

# NT Commentaries for Bible Expositors, 1987-92<sup>1</sup>

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*The following is a continuation of the annotated bibliography begun in the Spring 1993 number of The Master's Seminary Journal. This listing treats NT books in much the same way as the earlier one dealt with the OT. A sample ranking of commentaries in different categories closes the article.*

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## NT Commentary Sets

Paul Enns, ed. *Moody Gospel Commentary*. Chicago: Moody, 1992-.

This very readable evangelical series purposes to provide help to expositors and will cover the four gospels. J. Carl Laney's 407-page volume on John is the first to appear. Other volumes will follow. Enns and Laney are premillennial and dispensational.

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Arno C. Gaebelein. *Gaebelein's Concise Commentary on the New Testament*. Chicago: Moody, 1991.

This is a one-volume revision of the NT portion of the multivolume set *The Annotated Bible* written by one of America's most popular Bible teachers during the early twentieth century. It incorporates diligent explanation and frequent application to help pastors and lay readers. It resembles the general works of H. A. Ironside.

*New American Commentary*. Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1990-.

This is a replacement of the older *American Commentary on the New Testament*, which included the outstanding work by John Broadus on Matthew. All NAC authors "affirm the divine inspiration, inerrancy, complete truthfulness, and full authority of the Bible" (Editor's Preface). Craig Blomberg's commentary on Matthew is a very good survey, marked by careful study, wide acquaintance with literature, and perceptive handling of many problems. John Polhill's work on

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<sup>1</sup> 1. Editor's note: As in the Spring 1993 issue of *The Master's Seminary Journal* which treated works on the OT, the volumes and annotations in this article have been selected from a larger annotated bibliography compiled by Professor Rosscup. Recently revised, updated, and enlarged (1993 revision of a 1983 ed.), this larger work—*Commentaries for Biblical Expositors*—includes approximately 1,300 individual commentaries or sets of commentaries with annotations on all sixty-six books of the Bible, the volumes deemed to be the most helpful for expositors and teachers of the Word based on the compiler's thirty-five years of seminary involvement and teaching. The unabridged bibliography is available through Grace Book Shack at the same address as *The Master's Seminary Journal*. This article has selected works from the last five years, 1987–92, and pertaining to the NT only. The listings below are not exhaustive, because in some cases where a set of commentaries is discussed in the early section, individual works in that set are omitted in dealing with individual commentaries.

Acts is also quite good. Some volumes, as the one on the Pastorals, are surveys that make good contributions at times, but do not come up to the quality of Matthew and Acts.

*New International Biblical Commentary*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989-.

Such well-known evangelical scholars as Robert Mounce (Matt), F. F. Bruce (Phil), Gordon Fee (1 Tim-Tit), and Peter Davids (Jas) are contributors to this series. Much of the work by these high-ranking scholars rests on well-studied detail and sound hermeneutics. The series began in the early 1980's with Harper and Row as *The Good News Commentary* and using the GNB translation, but Hendrickson picked it up in the late 1980's and changed to the NIV.

Lloyd J. Ogilvie, gen. ed. *The Communicator's Commentary (NT)*. Waco, TX: Word, 1982-91.

This is a twelve-volume set by twelve expositors noted for the spiritual refreshment and insight they impart in their preaching: Myron S. Augsburger (Matt), David McKenna (Mark), Bruce Larson (Luke), Roger Fredrikson (John), Lloyd Ogilvie (Acts), D. Stuart Briscoe (Rom), Kenneth Chafin (1-2 Cor), Maxie Dunham (Gal-Phile), Gary Demarest (1 Thess-Tit), Louis Evans, Jr. (Heb), Paul Cedar (Jas-Jude), and Earl Palmer (Rev). Basing their remarks on the NKJV, the contributors combine scholarly interpretations, illustrations leading to application, and book outlines. The last feature appears in frequent bold-faced headings

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for smaller sections of text. The following specific selected strengths and weaknesses represent the quality of the work: (1) Many times the sweeping comments on main emphases are good and well illustrated, but other times rest on debatable interpretations. An example of a disputed meaning is in Matt 19:9 when Augsburger adopts Schweizer's meaning for πορνεία (porneia, "fornication"): "continual infidelity rather than a single act of adultery." (2) Another shortcoming is failure to explain how a point is consistent with another well-known truth. For example, how is a person's paying all to secure the pearl (Matt 13:46) in harmony with God's unconditional gift of eternal blessing? An explicit harmonization of such would be helpful. (3) Briscoe's work on Romans is very well-written and illustrated. His following of the explanations of Rom 2:7 by Cranfield and Ksemann is refreshing. His interpretation shuns the hypothetical route in favor of explaining the words as actual, lived-by-grace compliance consistent with the provisions of grace apart from human merit in Rom 3:28. Yet his treatment of 2:11-15 leaves many unanswered questions, as it does in 3:27-31 where his illustration is good, but the explanation is shallow. He does fairly well on 5:12ff; 6:6; and 7:14ff, however. (4) The commentaries on John's Epistles and Revelation are very often so general that they impart little understanding of the text (e.g., 1 John 5:16; Rev 2:10-11; 7:1-8; 9:1-11). The bibliography for Revelation is particularly weak in solid interpretive works.

The best feature of this twelve-volume set is the refreshing and suggestive illustrations it furnishes for preachers. Verse-by-verse interpretation is quite good in some places, but weak or non-existent in others.

*Pillars Commentary Series*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988-.

This is a substantial continuing project with three volumes complete so far: Leon Morris (Rom, 1988), D. A. Carson (John, 1991), and P. E. Hughes (Rev, 1990). The contributions of Morris and Carson are very helpful to expositors in their clarification of principal passages in fairly adequate detail and with readability. Hughes follows an amillennial understanding of Revelation. "Pillars" is a name for the set sometimes used because the dust jacket has broad lines resembling pillars on it.

*Ritchie New Testament Commentary Series*. 10 vols.; Kilmarnock, Scotland: John Ritchie, or Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1988-.

These are commentaries for laypersons done with a firm evangelical conviction of inerrancy and a dispensational view of

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Scripture. The discussions often lack references to other relevant helpful literature.

Warren Wiersbe. *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. 2 vols.; Wheaton: Victor, 1990.

This author is one of America's most appreciated and staunchly evangelical Bible-conference teachers. He is noted for his diligent refreshing expositions. His twenty-three earlier books in the "Be" series comprise these two volumes. He appeals to lay people particularly in the way he crystallizes sections, deals with some of the verses, handles certain problems and backgrounds, and applies principles. He is premillennial.

### **Commentaries on Individual NT Books**

#### **Matthew**

D. Frederick Bruner. *The Christbook: Matthew*. 2 vols. in 1; Waco, TX: Word, 1987–1990.

This effort to teach Matthew doctrinally is too wordy. Bruner sees a doctrinal emphasis in each chapter: chap. 1, God with us; chap. 2, man (magi, human nature under the power of sin); chap. 3, repentance; etc. He assumes Markan priority (xvii), and says that Mark is Luther, Matthew is Calvin or Thomas, Luke is Wesley or Xavier or Chrysostom, and John is Augustine or Barth (p. xvii), parallels that many find dubious. His apparent liberal orientation appears in his understanding that Matthew erred in having only thirteen names in the third part of his genealogy (p. 15) and that Jesus as a child made mistakes (p. 15). His excessive detail at times is not relevant to Matthew, but he does sometimes help, for example, in his sections "The Roman Catholic position on Peter" and "The Reformation Position on Peter" in connection with 16:18. He sees a posttribulational rapture of the church in 24:40–41 (p. 882). He allows sexual infidelity as a ground for divorce in 19:9.

Donald A. Carson. *When Jesus Confronts the World: An Exposition of Matthew 8–10*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987. 154 pp.

Sermons at Edon Baptist Church, Cambridge, England, are sources of six chapters on Jesus' authority, authenticity, mission, trustworthiness, compassion, and decisiveness. The book has much help for expositors and also applies some valid principles to life today.

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W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr. *The Gospel According to Matthew*. 3 vols., ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988-.

The first two volumes are complete and cover through Matthew 18, with a third volume yet to appear. This replaces the single-volume work by W. C. Allen (1912) in the ICC series. The volumes are very expensive, but contain an immense amount of information. It is very liberal, but informs evangelicals of differing views (e.g., eight views on the structure of 1:2–17, eight views on the Son of Man's coming in 16:28), arguments (e.g., nine reasons Mary's pregnancy is traced to the Holy Spirit [pp. 201–2]), and sources (e.g., the use of Hos 11:1 in Matt 2:15 [p. 263]). The 26-page general bibliography has mostly liberal works, ignoring the work of William Hendriksen, but including that of evangelical R. H. Mounce. It has a 148-page introduction. The

authors argue that the Jewish flavor and use of the OT point to a Jewish author (pp. 33, 58). They see a “massive unity” in the overall structure, but a “structurally mixed” situation that does not yield a clear outline (p. 72). They advocate the priority of Mark (p. 73) and sum up the most important of Allen’s conclusions (e.g., p. 73). Helpful features include discussions of semitisms, triads, repetition, headings, and conclusions and different kinds of tables. They see a redactional source for many of the statements in the gospel. They date Matthew between 80 and 95 (p. 138) and give Antioch as the place of origin (pp. 146-47). This ranks at the top of technical works because of its exegetical detail.

John MacArthur, Jr. *Matthew*. 4 vols., MacArthur New Testament Commentary; Chicago: Moody, 1985–90.

This is a conservative, premillennial, and very readable exposition that often deals in some detail with problem verses and elaborates on vital lessons of Jesus’ teachings. The author often explains customs and gives differing viewpoints and supporting reasons. In Matthew 13, he takes only the fourth soil to represent genuinely saved people and understands the leaven in a good sense. In Matthew 24, the one taken is removed in judgment and the one left is preserved on earth safely to enter the earthly kingdom promised in the OT.

Herman N. Ridderbos. *Matthew*. Bible Students Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987. 556 pp.

This work is from the famous Dutch series (e.g., Aalders on Genesis, etc.) originally published in 1950–51. It provides expositors with much help with its competent interpretations and definitions and defenses of varying viewpoints. Ridderbos is amillennial and does not

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deal with critical issues as much as other scholars. Because of its earlier publication, it does not reflect awareness of works on Matthew since the 1940’s.

Haddon W. Robinson. *What Jesus Said about Successful Living: Principles from the Sermon on the Mount for Today*. Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 1989. 298 pp.

The author is an outstanding preacher, a former professor at Dallas Theological Seminary and president at Denver Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary and now a distinguished professor at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. The book is popularly written and devotionally enriching and is a resource for sermon preparation and life application. Like Don Carson, D. M. Lloyd-Jones, and John R. W. Stott, Robinson develops the meaning for today in graphic style.

## **Mark**

R. A. Guelich. *Mark 1:1–8:26*. Word Biblical Commentary, 1st of 2 vols.; Dallas: Word, 1989.

This is a much-praised moderately conservative work, though some would question that it is conservative. It features expertise on linguistic details, varying viewpoints with their supporting arguments, and citations of modern scholarly sources. It will provide assistance for scholars and pastors who grapple with interpretive issues.

R. Kent Hughes. *Mark: Jesus, Servant and Savior*. 2 vols., Preaching the Word Commentary; Westchester, IL: Crossway/Good News Publishers, 1989.

Hughes is a good expositor who pastored Wheaton College Church and has completed several commentaries in the Preaching the Word series (e.g., Joshua). This work is a broad flowing study

that can help in sermon preparation and stimulate spiritual enrichment in day-by-day lay reading. The author is conservative and premillennial, and draws illustrative material from many sources.

W. D. Spencer and A. B. Spencer. *The Prayer Life of Jesus: Shout of Agony, Revelation of Love, a Commentary*. New York: University Press, 1990. 296 pp.

