the story” claims more than is clearly there.

Despite this minor critique the quality of the commentary is high throughout. The treatment of each psalm is accurate and insightful. The commentary will be very helpful to students, scholars, and especially pastors. It con-

tains a trove of valuable insights that bring the Psalms into conversation with the modern reader and with the life and worship of the church.

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MARK (FORTRESS BIBLICAL PREACHING COMMENTARIES), by David Schnasa Jacobsen. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014. Pp. 224. \$22.00 (paper).

Jacobsen’s *Mark* is one of six volumes in the *Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentaries* series. This relatively new set of commentaries (published volumes so far include Matthew, Acts, and John) has in mind preachers as the primary audience with particular attention given to lectionary preaching. The authors provide specific consideration of lectionary passages including helpful liturgical sensitivity. At the same time, the authors were charged with providing commentary on the entirety of the biblical narratives in focus. Attention to the whole of the story means that the individual lections gain a more robust presentation for the sake of trusted biblical interpretation and proclamation.

The strength of this series is its commitment to commentary on the biblical texts that has as its primary lens lectionary preaching. The reasoning and rationale for the lectionary is underscored and critiqued both for the sake of gaining a sense of the narrative impulse of the writing in question and also for the ways in which a specific section of Scripture can ring true in its literary context.

Jacobsen’s volume clearly follows the parameters set out by the series (see Series Foreword, vii–viii). The Revised Common Lectionary texts are treated explicitly but the passages omitted from the lectionary are also addressed, thereby preserving the narrative unity of Mark. Indices for the readings from

Mark in the Revised Common Lectionary in order of the liturgical calendar and in order of Mark's narrative provide expedient reference to individual passages discussed in the commentary. The commentary is structured into groupings of texts that then present a more streamlined sense of Mark's portrait of Jesus. Organizing the commentary around larger sections of the Gospel helps to point out the chronicled unity and theological logic of Mark. The introduction includes essential elements about the Gospel of Mark that would be included in any straightforward commentary such as historical background, authorship, rhetoric, and narrative patterns, always critical for preaching the specificity of each Gospel witness.

Introductions are never benign exercises, and Jacobsen takes a turn from the usual introductory material presented in biblical commentaries by arguing that Mark's theological heart is an expression of an "apocalyptic mode." This theme becomes the primary trajectory of the commentary and serves to guide much of the theological discussion. This claim gives the commentary a theological grounding and offers interesting interpretive moves on basic elements in the narrative such as minor characters, the final setting of Jerusalem, the identifications of Jesus, and the divine acts of revelation (baptism, transfiguration, crucifixion). At the same time, a clearer definition of what is meant by "apocalyptic mode" or offering a taxonomy of apocalyptic features would be helpful to appreciate fully this perspective and how it makes a difference for preaching this Gospel. Furthermore, how having an apocalyptic mode in view matters for Mark's theology could have been fleshed out in more detail so that a preacher has a greater appreciation for the way in which this theological perspective determines or changes one's hermeneutical stance when it comes to preaching Mark.

With the larger theological impulse and narrative framework of Mark in view, the ten chapters move through substantive sections of

the Gospel, providing a template that serves to focus more clearly the discussion on the lections treated in each chapter. For example, chapter four, "The Rocky Way—The Word of Promise and the Disciples' Misunderstanding (6:6b–8:26)," situates the complexity of discipleship in Mark within a memorable metaphor, "the rocky way." As a result, there is an automatic consistency perceived in the lections that always assists in lectionary preaching. Preachers will be able to see connections between texts that then make for more homiletical coherency and constancy. One of the challenges for lectionary preachers is to track the movement from one pericope to the next. A stated theme on the front end of substantive narrative sections provides the kind of centralization helpful for weekly interpretation and proclamation.

The chapters also include sidebars, or thematic discussion boxes, that allow Jacobsen to flesh out interpretive and homiletical issues raised by a lection. These sidebars cover a multitude of issues, from the psychologizing of biblical texts (75) to issues surrounding christological titles (120). While it is not clear why these sidebars are separate entities and not embedded in the primary commentary portion itself, they are helpful points of discussion on key subjects the lections raise. Preachers will find in these sidebars helpful avenues into preaching some of the specific details the passages present for homiletical inquiry.

Like the other volumes in this series, Jacobsen's commentary on Mark will be a trusted source for preachers. Exegetical insight, an overarching theological trajectory, and careful attention to the particularities pertaining to the lectionary preaching of Mark make Jacobsen's contribution to preaching this Gospel a worthwhile addition to one's homiletical library.

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