

10)?" He answers this question in the second part of the title of the chapter by indicating that they "Provide Pointers to the Danielic Vision of Earth and Heaven." Again, linguistic analysis leads to his conclusion, which once more highlights that in Daniel there is a forerunner to the New Testament's Kingdom of God.

Chapter 8, "History and Eschatology in Tension: A Literary Response to Daniel 11:40–45 as a Test Case," addresses the difficulty presented by that passage, which appears to be factual but is more likely to be prophecy/failed prophecy, as Meadowcroft shows through calling attention to literary aspects redolent of eschatological language.

In Meadowcroft's Chapter 7, "Daniel's Visionary Participation in the Divine Life: Dynamics of Participation in Daniel 8–12," he demonstrates the continuation of the theme of the wise man. The inner dynamics of Daniel's relationship with God are displayed through his visions and his responses. The shift in Daniel 11–12 is to the need for fidelity in difficult times. Again, the views of some theologians are presented.

Overall, the collection is worth publishing. This reviewer senses that the true interest of the author is in the message of Daniel for the Christian believer, a matter he brings very ably to the fore as the result of impressive literary, linguistic and theological abilities. It is to be hoped that the future readers of the work extend beyond Old Testament scholars to New Testament ones and Systematic Theologians.

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JOHN M. G. BARCLAY, *Paul and the Power of Grace* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020). Pp. xviii + 190. Paperback. US\$22.99.

At 159 pages plus bibliography and indexes, John Barclay's *Paul and the Power of Grace* offers a shorter yet just as compelling companion to his *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015). Barclay identifies it as an extension of this previous work, but with less of the academic technicalities, expanding on his previous focus on Galatians and Romans to include other letters in Paul's corpus and an application to contemporary situations (xi).

In the prologue, Barclay considers definitions of grace, including what is often spoken of as "'pure grace,' 'sheer grace,' or 'free grace'" (xiv). Pure grace can represent "God's relation to the world" as consisting "only of love, benevolence, and kindness" and without "any notions of wrath or judgement." As such pure grace "signifies unmixed, unqualified love, on the understanding that God has adopted the singular stance towards the world in Christ, without reservation and without limit" (xiv). Sheer grace and free grace have other connotations,

such as having no notion of reward—no *quid pro quo*—where gift requires no reciprocity. “Free grace” is thus noncircular, lacking “any hint of return or exchange” (xv). Grace may be free in two ways. Firstly, free “of prior conditions, without regard to worth or desert . . . undeserved.” Secondly, free “of subsequent obligation, debt, or demand,” with no strings attached (xv). Barclay then considers how each of these ideas interact with each other and with other interpretations of grace. For Barclay, of most importance is the idea that any aspect of *God’s* grace (*charis*), arises from THE gift—Jesus Christ.

The next thirteen chapters unpack Barclay’s thesis. Chapter 1 explores grace as gift. Barclay explores both ancient views of gift, including Greco-Roman ideas and the Western theological idea of “pure” gift, concluding that most of the ideas of gift and gift giving in the ancient world were *never* free of obligation. Chapter 2 explores six “perfections” of gift and grace: 1) superabundance; 2) singularity; 3) priority; 4) incongruity; 5) efficacy; 6) non-circularity. Even though these perfections are indicative of later early church, medieval, and Reformation ideas, and help us understand what some of these *early* discussions on grace were about, they continue to influence current interpretations of Paul’s idea of grace and church praxis.

Chapter 3 explores grace in second Temple Judaism. Barclay affirms with the New Perspective on Paul that the idea of election and the priority of God’s grace is important to understand how grace was understood by Jewish thought prior to Paul. However, while he accepts Sanders’ critique of later Reformation and the Evangelical approaches to understanding justification by faith as an expression of God’s grace in contrast to a perceived legalistic Judaism, he nevertheless rightly challenges the idea that, even though Judaism *may* have been a religion of grace, it is unclear exactly whether we can speak in terms of grace as being “everywhere the same” (27). In support of his argument for diverse interpretations in Second Temple Judaism, he explores texts from the Wisdom of Solomon, Philo of Alexandria, the Qumran hymns and Israel’s scriptures, and comparing these with the six perfections. For example, while all these texts express “the superabundance of grace,” few expect return (i.e., grace as noncircular). “Some stress priority (even eternal predestination),” others do not. “Some stress the congruity of grace . . . and others do not” (36). Thus, Barclay concludes, “it is clear that grace is neither a simple nor an uncontroversial matter.” Because Paul sits within the diversity of Second Temple Judaism, this poses more questions about how he understands grace.

Chapters 4 through 9 unpack various grace texts in Galatians and Romans respectively. Barclay compares the ideas of grace in these passages with the six perfections of grace from Chapter 2. Based on Barclay’s discussion, these texts also highlight the diversity of the idea of grace in the New Testament. Although these chapters are a reduced discussion of Barclay’s earlier work, they still provide solid, well exegeted, and well-researched scholarship, ensuring that this reduction does not minimise the impact of his argument.

Chapter 10 considers the grammar of grace in relation to the gift of Christ. Barclay continues to engage with texts from Galatians and Romans, but now also includes 1 Corinthians. A key conclusion is that, while many today think of gift-language in terms of *things* given, “for Paul, the Christ-gift is most fundamentally not the giving of a thing but the giving of a person” (119). “Paul understands the self as defined by relation: people are constituted by their relationships and derive their selfhood not from some independent or pre-existing essence but from their relationships to other people and other powers” (121). Paul’s “in Christ” language—shorthand for identification or solidarity with Christ—and his use of spatial metaphors and terms, therefore, are not concerned with physical things or actual spatiality, but represent a state of being in relationship with Christ

The final three chapters consider, firstly, an application of what has been previously discussed to Christian community and Christian ethics. The Christian community is to not only embody God’s gift of grace but effectively express it in their relationships with one another—especially those on the margins of community—and with Creation as a gift in itself. Chapter 12 considers how various perspectives on Paul have interpreted his gift language. Chapter 13 considers further how contemporary communities can appropriate and apply the idea of gift today. In contrast to Western individualism, Paul’s message of grace is “incongruous and circular” (149), providing a way of challenging structures that undermine the value of individuals and communities, and of fostering different ways of giving worth to and supporting others.

A major strength of *Paul and the Power of Grace* is its clarity, making it accessible to both academic and non-academic audiences. While it is still formally presented with footnotes and transliterations of the Greek, it is written with a simplicity that most could follow without losing its scholarly integrity. *Paul and the Power of Grace* is very informative and does enough to sufficiently stand on its own. However, when read in concert with *Paul and the Gift*, it is itself a gift worth giving and having; a book to be read time and again.

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NEIL MARTIN, *Regression in Galatians: Paul and the Gentile Response to Jewish Law* (WUNT 2/530; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020). Pp. xvi + 306. Paperback. €84.00.

The study of Paul’s letters and theology continues to produce an immense volume of scholarly work. Much of this presents a rehearsal of previous ideas and one is often struck by a lack of originality that comes from this broad scholarship