The authors—teachers at Gordon-Conwell Seminary—have prepared a comprehensive treatment of Matt 6:9–13; Luke 11:2–4, Jesus’ parables on prayer and emphasis on prayer in His busy life, NT words for prayer, Jesus’ positions in prayer, John 17, Gethsemane, and the cross. The volume has many good comments and will be refreshing to those who use it.

## **John**

G. R. Beasley-Murray. *John*. Word Biblical Commentary; Waco, TX: Word, 1987. 441 pp.

Beasley-Murray, an evangelical with a somewhat critical leaning, has written this competent, usually detailed book on text, grammar, movement of passages, and bibliography. He has a fairly good survey of the relationship between the fourth gospel and the synoptics (pp. xxxv-xxxvii) and argues for leaving the text in its present order instead of rearranging it as Bultmann and others have done (p. xlili). Nevertheless, he sometimes devotes more attention to critical theories than he does to the text of John. Some of his conclusions are subjective, for example, his attributing of “Look, the Lamb of God” (1:36) to John the Baptist and of “who takes away the sin of the world” (1:29) to the evangelist writer (p. lii). Yet he voices his conviction of a high view of the reliability and divine origin of the material (p. liii). He assigns authorship to one of a circle associated with the beloved disciple whom he assumes was not one of the Twelve (p. lxxiv), though within that circle John the Apostle is a possibility. The treatment of the text is good at times, fair at others, and weak in some places. Some examples of the weaker places are his cursory discussion of “born of water and of the Spirit” (3:5), an even thinner discussion of 3:14–15, an unexplained relationship between 10:27 and 10:28–29, his pitiful glossing over the details of 15:2, and a confusing explanation of 20:22.

Robert M. Bowman, Jr. *Jehovah’s Witnesses, Jesus Christ and the Gospel of John*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989. 171 pp.

The focus of this work on John 1:1 is to respond to the Jehovah’s Witnesses who have changed their line of argument from a few years ago. It also deals with John 8:58 and 20:28. Bowman has a reputation for skillfulness in refuting cultic error as associate editor of *Christian Research Journal* and also in other capacities.

Donald A. Carson. *The Gospel according to John*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991. 715 pp.

This is an excellent commentary from an evangelical with a breadth of scholarly study and a keen awareness of recent literature. He gears the work for teachers and preachers, but it is readable for lay-people too. It has an 84-page introduction with characteristics of the

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gospel, the “how to’s” of its interpretation, its genuineness, purpose, doctrinal distinctives, and other matters. Technical notes and comments appear, but more attention goes to following the flow of the text and drawing out doctrinal principles. Some will rate this at the top of evangelical works or in close contention with the similar work by Leon Morris.

D. M. Lloyd-Jones. *John 17*. 4 vols.; Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1988–89.

The four volumes are entitled *Saved in Eternity* (17:1–5), *Safe in the World* (17:6–19), *Sanctified through the Truth* (17:17–19), and *Growing in the Spirit* (17:17–24). They stem from messages preached in 1952–53. Lloyd-Jones assists other pastors and lay readers in finding much devotional stimulation for spiritual triumph by dwelling on their position in God's grace. This is the best work on John 17 with Rainsford ranking next, Wiersbe third, and Brown fourth.

John Phillips. *Exploring the Gospel of John*. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1988. 425 pp.

This articulate exposition relates well to life. It is the product of one of the fine Bible conference leaders and prolific writers of today. He is an evangelical and organizes his work well by following his outline step-by-step. It is, however, a puzzle why the outline comes at the end rather than at the beginning. A pastor or lay reader will derive help in following the flow of thought through John and in a light exposure to some of the book's problems. It possibly would serve best in daily readings.

### **Acts**

F. L. Arrington. *The Acts of the Apostles. An Introduction and Commentary*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988. 298 pp.

This is a fairly good work by the professor of New Testament Greek and Exegesis at the Church of God School of Theology, Cleveland, TN. It helps on many basic points from an evangelical perspective, but it does not rank high.

F. F. Bruce. *The Acts of the Apostles. The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary*. 3rd ed., rev. and enlarged; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. 569 pp.

This commentary is more technical and refers to Greek grammar more than the author's work on Acts in the *NICNT*. It is briefer, but

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good. The larger work explains more. The works of this author, one of the foremost NT scholars of the late 20th century, are always exacting in their scholarship. This is a revision and enlargement of the earlier editions, the first in 1951 and the second in 1952. The fruit of scholarly study since those dates is interwoven into the volume's comments. The 96-page introduction has a new section on the theology of Acts.

F. F. Bruce. *The Book of Acts*. *NICNT*; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. 541 pp.

This is a revision of the commentary first issued in 1954. The revision, coming not long before Bruce's death, has a new translation of the Greek text in place of the ASV appearing in the first edition. The documentation in footnotes has been extensively updated. The author has interacted with later studies, arranged comments on fewer verses, and achieved a more lucid style in places. Yet the basic verse-by-verse comments are substantially the same. It is still the finest commentary on the details of Acts. Bruce defers to I. H. Marshall's commentary for detail on Luke's theology. He reflects a fine grasp of pertinent history, a sound explanation of most passages, and insights on many problems.

Hans Conzelmann. *Acts of the Apostles*. Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987. 287 pp.

Using the RSV, the author supplies frequent assistance as he comments on syntax, background, customs, etc. He is liberal as exhibited in his copious use of redaction-criticism suppositions at various points. He denies the validity of miracles. A discerning pastor or student

can derive what is worthwhile from this much-studied scholar immersed in Acts and literature relevant to it and leave behind the parts that are not valid.

Colin J. Hemer. *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History*. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1989. 482 pp.

This noted author argues for the historical accuracy of Acts on the ground of Luke's correctness in details not essential to the spiritual message (p. 104). His methodology lends itself to good support in some places and reliance on suppositions in others.

Simon J. Kistemaker. *Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990. 1,010 pp.

A detailed commentary follows a 40-page introduction. The explanation comments on the Greek text, exposition, and doctrinal and

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practical remarks. Kistemaker as an evangelical contributes much in elucidating the flow of the book, goes behind problems, and shows relevance. As a continuation of the Hendriksen NT Commentary series, this is one of the better conservative works on Acts.

John R. W. Stott. *The Message of Acts: The Spirit, the Church and the World*. Bible Speaks Today; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990. 405 pp.

This verse-by-verse evangelical exposition considers key questions such as charismatic gifts, signs and wonders, baptism in the Spirit, etc. After the introduction come four divisions: Jews (1:6–6:7), foundations for world mission (6:8–12:24), the apostle to the Gentiles (12:25–21:17), and on the way to Rome (21:18–28:31). As usual, Stott is very articulate in capturing the message, showing the flow, and letting the text come alive. This is lucid for lay people and also helpful at times for pastors.

## **Romans**

Norman Anderson. *Freedom under Law*. Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1988.

A biblical scholar who is also a professor emeritus of legal studies shows how law relates to true freedom. Various types of freedoms flourish under protection by laws. Later, the author examines law in the spiritual life according to Scripture. He argues in Matt 5:17–20 for fulfillment of the law in the appropriate sense God has designed for it to have (p. 121). God purposed that Mosaic rules and regulations on ceremonial cleanness have their place in OT times, but also look forward to moral cleanness such as was realized in Jesus' spiritual life and teaching and spiritual power. The Mosaic law was not designed to be a way to merit salvation by obeying, but revealed ways God willed for saved people to live for their well-being (p. 155). The law could speak of the need for life, but could not impart the life God gives in grace through Christ in the gospel. In the gospel-way God supplies power to obey God's will as portrayed in the moral principles of the law, etc.

James M. Boice. *Romans, an Expository Commentary. Volume I, Justification by Faith, Romans 1–4*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991.

This Philadelphia preacher expounds the text, highlighting doctrinal points and their application to human life. This will be another multivolume commentary. It is full of teaching that will build up the believer.

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James D. G. Dunn. *Romans*. 2 vols.; Word Biblical Commentary; Dallas: Word, 1988.

Dunn, professor of divinity, University of Durham, Scotland, has resorted to critical theories more than some conservatives would like, but he certainly reflects a massive amount of study in the work. He has much on viewpoints and their supports, word meanings, grammar, and bibliography on each pericope. His interaction with other scholarship makes this one of the best on Romans in that regard.

R. Kent Hughes. *Righteousness from Heaven*. Preaching the Word; Westchester, IL: Crossway/Good News, 1991. 339 pp.

This very readable exposition explains Romans, section-by-section, and frequently introduces items from broader reading to stimulate the user. Hughes is diligent in researching and communicating winsomely and pointedly what the text says, and then realistically applying it to daily life. His studies are broad and will be more useful for lay people desiring a quick and interesting escort through Romans.

Douglas Moo. *Romans 1–8*. Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary; Chicago: Moody, 1991. 591 pp.

Moo thoroughly analyzes each passage, interacting with various viewpoints and their supports and usually sifting out clearly his own preferences. His 21-page bibliography and citations are copious. His major sources are twelve in number: Barrett, Calvin, Cranfield, Dunn, Godet, Ksemann, Kuss, Michel, Murray, Nygren, Sanday and Headlam, and Wilckens. He is so cautious that at times it is difficult to determine his viewpoint. Whether agreeing with Moo or not, one will find reward in a careful reading of his discussions of controversial issues. In commenting on the Greek and discussing theological ramifications, the work must rank as one of the top evangelical treatments, along with Cranfield and Murray.

Leon Morris. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. 578 pp.

Completed at age 74 by this noted scholar, this is a work that is quite thorough in many places. Morris is evangelical, reformed in his theology, and amillennial, as his remarks on Romans 11 demonstrate. He has a mature and profound grasp of issues to be explained and a broad knowledge of literature on Romans from various perspectives. His judgment on problem passages is perceptive. He has excursions on God's righteousness, truth, the law, justification, judgment, and sin. All

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in all, the commentary is worthy of a place alongside those by Cranfield, Hendriksen, Moo, and Murray.

### **First Corinthians**

Donald A. Carson. *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12–14*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987. 229 pp.

This evangelical exposition at times offers good insight into issues related to 1 Corinthians 12–14. A section on the theology of spiritual gifts draws from texts in Acts and 1 Corinthians. In evaluating contemporary charismatic claims and experience (chap. 5), Carson concludes that charismatics should guard against pride in having gifts and in claiming that tongues are a sign of "the second blessing." He says that noncharismatics ought to guard against saying that the gifts ceased. He believes that "that which is perfect" (1 Cor 13:10) relates to Christ's parousia and that tongues can be valid privately and publicly today. He also defends women's right to prophesy.

Gordon H. Fee. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. 880 pp.



This is the all-round best evangelical commentary on the epistle. Fee is well-organized, clear, and perceptive on issues. His work replaces the Grosheide commentary (1953) in this series. He is thorough, verse-by-verse, and skilled in Greek details. He keeps the argument of the epistle in view. His grasp of literature on 1 Corinthians is masterful, and his treatment includes more by way of disputed-passage discussion and application than other commentaries on the letter. Many conservatives will disagree with him on some issues, of course. In a 10-page discussion of 14:34–35 he concludes the verses are a textual gloss and therefore have no bearing on woman's role in the church. He devotes 40 pages to 11:2–16 and takes "head" to denote source, not authority. He is affiliated with the Assemblies of God and is sure that all the spiritual gifts are for today. Yet those who disagree with him will admit that he argues his position well.

John F. MacArthur, Jr. *Spiritual Gifts (1 Corinthians 12)*. Chicago: Moody, 1991.

This is an exposition of a key and much-discussed section and subject from a viewpoint that some gifts were intended to be permanent in the church age and some temporary, being limited to the early church. MacArthur's *Charismatic Chaos* (1991) is also relevant here.

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## Second Corinthians

Paul Barnett. *The Message of 2 Corinthians*. Bible Speaks Today; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1988. 188 pp.

This flowing and competent commentary moves section-by-section. It also discusses Paul as a minister and human being with weaknesses, facing problems and criticisms but experiencing God's power in his weakness. The applications are often very good. He has more detail in chapters 1–6 (100 pp.), but is cursory on such problems as "thorn" in chapter 12. The book can provide refreshment for devotional times and can serve as a catalyst for grasping and ministering the Word to others.

