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The Road to Kingship: 1–2 Samuel, Johanna W. H. Van Wijk Bos, Eerdmans, 2020 (ISBN 9780802877444), xiv + 418 pp., pb \$29.99

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Scientology requires courses for which the would-be auditor must pay, either in cash or labor.

Of course, many believe that Hubbard's desire for money was his main motivation in founding the Church in the first place, sometimes citing a putative quote from him about the money to be made by starting a new religion. Westbrook's analysis of Hubbard's motives is nuanced and persuasive. He certainly does not represent Hubbard as blind to the money to be made, but he argues that his real motivation was to regain control of his own intellectual property. An earlier episode of bankruptcy had lost Hubbard the copyright to Dianetics, putting him in an extremely humiliating and frustrating position. The introduction of the OT levels above Clear, all of them confidential and copyrighted, restored control to Hubbard.

A subsequent chapter sets forth the theology of Scientology, laying out key doctrines such as the concepts of 'overts', 'withholds', and 'suppressive persons'; the space opera-like vast timescales of reincarnation; and above all, the idea of 'Keeping Scientology Working' (KSW) – that is, preserving Hubbard's teachings and not altering or editing them. It is dogmatic within the Church that Hubbard's approach (his 'technology', to use the Scientology term) cannot fail; if it does, then the user has misunderstood something and should return to his writings and read more carefully. There then follows an overview and history of the Sea Org, the elite organization within Scientology. Particularly interesting is a case study of the typical day-to-day life of a Sea Org member in Los Angeles.

The final chapter discusses the recent history of Scientology, in particular the power struggles that took place after Hubbard's death, the Church's legal battle to be recognized as a religion in the United States, and the story of the rise and fall of the Guardian's Office.

This book is a first-rate introduction to Scientology, making its convoluted tenets and history remarkably clear and accessible.

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The End of the Beginning: Joshua and Judges, Johanna W. H. Van Wijk-Bos, Eerdmans, 2019 (ISBN 978-0-8028-6838-1), xiv + 354 pp., pb \$29.99
The Road to Kingship: 1–2 Samuel, Johanna W. H. Van Wijk-Bos, Eerdmans, 2020 (ISBN 978-0-8028-7744-4), xiv + 418 pp., pb \$29.99

These are the first two volumes of a trilogy, *A People and a Land*, which will include the author's commentary on Kings, due out later this year. Each

volume opens with an introduction which, as one might expect in a multivolume series, contains some overlap. Across both commentaries, the introductions incorporate sections that address genre and context, the landscape of the text in terms of its borders, agricultural prospects, the people of the text in terms of how families might have been organized, the construction of collective memory and its politics (who gets to remember and have their memories enshrined), and the approach taken to the text. Each volume closes with author, subject, and scripture indices.

Van Wijk-Bos reads the books of Judges and Samuel as texts that would have been brought together and edited in the post-exilic period, their purpose being to hold together the people who had suffered the trauma of exile and who were subsequently living under Persian rule. For this devastated, shattered audience, the stories of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel offer enlightenment, entertainment, and comfort, providing narrative tools to rebuild their fragile and possibly fragmented identity. The books offer this traumatized audience a memory of different times, when the land was granted to them by divine fiat and was not subject to siege warfare or the possession of a Persian overlord. The literature is thus not only identity forming but also cautionary: land can be granted and lost. Although composed in a post-exilic context and not historical in the strict sense, Joshua, Judges, and Samuel provide the kind of history Van Wijk-Bos describes as *mythos*, populated by extraordinary characters. The characters are not fictional creations, although she does describe the *dramatis personae* of Judges as folk heroes who might be drawn from people who were *like* them. That said, she does not believe that a character such as Deborah would have been invented from scratch. Rather, these texts draw on pre-existing traditions written down and subsequently stitched into post-exilic compositions. To this end, these commentaries do not stray from established, but now questionable, ideas.

She separates the contents of each book into cycles, acts, and scenes. Judges 1, for example, is act 1 of the first cycle, and verses 1–20 constitute its first scene, while verses 21–36 comprise the second. These units sometimes concur with established historical-critical divisions of the books, sometimes not, but as a way of splitting the texts into manageable sections for commentary, it works well. She provides her own translation and presents it in short colometric lines that maintain Hebrew word order so the reader can get a sense of how the ancient text is constructed and of how it would be heard. This is a good feature of the commentaries, although not all the text gets translated. For example, for Judges 21, only verses 23–25 are provided. There is a commentary on the preceding verses but no translation. For Judges 5, translations are provided for verses 1–3 and 24–27. In the commentary on 1 Samuel 15, colometric lines are provided only for verses 22–3. Since the colometric style offers the reader something quite different to usual translations in English Bibles, it is disappointing not to have a full translation of each chapter.

