

key issues within the oracle that require attention; David's disqualification from building the temple and the nature of the promise made to him. Avioz is not interested in questions of Deuteronomistic redaction within Samuel and Kings, though perhaps the question needs slightly more than the cursory comment it receives since it is arguably significant for the author-centred intertextuality with which he is concerned.

Drawing on comparative texts, Avioz argues that the reason David was barred from building the temple was because construction of a temple was something that only the deity could initiate. The prohibition on temple construction was thus a temporary feature, not a permanent bar, an interpretation that obviates the need to remove verse 13 as a later intrusion into the text. He also argues that 2 Samuel 7 represents a covenant with both conditional and unconditional elements, notwithstanding the absence of the word 'covenant' in the text. This reading of the oracle is not novel in itself, but Avioz shows himself to be a capable and attentive interpreter of the text. With this interpretation established, he is then able to note the way earlier passages in Samuel had prepared for the oracle, and the ways in which subsequent portions engage with it, thus demonstrating a degree of intertextuality within the books of Samuel.

The more obviously intertextual elements are then explored through echoes in the books of Kings and Chronicles. The argument for this is frequently by way of tables of shared vocabulary. For Kings, Avioz notes that reference back to the oracle is largely complete by the end of the Solomon narrative, largely because from this point the temple has been built. However, the dynastic element of the promise does receive later reference. The approach to Chronicles is similar, though Avioz first explores the way the Chronicler adapts the text in 1 Chronicles 17, so that the later echoes are refracted through the Chronicler's own interests. The temple is of obvious importance for the Chronicler, and David and Solomon are the ideal kings because of their attitude to it, but the theme of the endurance of the house of David is also important.

Avioz thus offers a well-reasoned interpretation of the oracle and at least some of its earlier interpreters, but the book is not without its problems. Although he is aware that other texts (especially Psalms, but also prophetic texts) draw on the oracle, a clearer rationale needs to be provided as to why Kings and Chronicles should be regarded as foundational for further study of these themes within the Hebrew Bible, especially if Chronicles is a late text. Likewise, although he provides some argument for his model of intertextuality it is not really sufficient for the weight placed upon it. But the book's greatest weakness is its presentation which does not match the care of its argument. There are incomplete sentences and phrases which simply do not connect to their subject matter, something that could have been resolved with some basic editing. More annoyingly, Hebrew text is poorly presented, with inappropriate line breaks and

frequent situations where text that was obviously meant to be in Hebrew is left in Roman characters. This frequency of this is simply unacceptable and detracts from the quality of an otherwise admirable book.

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*Fixing the Indemnity:  
The Life and Work of Sir George Adam Smith  
(1856-1942)  
(Paternoster Theological Monographs)  
Iain D. Campbell*

Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2004, xx + 256 pp.,  
£19.99, pb, ISBN 1-84227-228-4

SUMMARY

*Fixing the Indemnity* is the first critical and complete biography of Sir George Adam Smith, a famous Scottish Presbyterian pastor and professor who was a major promoter of historical criticism in the late Victorian and Edwardian era's battle over the Bible. A fine intellectual biography largely focussed on Smith's still influential scholarly publications and his attempt to wed evangelical faith with critical methods, Iain Campbell suggests Smith's contributions, even apart from their historical importance, raises important questions for the contemporary church about the danger of making the gospel accountable to critical methods as well as the nature of honest scholarship within a confessionally-faithful church.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

*Fixing the Indemnity* ist die erste kritische und vollständige Biographie über Sir George Adam Smith, einem berühmten schottischen presbyterianischen Pastor und Professor, der ein wichtiger Förderer der historischen Kritik in den Schlachten um die Bibel in der spätviktorianischen und edwardianischen Ära war. Es handelt sich um eine gediegene Biographie, die sich größtenteils auf Smiths immer noch einflussreiche wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen und auf seinen Versuch, evangelikalen Glauben mit kritischen Methoden zu verheiraten, konzentriert. Iain Campbells Anregung lautet, dass Smiths Beiträge auch abgesehen von ihrer historischen Bedeutung wichtige Fragen für die heutige Kirche in Bezug auf die Gefahr aufwerfen, das Evangelium vor den Richterstuhl kritischer Methoden zu zerren und in Bezug auf das Wesen ehrlicher Wissenschaft innerhalb einer bekennnistreuen Kirche.

RÉSUMÉ

Voici la première biographie critique et complète de Sir George Adam Smith, un célèbre pasteur et professeur presbytérien écossais, qui a été l'un des promoteurs principaux de la critique historique dans le débat concernant la Bible à la fin de l'époque victorienne. C'est une biographie intelligente qui fait une large place aux publications académiques de Smith, lesquelles exercent encore une certaine influence, et qui s'efforcent de marier une foi évangélique



à l'emploi de méthodes critiques. Campbell fait valoir qu'à côté de leur importance historique, les travaux de Smith soulèvent des questions importantes pour l'Église d'aujourd'hui, notamment concernant le danger d'assujettir l'Évangile aux méthodes critiques ou encore quant à la nature d'un travail académique honnête effectué dans le cadre confessionnel d'une Église fidèle.

