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Bautch and Knoppers' "Covenant in the Persian period: From Genesis to Chronicles" (Book Review)

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resources. As with all reference material in this age of information, it is likely to be somewhat outdated by the time it gets into students' hands (the authors state it is not comprehensive to begin with), but it should provide a valuable starting point to any researcher. This book would be invaluable for the new graduate student; its step by step guidelines give a nice framework for a thesis project. James E. Bradley is Geoffrey W. Bromiley Professor Emeritus and Senior Professor of Church History at Fuller Theological Seminary. Richard A. Muller is P. J. Zondervan Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology at Calvin Theological Seminary. Recommended for graduate students of church history.

Reviewer

Rebecca A. Givens, University of Alabama

Bautch, R.J., & Knoppers, G.N. (Eds.). (2015). *Covenant in the Persian period: From Genesis to Chronicles*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns. 452 pp. \$58.05. ISBN 9781575063560

This edited volume brings together twenty-two essays discussing covenant understanding during the Neo-Babylonian, Persian and Hellenistic periods. Besides overt statements of covenant in scripture, the selected authors highlight the development of covenantal thinking throughout all Old Testament genres: law, narratives, psalms, oracles and wisdom literature. Old Testament scholars themselves, the editors present the latest developments in covenantal theology put forth by European, Israeli and North American scholars, and introduce their works with an informative introduction that defines covenant and details why each chapter is included and how they relate to each other. Although this volume includes only contemporary scholars, each author cites numerous works spanning the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries.

As well as looking at Hebrew scripture, many authors trace covenant development in Ancient Israel's contemporaries, and how these nations may have influenced Israel's changing understanding of covenant. Although other ancient writings are referred to, this volume is separated into sections according to Hebrew scripture: the Pentateuch, the Deuteronomistic historical books, prophetic works, wisdom literature, and concluding with Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. These essays are based on Hebrew scripture, so knowledge of Hebrew is an asset for total comprehension of these highly technical essays. Detailed author and scripture indices provide two additional, helpful access points to the information in these essays.

This volume is recommended for graduate or post-graduate studies due to the in-depth subject matter, the technical language and the knowledge of Hebrew required for a full appreciation of the included essays.

Reviewer

Lisa Cutforth-Anderson, Alberta Bible College

Keel, O., & Schroer, S. (2015). *Creation; Biblical theologies in the context of the ancient Near East* (Peter T. Daniels, Trans.). Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 244 pp. \$44.99. ISBN 9781575060934

Authors Keel and Schroer originally published *Schöpfung: biblische Theologien im Kontext altorientalischer Religionen* in 2002 with a second edition in 2008 in the German language. Peter T. Daniels produced this English translation titled *Creation; Biblical theologies in the context of the ancient Near East* in 2015. Except for correcting a few minor errors and adding a selection of more recent items to the bibliography this work is faithful to the 2008 second edition.

Creation cites a number of texts that describe the creation story in various ancient Near East cultures and looks at how these relate to the creation story in the Bible. The first chapter summarizes the creation traditions of several Christian schools of theology as traditions progressed through the twentieth century. The second chapter challenges theologians to look at creation in the light of archaeological findings in the light of faith. The authors discuss numerous connections of local environment to the Hebrew account of creation in chapter 3: sea and rivers, mountains, rocks and stones, farmland, plant and animal world, and the skies. The acts of creation's manifold blessings are analyzed in chapter 4.

Chapter 5 is a theology-rich look at the four ancient Near Eastern approaches to the origin of the world as the authors describe commonalities between the accounts. The world as the manifestation of divine activity is discussed with chapter 6 with the authors making a distinction between the goal of creation and the object of creation. The destruction of creation and the introduction of evil into the world as the result of human failure are examined in chapter 7. The *Book of Job* is central to chapter 8's discussion of God's battle with chaos brought to creation. The purpose for the specific animals mentioned in *Job* chapters 30 and 38 is contrasted with the different animals mentioned in chapter 39 and reflect the role of ancient Near Eastern rulers' role as protector of their people from dangerous and damaging animals. Chapter 9 compares the nature philosophers of Ionia (Thales of Miletus, Anaximander of