

us as what glorifies us is both intellectually and spiritually moving. It is highly recommended for theologians both historical and systematic, and for educated Christians who wonder what that life will be like. Indeed, perhaps the greatest contribution of the book, one which aligns with Boersma's aims, will be to help recover the desire for the vision of God as ultimately satisfying for us who are all too willingly consumed by penultimate things.

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C. Clifton Black, *The Lord's Prayer*

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C. Clifton Black is the Otto A. Piper Professor of Biblical Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary. He has written extensively on the Gospels (especially the Gospel of Mark), on the relation between theology and the Bible and, now in his latest monograph, on the Lord's Prayer – 'the prayer above all prayer', to use Luther's phrase. For all the brevity of the prayer itself, at over 350 pages this ends up being a sizeable volume. These three verses in the Gospel of Luke (or five in Matthew) have a habit of generating extensive commentary. Karl Barth's treatment of the Lord's Prayer hit over 400 pages in the German, and he only reached the second petition. Black gets somewhat further than Barth by providing a full exegesis of each of the petitions of the prayer and, in addition, includes prefatory material and substantive appendixes.

The volume is the latest in Westminster John Knox's 'Interpretation: Resources for the Use of Scripture in the Church' series, which focuses on biblical themes and issues (such as miracles, money, and creeds) rather than on individual books of the Bible. Black sticks closely to the aim of the series by seeking to provide a theological resource for the church on the theme of the Lord's Prayer that is at once biblical, homiletical and pastoral. All this is to say *The Lord's Prayer* isn't straightforward biblical commentary. When it shifts into distinctively commentary mode, it is mostly, but not exclusively, historical-critical in its approach. But, as Black explains, his aims in this volume reach beyond any single methodology. He seeks to attend to the 'grand history of the church's reflection' (p. 49) on the Lord's Prayer, and this means interacting with a wide range of sources spanning Origen's *De oratione* in the third century to Joachim Jeremias' *The Lord's Prayer* in the twentieth. His prose is accessible and free from technical jargon, his analysis isn't bogged down with heavy references (though the bibliography at the end of each chapter usefully points to further reading), and he writes in a way which invites connections to the pastoral concerns of Christian ministry. After all, as chapter 10 rightly suggests, the Lord's Prayer has been part of the church's pastoral ministry from the very beginning.

Structurally, the volume consists of four parts. In the first part, Black offers two fast-paced scene-setting chapters to situate the Lord's Prayer first in the wider context of the Greco-Roman and Hebrew traditions and then in the thematic context of prayer in the Gospels. As Black settles into the actual petitions in parts 2–4, the pace relaxes. This is Black at his best. Here, he takes each petition in turn and delves deeply into the details of its history of interpretation. For example, his patient exploration of the *ho epiousios* of the fourth petition, which has vexed interpreters down the ages, offers the reader no less than six alternative translations and commentary. Throughout these chapters Black interweaves his petition-by-petition theological exegesis with helpful homiletical hooks and aids for the preacher – cultural references, lived examples, stories, and illustrations. However, because of the commentary's venerable aim of resourcing the church's teachers and preachers, I worry about its lack of engagement with feminist and other liberationist interpretations and reimaginings of the Lord's Prayer. In his treatment of the 'Our Father', the question of male language for God is somewhat skirted over – this, surely, is a pastoral question worthy of more attention. Black is aware of the debates, promising a reflection on 'the degree to which paternal imagery for God is complicit in abusive patriarchy' (p. 74), but the analysis that follows doesn't nearly do justice to the issues at stake. The single feminist text consulted appears to be Mary Daly's *Beyond God the Father*. Classic as Daly's work is, engagement with more recent literature would also have been welcomed. Likewise, when Black reaches the kingdom petition, there isn't any mention of the creative reimagining of the petition via the liberative logic of 'kin-dom'. Indeed, what don't fully emerge in Black's commentary, but are foregrounded in many of the theologians he cites in the appendix, are the political dimensions of the Lord's Prayer.

