

like a sequel that advances A.'s research on themes already broached in the final section of his earlier work. As such, this second installment belongs to the burgeoning literature on almsgiving in antiquity. Similar to *Sin*, however, the book's theological contribution extends far beyond the limited focus of most monographs.

Learned, yet written in an accessible style, the book is organized into two parts of six chapters each: "Charity as an Expression of Faith in God" and "Charitable Deeds as Storable Commodities."

Part I stresses how, in the thought of early Judaism and Christianity, almsgiving was understood as an exchange of trust with God. Important in this connection is the wisdom tradition's critique of overinvestments in worldly treasures. The alternative to such an immanent mode of personal security is to become a true *creditor*—that is, a believer—by "making a loan to God," offering gifts to the poor, confident that the Lord "will repay in full" (see Prov 19:17).

Part II shifts to the idea of accumulating heavenly treasures on the basis of charitable faith. Purgatory and the transfer of merits come to the fore here as logical extensions of the *thesaurus* metaphor. Asking whether purgatory is a "retrievable notion," A. points to "the surprising interdependence of Jews and Catholics on this doctrine" (177). In this way, he reframes a controversial "doctrine," exposing its essentially biblical shape and inspiration. The book thus envisions a new engagement with the theology of good works.

In the end, if *Sin* was more groundbreaking, demanding a reconsideration of Anselm, Luther, and Gustaf Aulén, *Charity* vigorously presses the case and provokes new questions. A.'s "sacramental" view of almsgiving (6) and rehabilitation of charitable self-interest invite a major ecumenical discussion. The book's importance and wide appeal is eloquently signaled in the well-chosen testimonials of a Catholic, a Protestant, and a Jew on the dust jacket.

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*Reading Genesis 1–2: An Evangelical Conversation.* Edited by J. Daryl Charles. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2013. Pp. xxi + 240. \$24.95.

The five main essays in this volume are the fruit of a symposium at Bryan Institute, Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 2011. Five scholars, Richard Averbeck, Todd Beall, C. John Collins, Tremper Longman III, and John Walton, "broadly representative of wider evangelicalism," interpret Genesis 1–2 and respond to one another. Victor Hamilton introduces the essays, and Kenneth J. Turner and Jud Davis of Bryan College provide concluding essays. All the main contributors take with utmost seriousness comparative material, especially Mesopotamian; all hold the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and, with the exception of Longman, the historical existence of Adam and Eve; none makes use of traditional Pentateuchal sources to resolve problems, and only one (Longman) uses genre in a sense recognizable by most modern scholars. Richard

Averbeck of Trinity Evangelical, for example, struggles with his previous literal interpretation of the six days of creation and emphasizes the observable world, that is, what is represented by the six days. Though undoubtedly evangelical, Longman stands apart in the volume by his stress on genre, acceptance of evolution, and willingness to say that, for Paul, Adam was not necessarily a historical figure.

As a Catholic scholar, I came away with two impressions: first, admiration for the competence and attention to comparative material displayed in the volume; second, the similarity of the scholars' issues to those of Catholic scholars in the first half of the twentieth century. In 1943, Pope Pius XII's encyclical, *Divino afflante spiritu*, clarified the notion of genre, encouraging Catholic scholars to understand Genesis 1–2 as stories of origin rather than as historical accounts, and to explore the various meanings of "history."

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*Apocalyptic Paul: Cosmos and Anthropos in Romans 5–8*. Edited by Beverly Roberts Gaventa. Waco, TX: Baylor University, 2013. Pp. ix + 197. \$34.95.

Under Gaventa's direction, several scholars (Martinus C. de Boer, Stephen Westerholm, Benjamin Myers, John M. G. Barclay, Philip G. Ziegler, Susan Eastman, and Neil Elliott) known for their studies on Paul's letters wanted to revisit Romans 5–8, a section of the letter less studied than Romans 1–4 and 9–11 during recent decades.

According to these experts, Romans 5–8 has an apocalyptic dimension that the commentators usually neglect because they insist on the impact of Paul's statements for individuals, probably because of Romans 7, where Paul is talking in the first person. Contrary to the opinion of the commentators, Gaventa and her collaborators think that the cosmic horizon should be taken into consideration. As she says, God's work of salvation is described in these chapters against a cosmic background; actually, according to Paul, "the Gospel has to do with a conflict between God and anti-god powers . . . Sin and Death" (91), which are personified entities. All the analyses are done in relation to this orientation.

Such an orientation is worth following, but one may wonder why Romans 8:18–30, a passage that is much more apocalyptic than the others, has not been analyzed. One may also wonder whether the cosmic dimension of the conflict between God and Sin/Death is enough to qualify Romans 5–8 (and thus Paul) as apocalyptic. Finally, a person may regret that the reasons for the personification of Sin and Death in Romans 5–8—and in other letters—have not been suggested.

That said, all the articles are stimulating, and if this book may discourage beginners in theology, it will renew the reading of those already acquainted with Paul's theology.

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