Frederick W. Danker. *2 Corinthians*. Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989. 223 pp.

This evangelical work ranks high among those conversant with scholarly study regarding the setting of that day and offering a great deal of information. One of the author's earlier works is *Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study* (3rd ed.; Saint Louis: Concordia, 1970, 295 pp.). His background study of "benefactor" helps him illumine chapters 8–9. Benefactors might distribute wealth with a noble spirit of obligation, while also having a right to see those to whom they shared respond in a noble way according to their means. Danker is, overall, quite good in a number of ways and will provide benefit in the study of 2 Corinthians.

C. G. Kruse. *The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*. Tyndale NTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. 224 pp.

R. V. G. Tasker's work served well for years, but Kruse's commentary replaces it with stronger exegesis. Based in the NIV, it is a fairly concise evangelical effort that brings together much that is of help in following the thought through and dealing with problems in a well-written flow.

J. P. Lewis, ed. *Interpreting 2 Corinthians 5:14–21. An Exercise in Hermeneutics*. Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity, 17; Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1989. 194 pp.

Four writers have written this expensive book (\$49.95 in 1989). It deals penetratingly with interpretive history, exegesis, problems, and theology.

- A. B. Spencer and W. D. Spencer. *2 Corinthians*. Bible Study Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989. 144 pp.

The Spencers are faculty members at Gordon-Conwell Seminary.

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They believe that Paul defends the leadership style that he and his associates model so as to help readers follow the right example and not be led astray. Their work is a survey, but displays a clear flushing out of principles that can assist Christ workers.

### **Galatians**

- R. A. Cole. *The Letter of Paul to the Galatians: An Introduction and Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989. 240 pp.

This is a revision of a work of twenty years earlier. It interacts with scholarly studies since then. It is a good evangelical commentary, well-informed, solid, clear with occasional good help on problem verses.

- Ronald Y. K. Fung. *The Epistle to the Galatians*. NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. 342 pp.

This replaces Hermann Ridderbos' earlier work in the same series. It is thorough, usually reaching traditional conservative views, with many satisfactory and even some excellent explanations. Fung is lucid and detailed on some verses, but bypasses some real problems such as the meaning of falling from grace (5:4). The same weakness applies to what it means to be "crucified with Christ." He follows the south Galatian theory and adopts an early date of A.D. 48. His reasonably good introduction updates scholarly discussion and relates 2:1–10 to the famine visit in Acts 11:27–30.

- Richard N. Longenecker. *Galatians*. Word Biblical Commentary; Dallas: Word, 1990. 323 pp.

This noted evangelical scholar is professor of New Testament at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto. His long introduction to Galatians surveying scholarly issues precedes a verse-by-verse commentary. Each pericope has its own bibliography, translation, notes, and literary analysis. The author leaves few stones unturned, at least the more crucial ones. His discussions of problems and summations are helpful. He has an earlier fine commentary on Acts and also has written *Paul, Apostle of Liberty* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964, 310 pp.).

- John MacArthur. *Galatians*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary; Chicago: Moody, 1987. 221 pp.

With sensitivity to grammar and word meaning, this fairly thorough evangelical treatment explains in a clear way the meaning of sections and verses. The author sees "the Israel of God" in 6:16 as literal Jews who have been saved, not as people of the church per se among

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the Gentiles. In most respects the commentary is articulate in helping pastors and lay people grasp matters of the gospel of grace and freedom of the Christian life. The first printing of the commentary had a discrepancy regarding the date of writing (pp. xii, 118).

### **Ephesians**

F. Foulkes. *The Letter of Paul to the Ephesians: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale NTC, 2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989. 189 pp.

The author has revised his own work of the 1960's, using the RSV and updated introductory matter. The evangelical author traces Paul's flow of thought well, summing up sections, looking at views and their supports, dealing competently with words and exegesis, but sometimes doing so more briefly than many readers would prefer.

R. Kent Hughes. *Ephesians: The Mystery of the Body of Christ*. Preaching the Word; Westchester, IL: Crossway/Good News, 1990. 304 pp.

Hughes has a highly readable, practical exposition that is refreshing for devotional use. He both explains Ephesians competently in a general way and relates it engagingly and vitally to Christian life. In remaining true to the text, it is like an alpine breeze in its spiritually invigorating tone.

Andrew Lincoln. *Ephesians*. Word Biblical Commentary; Waco, TX: Word, 1990.

This detailed evangelical effort ranks at the top or near the best in overall exegetical explanation. The author evidences a background of immense reading, a thorough grasp of disputed passages and turning of details, a good ability to summarize, and often judicious decisions.

### **Philippians**

John Gwyn-Thomas. *Rejoice...Always! Studies in Philippians 4*. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1989. 159 pp.

These are messages on one chapter delivered by a pastor in Cambridge, England. The book explains verses perceptively and sensitively and shows how they apply today. J. I. Packer in the introduction commends the book and the author as a good spiritual shepherd.

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. *The Life of Joy and The Life of Peace*. 2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989.

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This two-volume work on Philippians has typically rich pastoral comments from a master preacher who is well-known for his *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* and expositions on Romans, Ephesians, and 2 Peter. This is a republication of a 1989 British edition containing messages preached at Westminster Chapel in 1947–48. Both pastors and lay readers will find stimulation in this capable and refreshing effort.

Ralph P. Martin. *The Epistle to the Philippians: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale NTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.

This is a revision and updating of the 1959 edition by the same author, one of America's foremost moderate evangelical NT scholars. It displays unusual insight in regard to Greek grammar and exegesis and a fairly frequent use of other scholarly literature, critical positions, etc.

Moisés Silva. *Philippians*. Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary; Chicago: Moody, 1988. 255 pp.

Silva's treatment is a high-quality evangelical production, usually with good insights into the Greek and in the handling of differing viewpoints in current literature. This was the first commentary in the Wycliffe series. On many verses he is top-notch in perceiving and addressing issues with clear language. He sees two groups against Paul in Philippi, true Jewish Christians

holding that grace ideas led Paul too far in freedom from the law (Philippians 1) and Judaizers within the Christian circle (Philippians 3). To him the theme of the book is not joy, but steadfast continuance in sanctification, victorious over difficulties. The author weighs differing interpretations carefully in his vast awareness of literature on the book.

### **Colossians and Philemon**

Murray J. Harris. *Colossians and Philemon*. Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.

This is the first of a projected twenty commentaries in this series. The author, a professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, has an earlier commentary on 2 Corinthians. This 1991 work helps a student who is beginning to review Greek to see, paragraph-by-paragraph, a structural analysis of every phrase and every word and virtually every feature of the message of the Greek text. It teaches much about the Greek of the two epistles and also passes along some homiletical suggestions from a meticulous scholar.

R. Kent Hughes. *Colossians and Philemon: The Supremacy of Christ*. Preaching the Word; Westchester, IL: Crossway/Good News, 1989. 183 pp.

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The evaluation of this work corresponds closely to that of the discussions of Mark and Ephesians by the same author. In vivid strokes he displays the vital message for Christians in a refreshing devotional way and also gives ideas to expositors.

N. T. Wright. *The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon*. Tyndale NTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

As typical of this evangelical series, the author furnishes readers with concise and clear but well-thought-out comments on verses, sometimes with aid on difficult verses.

### **First and Second Thessalonians**

John R. W. Stott. *The Gospel and the End of Time: The Message of 1 and 2 Thessalonians*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1991. 220 pp.

Stott is evangelical, well-informed in good scholarly thinking, and has unusual ability to write understandably and to sum up. As in his other expositions (e.g., Sermon on the Mount, Romans 5–8, Acts, Galatians, Ephesians), his comments are good. His introductions are too brief, a total of eight pages on both books, but his commentary is well-organized and articulate. In this work he tends to be general and without detail on individual verses, but the flow of the exposition is refreshing. He stops to deal with a few problems (e.g., how Satan hindered Paul's return [2:18], what "vessel" means [4:4]). In 2 Thessalonians 2, he favors the state as the "restrainer" (p. 170). This is not a top commentary, but will serve lay people well as a devotional guide.

Charles A. Wanamaker. *The Epistles to the Thessalonians*. New Testament Greek Text Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991. 316 pp.

As part of a relatively new series, this work offers considerable expertise on details of the Greek, views on interpretive issues, lines of argumentation, and interaction with other scholars. This evangelical work must rate among the best on the Thessalonian epistles.

### **Pastoral Epistles**

Gordon D. Fee. *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*. New International Bible Commentary; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988.

This is a reworking of Fee's 1984 work in the *Good News Commentary*. Fee is clear in most cases, but hard to follow when he

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becomes very terse. He is good on Greek grammar and local setting and on the unity and integrity of the books. His contribution is that Paul authored the books and wrote to meet specific situations in the churches, not to give a manual for the church as some have held.

Donald Guthrie. *The Pastoral Epistles*. Tyndale NTC, rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

This recent revision of a 1957 publication has a good introduction, but the commentary lacks the detail of Bernard and Huther. The author is better known for his large work on New Testament Introduction. This commentary is especially helpful in supplying conservative answers to radical critical views concerning introductory matters.

Thomas Lea and Hayne Griffin, Jr. *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*. New American Commentary; Nashville: Broadman, 1992. 352 pp.

Lea, a professor at Southwestern Baptist Seminary, handles 1 and 2 Timothy, while Griffin, a PhD graduate of the University of Aberdeen, comments on Titus. The authors have seven arguments to prove Pauline authorship (pp. 23-49). Their discussions of doctrinal themes are good, as are their book outlines and the amount of space devoted to individual verses. Their work on problems is not always thorough, however (e.g., the law made for the righteous [1 Tim 1:9], the spiritual status of the two trouble-causers [1 Tim 1:19], "the husband of one wife" [1 Tim 3:2], Timothy's saving himself and others [1 Tim 4:16], the status of the unfaithful [2 Tim 2:20], the crown of righteousness [2 Tim 4:8]. It does have a pretty good survey of viewpoints and their supports in regard to women being saved through child-bearing (1 Tim 2:15). Occasional excursuses occur, such as those on biblical evidence and the Baptist practice of ordination (pp. 141-44). Footnotes containing explanations and sources for further study add to the value.

## Hebrews

F. F. Bruce. *The Epistle to the Hebrew*. NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

Before his death the author updated this outstanding evangelical work that first appeared in 1964. The introduction discusses recent developments regarding the main facets of the book. The discussion of how the epistle uses the OT and its harmonization of the epistle with the gospel witness about Jesus (pp. 25-34) are two of the areas. This, the best evangelical work on Hebrews, is clear and excellent on detail in most verses, competent in Greek grammar, word study, and background.

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William L. Lane. *Hebrews 1-8*. Word Biblical Commentary; Waco, TX: Word, 1987.

This volume provides much in the details of the Greek text, exegesis, and bibliography. It will inform readers of a wealth of scholarly opinion and be especially helpful to teachers, preachers, and Bible class leaders who are serious about their preparation. Its bibliography rates higher than its commentary which is a bit inferior to that of Bruce.

## James

Ralph P. Martin. *James*. Word Biblical Commentary; Waco, TX: Word, 1988. 240 pp.

Here a moderate evangelical shows a broad awareness of scholarly opinions and lines of argument in both the introduction and the verse-by-verse commentary. His expertise in Greek details, his good grasp of relationships with other Scripture, and his thorough bibliography are evident. It is overrated, however, when called “the best longer work on James” (Douglas Stewart, *A Guide to Selecting and Using Bible Commentaries* [Dallas: Word, 1990] p. 126).

### **First and Second Peter and Jude**

Peter H. Davids. *The First Epistle of Peter*. NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

Davids has an earlier highly respected commentary on James. Here he uses a 42-page introduction to review issues and discuss scholarly literature from an evangelical perspective. Then follows a 266-page commentary in which he capably handles the Greek and deals with the differing views on problem passages.

