

specific issues such as loving enemies, forgiving impenitent offenders etc. Jones interacts with theories and practices of forgiveness outside the Christian tradition and explores the implications of a Christian understanding of forgiveness in such situations as slavery in the USA and the holocaust in Europe.

In developing his own account of Christian forgiveness, Jones draws from a rich variety of Christian sources in true ecumenical breadth. His discussion of alternative accounts is fair and considered, and he shows a keen awareness of the destructive ways in which the language of forgiveness can be used as a weapon of abuse and oppression of others. His analysis interacts with examples from the world of literature and film which are well chosen and presented. The theological analysis is thus firmly embedded in our cultural world. Jones realises that discussing theology must involve the political and the social, the philosophical and the psychological, and goes about his task with sensitivity and with an evangelical commitment to the authority of Scripture. I suspect that most readers will find points where they disagree with Jones, even after having heard his arguments, but they will be engaged in a process of thinking which might lead to a better understanding and practice of forgiveness. The book is profound, yet without being inaccessible not least as a result of the (fictive and real) stories re-told in the book. I recommend it warmly to all concerned with reclaiming a Christian vision and practice of forgiveness.

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Joshua: An Introduction and Commentary

R. Hess

Leicester: IVP (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries), 1996, 320 pp., £9.99 pb., ISBN: 0-85111-849-6

RÉSUMÉ

Ce commentaire apporte un bon exposé de la situation archéologique et géographique de la Palestine durant la conquête. Hess présente la stratégie d'Israël dans la conquête en expliquant la situation géographique et la valeur stratégique des lieux mentionnés. En ce qui concerne l'interprétation littéraire du livre de Josué, ce commentaire montre à nouveau combien la tâche est difficile. Néanmoins, Hess

parvient à identifier les principaux traits littéraires, tels que l'intrigue et les principaux personnages des récits. L'analyse de chaque passage est suivie d'une application homilétique, et ce commentaire montre ainsi au lecteur combien le livre de Josué est actuel pour sa vie chrétienne.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der vorliegende Kommentar bietet eine umsichtige Erklärung der archäologischen und geographischen Situation Palästinas zur Zeit der Landnahme. Hess illustriert Israels Landnahmestrategie, indem er die geographische Situation sowie die strategische Bedeutung der erwähnten Orte erläutert. Was aber die literarische Interpretation des Josuabuches betrifft, so stellt der Kommentar ein weiteres Beispiel für die Probleme dar, denen man dabei begegnet. Dennoch gelingt es Hess, die wesentlichen literarischen Merkmale, wie z. B. den Plot und die Hauptcharaktere der Erzählungen, herauszuarbeiten. Indem jeder Abschnitt mit einer homiletischen Anwendung abgeschlossen wird, zeigt der Kommentar dem Leser die Relevanz des Josuabuches für sein Leben als Christ auf.

This commentary contains partially literary and homiletic elements but is mainly an archaeological and geographical interpretation of Joshua. Hess regards 'the message that this book contains for the Christian' (p. 10) as of highest importance and regards the text as an accurate description of real events. These events serve as an example for the Christian today, be it as an illustration of an eternal truth, an encouragement, or a warning. These applications, however, often appear unnatural as they frequently seem to press a typological meaning on the text. Furthermore, some applications recur in the commentary. But since they are only given after the interpretation of each passage, they do not attract the main attention of the reader.

In line with the commentary series, the text is analysed passage by passage. Hess divides Joshua into the three sections: I. The conquest (1:1-12:24), II. The Israelite tribal allotments (13:1-21:45), and III. The conclusion: proper worship of God (22:1-24:33). Especially in the first section Hess focuses on literary and narrative issues such as the structure of the narrative, the usage of words, repetitions, and chiasms. Hess identifies the plot of the stories and works out the main character(s) and message(s). Thus he provides an overview of the stories which he sets in the larger context of

Joshua, God's covenants with his peoples, and the Christian Bible. Accordingly, for example, the leadership of Joshua, the role of Rahab, the parallels between Israel's crossing of the Jordan and her crossing of the Reed Sea, and the significance of the circumcision and the celebration of the Passover are emphasised. On the other hand, some chiasms mentioned are unconvincing (e.g., Josh 21:43–45 [p. 284], or 24:19–20 [p. 306]), and in some instances the chiasm observed does not correspond with the explanation given for it (e.g., 10:14 [p. 199]); cf., however, the well observed example 3:6–7 (p. 108) with a good interpretation. Hence the commentary shows once more the well-known difficulty of analysing Joshua in literary terms.

The strength of the commentary is that Hess provides detailed geographical and archaeological evidence as he describes the events and places within the Promised Land and as he discusses their strategic value for Israel. For each of the places mentioned in the second section Hess includes the name as it appears in the New International Version, whether it is mentioned in the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint (for 15:21–62 and 19:1–48 he distinguishes between the Alexandrinus and the Vaticanus), the Israelite and the Arabic name, and the location within the Promised Land; where possible he also includes the name of the tell which represents the location of the ancient town today. Hess furthermore connects the geographical situation with the biblical account of the military aspects of the conquest, thus providing a strategic explanation for the conquest. In conjunction with the maps provided the reader gets a good idea of Israel's strategy in the conquest and the geography of the Promised Land. Among the questions treated are, for example, why did the Canaanites not attack Israel as they crossed the Jordan despite Israel's lengthy preparation, which the Canaanites must have observed? Or, why did the Canaanites prepare for a battle with Israel although they could not face her earlier?

To sum up, this commentary offers a well worked explanation of the archaeological and geographical situation in Palestine during the conquest. Hess illustrates Israel's strategy in the conquest by explaining the geographical situation and strategical value of the places mentioned. In terms of a literary interpretation of Joshua, this commentary is another example of the difficulty one encounters here; nevertheless Hess manages to identify the main literary features such as the plot and the

main characters of the stories. As each passage is concluded with a homiletic application, this commentary also demonstrates to the reader the relevance of Joshua for one's life as a Christian.

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***The Making of the New Testament:
Origin, Collection, Text and Canon***
Arthur G Patzia

Leicester: Apollos, 1995, 205 pp. £11.99
pb. ISBN: 0-85111-443-1

RÉSUMÉ

Patzia est professeur assistant de Nouveau Testament et directeur de la faculté de théologie de Fuller aux USA. Son livre s'interroge sur la manière dont le Nouveau Testament a été compilé. Il est destiné aux étudiants qui commencent l'étude du N.T. Il sera un instrument utile, à la fois pour les étudiants et les professeurs, et trouvera une place méritée dans les bibliographies des cours des universités, des écoles bibliques et des facultés de théologie européennes et américaines, où la théologie biblique est prise au sérieux.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dr. Patzia ist außerordentlicher Professor für Neues Testament sowie Direktor des Fuller Theological Seminary. Sein Buch The Making of the New Testament beleuchtet die "Wie"-Fragen der Zusammenstellung des Neuen Testaments. Es ist an College-Studenten gerichtet, die ins Studium des Neuen Testaments einsteigen. Es wird eine brauchbare Hilfsquelle für Studenten wie Lehrer darstellen und somit zu Recht in den Bibliographien der unteren Studentenjahrgänge an Universitäten, Colleges und Seminaren in Europa und den USA auftauchen; überall dort, wo biblische Theologie ernstgenommen wird.

Arthur Patzia's Making of the New Testament sets itself the task of explaining the 'how' of New Testament compilation. He perceives his audience to be the college student, who is taking his or her first steps in the world of New Testament studies.

The work certainly appears to fit within such a remit covering as it does, the literary world of the New Testament (19–34), the