

## Book Reviews

*Christian Doctrine in the Old Testament: Theology in the Service of Biblical Exegesis*. By Gary A. Anderson. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017. xix + 220 pages. \$32.00.  
doi: 10.1017/hor.2020.30

Nine chapters of this book were previously published as articles or book chapters; the third chapter (on *Creatio ex nihilo*, and the Bible) is new. All the essays here are excellent; a number are theologically exciting. The book could easily be paired with Richard Hays' *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* for a splendid seminar on theology of the New Testament.

The congruence that Anderson points out between major Christian theological themes and Jewish theological perspectives within the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament is reassuring. It is also something that preachers as well as scholars need always to bear in mind. After all, there is only one God and (as Bernard Lonergan said) there are no divine afterthoughts. Hence the congruence and the continuity. The divine mystery itself links and grounds the two testaments. Christian theology has certainly moved beyond a proof-texting approach to doctrine, as Anderson notes several times. Recalling a colleague, Anderson writes: "Though he had been raised in a Catholic context, he had never thought that one could read the Old Testament in light of the New. Only by keeping the two Testaments completely separate could one avoid the admittedly horrible sin of supersessionism. Catholic education, understandably perhaps, but also lamentably, had taught him to read the two Testaments as two wholly different worlds" (135).

The topics covered include how Scripture thinks apophatically about God ("The Transcendence of God and the Story of Nadab and Abihu"), divine impassibility ("Moses, Jonah, and the Theo-Drama of Intercessory Prayer"), creation, original sin ("The Fall of Humanity and the Golden Calf"), election ("The Beloved Son in Genesis and the Gospels"), Christology ("The Incarnation and the Temple" and "Tobit as Righteous Sufferer"), Mary ("The Mother of God and the Temple")—and then "the treasury of merits" ("Faith and Works in the Biblical Tradition") and purgatory

("Sanctification in This Life and the Next"). Anderson's argument is not that these doctrines are already contained or previewed in the Hebrew Bible in some indirect way. His point, rather, is that these Christian doctrines make a great deal more sense when viewed as reflecting the spiritual and theological intuitions of the Jewish writers who gave us the ancient biblical texts—intuitions that were second nature to the writers who gave us the New Testament. Each one of these chapters would invite and sustain a lively class discussion. In addition, they would richly benefit any who are regularly preaching from the church's lectionary by opening up the Old Testament depth and resonance within the Gospels and letters that make up the New Testament.

After reflecting on the cross and the betrayers of Jesus, for instance, Anderson comments: "I have often thought that the story of Joseph should be read on one's knees. Or, to borrow an image from how some perform the creed—that is, bowing at the moment we come to the mystery of the incarnation—perhaps we should bow periodically during the reading of this story. Let us bow when the brothers lower Joseph into the pit, when Judah offers to give up his life for Benjamin, when Jacob surrenders Benjamin to his other sons, when Jacob hears that Joseph is alive and of royal stature. And let us reserve our deepest and longest bow for when we hear Joseph's words of forgiveness to his brothers: 'Do not be afraid!' We are those brothers ..." (91).

Throughout the book, Anderson is remarkably respectful and appreciative of the work of other scholars. Although the subtitle is "Theology in the Service of Biblical Exegesis," I found the book to be a clear example of how theology is enriched and strengthened when informed by good exegesis. Besides, although the biblical writers created the stories and narratives that transmit our faith, they were at the same time doing very serious theology.

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*Aquinas on Virtue: A Causal Reading.* By Nicholas Austin, SJ. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2017. xxiv + 232 pages. \$34.95 (paper).  
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Nicholas Austin's important study offers a broad and comprehensive exposition of the virtue theory of Thomas Aquinas. But more than mere exposition, Austin offers an interpretive analysis of Aquinas' approach to virtue by examining this topic through the lens of Aristotle's theory of causality, which Aquinas and his contemporaries adopted as their own. This causal approach offers distinctive insights into Aquinas' virtue theory and also links Thomas'