Wayne A. Grudem. *1 Peter*. Tyndale NTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. 239 pp.

At many points this evangelical work is good in regard to views and helpful in regard to the Greek text. The author advocates double predestination in 2:8 and says that God destined the stumbling and disobedience of the unsaved (p. 106). In 3:19–20, he takes the spirits in prison to be unsaved humans of Noah’s day, who are now in prison. A special appendix details the “spirits” passage at some length. His 36-page discussion of this passage takes one of several conservative options. He also favors traditional conservative viewpoints elsewhere.

D. E. Hiebert. *Second Peter and Jude*. Greenville, SC: Unusual Publications, 1989. 324 pp.

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Hiebert adopts conservative positions, even to the point of understanding Jude to be written after 2 Peter. He usually provides clarification and evidences considerable awareness of viewpoints and issues. Both preachers and lay people will find this work worth the time.

Simon J. Kistemaker. *Peter and Jude*. Hendriksen NTC; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987. 441 pp.

This careful evangelical scholar of the reformed tradition continues the Hendriksen series with good attention to exegesis, viewpoints, arguments, and some practical applications. The work is quite readable for preacher or lay person.

I. Howard Marshall. *1 Peter*. IVP NTC; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1991. 184 pp.

This volume launches a new series under the general editorship of Grant R. Osborne. It is designed for brevity, for capturing the message competently, and for practical use by the church. Marshall writes with clarity and refreshment. He shows awareness of differing perspectives on interpretation and usually reasons well and crystallizes data beneficially. Five points defend Petrine authorship, and nine points summarize Peter’s theology. His remarks about trials in 1:6–7 and purity and growth in 2:1–3 are outstanding. He lists the views in 3:19–21 capably, but ends with a questionable conclusion to the matter. All in all, this is a very fine concise work that is bound to provide students and all Christians with a quick, well-informed review of the text and a daily reading guide.

J. Ramsay Michaels. *1 Peter*. Word Biblical Commentary; Waco, TX: Word, 1988. 337 pp.

Many view this as the current basic evangelical work in English on 1 Peter. The author deals well with Greek details and is abreast of scholarly writings as evidenced by his helpful lists. His

discussions of debatable issues is thorough, with frequent good defenses of his own views. One unusual feature is his theory that Peter lived through the persecution under Nero, contrary to evidence of his death under Nero, and wrote the epistle in the A.D. 70's with help from the church at Rome.

### **1, 2, 3 John**

John R. W. Stott. *The Epistles of John*. Tyndale NTC, 2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. 234 pp.

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Here is a clear and stimulating treatment by a gifted writer who has served as rector of the All Souls (Anglican) Church, London. Several NT scholars have hailed the commentary as outstanding in exegesis, exposition, and warm application. This 1988 edition updates the 1964 work. Stott displays a vast breadth of reading in the best conservative commentaries on the Johannine epistles.

### **Revelation**

David Chilton. *Days of Vengeance: An Exposition of the Book of Revelation*. Fort Worth, TX: Dominion Press, 1987. 721 pp.

This is a learned case for postmillennialism. Gary North in the "Publisher's Preface" says that what Chilton generalized in an earlier book "is now supported with chapter and verse—indeed, lots and lots of chapters and verses" (p. xv). He asserts that Chilton has at long last found the secret key to unlock the code of the book of Revelation (p. xvi).

David S. Clark. *The Message from Patmos: A Postmillennial Commentary on the Book of Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989. 148 pp.

This is a more succinct effort than Chilton's volume to support the postmillennial interpretation.

Philip E. Hughes. *The Book of Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. 242 pp.

Hughes was a renowned NT scholar and Anglican clergyman. He has provided an amillennial work (p. 211) that is clear, but not outstanding in exegesis. His commentary on 2 Corinthians is very good and the one on Hebrews is fairly good.

Leon Morris. *The Book of Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale NTC, rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. 256 pp.

Morris concisely comments on verses in an amillennial vein, as in Revelation 20. He frequently helps on views and information based on his wide reading. Noteworthy here and there, the work as a whole does not rank as high as his commentaries on John, Romans, and the Thessalonian epistles.

Robert L. Thomas. *Revelation 1-7, An Exegetical Commentary*. vol. 1 of 2 vol. set; Chicago: Moody, 1992. xxvii + 524 pp.

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Thomas has a second volume yet to come in this most exegetically detailed effort yet by a premillennialist. The field is one of his specialties since his ThD dissertation was "The Argument of the Book of Revelation." He brings more than thirty years of Greek-teaching expertise to the task. He argues for authorship by the Apostle John (pp. 2-19) and a date of ca. A.D. 95 (pp. 20-

23). His wide interaction looks at issues fairly and carefully. A good section explores hermeneutics for interpreting the Apocalypse (pp. 29-39). He employs his own translation verse-by-verse. He deals in considerable detail with many interpretive issues, gives reasons for viewpoints, is clear, and follows a detailed outline. He favors seeing the Lord's day (1:10) as Sunday, sees in 1:19 a threefold division of the book based on grammar, opts for human messengers in 1:20, and sees a mixed group in the churches (i.e., some genuinely saved, others only professors). He looks penetratingly at views on the Nicolaitans (2:6), sees "the overcomer" as applicable to all genuinely saved persons, reasoning this out with awareness of relevant factors, and prefers taking "crown of life" in 2:10 as a genitive of apposition—i.e. "crown which is (eternal) life"—understood as a crown received through grace and not merit. Thomas favors a pretribulational removal of the church in 3:10, devoting six pages to an appraisal of arguments for differing views. The twenty-four elders are exalted celestial beings. The decision on the white-horse rider in 6:2, after a long evaluation of views, is that he personifies a movement or force working against the Messiah's interests in the future tribulation period. He defends the view that the 144,000 in chapter 7 are distinctively certain men of Israel, not the church.

### **Classification and Rating of Commentaries**

As explained in the reviews of OT commentaries,<sup>2</sup> space does not permit a ranking of all the NT commentaries, even the ones done in the last five years. This comprehensive table appears in the unabridged work described in footnote #1. All that can be furnished here is a sample categorization, for which the book of Revelation has been chosen. An asterisk following the author's name indicates a work discussed in the pages above.

Table 1 showing the rating of commentaries on Revelation appears on the next page.

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#### Rating of Commentaries on Revelation

Table 1

<i>Detailed Exegetical</i>	<i>Expositional Survey</i>	<i>Devotional Flavor</i>
1. R. L. Thomas* (premil dispen.) W. Hendriksen (amil) H. B. Swete (technical) D. Chilton* (postmil)	1. J. F. Walvoord (premil dispen.)       2. J. B. Smith (premil dispen.)	1. J. Stott (Rev 2–3)          2. W. Newell (premil dispen.)
2. I. T. Beckwith (amil) D. Clark* (postmil)	3. L. Morris* (amil)	3. M. Wilcock (amil)
3. R. H. Mounce (amil)		

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<sup>2</sup> 2. James E. Rosscup, "OT Commentaries for Bible Expositors, 1987–92," *TMSJ* 4/1 (Spring 1993):93.



4. G. R. Beasley- 4. J. A. Seiss (premil)  
Murray (amil)  
5. G. E. Ladd (premil)  
6. C. Colclasure (amil)

1

## OT Commentaries for Bible Expositors, 1987—92<sup>1</sup>

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**James E. Rosscup**

Professor of Bible Exposition

*Recent years have witnessed the publishing of an abundance of commentaries on OT books of the Bible. A survey of such volumes published from 1987 through 1992 can be quite beneficial to one's study of the Bible for either public presentation or personal use. An annotated bibliography noting the books' purposes and evaluating how well the authors have provided comments to help expositors is a good way to look quickly at a large number of sources. After a survey of the individual works, a classification and ranking of books on Genesis illustrates a good way to compare the volumes with each other by dividing them into categories according to their types of treatment and rating them according to the quality of their explanations.*

\* \* \* \* \*

In an era of mushrooming information, publishing of tools for biblical study has not lagged behind literature in other fields. In a seemingly never-ending stream, books dealing with the Bible continue to appear. That has evoked what is perhaps the most frequently asked kind of question by those who thirst for a deeper understanding of the Word:

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<sup>1</sup>The Master's Seminary. (1993; 2002). *Master's Seminary Journal Volume 4* (4:203-225). Master's Seminary.

<sup>1</sup> 1. Editor's note: The volumes and annotations in this article have been selected from a larger annotated bibliography compiled by Professor Rosscup. Recently revised, updated, and enlarged (1993 revision of a 1983 ed.), this larger work includes approximately 1,300 individual commentaries or sets of commentaries with annotations on all sixty-six books of the Bible, the volumes deemed to be the most helpful for expositors and teachers of the Word based on the compiler's thirty-five years of seminary involvement and teaching. The unabridged bibliography is available through Grace Book Shack at the same address as *The Master's Seminary Journal*. This article has selected works from the last five years, 1987–92, and pertaining to the OT only. An article in the Fall 1993 issue of *TMSJ* will deal similarly with NT works.

“What is the best commentary on Genesis?” or “What is the best book for studying Old Testament backgrounds?” or “What is the best commentary set on the Old Testament?”

Such a question deserves a knowledgeable answer because the accuracy and consequent effectiveness of someone’s sermon or Bible-study lesson may hinge on the advice given. Yet it is not an easy question to answer. One reason it is not easy to answer is the rapidity with which new volumes are appearing.

The following remarks cite recent works that, for some reason, deserve such special attention. This is not intended to be an exhaustive listing of recent works, but the number of study tools cited should furnish a beginning answer to readers’ questions such as the ones cited above.

The descriptions are limited to some of the relatively recent volumes and sets, under the assumption that many will already know the merits of many of the older works. Anyone interested in a complete annotated bibliography should consult the information in note 1 above.

### **Commentaries on the Whole Bible**

Several commentaries on the whole Bible have appeared and can be divided into two groups: those that follow a “synthesis” approach and those that are more analytical.

#### **Works That Synthesize**

*The Bible Speaks Today*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1986-.

The volumes in this series furnish surveys to Bible books in a lucid manner that explains passages concisely, deals with some problems, and shows the practical import of principles. Writers often draw on considerable scholarly help, resulting in a competent evangelical product. Joyce Baldwin does *The Message of Genesis 12–50* (1986). Derek Kidner contributes *Love to the Loveless* (Hosea) and *A Time to Mourn and a Time to Dance* (Ecclesiastes). Michael Wilcock is fairly helpful on Chronicles, John Stott very good on Galatians and Ephesians, R. C. Lucas vital on Colossians and Philemon. The series has other contributors and is helpful for lay readers and pastor-teachers desiring a readable and refreshing tracing of the progression of thought.

Raymond Brown, *et al*, eds. *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1990. 1,475 pp.

This updates *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* that appeared twenty-two years ago by incorporating the results of recent scholarship.

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It represents some of the cream of Roman Catholic scholarship in commentary and special articles on topics such as the Pentateuch, wisdom literature, prophetic books, apocalyptic, Hebrew poetry, apocryphal sources, Dead Sea Scrolls, other Jewish literature, text and versions, modern CT criticism, biblical archaeology, and religious institutions of Israel. About sixty percent of the material is new.

Walter Elwell, ed. *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989. 1,229 pp.

The purpose of this one-volume work is to help those without technical training to understand Scripture, an aim held in common with several other commentaries not written with scholars in mind. Contributors represent a variety of viewpoints, unity of content not being the goal (p. viii). Some of the better portions are on Genesis and Ezekiel (Victor Hamilton), Leviticus and Ezra/Nehemiah (Louis Goldberg), Joshua and Judges (Andrew Bowling), Ruth (R.

K. Harrison), 1 and 2 Samuel (Herbert Wolf), Proverbs (R. K. Harrison), James (Douglas Moo), and the Johannine Epistles (James B. DeYoung).

James L. Mays, ed. *Harper's Bible Commentary*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988. 1,326 pp.

