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Hawkins' "How Israel Became a People" (Book Review)

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How Israel Became a People,

by Ralph K. Hawkins. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013. 288 pp.
\$37.99. ISBN 9781426754876

*Reviewed by Daniel Chesney, Acquisitions and Interlibrary Loan,
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Over the last century as archaeology has uncovered and interpreted more and more artifacts that date to the Biblical time period, there has been increased interest in trying to align that historical data with the Biblical record. One area of great interest has been the original conquest of Palestine and the early history of the Israelite people as described in the books of Deuteronomy through 2 Kings, also referred to as the Deuteronomistic History. Ralph Hawkins' text does not simply offer one possible interpretation of the history of Israel, but instead documents the development of thought on the subject. While Hawkins eventually presents his best understanding of the data, throughout the book he is objective, providing impartial information that allows readers to make their own value judgments.

The text begins by outlining the nature of historiography in the ancient world and the significance of studying early Israelite culture. This introduction is then followed by multiple chapters that outline and integrate information from the Biblical text, archaeological findings within Palestine, and artifacts from neighboring ancient cultures. Hawkins ends by presenting his theory of a slow, long-term cultural development and infiltration process that formed the people of Israel. The work contains an excellent index and a lengthy notes section. While the text is very informative it is still relatively approachable and contains a glossary to help those unfamiliar with some of the more discipline specific terms. This text would make a great addition to a seminary library or any institution that teaches classes on Deuteronomistic history and/or Biblical archaeology.

How (Not) to Be Secular: Reading Charles Taylor,

by James K. A. Smith. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014.
148 pp. \$16.00. ISBN 9780802867612

*Reviewed by John E. Shaffett, Director of Library Services,
The Baptist College of Florida, Graceville, FL*

James K. A. Smith's *How (Not) to be Secular* is basically a manual or handbook to Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age* which was published in 2007 by Harvard Press. Smith believes that Taylor's book makes an original contribution to our understanding of the secularization process. He thinks Taylor's book is an important book that needs to be read widely. The problem is that Taylor's book is over eight hundred pages. Smith hopes that those who read his book will be encouraged to read Taylor's *A Secular Age*.