

to Hengel's much shorter, but more invigorating, book of almost forty years ago. But by dint of its competent and careful coverage of a mass of material, it will remain an important point of reference to those interested in further research on this gruesome subject.

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The harp of prophecy. Early Christian interpretation of the Psalms. Edited by Brian E. Daley and Paul R. Kolbet. (Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity, 20.) Pp. xvi + 332. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015. \$39 (paper). 978 0 268 02619 6
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As we are reminded early on in this excellent collection of essays, New Testament and patristic Christology and apologetic were heavily dominated by the Psalter: many of the most important themes in doctrinal debate were hammered out in conversation with texts like Psalms ii, xxxix, xlv and cx. Even before the Psalms had established themselves as regular element in liturgy, they were receiving extensive commentary as texts that laid bare the narrative of spiritual life. Gary Anderson observes in an insightful piece here that problems about the 'cursing' Psalms were not the invention of soft-hearted modernists: rabbinic and patristic writers alike acknowledged that the violent language of some Psalms was not an exhortation to extreme behaviour but an example of the depth of the passions that King David successfully destroyed in his soul. Locate the texts in the context of David's life, they argued, and all becomes clear. This may not be exactly the strategy that we ought to (or could) adopt today, but it is a reminder that the tradition encourages a narrative reading (Kolbet on Athanasius makes this plain) and allows for the reality of a developing, diverse and imperfect Church (McCarthy on Augustine). We are introduced to some intriguing hermeneutical issues around gender by Verna Harrison and David Hunter, given a rich survey of Evagrius' reading of psalmody by Luke Dysinger and an elegantly and persuasively argued reconstruction of the content of Origen's preface to his Caesarean commentary on the Psalms by Ronald Heine. Other essays both explicate and problematise the Antiochene/Alexandrian divide in exegesis; and Brian Daley contributes a typically clear and thoughtful orientation to the whole field. It would have been interesting to have more discussion about the process by which liturgical use of the Psalms took shape, and the difference evolved between a Western norm of continuous reading in the Office and the more selective Eastern practice. And the extent of the use of texts from the Psalms in apologetic prompts the question of how and in what context they were used in Jewish worship and reflection – an issue that has had some study but could do with more. But these are marginal points. Overall, this is a collection of unusually solid and satisfying essays, written with clarity and penetration; a very welcome contribution to a burgeoning area of research.

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