Here, eighty-two scholars from the Society of Biblical Literature provide introductory essays and commentaries. The work's essays deal with such topics as reading and interpreting the Bible, OT context, context of Apocrypha and NT, how the Bible relates to literature of the ancient Near East and the Greco-Roman era, Jewish interpretation, and introductions to sections of the Bible such as Psalms and Wisdom, with a bibliography at the end of each. The work leans toward the JEDP theory about some OT books, Canaanite religious ideas, the view that Genesis 1–2 has two creation accounts, and other liberal theories.

John Phillips. *Bible Explorer's Guide*. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1987. 274 pp.

This general introductory work, evangelical in nature, has two sections, Hermeneutics and Helps. Under the first are twenty-two divisions dealing with Words, Figures of Speech, Culture, Context, Types, Parables, Prophecy, Devotional Rule, Application, Christ the Ultimate Key, and others. The second has a quick survey of the Bible, summary of Bible history, symbols, helpful books, and the like. Phillips, a premillennialist, is well-known for his *Exploring the New Testament*, a series of clear practical expositions of key books like John and Romans.

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Lawrence O. Richards. *The Teacher's Commentary*. Wheaton: Victor, 1987. 1,110 pp.

This is an evangelical effort by a Dallas Seminary graduate to survey each book of the Bible and provide special material to help teachers of Sunday Schools, Bible study leaders, and pastors teach on different sections. The special features include illustrations and applications, definitions of biblical and doctrinal terms, background, maps and charts, and teaching suggestions.

Coverage of sections is of a very general nature that picks out some key points and skips many others. Richards devotes five and one-half pages to the treatment of Psalms 74–150. Proverbs 10–31 and Ecclesiastes receive about the same. The amount of material that is bypassed will perhaps agitate readers. The page format is in two-columns of very readable type.

### **Works That Analyze**

Frank E. Gaebelien, gen. ed. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. 12 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979–92.

This is the top general work of scholarly evangelicalism by seventy-two writers who are from several countries and hold to divine inspiration of Scripture and premillennialism (for the most part). The NIV is the basis for their comments. The Associate Editor is J. D. Douglas, and consulting editors are Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, James Boice, and Merrill C. Tenney. The work reflects a sensitivity to recent literature, issues, and views on exposition. Some very skilled and established scholars are among the contributors. Writing on introductory matters are Gleason Archer, Jr., G. W. Bromiley, Donald Guthrie, R. K. Harrison, Carl Henry, Harold Hoehner, Walter Kaiser, Bruce Metzger, Roger Nicole, Robert L. Saucy, Andrew Walls, Bruce Waltke, Donald Wiseman, and Edwin Yamauchi. Scholars that write on NT books include M. C. Tenney (John), R. N. Longenecker (Acts), James Boice (Galatians), Homer Kent, Jr. (Philippians), Robert L. Thomas (Thessalonians), D. E. Hiebert (Titus), Leon Morris (Hebrews), Edwin Blum (Peter and Jude), and Alan Johnson (Revelation).

David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker, gen. eds. *Word Biblical Commentary*. Waco, TX: Word, 1982-.

This recent series is sometimes liberal and sometimes evangelical. Many of the projected fifty-two volumes that will compose the set are already available. An imposing group of about fifty scholars, many of them internationally known, are contributing commentaries. John D. W. Watts is editing the OT, and Ralph P. Martin the NT. Each writer does

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his own translation of the biblical text and accommodates his exegesis to this. The technical scholarly matter is understandable and relevant to seminary students (in some cases, more advanced ones) and pastors as well as professional scholars and teachers. The introductions and commentaries on individual books incorporate a fair amount of detail as well as excurses on major problems and lengthy bibliographies of books and journal literature. In the verse-by-verse comments, Hebrew and Greek words appear and are followed by an explanation of their sense. Different views in a passage often receive detailed discussion, e.g., F. F. Bruce on 1 Thess 4:4 regarding whether σκεῦος (skeuos, “vessel”) refers to a man’s wife or his body. The following are among the other contributors: Gordon Wenham (Genesis, 2 vols.), Peter C. Craigie (Psalms 1–50), Marvin Tate (Psalms 51–100), Leslie Allen (Psalms 101–150), G. R. Beasley-Murray (John), James D. G. Dunn (Romans), Ralph Martin (2 Corinthians, James), Richard Longenecker (Galatians), Robert Mounce (Pastoral Epistles), and William Lane (Hebrews). This venture, like any other of its kind, varies widely in quality from volume to volume.

### **Commentaries on the Old Testament**

Some commentary sets deal only with the Old Testament.

#### **A Work That Synthesizes**

Paul N. Benware. *Survey of the Old Testament*. Everyman’s Bible Commentary; Chicago: Moody, 1988. 267 pp.

The author was a professor of Bible and Theology at Moody Bible Institute and now is on the faculty of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. The surveys are brief and sweeping and furnish a lay person with a quick glimpse that is helpful. Yet they do not deal with as much or provide nearly the help of other surveys such as that of Leon Wood.

#### **A Work That Analyzes**

*Old Testament Library*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985-

This is a scholarly series steeped in critical issues, views, and reasoning that because of their liberal bent are displeasing to staunch evangelicals. The works can provide help in some places, but too often they are of no help. Some volumes are better in explaining passages in ways that conservatives can appreciate. Frequent examples of this occur in Joseph Blenkinsopp’s treatment of Ezra-Nehemiah. On the other hand, many parts have their greatest usefulness among readers of a very liberal orientation. G. von Rad on Genesis and Deuteronomy and

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Robert P. Carroll on Jeremiah exemplify these.

### **Commentaries on the Pentateuch**

*JPS Torah Commentary*. New York: Jewish Publication Society, 1989–93.

Nahum Sarna's commentaries on Genesis and Exodus and Baruch Levine's on Leviticus are surveys, but Jacob Milgrom's treatment of Numbers is massive (520 pp.). Thorough study in a wide range of sources marks this series, especially the work of Milgrom. The commentary provides an explanation of passages that is typical of Jewish scholars. Jeffrey Tigay's volume on Deuteronomy is scheduled for release in 1993 and is not available for this review. The theological orientation of the commentaries is liberal, but the volumes contribute to the understanding of many points where liberal or conservative factors are not in question.

G. H. Livingston. *The Pentateuch in Its Cultural Environment*. 2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987. 322 pp.

A professor of OT at Asbury Theological Seminary since 1953 has produced this readable, comprehensive, well-respected, evangelical work. He discusses peoples of the ancient Near East (Sumerians, Assyrians, Amorites, Egyptians, Hyksos, Hittites, Philistines, Canaanites, and others). Among other things, he describes relevant ancient scripts, literature (compared with the Pentateuch), concepts, practices, schools of thought on Pentateuchal studies, Mosaic authorship, Dead Sea Scroll relevance, the JEDP theory, literary criticism, form criticism, and canonical criticism. The last chapter discusses the canonization of the Pentateuch and factors relevant to it. Subject and Scripture indexes help locate information on various topics and verses.

John H. Sailhamer. *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical Theological Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992. 522 pp.

An associate professor of OT, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, begins his volume with an introduction to the Pentateuch that covers background, authorship, sources, literary form, structure, purpose, theology, basic principles, and other matters (1–79). Then he gives a fairly detailed, well-outlined survey of each book, section by section—e.g. Genesis occupies 81–240 and Exodus 241–322). He concentrates on style and structure in relating details to their context. Besides providing surveys of and connecting thoughts in the text, he treats major problems

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such as Gen 1:1–2 and 6:2, 4 (the sons of God). He incorporates the Hebrew text skillfully and is usually lucid. He holds a high evangelical view of the integrity and unity of the biblical accounts. He is thoroughly aware of literature on relevant issues as reflected in his sometimes very substantial documentation. Even though one may not agree with all the conclusions, this is still, on the whole, one of the most competent, informative books on the Pentateuch. It will be very helpful for teachers, pastors, and students. In an appendix Sailhamer lists all the commands of the law in various categories and gives examples where Jesus and NT writers derive principles (482–516). Discussions of many verses are insightful, e.g., the validity of a Messianic reference in Deut 18:18 (456). The same author furnishes more detail on Genesis in his commentary on the book in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*.

Herbert Wolf. *An Introduction to the Old Testament Pentateuch*. Chicago: Moody, 1991. 276 pp.

Wolf is associate professor of OT, Wheaton Graduate School. He provides an evangelical discussion of introductory aspects such as the fivefold division of the Pentateuch, unity, impact on other OT and NT books, theology (i.e., God, man, salvation, the Messiah, faith, atonement, covenants), the Samaritan Pentateuch, literary characteristics, and Moses' significance. He argues for Moses as the main author and for the unity of the Pentateuch. Then he deals with each of the five books. In Genesis, he discusses key problems in 1:1–2:3, the sons of God in 6:2, 4, the extent of the flood, and other issues. Sometimes when discussing differing views, as on the

length of “day” in Genesis 1, it is difficult to discern the preferred view of the author (84–88). The same applies in his lengthy comments on the sons of God (97–100). A conclusion to all the interpretive problems would have improved helpfulness, as is illustrated in Wolf’s stated preference for an early date of the exodus (148). Some of the problem discussions are excellent, as in the case of the much-attacked numbers for Israel in Numbers 2 (148–52). Overall, the book is well worth reading, though surveys of Pentateuchal books are shorter than Sailhamer’s. It contains a good bibliography (223–61). Indices of subjects, authors, and Scriptures also add value.

### Commentaries on Genesis

The remainder of this commentary survey will focus on individual books or groups of books of the OT. As a general rule, this discussion will omit works already alluded to as parts of sets.

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Victor P. Hamilton. *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*. NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. 522 pp.

This first of two volumes on Genesis has a very informative introduction (about one hundred pages), surveying the history of critical theories but without reaching a firm conclusion on authorship. It has twenty-five pages of bibliography. The treatment of some problems is in detail, examining interpretive issues such as the length of the “days” in Genesis 1. It is thorough in giving the meaning of verses, taking into account biblical usage of words, context, and Near Eastern literature. It is a standout commentary along conservative lines, even covering many subjects relevant to Genesis. Only scholars will grasp some of what Hamilton writes. Others will have to keep rereading patiently to figure his meaning out. The author is indecisive in regard to the “sons of God” (6:2, 4) and in choosing between a local and universal flood. His explanations are at times very good, but at others fall short of adding much light as in the case of the ritual ceremony in Genesis 15. Yet he gives so much data that the reader is bound to benefit.

Allen P. Ross. *Creation and Blessing*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988. 744 pp.

This is a major contribution, stemming from an immense study in relevant literature written recently. Ross gives a broad exposition, section by section, not verse by verse, and handles major problems with expert awareness of views and discussion of arguments. It is a valuable scholarly work that surveys issues and the literature dealing with them.

Claus Westermann. *Genesis: A Commentary*. 3 vols.; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984–86.

The three volumes cover chaps. 1–22, 23–36, and 37–50. This form-critical scholar uses more than 1,500 pages to discuss critical matters, word meanings, history, and theology—all in immense detail. By careful study a reader can glean much that is profound and helpful from the three volumes, but some statements will still puzzle him. The commentary portion is often helpful to the scholar. The bibliography supplies considerable assistance, though most entries are German works and few are evangelical. Textual comments and summaries on the history of interpretation of portions like Genesis 14, 15, and 16 are informative. Westermann thinks Genesis 37–50 was a later writing, originating during the period of David and Solomon and added to the rest of Genesis to form a unit. The commentary’s low view of the authority of Scripture will disturb the conservative. It often argues

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against conservative views. It does not endorse the teaching of original sin in Genesis 3. The author devotes much space to theorizing how the text of Genesis arrived in its present form. Incidentally, a one-volume condensation of this large work is also available (*Genesis, A Practical Commentary* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987] 338 pp.). The briefer work concentrates on Westerman's personal convictions in a much simpler way, without the technical comments.

Ronald Youngblood. *The Book of Genesis. An Introductory Commentary*. 2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991.