The commentaries are footnoted with additional material written in a very accessible way, even when dealing with tricky textual cruxes. Although not every reader will know what the Hiphil form of a verb means, lay readers without Hebrew language will find these footnotes manageable. Mostly they are concise, a few lines at most. Occasionally, a longer note is required, but they are never extensive to the point of being tiresome. Often they direct the reader to further reading and scholarly ideas that differ from the author's own.

In the main body of the commentaries Hebrew is always transliterated – and there is respect for Jewish tradition and terminology. The divine name, for example, is translated as Adonai throughout. Each volume has an appendix titled 'Hebrew words in this volume', which as it suggests, lists the terms used and provides definitions. It is not extensive – the Samuel volume's appendix contains four pages of Hebrew words – but is ideal for anyone who is beginning to learn Hebrew and is also using texts covered by these volumes for that purpose. Such students will have a helpful assembly of key vocabulary with added instruction on how words are pronounced and an explanation of how transliteration works. For first year university students, secondary school students, and all lay readers, this is likely to be a very useful addition, and this, in my view, is one of the great strengths of these commentaries: they are eminently readable.

The books of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel contain material difficult to grapple with, whoever the commentator. The genocide, misogyny, and the general sense of violence running amok is daunting and demands an ethical response. Van Wijk-Bos brings her childhood experience of the aftermath of World War II to the discussion, remembering the brutalities, the malice, the absence of compassion, the sound of World War II's violence, and atrocities. One gains the sense of reading alongside the author, seeing how her experiences and her Dutch history interplay with the ancient world of the text while learning simultaneously about the ancient context of the narratives under discussion. Writing with a feminist consciousness, she is particularly attuned to women's unhappy fates in these texts, but has a keen eye for the more positive and/or significant role women play in various plots. In short, although the books of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel feature many difficult stories, she does not shrink from addressing the abysmal events described. On the contrary, one of the best features of these volumes is the attention given to how we continue to live in times of violence, war, and ethnic cleansing, to the ongoing, appalling treatment of women, and the consideration given to how we can respond. She is well aware that the books of Joshua and Judges in particular do not provide a clear, unambiguous denunciation of the brutalities they contain. In response, she appeals to the context of the biblical editor, suggesting that a post-exilic time of composition meant the editor was still reeling from the aftermath of the horrors of siege

warfare and deportation and, accordingly, did not have the benefit of sufficient critical distance. It is likely, in her view, that his inclusion of such distressing violence related directly to the trauma that has left its impact upon him and his casting of the stories. She speculates that inclusion of violent stories could even have been a necessary part of a healing process.

Van Wijk-Bos' referencing of trauma and the mark it has left on the text is currently very topical in biblical studies, and it is both a key strength of the volumes and their weak point when absent. It would have been fascinating to read about how the death of Eli, or David's profoundly beautiful lament over the death of Saul, contain the indicators of trauma and have relevance for the post-exilic period, but we do not. Indeed, the index of the Samuel volume lists only two pages for the word 'trauma'. One feels that opportunities have been missed. Notwithstanding, the reader will find in these commentaries an empathetic-while-critical reading of tricky texts, a method of reading that is alert to feminist concerns and profoundly aware of the history of antisemitism, striving against the latter in many ways throughout the volumes. They are ideally suited for use in bible study settings, for teaching Biblical Hebrew and for first year undergraduates who are being introduced to these texts and their contemporary significance.

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To Stir a Restless Heart: Thomas Aquinas and Henri de Lubac on Nature, Grace, and the Desire for God, Jacob W. Wood, The Catholic University of America Press, 2019 (ISBN 978-0-8132-3183-9), xviii + 476 pp., hb \$65

The 1946 publication *Surnaturel* by the French Jesuit Henri de Lubac ignited a firestorm of controversy within Catholic theology, which has dominated the landscape of twentieth century theology and which looks to continue well into the new millennium. The debate centered upon what de Lubac referred to as a natural desire for the supernatural, which his book sought to locate in the teaching of Thomas Aquinas, and which, according to de Lubac, was occluded in the centuries following under the influence of a number of commentators, not least of whom was Tommaso de Vio 'Cajetan' (1469–1534).

De Lubac's thesis, the controversial history of which need not be repeated here, saw him spend nearly 10 years 'on the bench', forbidden from teaching and publishing, presumably being the target of the condemnation with Pius XII's encyclical *Humani generis*, a condemnation