

during the Second Temple period (539 BCE–70 CE). He devotes equal attention to those whose adherence to the Torah's legislation ranged from casual to fanatical—the obscure sages behind the Bible's wisdom literature, the authors of the esoteric Enoch literature, the Essenes, and the authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Fittingly, Collins ends his tour with the apostle Paul, whose letters tell of his deeply conflicted relationship with the Torah. To Collins, Paul's design to relieve followers of Jesus of what he saw as the Torah's restrictive ritual obligations would prove a major factor in Christianity's emergence as a religion distinct from Judaism.

Little of the evidence that is presented here will come as news to specialists in the discipline of biblical research. Yet Collins' masterful elucidation of the many and diverse materials he mobilizes on behalf of his argument makes this book a valuable resource for readers mulling the semantics of Jewish identity during the Second Temple period. Collins' work thus succeeds not only as an accessible overview of the composition and early reception of the Torah but as a necessary call to common sense as to the misguided premise that Judaism was born of Christianity rather than Christianity of Judaism.

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Wealth, Wages, and the Wealthy: New Testament Insight for Preachers and Teachers. By Raymond F. Collins. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2016. xix + 347 pages. \$34.95.
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Many books discuss the poor in the New Testament, but few monographs focus on the wealthy or wages. Since he maintains that all twenty-seven NT books discuss wealth, Collins wants to help pastors preach on this basic issue.

After a brief survey of the wealthy persons who aided Paul and Jesus in their ministries, Collins takes up the books in roughly chronological order. Avoiding the proof-texting of the Prosperity Gospel televangelists, Collins locates each text in its historical socioeconomic milieu, in the literary context of the entire book, and in the smaller subsection in which the biblical author has located his text. He also distinguishes between what the text explicitly says and what can be inferred from it, sometimes by reference to similar NT texts, and sometimes by reference to Hellenistic moralists.

Each chapter concludes with a “so what?” section, in which Collins cites contemporary news sources that manifest our neglect of that chapter's teaching, or quotations from religious leaders who witness to it.

An expert on the Corinthian correspondence, Collins finds in these two letters his main themes. There is wealth in the churches (1 Cor 1:26;

indeed, all six named members of the Corinthian churches are wealthy). The wealthy abuse the poor, in the law courts (1 Cor 6:1-9a) and at the Eucharist (1 Cor 11:17-22), and so Paul warns against greed (1 Cor 5:11, 6:10) and insists on the right of the laborer to his wages (1 Cor 9:4-10). The way to be free of greed is by the collection for the poor in Jerusalem (1 Cor 16:1-4; 2 Cor 8:1-15). Elsewhere in Paul, Collins finds a mandate to pay taxes (Rom 13:6), the virtue of generosity (Gal 5:22; Phil 4:14-18), and the necessity of paying debts (Phlm 16-17).

These and other themes are then investigated in the rest of the New Testament, where Collins finds abundant material in Luke-Acts, in James, and in 1 Timothy. In all, Collins investigates over a hundred principal texts dealing with wealth in the NT, but his biblical index indicates a mastery of the entire biblical witness.

His last chapter summarizes his investigation: although wealth is a gift of God, it is also seductive. When it becomes the overarching focus of life, it becomes the divinized "Mammon." Apart from *porneia* (the amorphous sexual immorality), *pleonexia* (greed) is the vice most often condemned in the NT as the root of other vices. Wealth finds its proper use in the elimination of need and the establishment of equity for the poor and elderly widows. Taxes are to be paid to civil authorities, and just wages are to be paid to all laborers. Although many men and women use their wealth for the poor, the NT views wealth as a danger. Collins concludes with three challenges that confront the wealthy: failure to care for the poor, defrauding the worker of his wages, and misuse of the judicial system.

Although Collins cannot prove that all twenty-seven NT books deal with wealth or wages (2 and 3 John do not), he has demonstrated his main point, that these topics are as central to the NT moral message as any other.

Some minor flaws in the book: simple scriptural citations in the footnotes should be inserted in parentheses in the text. Among the few typos are some errors in Greek transliteration: *etaire* for *hetaire* (109), *penikran* for *penichran* (140, 152), *apanata* for *hapanta* (194-95).

Exegetes will dispute some of Collins' exegesis—for example, his link of *ta bare* in 1 Thessalonians 2:7 to money, or his assertion that Jude 16 speaks of money. But his careful exegesis is especially good at excavating subplots dealing with money in narratives making a different point.

The main problem with the book is its destination. Few are the pastors who know the meaning of Latin *captatio benevolentiae*, *incipit*, *ad rem*, and so on, or the Greek terms such as *lemma*. Perhaps Collins is looking over his shoulder at exegetes who might read the text. And indeed, they should: Collins illuminates important meanings for exegetes whose interests have overlooked the NT concern with wealth and wages.

This book is highly recommended for undergraduate and graduate libraries and all members of the CTS. Bishops should make it a Christmas gift to all priests.

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Fierce: Women of the Bible and Their Stories of Violence, Mercy, Bravery, Wisdom, Sex, and Salvation. By Alice Connor. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017. x + 182 pages. \$18.99 (paper).

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This slim book presents the stories of a carefully selected group of female figures in the Hebrew Bible, Apocrypha, and New Testament. In Connor's judgment, these figures represent the experiences of women in a variety of situations. Noting the paucity of attention given to biblical women in church settings, she hopes that their stories can be inspirational for all people today, especially in contemplating the plight of the powerless, by enabling people to recognize their similarity to women who are "so far from us in years and so close to us in their desires and abilities" (6). But *Fierce* is not a simple retelling of the biblical stories; rather it is *midrashic*. Midrash imaginatively updates and augments the ancient sacred source in contemporary terms in order to find new or relevant meaning; it is especially effective when the "original" text is abhorrent, for it serves to justify its place in Scripture.

The book has three parts. The first—"The Only Four (plus Mary)"—presents the women (Tamar, Rahab, Bathsheba, and Ruth) in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1. The problematic and painful sexual pasts of the four Old Testament figures foreshadow Mary's struggles in her role as mother of Jesus and as a prophet. Part 2, "Hebrew Women," provides vignettes of Eve, Hagar (and Sarah), Deborah, and Jael, the woman in the Song of Songs, several widows, Jerusalem as a metaphoric woman, and Susanna, as well as the Canaanite/Israelite deity Asherah. Different aspects of female suffering, leading, serving, and caring are portrayed in these dramatically varied figures—from deity and national leader to slave and disenfranchised widows. Part 3, "Christian Women," elaborates on the stories of the Samaritan and Canaanite women, Martha and Mary of Bethany, the two Herodias, four of Paul's colleagues (Priscilla, Phoebe, Lydia, and Rhoda), and Mary of Magdala. Deeply meaningful spiritual lessons can be found in the roles and struggles of these New Testament figures. The book is supplemented with two appendices: one provides biblical citations for the book's stories; the other is an all-too-short, and thus inadequate, list of suggestions for further reading.