This broad exposition is an extensive revision of the first edition of this work (chaps. 12–50 in 1976 and chaps 1–11 in 1980) by a professor of OT at Bethel Theological Seminary, West. A brief introduction (9–18) upholds Mosaic authorship and a date between 1445-1405 B.C. The author sees no gap in 1:2. He interprets the days of chap. 1 partly in literary order and partly in chronological order. He favors the claim of science that manlike creatures were on earth five million years ago (46), but that man in the Adamic race in a covenant relation with God has a more recent date. He chooses the human view of “sons of God” in Genesis 6 and opts for a local flood. This is a fairly good, very readable survey of Genesis, but does not have the overall value of those by Ross and Sailhamer.

### **Book Commentaries on the Rest of the Pentateuch**

Bernard L. Ramm. *God's Way Out. Finding the Road to Personal Freedom through Exodus*. Ventura, CA: Regal, 1984 and 1987. 166 pp.

This is a simple, clear, running commentary—not verse by verse—that centers on God's attributes and work, types of Christ and His church, NT truth related to Exodus, and application to life today. Ramm has intriguing chapter titles, sweeping surveys rich in connections to life now, notes on word meanings, and refreshment that warms the heart. Chapter 4 on Moses' excuses and God's answers is entitled, “God Can Use Even You.” This popular-level survey is effective in simplifying a long book into three very manageable points: Divine Redemption, Divine Morality (the Law), and Divine Worship. Its contribution is in the perspective of the synthesis that encompasses so much detail.

B. Maarsingh. *Numbers*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. 221 pp.

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This volume is lucid, brief, and vigorous in explaining words, phrases, and many issues with a learned grasp of text, exegesis, and ancient customs. Yet the author remains practical and has a freshness that encourages application and growth. Lay readers and even advanced students will profit from this survey.

James Philip. “Numbers,” in *The Communicator's Commentary*. Waco, TX: Word, 1987. 364 pp.

Philip has for a long time been a bright light for the evangelical faith in Scotland, pastoring the Holyrood Abbey Church, Edinburgh. Using good sources and explaining the text conservatively, he also shows practical applications for people today.

Patrick D. Miller. *Deuteronomy*. Interpretation Series; Louisville: John Knox, 1990. 253 pp.

This is a sweeping exposition—not a verse-by-verse discussion—with essays on structure, motifs, and sections in the book. This professor of OT Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary follows the line of many in thinking final redaction took place during Josiah's career.

He does not, however, devote much space here to this subject. He has many helpful thoughts on the meaning of the text. His well-organized work aims to help teachers, preachers, and students by commenting on the RSV text. Synopses begin each chapter and orientate readers to the setting, Miller's opinion about the unit of structure under consideration, and how the section of Deuteronomy fits the larger structure of the book. Occasionally his ideas are arbitrary: e.g., "It is highly unlikely that we have here an accurate historical report of words and actions by Moses on the plains of Moab" (25). Yet the volume draws spiritual-life lessons that are quite worthwhile (e.g., chaps. 38–40). The problem for conservatives will be the position that the concern for possession of the land in Deuteronomy is expressed because the book was done centuries later than the wilderness era when Israel was in danger of being uprooted from the land (44). Even in the face of this extreme position, Miller summarizes many helpful things regarding the land (44–52).

### **Joshua, Judges, Ruth**

Dale R. Davis. *No Falling Words. Expositions of the Book of Joshua*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988. 204 pp.

These twenty-one expositions by a former professor of OT at Reformed Theological Seminary furnish evangelical material to help

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preachers blend sound exegesis, theological substance, interesting exposition, and practical application. Davis groups his chapters under "Entering the Land" (Joshua 1–4), "Taking It" (chaps. 5–12), "Possessing It" (chaps. 13–21), and "Refining It" (chaps. 22–24). The book title comes from 21:45 (cf. 21:14), and the chapter titles are quite creative. These very readable studies do not deal with every verse, but with key portions from each chapter. At times footnotes cite good sources and add important help. All told, the book is a good survey of Joshua that preachers or lay people can enjoy. It has many ideas to provoke sermons and point to application.

R. Kent Hughes. *Living on the Cutting Edge: Joshua and the Challenge of Spiritual Leadership*. Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1987. 172 pp.

This broad exposition is warm and popular in treating selected chapters from Joshua. Hughes often has good insights on analogies from Israel's victories for growth and victory today, through God's strength. He shows traits for effective leadership. Most lessons are good, but one that disappoints is, "Rahab's lie was a stupendous act of true faith" (37). Well, yes, she lied, and yes, she did have faith. But who says it is necessary to make the lie a part of the faith or faith a part of the lie? Also, on p. 36, Hughes advances the idea that a Christian musters faith out of a glass. In actuality, when a Christian wrongly persuades himself that he has to clutch at certain means to achieve faith, true faith is not generated by human fallacy, but by the Lord using means He can endorse: His Word. He can use us even though a Christian may fail Him by leaning on false means or tracing his effectiveness to the means the Lord may use rather than to the Lord Himself. On the whole, however, the book is usually quite helpful for preaching or just for devotional aims.

Dale R. Davis. *Such a Great Salvation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990. 227 pp.

This is a flowing and popular conservative exposition that is suggestive for pastors who preach individual messages or a series on Judges. Davis deals with problems in footnotes, so he



can keep the vital message foremost and point out relevance for today. The book is frequently refreshing in helping a reader to grow in grace. The author keeps spotlighting the beauty of God.  
Cyril J. Barber. *Judges, A Narrative of God's Power*. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1990. 293 pp.

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This is a well-organized and conservative exposition based on much study and skill in showing present relevance of the text. The Dale Davis book is fairly good, but this one is even better as a whole, though Barber does not see impropriety in some of Samson's episodes with women as he interprets the texts. He uses captivating headlines for sections, a vivid flow, arousing descriptions, analogies, illustrations, and applications. He capably handles many problems through notes that sometimes are rather lengthy and meaty. Like Davis, he is competent, thought-provoking, and often sharp in exposing the contemporary timeliness of the book.

Cyril J. Barber. *Ruth, A Story of God's Grace*. Revision of a 1983 ed.; Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1989. 198 pp.

As with Judges, this conservative exposition is creatively lucid in a way many pastors, students, and lay people will value. It has nine chapters, including footnotes at the end of the work, some with substantial help drawn from wide reading. A section on critical studies (131–47) discusses authorship, date, unity of the genealogy in chap. 4 with the rest of the book, and themes. Using good illustrations occasionally, Barber usually touches on problems briefly, e.g., defending the chastity of Boaz and Ruth in lying near each other and explaining customs.

Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. *The Book of Ruth*. NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. 317 pp.

This professor of Hebrew at Denver Theological Seminary believes that the book dates from Solomon's era—the point to which the genealogy of Ruth 4 reaches—and is a unity including 4:18–22. Using a detailed verse-by-verse approach, Hubbard is thorough and knowledgeable and documents well. He analyzes issues from several perspectives and is very familiar with customs and literature relevant to Ruth. He writes primarily for pastors and lay people.

### **Samuel, Kings, Chronicles**

John H. Hayes and Paul K. Hooker. *A New Chronology for the Kings of Israel and Judah and Its Implications for Biblical History and Literature*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1988. 112 pp.

These writers from Emory University reject co-regencies, antedating, and emendations. They say that the regnal years for Israel and Judah were dated from the first fall New Year festival when a king

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was on the throne—this New Year switched from Tishri to Nisan during Josiah's reign. They use only Massoretic text numbers and have their own explanations for numbers being inconsistent. They encounter big chronological problems in dealing with several reigns (e.g., 23, 28, 33, 74).

Russell H. Dilday. "1, 2 Kings," in *The Communicator's Commentary*. Waco, TX: Word, 1987. 512 pp.

This president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary has given a thoroughly studied, clear, well-illustrated, and well-applied work. It will be of rich assistance to the expositor in furnishing different views on issues. He includes many footnotes referring the reader to additional helpful sources.

Simon J. DeVries. *1 and 2 Chronicles*. Forms of the Old Testament Literature Series; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989. 439 pp.

This work will illustrate for serious readers advanced in their theological training how a scholar does a form-critical analysis. It also contains discussion of the history of this kind of study. It probes the structure, genre, setting, and aim of each section according to the opinion of DeVries, which a conservative student may choose to profit from or pass by in favor of what he regards as a more defensible view. This type of study can sometimes provide good insights, but it can also be very arbitrary and subjective.

Michael Wilcock. *The Message of Chronicles*. The Bible Speaks Today; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1987. 288 pp.

This evangelical approach defends conservative views on a number of problems by viewing the books of Chronicles as error-free. Wilcock sometimes displays clarity, making delightful applications to present-day life. He shows readers why material occurs where it does and how it fits a need there. He is vicar of St. Nicholas Church, Durham, England. His book is worthwhile in developing the principles and movements within the books.

### **Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther**

Joseph Blenkinsopp. *Ezra-Nehemiah. A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988. 366 pp.

The author supports the view that Ezra-Nehemiah gives a continuation of 1 and 2 Chronicles, being authored by the chronicler, an

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individual or a school. He also holds traditional views regarding the dating of Ezra in 458 B.C. and Nehemiah in 445 B.C. Often his treatment is in a good verse-by-verse style. He has a bibliography for each section, his own translation, textual notes, and a reasonably thorough commentary. He takes “the chronicles of Nehemiah” (1:1) to refer to Nehemiah as the subject, not the author. The author displays an immense awareness of the literature dealing with this period.

James M. Boice. *Nehemiah: Learning to Lead*. New York: Revell, 1988. 219 pp.

One of America’s foremost expository pastors, who serves the Tenth Street Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, issues a call to pattern life after Nehemiah’s style of leadership. He focuses on traits and shows how they can relate to today. He writes lucidly and uses illustrations occasionally. His work is suggestive for expositors and provokes spiritual growth in usefulness to God.

Howard F. Vos. *Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther*. Bible Study Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987. 191 pp.

This is a brief exposition from a conservative who is professor of history and archaeology at King’s College. Vos surveys reasonably well and provides help for lay readers especially, those who want a simple, quick study, and for pastors or Bible teachers who need a panoramic look as well as some concise help with problems.

### **Job**

John E. Hartley. *Job*. NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. 591 pp.

It is good to see this firmly evangelical work, a feature that shows itself in many places. Yet Hartley is sometimes subjective and without necessity does such things as transferring Job 27:13–23 to chap. 25. Generally, his careful handling of the text, syntax, views, and reasoning constitute this as one of the best conservative works on Job.

Roy B. Zuck, ed. *Sitting with Job: Selected Studies on the Book of Job*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992.

Scholars such as R. Laird Harris, Francis Andersen, Norman Habel, and Don Carson contribute thirty-four chapters (or sketches) on key sections or topics. Zuck himself writes on 19:23–29 and on chap 28. The book's comments represent high expertise on subjects that an

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expositor will find very instructive while preparing for an individual message or a series on the book.

## **Psalms**

Tremper Longman, III. *How to Read the Psalms*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988. 166 pp.

The features of this evangelical work include discussions of such things as the main types of psalms, the aim of the psalm titles, Davidic authorship, lines of covenant thought, Messianic themes, relevance of psalms in the ministry of Jesus, charm of the psalms for readers today, and parallelism. As examples, Longman examines in detail Psalms 30, 69, and 93. This is a good and smooth-reading recent general introduction on some of the main issues connected with the psalms.

John Phillips. *Exploring the Psalms*. 5 vols.; Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1985–88.

One of America's fine Bible expositors from Moody Bible Institute's extension department supplies another of his lucid works. He has volumes on other books of the Bible. His outline for each psalm is intently alliterated with many of the points appearing to be quite appropriate. The exposition is broad and sweeping, with many statements that seize the reader's mind and heart. Using this along with their Bible text, preachers will find it suggestive and Christians in general will receive refreshment during their daily worship times because of its clarity and flow.

## **Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon**

Eldon Woodcock. *Proverbs*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988. 237 pp.

