

role played by liturgy, this movement from belief to practice comes into focus as it paves the way for further reflection on daily Christian living in communion with God, the saints, and all the faithful.

CHRISTINA CONDYLES

*The Catholic University of America*

*Suffering in the Face of Death: The Epistle to the Hebrews and Its Context of Situation.* By Bryan R. Dyer. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xiii + 209 pages. \$114.00.

doi: 10.1017/hor.2018.20

In chapter 1, Dyer surveys ten books and articles that have dealt with the topics of suffering and death in Hebrews. He concludes that prior studies, while making valuable contributions, are incomplete or inadequate. There is a need for a thorough investigation of these topics in Hebrews.

Chapter 2 provides a very useful survey on the history of research on the situation addressed in Hebrews. Dyer offers an assessment for each reconstruction. While each reconstruction addresses particular aspects that are present in the text, none of them accounts for the entire picture. Dyer believes that the situation reflected in Hebrews is complex and addresses multiple concerns. Dyer's study will address one significant concern: "the reality of suffering in the lives of believers and a threat or fear of death" (46).

Chapter 3 lays out the methodology for the study. First, Dyer utilizes semantic domain theory in order to identify the pertinent vocabulary for the study. Second, he adopts M. A. K. Halliday's systemic functional linguistic concept of the "context of situation" in order to provide a theoretical linguistic foundation for understanding how a text relates to its social context. Third, he takes a linguistically rigorous approach to mirror reading in order to determine the social context.

In the first part of chapter 4 Dyer identifies in Hebrews twenty-three terms related to suffering that appear thirty-six times, and twenty-one terms related to death that occur sixty-four times. He then identifies clusters where these terms appear. In part 2, he examines each occurrence of the language of suffering and death in Hebrews. Dyer highlights three motifs that arise from the investigation. First, God's power over death gives hope to believers. Second, disobedience toward God will result in eschatological punishment. Third, Hebrews often links suffering, death, and kinship.

In chapter 5 Dyer applies five principles to the suffering and death language of Hebrews to determine the social context of Hebrews. Hebrews addresses a situation where suffering and the fear of death were prominent.

This context of situation is demonstrated by the pervasiveness and semantic variance of suffering and death terminology, the heavy use of commands and prohibitions within the discussion of these topics, and the prominence that these topics are given within the discourse. Finally, the assumption of a social context of suffering and death makes good sense of the epistle's argument and coheres with other major themes within the discourse.

Chapter 6 examines how the author uses exempla to respond to a context of suffering and death in Hebrews. Dyer surveys Greco-Roman, Jewish, and New Testament literature and concludes that exempla were used to support arguments and to present models of behavior to be emulated or avoided. The exempla used in Hebrews are (1) figures from ancient Judaism, (2) the community itself, and (3) Jesus Christ. Dyer concludes that these examples offer "hope beyond death, honor in the midst of public shame, and a model of behavior in times of struggle" (174). Chapter 7 presents some final conclusions and suggests some ideas for further research.

Dyer's prose and argumentation are clear and straightforward. His main contribution is the application of new linguistic methodologies to the study of Hebrews. He builds on the work of Cynthia Westfall, who utilized systemic functional linguistics to determine the literary structure of Hebrews. Dyer's rigorous application of his methodology convincingly demonstrates that suffering and the fear of death were significant realities within the social context of the historical audience. Despite this novel approach to Hebrews, however, Dyer gets us no closer to determining the actual historical situation that prompted the writing of the letter. He is cautious in his conclusions and studiously avoids tying his study to a specific historical situation lest it skew his results. What is clear is that any future study dealing with the historical context of Hebrews will need to take the results of Dyer's study seriously. This monograph is best suited for graduate-level work and would be an important addition to any theological library.

BRIAN C. SMALL

*Grand Rivers Pisgah United Methodist Church*

*The Wedding Feast of the Lamb: Eros, the Body, and the Eucharist.* By Emmanuel Falque. Translated by George Hughes. New York: Fordham University Press, 2016. xxv + 300 pages. \$36.00.

doi: 10.1017/hor.2018.21

This philosophical essay on the Eucharist is the third in a "trptych" from Falque, whose first two books examined, in turn, the anxiety of death (suffering) and the phenomenology of birth (resurrection). Those earlier themes are