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Mitchell's "Ethics and Moral Reasoning: A Student's Guide" (Book Review"

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Ezra, meet as antagonists in the Books of Nehemiah and Ezra. The author's thesis is that Nehemiah behaves as other contemporaries with an imperial commission by the Persian empire do when sent to intervene in power struggles between local elites (p. 5). The competition between Sanballat, a Samaritan; Tobiah, an Ammonite; Geshem, an Arab; the Jerusalem priesthood; and the leaders of Ashdod all attempting to maximize personal political power in a semi-autonomous, conquered territory provide the local opposition to Nehemiah's commission to establish a loyal Persian garrison in Jerusalem, which she argues is colored by Nehemiah's personal agenda of reestablishing Jehovah worship. This dissertation type work consists of nine chapters, plus an introduction, extensive bibliography, several indexes, and footnotes, occupying about one third of the work which add significantly to the value of the book. The author masterfully achieves her purpose of showing the local elites in opposition to Nehemiah in the historical context of the wider ancient Middle East including how these opposition leaders and their families fared in their future. The author supports her contentions well despite being quick to disregard Scriptural sources as significant primary historical resources. Few books address any aspect of Nehemiah's opposition in an academic historical context and this book should be considered by any library which carries academic level work on the ancient Middle East and as a resource for academic level commentary work on the books of Nehemiah and Ezra.

Ethics and Moral Reasoning: A Student's Guide,

by C. Ben Mitchell. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013.

111 pp. \$11.99. ISBN 1433537672

*Reviewed by Paul Hartog, Professor and Director of Library Services,
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C. Ben Mitchell holds the Graves Chair of Moral Philosophy at Union University. His primer is a worthy entry in the Reclaiming the Christian Intellectual Tradition series, edited by David Dockery. Like other constituent volumes, it includes a glossary, study questions, a list of further resources, and indices.

Chapter 1 confronts the challenges of modern relativism. Mitchell argues that relativism (1) does not account for simultaneous participation in multiple sub-cultures, (2) does not allow for moral error, (3) does not enable moral reformers, (4) commits the is-ought fallacy, (5) and fails to distinguish between moral practices and their underlying values (pp. 27-29).

The next two chapters trace the history of moral reasoning. Mitchell analyzes the moral themes of Scripture and discusses the Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount in detail (without defining a contemporary Sabbatarian application). He then turns to Aristotelian virtue ethics and the Thomistic natural law tradition. Chapter four continues with Enlightenment ethics, including deontological and utilitarian models. Mitchell considers both to be inadequate, accentuating Alasdair MacIntyre's recovery of virtue theory.

The fifth chapter, a survey of Evangelical ethics, summarizes the works of John Murray, Carl Henry, Arthur Holmes, Stanley Hauerwas, Oliver O'Donovan, and Gilbert Meilaender. A final chapter discusses the Bible as law code, as universal principles, as community narrative, and as canonical revelation. Mitchell concludes by highlighting the treatment of Scripture and ethics in "the very helpful volume" by Kyle Fedler (*Exploring Christian Ethics*) but does not assess Fedler's weaker view of scriptural authority.

According to Mitchell, Christian ethics revolves around "three moral relationships – to God, to others, and to self" (pp. 18, 22). This trifold structure, however, may overlook our relationship to the natural world and thus environmental ethics. One can contrast, for example, Fedler's assertion that "the Christian universe consists of three components: God, the created world, and human beings" (p. 100).

The Father of Modern Landmarkism: The Life of Ben M. Bogard,

by J. Kristian Pratt. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2013.

192 pp. ISBN 9780881464344

Reviewed by W. Terry Martin, Director of the Library, Louisiana College, Pineville, LA

J. Kristian Pratt records an excellent narrative about Benjamin M. Marcus Bogard (1868-1951), now a virtual unknown within the general population of American Christians, but a person who had a significant influence on Baptists during the first half of the twentieth-century. Bogard was involved in the founding of the General Association of Baptist Churches in Arkansas (GABCA), the General Association of Baptist Churches of the United States of America (GABCUSA), and the Missionary Baptist Seminary. He was also had a significant role in the 1905 separation of Landmarkers from the Southern Baptist Convention and 1950 ABA Schism.

Bogard attended Georgetown College (KY) for one-year prior to transferring to Bethel College in Russellville, KY where he graduated in 1891. While attending Georgetown College, Bogard embraced the convention system as practiced by the