A Dallas Theological Seminary graduate and professor of Bible at Nyack College deals with key topics such as wisdom, fear, human relationships (i.e., adulterous woman, wife, family circle, speech), and counsel for a work ethic. Rightly heeded, the principles Woodcock sets forth in this clear presentation can lead to true success. The book is of special benefit to lay people in their devotional times, but it can prime the pump for preachers too.

James L. Crenshaw. *Ecclesiastes*. Old Testament Library; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987. 192 pp.

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Crenshaw writes this volume from a liberal perspective, furnishing an example of human rationalism at work on Scripture. In many cases the Duke University scholar in OT wisdom material makes a positive contribution in giving views and reasons by other writers on particular issues, but in many other ways he is disappointing. To him, Ecclesiastes has no reasoned structure, but is randomly arranged (cf. 47). Theologically the work is of little help. He understands the book to have a pessimistic outlook according to which life has no meaning (e.g.,

25, 34, 53), causing him to downplay the positive side (20). His own merely human rationalism leads to an explaining away of verses about fearing God (102, 184, 190). He rejects the words, “remember your creator” (12:1), because he takes the statement to read correctly “your wife” in order to fit the context (184–85).

R. N. Whybray. *Ecclesiastes*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989. 179 pp.

Adept in wisdom literature, the writer finds a positive outlook in the book. God bestows meaning to life, and a person’s pursuits have a fulfilling quality only from Him (cf. 27). Whybray furnishes illumination at many points exegetically, but conservative readers will not always think he does this because he holds a third century B.C. date for writing. He also sees no unified flow through the book, but rather thirty-four unconnected subjects. At times his explanations leave matters insufficiently clear (cf. 127 regarding women in 7:28).

Raymond J. Tournay. *Word of God, Song of Love*. New York: Paulist, 1988. 194 pp.

Tournay has the Song written during the Persian era, but his evidence for this dating is not convincing. He combines two themes or levels of meaning, one about Solomon and his Egyptian wife in lovers’ intimacy and the other an allegorical idea—Messiah and the daughter of Zion with her city where she dwells. The second is a Messianic yearning to encourage Jews of the Persian era to believe in the Messianic kingdom to come. It is as if the Messiah is asleep, delaying that new era. Here, Tournay labors the notion that the person sleeping in the Song is the man, not the woman. He has steeped himself in rabbinics and the Hebrew language as well as in scholarly literature on the Song.

### **Jeremiah, Lamentations**

Walter Brueggemann. *To Pluck Up, to Tear Down: A Commentary on the Book of Jeremiah 1–25*. Revised ICC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988. 222 pp.

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Much good detail in this work will help students with the text and with principles for today. Yet the commentary is not especially good in comparison with others. Recurring redactional ideas are a further drawback. Often the author takes passages as having been written and redacted at a later date (e.g., 3:14–18; 24:1–10). The bibliography will provide some help for those who wish to do research on Jeremiah, but these sources are mostly liberal.

W. L. Holladay. *Jeremiah I: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 1–25*. Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986. 682 pp, & *Jeremiah II: Chapters 26–52*. 1989. 543 pp.

Like the works by Carroll and McKane, this is highly respected by the scholarly community as a technical and critical commentary. It is quite beneficial on the text, grammar, structure, synthesis of sections, and literature dealing with relevant issues. A 95-page introduction begins Volume II, along with a bibliography that updates the one in Volume I. This is the most massive of the recent detailed works, totaling over 1,200 pages at more than 800 words per page. Holladay theorizes that 1:1 refers not to the year of Jeremiah’s call, but to his birth, 627 B.C., and uses this as a chronological starting point for the rest of the book. He often connects the themes of passages in Jeremiah with NT verses, and is skeptical about redaction that remodels the book in a Deuteronomistic pattern. Some criticize him for a highly individualistic translation in many passages and his pleading that the original text was the way his emendations propose. In a verse-by-verse commentary he explains more than Carroll or McKane, is masterful in grammar

and syntax, and skillful in insights drawn from much study. Yet he retains an intelligible flowing style. Many herald this as the definitive work on Jeremiah to date.

Derek Kidner. *The Message of Jeremiah*. The Bible Speaks Today; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1987. 176 pp.

This is a broad exposition of the book that is quite refreshing. Kidner displays his usual high standard of readability, conservatism, conciseness, and directness regarding many issues. Yet he is amillennial on the main prophetic section (chaps 30–33), expecting a spiritual rather than a literal realization.

Iain Provan. *Lamentations*. New Century Bible; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991. 142 pp.

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Provan is lecturer in Hebrew and OT studies at the university of Edinburgh. His introduction is informative and up-to-date on views of authorship, date and place, but because he is liberal, he is unable to arrive at a view except that the book was written between the sixth and second centuries B.C. (19). His information is valuable in spite of the fact that he does not believe that a commentary should give the text's meaning. Rather it should be "a catalyst for the reader's own imaginative interaction with it" (29). So usually he does not state his own view and seems unsure the book refers to the fall of Jerusalem or what its setting is (11, 29). Still, one can find much information on verses as to the text and meaning of words. He is of the opinion that Lam 3:21–27 focuses on humble repentance and trust in God's love, yet that chap 5 swings to an attitude opposed to this, reproaching God for unfairness (23). So he feels that the theology of the book is left "ending in a question mark" (24). Many will disagree with him here.

## **Ezekiel**

W. A. Criswell. *Expository Sermons on the Book of Ezekiel*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987. 269 pp.

This author is a great man and preacher, but this work on Ezekiel is not good in too many places. It is warm and compassionate, and has much practical comment by way of applications for lay people and pastors. This worthwhile part is helpful, for example, on "Why Study Prophecy?" and "The Preaching of Ezekiel." Another good feature is his appeal-based on 18:31—to readers to lay hold of hope in God, casting away transgressions, "for why will ye die?" (22). He embraces premillennialism, but does not defend it well here. He lightly asserts the origin of Satan in chap. 28 and Isaiah 14, but without basing it on evidence. He assumes that chap. 37 teaches bodily resurrection as well as restoration to Palestine and that the northern invader of chap 38 is Russia (215). His strange mixture of views regarding the temple in chaps. 40ff is disturbing. It is a literal one with a literal river in Palestine, yet blessings flow from the church, and the river somehow flows throughout the world today, "blessing the deserts of the nations of the world" (227–58). The book is a disappointment.

## **Daniel**

John F. MacArthur, Jr. *The Future of Israel (Daniel 9:20–12:13)*. Chicago: Moody, 1991.

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This is a brief premillennial dispensational series on the verses indicated by one of America's most able expository pastors.

John Phillips and Jerry Vines. *Exploring the Book of Daniel*. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1990. 279 pp.

This work is a dispensational exposition with clarity of interpretation and practical application to stimulate thought about relevance for today. It does not wrestle deeply with interpretive issues.

## Minor Prophets

James M. Boice. *The Minor Prophets. An Expository Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983–86. 542 pp.

Boice assigns a catchy title to each chapter or section of the prophets. The large, two-column pages contain much good material on the relevance of the words for then and for now, dealing with such topics as love, repentance, and sincerity (Hosea 6). A prolonged contemplation of these pages and an application of their principles will produce substantial Christian growth. The author could improve the work by being more definite sometimes in specifying in what framework God will bless Israel in the future (e.g., Hosea 14). Vagueness such as in Joel 2:1–11, where he says the invader is neither locusts nor a human army, is a drawback. Wordiness and wandering in his discussions is another shortcoming, as in using Joel 2:28 to take off into a long discussion of clericalism. He finds fulfillment of Joel 2:28 at Pentecost, yet it would help to point out some aspects that were not fulfilled on that occasion. He is more to the point on Zechariah 14.

Robert B. Chisholm, Jr. *Interpreting the Minor Prophets*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990. 317 pp.

This well-informed survey by an associate professor of OT studies, Dallas Theological Seminary, looks broadly at each prophet's structure, message, doctrinal themes, and literary and rhetorical features. After a brief survey of overall themes—i.e., sin, judgment, salvation—the work examines each prophet in succession from Hosea to Malachi. Regarding long-range prophecy, Chisholm is presumably premillennial, but in several instances where he would expectedly commit himself, he maintains such a vagueness that no distinct word as to when fulfillment will come is discoverable (e.g., Hosea 3, 14; Joel 3:9ff; Zechariah 14). He surveys each book, section by section, with helpful comments and

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brief treatments of the main problems. At the end of each book survey, he sums up points of theology. He views Joel 2:1–11 as meaning a human army, but is not explicit in naming which army and what the time is. This volume is good, but general. The reader who consults the *Bible Knowledge Commentary* in this area will find more premillennial specificity in many cases.

H. D. Beeby. *Hosea: Grace Abounding*. International Theological Commentary, F. C. Holgren and G. A. F. Knight, eds. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989. 189 pp.

Beeby's work is rich in helpful analysis of the text and has much to offer on word studies, exegesis, historical background, theological comment, and devotional principles. Beeby's assumptions on critical theories must temper its reading, however, because the assumptions at times lead to excising verses as redactional additions. These excisions derive from subjective opinion, not convincing evidence. In many respects, the work is not bad, neither is it truly great.

David A. Hubbard. *Hosea: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentary; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1989. 245 pp.

This is a highly readable conservative effort that is often refreshing in its discussion of passages. It has sections treating the broad perspective and some good verse-by-verse comment. The introduction, among other things, is an orientation regarding the message of Hosea. In

predictive prophecies where many premillennialists would feel he could be definite, however, Hubbard is not clear-cut as to a longreaching millennial fulfillment.

Thomas McComiskey, Raymond Dillard, and Jeffrey Niehaus. *Hosea, Joel, Amos*. An Exegetical and Expository Commentary; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992. 509 pp.

This volume is part of a new series on the Minor Prophets with McComiskey as its editor. It is evangelical and shows expertise in exegesis, background, and sensitivity to hermeneutics, plus evidencing a good grasp of recent scholarship. Its bibliography is splendid. The format of the work puts a textual section first, followed by an expository part.

Ronald B. Allen. *Joel*. Bible Study Commentary; Zondervan, 1988. 120 pp.

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Allen is skilled in Hebrew and interpretation, and writes in an appealing manner. He is conservative and premillennial. In his view the locusts are literal in chaps 1 and 2, yet supernatural in the latter case. He never seems to clear up what the supernatural locusts are in the future time of Armageddon, but stays general and vague. They sound like angelic hosts when Allen links them with Rev 9:11–16. The volume has good emphases on God's grace, compassion, anger, and love in 2:12–17. Apparently the author sees the "northern army" of 2:20 as a human one, not identified with the locusts of 2:1–11. He has a long and helpful discussion of whether Acts 2 fulfills the outpouring of the Spirit, and concludes it is a partial fulfillment (95). In 3:9ff, he believes the blessing is in the millennium after the second advent, yet he identifies the fountain of v. 18 as the river in the ultimate state, the New Jerusalem (116), and is not clear on why or how he leaps from the millennium to the ultimate bliss.

Thomas J. Finley. *Joel, Amos, Obadiah*. Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary; Chicago: Moody, 1990. 417 pp.

This conservative and premillennial work by a professor of OT at Talbot School of Theology has a good bibliography of five pages and a very full discussion of many issues, a rich use of other studies, help in Hebrew exegesis, and a good effort on word meanings. Hebrew words are transliterated into English. Finley sees literal locusts in chaps. 1 and 2 of Joel. One wishes that he had listed and given arguments, yet he does give some when he arrives at individual verses. It sounds as though he believes rich blessing will come to Israel (not the church in this case) in 2:18–27, but it also sounds like he sees it realized in past history. He is not wholly clear. He sees a partial fulfillment of Joel 2:28–32 in Acts 2 and the fulfillment of details of 3:9ff in the future tribulation period and Messianic Kingdom after the second advent, not in the church or the ultimate state. The treatment of Amos 9:11–15 could be stronger in support for a premillennial view. The discussion about when the fulfillment will come to Israel is seemingly vague.

Gerhard F. Hasel. *Understanding the Book of Amos*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991. 171 pp.

