

of this seems to have impacted Brueggemann's introduction. In this sense Brevard Childs' *Introduction* (1979) was much more prescient for each section concluded with a bibliography of the history of exegesis, and this concern was already present in his earlier Exodus commentary (1974) and has continued in his most recent work on the interpretation of Isaiah (2004). To begin to map something of the Old Testament as it has been perceived in the Christian imagination would really have been a task worthy of the title *Introduction* (where *Introduction* is the classical genre of a detailed description of critical scholarship [i.e. German *Einleitung*], the understanding Brueggemann seems to intend).

In Brueggemann's subtitle, then, we can see a fruitful direction that future scholarship must go. There is a land full of promise that awaits the new generation of Old Testament scholars. With his appropriation of the language of 'imagination' Brueggemann has helped us see that our task is not so different from that of earlier generations. He has also enabled pastors and congregations over the last twenty-five years with works such as this introduction to emerge from what seemed like a desert of historically-orientated scholarship.

Nathan MacDonald, St Andrews, Scotland

*How Are the Mighty Fallen?*  
*A Dialogical Study of King Saul in 1 Samuel*  
(JSOT Supp. 365)

Barbara Green

London: Continuum, 2003, x + 492 pp., £80.00, hb,  
ISBN 0-8264-6221-9

*King Saul's Asking (Interfaces)*

Barbara Green

Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2003, xxii + 130 pp.,  
\$14.95 (US), pb, ISBN 0-8146-5109-7

SUMMARY

In these books, Green applies the literary theories of Bakhtin to the character of Saul in 1 Samuel. She argues that Saul is an epitome of Israel's experience of kingship, and shows why this should not be the path taken after the exile. In spite of many helpful insights, the thesis is unpersuasive. The application of Bakhtin's theories is uneven and does not always seem appropriate. *King Saul's Asking* is a more disciplined book and worth reading for Green's insights. *How are the Mighty Fallen?* has more detail, but the extra expense cannot be justified.

RÉSUMÉ

Dans ces deux ouvrages, Barbara Green applique les théories littéraires de Bahtkin au personnage de Saül dans le livre de 1 Samuel. Elle essaie de montrer que Saül est une figure typique de l'expérience israélite de la royauté et que son histoire sert à montrer pourquoi la monarchie n'est

pas la voie à emprunter après l'exil. Malgré de nombreux apports, la thèse n'est pas convaincante. L'application de la théorie de Bahtkin est inégale suivant les cas et ne semble pas toujours appropriée. *King Saul's Asking* est le plus rigoureux et le plus intéressant des deux ouvrages. L'autre est plus détaillé, sans que cela suffise à faire valoir la peine de la dépense supplémentaire.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In diesen Büchern wendet Green die Literaturtheorien von Bakhtin auf Saul als Charakter in 1. Samuel an. Sie argumentiert, dass Saul ein Inbegriff der Erfahrung Israels von Königsherrschaft ist, und sie zeigt, warum dies nicht der Weg sein sollte, der nach dem Exil gegangen werden soll. Trotz vieler hilfreicher Einsichten ist die These nicht überzeugend. Die Anwendung der Thesen Bakhtins ist uneinheitlich und scheint nicht immer angemessen. *King Saul's Asking* ist ein disziplinierteres Buch und um Greens Einsichten willen wert, gelesen zu werden. *How are the Mighty Fallen?* ist detaillierter, aber die Extraausgabe ist nicht zu rechtfertigen.

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Although these books are obviously aimed at different audiences, they have so many similarities that it is appropriate that they be reviewed together. Both represent an attempt by Green to apply the interpretative approach of the Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin to the figure of King Saul in 1 Samuel. Green acknowledges that the first chapter of *King Saul's Asking* (KSA) is an abridgement of chapter 1 of *How are the Mighty Fallen?* (HMF), though they have numerous points of contact. Given that they were written at much the same time as one another, cover the same material and work with the same methodology, this is to be expected. But the similarities here are so marked that even the chapters of each book match each other perfectly. Both are also concerned with providing a transformative reading of the biblical text. What distinguishes them, and results in their great divergence in length, is the intended readership. KSA is part of a new series called "Interfaces" edited by Green, which seeks to provide a methodologically conscious set of readings of the biblical text aimed at undergraduates, though with the hope expressed that they might be of benefit to those commencing postgraduate study. HMF is clearly aimed at scholarly community and seeks to provide the detailed reading of Saul that cannot be given when one has to be more conscious of the requirements of a less trained readership. That said, it would be unfair to describe KSA as *HMF Lite*, so as well as commenting on the shared elements of the books, some comment will be made on how they achieve their discrete goals.