After chapter 10's 'Pastoral Coda', which turns from the history of the interpretation of the prayer to its practical application in terms of catechesis, interreligious communion and care with the aged, 60 pages of appendixes complete this volume. The longest of these is the final appendix titled 'A Conspectus of Interpretation: The Lord's Prayer in Christian Thought'. Here Black covers some of the tradition's most important engagements with the Lord's Prayer, beginning with Tertullian's twenty-nine-chapter discourse *Prayer* (ca.205) and ending with the novelist Aldous Huxley's fascinating 'Reflections on the Lord's Prayer' (1945). In between are the usual suspects (Augustine, Cassian, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, John Wesley, Karl Barth) as well as some more unusual but very welcomed figures such as the fourteenth-century Dominican nun Margareta Ebner, the Strasbourgian reformer Katharina Schütz Zell and the Anglican mystic Evelyn Underhill.

While I appreciate the pedagogical helpfulness of having these commentators anthologised in this way, and while Black's summaries are certainly whistle-wetting, the format of the appendix means that the inevitable omissions have nowhere to hide. For example, although covering much of the canon of interpretation, again in the appendix (as in the main commentary) perspectives from feminist and otherologies of liberation are left out. Likewise, the coverage stops short of tracing the responses to the Lord's Prayer in the visual arts (such as the woodcarvings by the interwar German artist Max Pechstein). As well as concerns around the breadth of coverage, there is also the issue of depth. It is difficult to do justice to, say, Augustine's extensive and creative engagement with the Lord's Prayer (let alone the mountain of secondary literature it has inspired) in the two pages allotted to him. Admittedly, that Black attempts both too much and not enough is not the fairest of criticisms. The endlessly generative nature of the Lord's Prayer makes it inevitable that a study even of the length

provided by Black misses some things out. What Black does very well throughout this learned and significant commentary, however, is introduce the reader to the theological richness of the single most important prayer in the Christian tradition, even if this means they have to fill in the inevitable gaps for themselves.

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Konrad Schmid, *A Historical Theology of the Hebrew Bible*

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This book takes the reader into the world of recent German-language scholarship on the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible. Schmid correlates substantial changed understandings of the literary/redactional history of the biblical text with revised accounts of theological thinking on the part of those responsible for the text's formation. As such, this is essentially a study in the history of ideas and redaction, which does not seek 'any immediate kerygmatic or normative functions' (p. xvii).

Schmid works lucidly through a wide range of issues appropriate to this historical project. There is methodological discussion of the nature of 'theology' in relation to the Bible, and of the pluriformity of the biblical documents as Hebrew Bible, Old Testament and Tanakh. There is reflection on the theological significance of extant Hebrew Bibles and Old Testaments as overall collections. There is reflection on the theological meaning of the three constituent parts of the Hebrew Bible (*Torah*, *Nevi'im*, *Ketuvim*) as discrete collections. There is an account of the principal theological guidelines in the literary history of the Hebrew Bible from the eighth to the second centuries BCE. The longest part of the book is an account of themes in the theology of the Hebrew Bible, themes both familiar and less familiar: 1) literary genres and forms of theological statements; 2) perceptions and impressions of God; 3) from counterworld to everyday world: the basic precepts of life; 4) divine intervention in history; 5) political theology; 6) law and righteousness; 7) temple worship and sacrifice; 8) people of a nation, people of God and the individual; 9) monarchy, theocracy and anticipation of a ruler; 10) Zion and Sinai; 11) interpretations of humanity; 12) theological diversity and unity.

The book is clearly written and has real strengths. One of the most striking, for those mindful of Wellhausen and the history of modern scholarship, is the positive evaluation of the priestly material:

Thanks to the sacrificial cult established by God himself, a meaningful life is possible in a world that has stood under the mark of human guilt since its beginnings – this is the fundamental meaning of the sacrificial torah. Law here