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Volume 61 | Issue 2

Article 33

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12-1-2018

## Pressler's "Numbers" (book review)

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### Recommended Citation

Burnett, Julianne (2018) "Pressler's "Numbers" (book review)," *The Christian Librarian*: Vol. 61 : Iss. 2 , Article 33.  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/tcl/vol61/iss2/33>

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# Book Reviews

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Pressler, C. (2017). *Numbers*. Nashville: Abingdon Press. 323 pp. \$39.99. ISBN 9781501846533

This book is part of the Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries series (Patrick Miller, general editor). As is consistent with the series, Carolyn Pressler offers a compact critical commentary on the book of Numbers intended for university students, ministers, and those who teach the Bible in confessional contexts. While we might wish for more content, the reader must acknowledge the intentions and therefore limitations of this commentary.

In each chapter of the book Pressler provides a succinct introduction to the section of Numbers being addressed. She then offers a “literary analysis” which touches on divisions within the text, the larger literary context, and minimal discussion on composition theories (where relevant). This is followed by an “exegetical analysis” of the passage. Hebrew words are provided in transliteration only, but used sparingly. Brief discussions over specific Hebrew terms are included only where it provides a key insight for interpreting the text. Readers familiar with Hebrew will benefit from this as Pressler draws attention to particular phrasing or nuances which might warrant further research. Yet she provides enough explanatory information for readers with no prior knowledge of Hebrew so that they will benefit from the analysis.

This commentary also summarizes the scholarly debates and interpretations of some passages within the book of Numbers. The reader is provided with archaeological evidence and historical background to the text where applicable. The general socio-historical information is helpful for specialist and non-specialist readers alike, especially when interpreting a difficult portion of the text. Likewise, readers will benefit from Pressler’s insightful connections between passages within Numbers and elsewhere in Scripture.

Each chapter concludes with a “theological and ethical analysis.” This brings together the material covered in the chapter and additional theological observations. A brief bibliography of works cited is included at the end of the book. Those interested in pursuing further research will find this an asset.

## Reviewer

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