Although Green has previously written a helpful introduction to Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Studies, both these books commence with an introduction to Bakhtin's thought, whilst also indicating Green's understanding of the Deuteronomistic History (DH). Her unargued-for position in KSA is that DH is to be read from the context



of exile, and in spite of the extra details in *HMF*, there is not much more in the way of argument. The more important point for Green is that we do not read the story of Saul from the perspective of the eleventh century in which the narrative is set, but at a later time, when people are debating the question of whether or not the community should still look for a king. Literary method is employed, but still linked to a specific historical situation. Saul, argues Green, becomes the epitome of Israel's experience with kingship, and provides the reason why DH suggests that kingship does not represent the future. This understanding of DH is linked to her exposition of Bakhtin, particularly his emphasis upon genre and varieties of discourse. It is intriguing that she does not provide an argument here for why Bakhtin alone provides the literary foundations for reading this narrative and not more recent theorists who engage with Bakhtin and develop alternative reading methods. Methodology is something that is in the foreground here, but although Bakhtin has clearly provided a framework in which literary theory and biblical interpretation comes together, it is not clear why we cannot also engage with other theorists. Once we have decided that modern literary theory provides the means by which we read the biblical text, can we cherry-pick theorists because we find them helpful for our ends as readers? Or does engagement with literary theory mean that we need to enter the whole field and develop an eclectic methodology that recognises that guild's criticisms of theorists like Bakhtin? In short, if literary theory provides the critical mechanism by which we read the biblical text, what critical mechanism controls our application of such theory? Bakhtin provides a set of tools with which to read the text, but works that seek to be methodologically conscious need to provide a rationale for their choices. Along with her commitment to Bakhtin, Green also utilises Robert Polzin as her principal dialogue partner in the study of Saul, principally because of his application of Bakhtin's theories to the books of Samuel. Green seeks to develop Polzin's conclusions through her specific focus on the figure of Saul. Although a worthwhile choice, even if one is not committed to Polzin's reading, the reasons for choosing Polzin are not clear. Arguably, the contribution of Fokkelman might have been more effective because he would have provided someone with whom Green could have engaged in a critical dialogue precisely because he does not operate within the same theoretical framework.

With her methodology thus stated, Green proceeds to read the whole of 1 Samuel 1 – 2 Samuel 1, not just those chapters in which Saul appears. This is to be applauded, because in doing so she highlights the way in which the question of kingship and inherited dynastic structures are brought to the fore before we actually meet Saul. Hannah's story, and those of Eli and Samuel, all point to the problem of sons, and all stress the fact that dynasties may not operate as one might wish. The issue of the problem with sons is something that Green is able to explore in subsequent chapters, each of which

addresses a logical block of narrative within 1 Samuel. In *HMF*, Green achieves this by following a fixed structure in which she outlines her point of entry to the text, develops an aspect of Bakhtin's thought that is relevant to it, summarises Polzin's contribution and then offers her own reading. *KSA* is not quite as rigid in its structure, but the same elements are there. Green's reading is frequently insightful, and her exploration of the language of sonship throughout 1 Samuel opens up new perspectives on the text. Anyone who engages with her reading will find many new insights, whilst her commitment to the ways in which her reading might be transformational for others is refreshing because of its commitment to reading Scripture, even if her essentially fictional reading might not sit well with all. Whether or not all of these insights derive from the impact of Bakhtin, or whether Green is simply an astute reader of texts is another matter, and this reviewer at least is unsure how ascribe the relevant weighting.

There are questions about her use of Bakhtin, especially the fact that each chapter introduces a different element of his thought, an element then applied to the passage being analysed. Bakhtin's model of interpretation is inclusive of a range of elements, and though it is helpful to break them down in terms of analysis, it is not meant to be applied piecemeal. Moreover, I am unconvinced by the decision to focus on Saul alone. Saul is only one character in a narrative, and he is clearly not its hero. 1 Samuel is only one part of a text that Green acknowledges stretches for some way both before and after. Is it possible to develop a reading of the Saul as the epitome of monarchy without placing him more firmly in the larger narrative? Whatever one makes of Saul, 2 Samuel 7 does make the promise of an enduring dynasty to David, and that promise does not seem to be overly troubled by the difficulties that king's pose. It could also be argued that the characterisation of Saul is developed as a foil for David. Green's exclusion of these elements creates a potential distortion in genre and characterisation, and could run counter to her own commitment to Bakhtin. There is, therefore, a fundamental tension at the heart of these books where the method employed does not conform fully to the text being examined. In spite of the many insights, Green's central thesis cannot be considered to be proved.

As indicated, each book seeks to achieve Green's aims for a different readership. *KSA* is also marked by Green's concern for the students that she imagines to be reading it, and there are several points at which she addresses them directly. The pastoral concern is a real strength, and links in well with her transformative goals, even if not all of her conclusions are accepted. The shorter length also results in a book that is much more disciplined in its writing, and which keeps the central focus more clearly in front of the reader. *HMF* packs in more theoretical detail, but I am not sure that the extra length provides much more depth to the argument. There are many points at which Green offers discursive illustrations of her points



which probably work well in a classroom, but which are distracting in a book of this nature. Also, the editing is not of the same standard, and there are several points where a discussion of a key theme from Bakhtin includes the note “[Russian Word]” in which some key term from Bakhtin was clearly meant to be placed but no one has got around to doing it. *HMF* does offer more than *KSA*, but the benefits are nowhere near enough to justify the significant price difference. Although Green’s thesis is unpersuasive, there are many insights to be harvested, but unless one has a large amount of spare cash and time for reading, preference should go to *King Saul’s Asking*.

