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setting justification alongside prayer for the dead and purgatory. These are fascinating themes, but by including them alongside justification, despite their obvious connections, the chapter is given too much to accomplish in the space available.

The conclusion offers a summary of the principal arguments of the preceding chapters. Given the significance of this book, I would have liked to have read something more substantial and synthetic by way of a finale, and therefore more rousing. Still, *Never Doubt Thomas* is an impressive work of ecumenism, worked out in a theological register. It also offers perceptive discussions of the handful of doctrinal topics it addresses, most of all by revealing divergent philosophical assumptions underlying consequently diverging theological positions, and turning to Aquinas to suggest a way forward.

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Brant Pitre, Michael P. Barber and John A. Kincaid, *Paul, a New Covenant Jew: Rethinking Pauline Theology*

(Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans 2019), pp. xvii + 310. $35.00.

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We used to speak breezily of Paul the Christian, but beginning after the Second World War and accelerating around the turn of the millennium, New Testament scholarship has grown accustomed to speaking instead of Paul the Jew. But what kind of Jew? A Torah-observant Jew? A radical Jew? An anomalous Jew? A Hellenistic Jew? An apocalyptic Jew? Here opinions diverge and controversy ensues. With this book, Pitre, Barber and Kincaid – young American lay Catholic scholars, all – stake out their position in this debate. It is a multi-authored book, but the seams are invisible; the authors speak as a unanimous 'we'. Their thesis, neatly encapsulated in the book's title, is that 'the language of the new covenant helps to explain both the continuity (covenant) and discontinuity (new) with Judaism that is undeniably present in Paul's letters … [It] has a great "capacity to integrate" the various aspects of Paul's thought. Even more, it is Paul's own language' (p. 62). With much recent scholarship, Pitre, Barber and Kincaid situate Paul within ancient Judaism, but by adding the modifier 'new covenant' they qualify and limit this situatedness.

In relation to the Paul-the-Jew debates, the authors' central claim certainly has some points in its favour. They rightly point out that, unlike most of the other descriptors on offer (Hellenistic, apocalyptic, anomalous), 'new covenant' is one that Paul himself adopts as a self-identifier (2 Cor 3:6: 'We are ministers of a new covenant'). That fact is, admittedly, a hedge against the imposition of ill-suited categories. On the other hand, however, it is also a barrier to taxonomy, because neither ancient nor modern writers (Pitre, Barber and Kincaid excepted) ever use 'new covenant' to denominate a certain subset of ancient Jews. To identify Paul as a Hellenistic Jew is to say that he is like, for example, Philo of Alexandria in some relevant respect. Likewise, to identify

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Paul as an apocalyptic Jew is to say that he is like, for example, the Qumran covenanters in some relevant respect. But what does it mean to identify Paul as a new covenant Jew? Who are the other members of that set? Indeed, are there any? One might think that to call Paul a new covenant Jew is simply to call him a Christ-believing Jew (though at that point we would be inching closer again to traditional Paul-the-Christian categories). But Paul only uses the label 'ministers of a new covenant' of himself (and perhaps also Timothy; see 2 Cor 1:1), not of the other apostles or other Christ-believers, let alone any other Jews outside the Christ sect. So perhaps to identify Paul as a new covenant Jew is simply to say that he is a Paulinist. But that is a tautology, or very close to one. My point here is not that Pitre, Barber and Kincaid are wrong; they are not. It is that the classification of Paul as a new covenant Jew may not actually tell us very much.

That criticism notwithstanding, this book is a breath of fresh air in the current scholarly discussion of Pauline theology, which has tended to be overwhelmingly Protestant. (Full disclosure: the present reviewer belongs to that amply represented demographic.) Indeed, Pitre, Barber and Kincaid are at their best when they are arguing – always carefully and charitably – against certain deflationary emphases in Protestant interpretation of Paul. When they insist, for instance, that justification for Paul signifies something more than a forensic verdict, or that baptism for Paul effects a real, ontological union between Christ and the believer, they are on very solid exegetical ground. In these cases, it seems to me, the authors' Catholic sensibilities give them a hermeneutical advantage over their Protestant counterparts. The case of the Pauline Lord's supper is more complicated. Here, too, the authors are quite right to insist that Paul imagines a concrete, not merely symbolic, *koinonia* between Christ and those who eat the meal. But their further argument that, for Paul, the death of Christ is a levitical sacrifice (both Yom Kippur and Pesach?) recapitulated at every Lord's supper makes too much theological meaning out of too little evidence (cf. Stanley Stowers on the death of Christ and Wayne Meeks on the meal). Protestant accounts of the Lord's supper in Paul, where they exist at all, are not any better in this respect. It is just that any Christian theology of the eucharist has to do a lot more constructive work than Paul himself does in his extant letters. But then, such constructive work is another thing very often meant by that ambiguous phrase 'Pauline theology'.

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Paul Cefalu, *The Johannine Renaissance in Early Modern English Literature and Theology*

(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. xiii + 352. £60.00.

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In this compelling examination of early-modern devotional writing and its theological contexts, Paul Cefalu delivers a convincing reassessment of the Johannine influence which pervades the artistic and literary cultures of the period. Aligning the works of

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