

This book is of course a compilation of essays, which means that some of the articles are of more value than others. One of the weaker articles is Kaiser's "The Theology of the Old Testament," which is either out of date or uses an outdated methodology.

The General articles are useful. Carl F.H. Henry's "The Authority and Inspiration of the Bible" lays out the philosophy of most evangelicals as they come to the text. F.F. Bruce's "The Transmission and Translation of the Bible" was published long before Barrera's *The Jewish Bible and the Christian Bible*, but seems to use the same sort of argumentation for the transmission of the text. Geoffrey W. Bromiley's "The Interpretation of the Bible" gives a brief overview of hermeneutical problems, as well as history of interpretation. James M. Houston's "The Geographical Setting of the Bible" gives a very general overview. The sections, "modes of life in biblical times," and "trade routes" are most useful. Robert L. Saucy's "The Eschatology of the Bible" gives an even discussion of what is meant when evangelicals use the term Eschatology, and some issues relating to eschatology. Calvin D. Linton's "The Bible as Literature" gives a quick introduction to what it means to view the Bible as literature, and how one does this critically. It is a bit elementary for an advanced student. Sir Norman Anderson's "Christianity and the World's Religions" gives a summary of world religions. Then he develops the similarities and differences between Christianity's understanding of certain concepts and the other religions's understanding of those concepts. Bruce M. Metzger's "The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha" describes the terms first. Then he discusses the basic literature of both, and evaluates their influence. The work is somewhat dated, but still useful as an introduction for a mid-level student. Harold W. Hoehner's "Between the Testaments" gives a summary of the history during that time, as well as the literary and ideological developments. He views the period between the testaments as important for understanding the NT's radical position on eschatology and other matters as compared to the OT.

The Old Testament articles begin with G. Douglas Young's "The Language of the Old Testament" which describes the semitic languages, and their complexities. Interestingly, he includes a section on the influence on the NT. Next, Bruce Waltke's article "The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament" works through a discussion of the Hebrew manuscripts, different ancient versions and translations, as well as the canons of textual criticism. R.K. Harrison's "Historical and Literary Criticism of the Old Testament" begins with a discussion of the nuances of historical criticism, then proceeds to a discussion of source (what he calls literary) criticism. J.A. Motyer gives a discussion of Old Testament History, which is oversimplified due to its short length. Walter C. Kaiser's "The Theology of the Old Testament" gives an introduction to the sub-discipline, then proceeds to outline his theology based on themes. D.J. Wiseman presents "Archaeology and the Old Testament" which is honest about the limitations of the field. He also gives an introductory discussion to the different archeological periods of the OT. G. Herbert Livingston's "The Relation fo the Old Testament to Ancient Cultures" gives a chronological discussion of each archeological period and the peoples that would have or did interact with the people of the biblical text. Gleason L. Archer's discussion of OT chronology was as to be expected, lacking incorporation of critical scholarship. Milton Fisher's "The Canon of the Old Testament" goes in a different direction from current SBC creeds, but fits well within the larger bounds of evangelical ideas of canon. William Sanford LaSor's "The Dead Sea Scrolls" is an enlightening piece, when one considers that scholarship has progressed in the area since his writing.

The New Testament articles begin with J. Harold Greenlee's "The Language of the New Testament." He outlines the development of Greek. Then includes a discussion of the styles of NT authors. Gordon D. Fee's "The Textual Criticism of the New Testament" gives more space to method than does the OT article on text criticism. Because of the simpler transmission problem, he is still able to include a discussion of the text in history. Donald Guthrie's "The Historical and Literary Criticism of the New Testament" does an excellent job of summarizing the trends in modern criticism, historical criticism, literary criticism and describing methods. He also does a good job detailing how to use each

method and when it is helpful. Samuel J. Mikolaski's "The Theology of the New Testament" gives a description of theology in the New Testament by using systematic categories and then presenting scripture relating to each. This is not my preferred method, but his presentation is good for what he does. Arthur A Rupprecht "The Cultural and Political Setting of the New Testament" gives a useful discussion of the political, economic and social conditions at the time of the NT. This is very helpful when thinking of modern socio-rhetorical criticism methods. J. Julius Scott's "The Synoptic Gospels" is a basic compare and contrast essay dealing with the presentation of Jesus within the Synoptics. I. Howard Marshall's "Jesus in the Gospels" deals with the nature of gospels, how they fit into historical framework, and some of Jesus' teachings. He too does a compare/contrast sort of discussion of Jesus' teaching for His Disciples. Edward M. Blaiklock's "The Epistolary Literature" outlines different sorts of letters at the time of the NT epistles, and how each epistle fits into those categories. He also gives discussion of epistolary details which would be very useful for form criticism. R. Alan Cole's "Life and Ministry of Paul" sorts through the subtleties of Pauline scholarship, giving a good broad introduction. He asserts that Paul was certainly a product of his time, but differed with established sects of Judaism (not a New Perspective guy), was not the founder of Christianity, etc. A. Skevington Wood's "The Apostolic Church" asserts that the Jerusalem church saw itself not as the "true Israel" but as the "New Israel," thus leaving a bit of continuity between Judaism and Christianity, but developing something different. He further touches on Gentile churches in Samaria, and then moves to Rome. Lewis A. Foster's essays, "The Chronology of the New Testament," as well as his "Metrology of the New Testament" give some basic archeological data as well as incorporating biblical data so as to present a picture of chronology and units of measurement for the reader who is removed from the context of the document. Roger Nicole's article "The Old Testament in the New" shows how the NT writers thought of the OT as sacred scripture which was divinely authoritative. Yet, the OT gained full meaning when applied to the NT situation in light of Christ. Andrew F. Walls' "The Canon of the New Testament" considers the canon to have a sort of organic development. The OT was considered canon, then the teachings of Christ added, with the apostolic teachings later added. The sub-apostolic teachers did not consider their teaching to have the same authority, and thus appealed to the earlier canon. He holds to a 4<sup>th</sup> century consensus of the NT canon. Then one encounters Edwin Yamauchi's "Archeology and the New Testament". He describes the data relating to different characters, such as Herod the Great, Jesus, Peter, etc. In discussing these people, he relates the archeological data, and how this affects the understanding of the character and it/their chronology.

The strengths of this work outweigh the previously mentioned weaknesses. It serves as an entry point into critical discussions on issues relating to the study of the Bible, the Old and New Testaments. Yet, this work is from a uniquely evangelical perspective which separates it from other works in the field, such as those from German scholars. While adhering to the inspiration of Scripture, the scholars weigh the critical data, and evaluate the testimony of scripture as an equal partner to hard data. When conflict with traditional interpretation arises, the authors are willing to modify the traditional position to the slight degree necessary to incorporate new data. Yet, the testimony of the Scripture is considered to be the most weighty evidence, and is only departed from when absolutely necessary.

The work is a bit dated, which is more apparent in fields like Qumran studies and Apocryphal/Pseudepigraphal studies than in textual criticism methods. Some of the theoretical essays (describing OT theology, NT theology, literary and source criticism) are out of date. Yet, the work is certainly a valuable starting point for a conservative entry into scholarship.