David G. Firth, Calver, England

### *Isaiah’s Christ in Matthew’s Gospel*

Richard Beaton

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, 197 pp., £45.00, hb, ISBN 0-521-81888-5

#### SUMMARY

In an effort to further the discussion regarding Matthew’s use of the Old Testament and his composite Christology, Richard Beaton examines Matthew’s quotation of Isaiah 42.1-4 in Matthew 12.18-21. Beaton demonstrates that Matthew’s use of this (and other) Isaiah text(s) is more complex than previously believed, exhibiting a bi-referential function in the final form of Matthew: the quote contributes both to the near context and entire narrative of Matthew’s Christology. In this work, Beaton also examines various issues regarding Matthew’s use of the Old Testament and the text-form that he used.

#### ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In einem Versuch, die Diskussion um den matthäischen Gebrauch des Alten Testaments und die im Matthäusevangelium zusammengestellte Christologie voranzubringen, untersucht Richard Beaton das Zitat von Jesaja 42,1-4 in Matthäus 12,18-21. Beaton zeigt, dass der matthäische Gebrauch dieses (und anderer) jesajanischer Texte komplexer als bisher angenommen ist. Das Zitat hat in der Endgestalt des Matthäusevangeliums eine zweifache Funktion: es trägt sowohl zum unmittelbaren Kontext als auch zum gesamten Narrativ der matthäischen Christologie bei. Beaton untersucht in seiner Arbeit auch verschiedene Fragen bezüglich des Gebrauchs des Alten Testaments und der von Matthäus benutzten Textform.

#### RÉSUMÉ

L’auteur étudie la citation d’Ésaïe 42.1-4 chez Matthieu (12.18-21) dans le but de contribuer à la recherche sur l’usage de l’Ancien Testament par cet évangéliste, ainsi qu’à l’étude de sa christologie composite. Il montre que l’usage que fait Matthieu de ce texte isaïen, ainsi que d’autres du même prophète, est plus complexe qu’on ne l’avait pensé auparavant, et qu’il a une fonction biréférentielle dans la forme finale de l’évangile : la citation contribue à la fois au

contexte immédiat et à la narration de la christologie matthéenne dans son ensemble. Beaton aborde encore diverses questions concernant l’usage de l’Ancien Testament par Matthieu et le type textuel qu’il a utilisé.

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This book is a minor revision of the author’s doctoral dissertation completed under the supervision of Dr. Ivor H. Jones at Cambridge University. The author states from outset the overriding question: ‘if Matthew’s text-form does not support the traditional presentation of a meek and lowly Jesus, then Matthew’s portrait of Jesus may be more complex than is otherwise thought’ (p. 2). This quote contains two dominant concerns that recur throughout the book: 1) the text form that Matthew used, and 2) the overall presentation of Christ in Matthew. The author attempts to further this discussion by examining the lengthy quotation of Isaiah 42.1-4 in Matthew 12.18-21.

The book begins with the typical introduction setting out the question at stake (pp. 1-13), followed by a chapter surveying the history of research up to this point (pp. 14-43). Beaton concludes his survey: ‘Even a brief survey such as this reveals that the two fundamental questions which confront this investigation concern the state of the text-form prior to AD 100 and the early Jewish usage of Isa. 42.1-4’ (p. 43). Thus, his third chapter titled ‘Texts and Early Jewish Exegesis’ examines these twin issues of the various text forms available to Matthew in the first-century, and the common Jewish exegetical practices of the day. Regarding the former issue (text forms), Beaton draws heavily on the work of E. Tov regarding Old Testament textual criticism. Tov’s work has been the most influential in showing that the common tripartite view of the text (LXX, MT, Sam. Pent.) is really a misnomer. Thus, Beaton argues that Matthew wrote his gospel during a ‘period of textual fluidity and variety’ (pp. 60-61). While Matthew certainly made some changes to the text in order to support his narrative and theological agenda, there still remains the strong possibility than he had before him a text form unknown to us.

Next, though still in chapter three, Beaton examines the possible early uses of Isaiah 42.1-4 in Early Judaism. I say ‘possible’, because as Beaton recognizes, the text is not explicitly quoted in any second-temple text that we now have. Nevertheless, we do have the LXX, targums, and various allusions and echoes that might be traced back to this Isaianic passage. Regarding these later allusions, Beaton finds traces of this passage in 1QH, the *Similitudes of Enoch*, and the *Psalms of Solomon*. Furthermore, Beaton argues for the potential that according to these references, Isaiah 42 was read messianically.

Beaton then includes a chapter on Matthew’s use of Isaiah 7.14 (Mt. 1.23), Isaiah 8.23b-9.1 (Mt. 4.15-16), and Isaiah 53.4a (Mt. 8.17). In this section, he includes a comparison of the known text forms that were available to Matthew, a discussion on which one he used and