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The Scottish Presbyterian professor George Adam Smith (1856-1942) boasted in 1899 that modern criticism had conquered the traditional theories of the Bible's inspiration and authority. 'It only remains to fix the amount of the indemnity' (*Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament*, London, 1901, p. 72). In Iain Campbell's engaging biography of Smith, this brash claim justifies the importance of an historical study as well as begs for a fresh theological assessment of the indemnity's cost. For Smith emerges from Campbell's study as a pivotal figure in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century campaign to alter traditional notions of Scripture: over a long career as pastor, professor, and university principal, he largely persuaded his own denomination, as well as much of the English-speaking evangelical world, that historical criticism could secure a Bible that would powerfully speak the gospel to the modern age. And, Campbell is able to draw on current biblical scholarship to prove that Smith's claim of total victory was premature, and that the indemnity – far from being fixed – is under constant negotiation as evangelical churches struggle to balance fidelity to traditional confession and dogma with honest scholarship.

*Fixing the Indemnity* is characterized by clear, chronological analysis of Smith's life and contribution to church and academy against the backdrop, helpfully reconstructed, of the social and ecclesial upheaval in Britain c.1880-1935. Initial chapters recount Smith's upbringing and seminary education within the evangelical Free Church of Scotland. Of signal importance at this stage of his life was the impact of the 1873-74 Moody Revival upon his heart, and the equally strong effect of German higher criticism upon his head. Indeed, Campbell interprets young Smith's commitment to an experiential, non-dogmatic evangelicalism as being reinforced by the new scholarly reconstructions of the Old Testament as the historical record of Israel's developing experience of God. A thoroughly historical approach to Scripture, Smith discovered, could pry the gospel free from dead dogma and yesterday's creed and let it be heard and felt afresh in the living history of God's people, in Bible times or now. Smith's espousal of what became known as 'believing criticism' is then traced through chapters detailing a successful pastorate in Aberdeen, a professorship in Glasgow that permitted scholarly and semi-popular dissemination of his views, and finally his long principalship of the University of Aberdeen. While *Fixing the Indemnity* foremost describes and assesses Smith's still influential contribution to biblical scholar-

ship, Campbell strikes a good balance between detailed examination of Smith's significant academic work, e.g. his commentary on Isaiah (1888-1892) and *Historical Geography of the Holy Land* (1894), his church work, civic duties, and a remarkable personal life which included a knighthood and royal chaplaincy. Two chapters are interspersed into the chronological narrative: one assesses Smith's groundbreaking contribution to the study of the historical – indeed, theological – geography of the Holy Land; the other takes up Smith's activity in the First World War, especially as a voice giving theological justification to Britain's war aims.

An impressive handling of primary source documents, particularly Smith's unpublished papers, makes this study the only critical and complete biography of the subject. It will be of profit to historians of modern British church history as well as Old Testament scholars interested in the history of their discipline. However, the theological intent motivating this book calls out too for attention. The theologically conservative author respects Smith's desire to hold together faith and scholarship but frankly assesses as pyrrhic the victory of Smith and his generation's believing criticism. Campbell lets the unresolved problems he finds raised by Smith's aims pose questions to the contemporary church: can a Bible reconstructed according to historical critical methods bear the weight of the gospel? Does modern criticism, even when it wishes (as with Smith) to recover a relevant and living Bible for the church, inevitably pull Scripture out of the pew and into the academy? What should be the relationship between creed or church confession and criticism? Surprisingly, Campbell makes no reference to the flurry of canonical or theological approaches to the Bible published in the past few decades, nor to the ways of approaching the relationship between church confession and historical contextuality that refuse either absolute status. Yet, both tendencies, each in their own way, mitigate somewhat the battle depicted in *Fixing the Indemnity* between evangelical commitment to the faith 'once delivered' and the challenges posed by modern thought. But these caveats are precisely the sort of response Campbell wants to encourage in his thought-provoking study of a man whose legacy is still very much with us.

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### *What are They Saying about the Historical Jesus?*

David B. Gowler

New York: Paulist Press, 2007, x + 190 pp.,  
\$14.95, pb, ISBN 978-0-8091-445-7

#### SUMMARY

Gowler surveys and critiques the current state of historical Jesus research. He rapidly summarizes the 'modern period' and the 'continuing quest'. The longest chapter reviews the work of the Jesus Seminar and its critics. Gowler's sum-