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Sudin's "Anchor in the storm" (Book Review)

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Book Reviews



Mehl, N. (2016). *All abuzz at the honey bee*. New York: Guideposts. 264 pp. \$7.99.

Sugarcreek, Ohio is home to a large Amish community as well as many Englishers. Sugarcreek is a real place and many of the locations and characters in the story are based upon real businesses and people, but the story is entirely fictional. Local shopkeeper, Cheryl Cooper and her Amish friend, Naomi Miller have formed a close friendship that transcends their religious affiliations. The two women share heartwarming and Christ-centered interactions all through the story. Cheryl is a young single woman who recently moved to town and Naomi is a married woman with grown children. Through their friendship they have gained a reputation for solving local mysteries, much to the chagrin of the local sheriff. The mystery is non-violent yet still provided a few thrills for the reader. Although part of a series, this book can be read as a standalone. Pre-existing conflict and relationships were explained in a way that flowed well through the story, not leaving the reader to guess at prior happenings or to feel annoyed at the re-telling of prior events. An entertaining page-turner with a fall-themed setting.

Reviewer

Jeanette Parker, Newman University

Sudin, S. (2016). *Anchor in the storm*. Grand Rapids, MI: Revell. 393 pp. \$14.99. ISBN 9780800723439

Anchor in the Storm is Sarah Sundin's second book in the trilogy, "Waves of Freedom," and features Lillian Avery and Ensign Archer Vandenberg, both who are battling their own personal demons while clinging to the one and true anchor – Jesus Christ. Lillian is strong, but she has had to be since she lost her leg in a childhood accident. People judge her not for who or what she is, but for what she is lacking. She has worked hard to overcome her disability and earn her pharmacist degree so she can help others in 1940's Boston. Ensign Archer Vandenberg struggles with self-worth and nerves since being trapped in a sinking ship. Also, he struggles with being the son of an affluent family. Do people judge him and like him for who he is or for what he is worth? Lillian and Archer meet through Lillian's brother Jim, but their relationship immediately goes awry with mistrust and misconceptions;

however, a mutual concern throws them together. Can they help each other, and resist their growing feelings for each other, as they partner to find out if there is a link between the extraordinarily large amounts of phenobarbital that are flowing through Lillian's pharmacy and the men on Archer's ship who are struggling with nerves and drowsiness?

Reviewer

Sherill L. Harriger, Warner University

Bird, M. F. (2016). *An anomalous Jew: Paul among the Jews, Greeks, and Romans*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. 310 pp. \$28.00. ISBN 9780802867698

An Anomalous Jew joins a wide selection of books addressing Paul's relationship with Jews, early Christians, Romans, and Gentiles. Bird argues that Paul would have been seen as something of an outsider by all of these groups, and yet would have been assigned to at least one of these categories by the people of his time. There is little new in Bird's argument, but the bibliography and his summary of the academic arguments asserting Paul's marginal status in all of these groups is an achievement in itself. In five chapters of dense academic prose arranged in a dissertation format, Paul's Jewishness in relationship with each of these groups is addressed.

Bird argues that this book is "an attempt to understand Paul's Jewishness as it was expressed in relation to other Jews, to Paul's fellow Jewish Christians, and to Romans and the Roman Empire" (p. vii). Chapter one addresses Paul's new Christian understanding of salvation which is no longer dependent on adherence to Torah, but depends on acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah. Bird argues that this viewpoint would have been seen by Jews as a significant departure from Jewish tradition and that it explains some of the Jewish hostility encountered by Paul. In Chapter two, Bird argues that Paul began his ministry to Jewish Christians through established Jewish institutions, but that differences between Paul and the Jerusalem Church led to Paul's rejection by more traditional Jewish converts. Unlike others who would argue that Paul then went to Gentiles, Bird argues that Paul went to diaspora Jewish communities containing both Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. Paul's new understanding of Jesus and the kingdom do not allow the separate, but "equal," treatment of the non-Jewish converts to Christianity that the Jerusalem Church and most Jewish Christians saw as normative. Bird argues that this results in Paul's move into a predominantly Gentile world for the rest of his ministry. In chapter three Paul's view of the kingdom of God as having entered the world with Jesus is shown as creating difficulty for Paul and the early Christians he influenced. In chapter four the confrontation between Paul and the Jerusalem apostles is further explored. Chapter