This is not a commentary per se but a lucid and excellent survey that combines into a rich tapestry some of the helpful lines of thought in research on the book. Hasel sees Amos as the first of the writing prophets, ca. 780-760 B.C., and as a "microcosm for the study of all prophetic writings on the Old Testament" (11). He articulates issues

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in such a way as to point to the unity of the book.

Shalom M. Paul. *Amos*. Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1991. 409 pp.

Paul has produced a magisterial work that ranks above everything else. It is impressively thorough, well-written, and shows an awareness of many issues, possible interpretations, and much relevant literature—cf. nearly eighty pages of lists of sources (xix-xxvi, 299–367). Included is a very full discussion on the situation in which Amos ministered, his kind of ministry, features of it, views about when oracles occur, and literary traits of oracles. The author defends the authenticity of the oracles against arguments of interpolation. The verse-by-verse commentary is on large double-column pages and quite full of details about the text, word meanings, geography, customs, relation to other Scriptures, and views on problems. Footnotes crammed with further help are abundant and are often long. Summary remarks at the outset of sections help readers see connections, overall ideas, and movements of the book. Paul defends 9:11–15 against arguments from the majority who take it as unauthentic, i.e., from an exilic or post-exilic theological-redactor. He shows how well it fits with the book. He also does much to recognize the prophecy of a future glorious state for Israel and ties it with other passages. But he does not relate 9:11–15 to James' use of it in Acts 15:13–15. His bibliography lists two works under “Early Christian Interpretation” (316–17). In his section on Indices (354–406) where he lists literature consulted, the “New Testament” entry includes only seven passages and 7:43 is the only Acts reference.

Gary V. Smith. *Amos, A Commentary*. Library of Biblical Interpretation; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989. 307 pp.

This is a thorough conservative commentary that leaves few key stones unturned in an exposition based on Hebrew exegesis. Smith is helpful on the book's unity, verse-by-verse interpretation, and theological relevance then and now. Expositors and lay readers will find substantial help.

D. W. Baker, Desmond Alexander, and Bruce K. Waltke. *Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentary; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988. 207 pp.

Baker on Obadiah, Alexander on Jonah, and Waltke on Micah combine to write a good, concise conservative commentary. It is quite competent and carefully thought through. Baker sees Obadiah 21

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fulfilled in a king on earth after the second advent (43) and defends the unity of vv. 17–21 with the earlier part of the book. Alexander defends an early date of Jonah (8th century) against several arguments (51–63). He also argues for authorship by one writer (63–69), apparently the Jonah of 2 Kgs 14:25. He favors actual, historical events, not a parable or a form of fiction, and capably sums up answers to problems, but appears thin in regard to how to explain a great fish swallowing Jonah, though he believes it was a miracle (110–11). Waltke provides a good verse-by-verse study, enriched by expertise in exegesis, history, and customs.

Bryan Beyer and John H. Walton. *Obadiah/Jonah*. Bible Study Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988. 122 pp.

Bryan teaches at Columbia Bible College and Walton at Moody Bible Institute. Bryan dates Obadiah after the 586 B.C. fall of Jerusalem, because vv. 10–14 describe Edom's gloating at that fall. He understands vv. 17–21 to teach a premillennial view with a future millennial kingdom after the second advent. Yet he never says it is millennial, only that it is God's kingdom. He finds a future resettling of Israel in its land. Walton supplies much good information (e.g., the lots of Jonah 1). But since God's preparation of the great sea creature was a miracle, he sees no



need to cite accounts of marine creatures swallowing men (29). He apparently does not view Nineveh's repentance as being a conversion to the Lord, to Judaism, or even to monotheism (51). It was not to spiritual salvation (53). Some will not find persuasive his explanation for why Jonah was angry (chap. 4).

Jack R. Riggs. *Micah*. Bible Study Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987. 92 pp.

A Dallas Theological Seminary graduate and professor at Cedarville College follows a clear, simple, overall outline for the book—judgment (1:2–2:13), Messiah (chaps 3–5), and pardon (chaps 6–7). He fills in subpoints helpfully, commenting competently on the main details. His view of the kingdom is premillennial (49). His work is helpful for pastors, Sunday School or Bible class teachers, and lay people in general.

Hans W. Wolff. *Micah, A Commentary*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1990. 258 pp.

This volume, highly regarded in critical circles, embraces the idea that Micah was written in post-exilic times and was the product of

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centuries of composition, with only some passages coming originally from Micah (cf. list on 8–9). His redaction segments are subjective and lack hard evidence that they are necessary. One can glean much that helps on Micah, but will often meet Wolff's theories about composition, which are obtrusive and interruptive for the person viewing the text as a unit by one writer.

D. W. Baker. *Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentary; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1988. 121 pp.

Baker presents a brief introduction and a well-studied survey of each book, providing a good outline, handling most things rather carefully and from a conservative stance. He sees "Day" of Zephaniah 3 as one of wrath and also one of hope and help (116), but is very general and vague about when, where, and in what form the blessed state will be realized. He is typical of many who do not nail things down in any framework so as to clarify just where he stands.

Richard Patterson. *Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah*. Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary; Chicago: Moody, 1991, 416 pp.

This is an outstanding conservative, detailed work backed by scholarly awareness and expertise. Comments reflect fine-tuned ability in the Hebrew text, philology, exegesis, history, and literature. Patterson has premillennial convictions in the final verses of Zephaniah. He shows the shaky reasoning of critical arguments against the unity of Nahum, and defends the unity of Nahum and Habakkuk. In a long excursus he defends NT uses of Hab 2:4 (21–23). But some will doubt that he captures the significance of the picture of a hind in Hab 3:19 when he sees only swiftness ascending and gracefully gliding (262–63). Yet in most details he is excellent. The work is well worth the cost and time spent on it.

O. Palmer Robertson. *The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah*. NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. 357 pp.

This is a very good conservative work, both perceptive on issues and lucid in style. The writer provides a good translation and commentary that is often graphic. He looks at Hab 2:4 from many angles (173–83) and clearly catches the picture of living by faith in 3:19 that ties in with 2:4b. To a great extent the explanations of verses are full enough and satisfying, but at times questions occurring to serious minds do not find treatment. For example, why make a sweeping

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statement about no deceit in a future remnant if this is in a state of imperfection and believers still have some deceit when less than absolutely perfect?

Maria Eszenyei Szeles. *Wrath and Mercy: A Commentary on the Books of Habakkuk and Zephaniah*. International Theological Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. 118 pp.

This work by a professor of OT, United Protestant Theological Seminary, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, has many thorough and good exegetical comments on the Hebrew text drawn from much study, but is mixed with some thin and cursory statements. Often the book helps with theological meaning, but the authoress at times reflects higher critical loyalties as when she claims arbitrarily that certain difficult statements must be a redactor's later insertion. She is flimsy or non-existent in convincing proof on Hab 2:6–20 (36; cf. also 41). A pastor or student using the work with good discernment can profit from it by exercising his own judgment.

Richard L. Coggins. *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*. Old Testament Guides; Sheffield, England: JSOT, 1987. 90 pp.

This work, available through Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake, Indiana, offers brief assistance on critical issues, historical matters, and exegesis. Coggins is not a particularly interesting writer, but he offers quite a bit of expertise that can be helpful as one reads and discerns carefully in choosing what is usable and bypassing the rest.

Pieter A. Verhoef. *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*. NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. 364 pp.

This volume by a professor of OT, Emeritus, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa, is conservative in its coverage of much current literature, introductory matters, and verse-by-verse content. Explanations of the text and the tracing of the flow of thought are competent. Verhoef takes issue with W. Rudolph who says that Haggai has no relevance for those of the Christian faith (vii), and strives to show the significance of both Haggai and Malachi for today. He has interacted with much scholarship within the text and in his footnotes. He believes that someone close to Haggai wrote the book with authentic material from Haggai. He upholds the unity of the book and traces the movement through the verses carefully in relation to its background. He seems to be premillennial in understanding the fulfillment of prophetic aspects about the temple beyond the second advent. He deals at length

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with many of the problems by giving different views and factors to weigh—e.g., on God's love and hate (Mal 1:2–3), "one" (2:15), and "Elijah" (4:4–6).

Hans W. Wolff. *Haggai, A Commentary*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988. 128 pp.

This work by an expert in exegesis, history, and critical study is a translation from the German *Biblischer Kommentar* series. Wolff sees three layers of composition from Haggai to the final writer. The chronicler, he feels, added interpolations at 2:5, 9, 14, 17–19, 21–22. The helpfulness of the large amount of information and expertise on exegesis is reduced by what some will consider arbitrary opinions about composition and rearrangement.

Homer J. Heater, Jr. *Zechariah*. Bible Study Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987. 122 pp.

Here is a good survey by a premillennialist that is well-organized and aware of the main issues, with contributions to make on most of them. Heater understands the four horns of 1:18–19 not to be the four empires of Daniel 2 and 7 or any other specific four, but a coming from the four quarters of the earth, a worldwide context (21). The four craftsmen are likewise. He sees the

future for Jerusalem in chap. 2 as millennial, after the second advent. He is vague on the circumstances of God’s taking evil from Israel and “setting it up among those who reject Him” in Shinar in Zechariah 5 (43). The explanations of details in chap. 14 as fitting into a premillennial view are helpful, but brief.

Beth Glazier-McDonald. *Malachi, The Divine Messenger*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars, 1987. 288 pp.

This 1983 dissertation at the University of Chicago does several things. It stands against the tide that holds the book to be prose and contends for the poetic character of the larger part. It explains the text, often in as much detail as many verse-by-verse commentaries. It is against emendations and argues for every verse fitting the flow of the context and being cogent to the situation of Malachi’s day (ca. 450 B.C.). The writer shows a wide knowledge of scholarly literature, but often reasons against commonly accepted critical theory. For example, the “messenger of the covenant” in 3:1 is to her the Lord, not an addition to the text. Conservatives will appreciate much of the work, but textual and redaction-critical scholars frown on her upholding the text as it is, though she has done her homework.

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### **Classification and Rating of Commentaries**

Space does not permit a thoroughgoing classification and rating of commentaries on individual books of the OT, but an appraisal of the works on Genesis provides an example of how commentaries may divide themselves into categories and how they compare with one another.<sup>2</sup>

Three distinctive categories of commentaries are (1) detailed exegetical works that may include more technical material, (2) competent expositional surveys, and (3) more predominantly devotional efforts that may include exposition and, at times, a handling of interpretive problems. A careful observation of the descriptions of commentaries earlier in this article will usually reveal in which category each book belongs.

This reviewer has also attempted to rank the commentaries in each category in accordance with his estimate of how well the writers explain the text. In this ranking, works that delve into speculative theories to the extent that they furnish no real explanation of the text may be omitted, no matter how painstaking their scholarship is.

In the sample charting of Genesis below, some of the ranked books do not appear in the annotations earlier in this article. The reason for this is that they were written prior to 1987. In cases where the books do appear in the above discussion, an asterisk (\*) follows the author’s name.

Table 1 showing the rating of commentaries on Genesis appears on the next page.

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#### Rating of Commentaries on Genesis

Table 1

<i>Detailed Exegetical</i>	<i>Expositional Survey</i>	<i>Devotional Flavor</i>
1. H. C. Leupold	1. J. J. Davis	1. W. H. Griffith-Thomas

<sup>2</sup> 2. A comprehensive categorization and rating of commentaries on all sixty-six books is available in the unabridged annotated bibliography referred to in note 1 above.

2. V.  
Hamilton\*(only  
chaps. 1–17, so far)

3. G. Wenham\*

4. J. Sailhamer\*

5. H. Stigers

<sup>2</sup>

2. A. P. Ross (*CAB*)\*

3. R. Youngblood\*

4. D. Kidner

2. J. Phillips\*

3. D. Barnhouse

4. A. W. Pink

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<sup>2</sup>The Master's Seminary. (1993; 2002). *Master's Seminary Journal Volume 4* (4:67-94). Master's Seminary.