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BOOK REVIEW

Stanley N. Gundry, Kenneth Berding, and Jonathan Lunde, eds. *Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Counterpoints: Bible and Theology. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008. 256 pp. Pbk. US\$16.99.

Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament provides a helpful window into some of the debates surrounding the use of Old Testament texts by New Testament authors within an evangelical context. The book has three main components: an introduction, a body composed of the three different views of the use of the OT in the NT with responses to each view by the fellow respondents, and a conclusion.

The introduction by Lunde is intended to guide readers through elements of the history of the debates in the use of the OT in the NT, to put forward the commonly held assumptions of the three evangelical scholars, and to note briefly the major issues presented by the three views represented in the body of the book. He describes these debates in terms of a central issue and five orbiting issues. The central issue is the relationship between the OT and the NT authors' intended meanings. The orbiting issues are the roles of *sensus plenior*, typology, context, and Jewish exegetical methods in the NT authors' use of the OT material, and whether we are able to replicate such exegetical and hermeneutical approaches to the OT today.

The three views are represented by Walter Kaiser, Darrell Bock, and Peter Enns. Kaiser describes his view as "Single Meaning, Unified Referents." He argues that the authors of the OT had a single intent in their writing, which is also the intent of the NT authors' use of the OT text. Kaiser believes that what the OT author had in mind included the future use of his text and thus the referents in the NT are completely consistent and unified

with the original reference in the OT. For example, according to Kaiser, David foresees the messianic promise-plan of God in writing Ps 41:9 and thus is perfectly in harmony with the use of this passage in John 13:18. Bock agrees with Kaiser on the idea of single meaning, but differs in his understanding of the role of context and referents when applied to the NT situation. Bock describes his view as “Single Meaning, Multiple Contexts and Referents.” Bock sees the application of the OT in NT passages as having greater complexity than Kaiser, but agrees that the NT use is not inconsistent with the original intent of the OT authors. Enns disagrees with both Kaiser and Bock that the original meaning of the OT author is maintained in the NT authors’ uses of OT passages. Instead, Enns argues that there is often greater discontinuity between the original passage in the OT and its interpretation in the NT than scholars like Bock and Kaiser will admit. Enns explains these changes made by NT authors as influenced by the Jewish hermeneutical practices of their time, which allowed for greater freedom in using the OT passages than some modern scholars might desire. To each of these views, the other contributors provide critical responses.

One of the strengths of this volume is its accessibility to students and pastors. The goal to present some of the complicated issues of the use of the OT in the NT through three evangelical positions is reached for the most part. The three views span several of the positions held by evangelical scholars more generally, though one might argue that this is a narrower sample set than necessary to be more fully inclusive as to be the “one-stop reference for setting the scene and presenting approaches to the topic” that the back cover promises. However, the format of the Counterpoint series is a helpful one for the question of the use of the OT in the NT, allowing the reader to follow a scholarly debate among the three representative scholars. The introduction provided by Lunde orients the reader to the major issues at hand in a down-to-earth, yet academically grounded way and the conclusion provided by Berding summarizes the major points of each scholar’s arguments in ways that help the reader remember the journey they have travelled

thus far, while also suggesting further paths to continue upon in seeking additional insight.

Despite these strengths, each section of the book has some weaknesses. Regarding the introduction, some of the assumptions presented by Lunde in his introduction as unanimous across evangelical scholarship are by no means universally held by all evangelical scholars. One such issue is what “messianic” meant in the contexts of various parts of the OT corpus and its further interpretation in the Second Temple period. It is not the case that only one view of the term “messiah” existed, or that one even necessarily sees every writer of the NT utilizing all the same “messianic” elements in their depiction of Jesus as Messiah. Recent works such as *The Messiah in the Old and New Testaments* edited by Stanley E. Porter demonstrate the complexity of these issues. Lunde’s introduction could be strengthened by including this issue at the very least in his footnotes.

The difficulties particular to Kaiser are many. Besides his dated sources, particularly in light of insights from Second Temple studies and biblical hermeneutics during this period, Kaiser’s position regarding “single intent” is quite muddled. Is this single intent the intent of the original author within his cultural setting or is it some intent that moves beyond “culture” into some spiritual realm or meta-story that stands beyond any “cultural” elements of the author’s own time? The latter view seems fairly certain based on phrases by Kaiser like “[Paul] has expertly taken off the temporary wrapping and cultural setting in which the teaching was first given to show us the permanent principles that Moses and the Holy Spirit intended all along” (87) which suggests that Moses would be able to step outside of his “temporary wrapping and cultural setting” to see some “permanent principle” in the same way as the Holy Spirit. Yet, one must ask, how does this differ from a *sensus plenior* perspective that Kaiser refutes, except to include the original author in the “fuller sense” in some strange way that would suggest a form of human omniscience in the OT biblical authors?

Bock’s discussion of “single intent, multiple contexts and referents” does an excellent job of integrating the insights of philosophical hermeneutics, but at times his research too is a bit

dated, using work from the late 1970s and 80s, rather than integrating some of the more recent research particularly in the field of Second Temple hermeneutics (an area where Enns' approach is certainly stronger). Enns rightly critiques some of the areas of imprecision in Bock's approach, demonstrating Bock's frequent sweeping statements that tend toward oversimplification or overgeneralization.

In the third essay, Enns also faces some challenges. First, he has a tendency to speak of "Second Temple hermeneutics," but not explain which type he means or how exactly it works for his particular examples, which leads to assertions rather than explanations at times. A further issue with Enns's essay is his lack of engagement with sources outside of the texts themselves. While Enns critiques Kaiser for his lack of integration with recent research, Enns points to recent documents from Second Temple times without providing the reader with sufficient secondary sources to follow through with key areas of the debates around these documents. Thus, Enns's use of primary sources, while helpful to his argument on the side of explaining ancient hermeneutics, should be better grounded in the vast secondary sources, presenting different positions concerning these sources.

Despite these critiques, the book itself meets its goals and usually hits its aim of speaking to its audience in understandable and meaningful ways. This book could serve as an introductory work coming alongside a major textbook within a seminary or Bible college context or might be a helpful read for the pastor or layperson coming from the background of evangelicalism and longing to learn more about the intricate relationship between the Old Testament and the New. No doubt many a reader's eyes will be opened through this work to a new way of looking at the Bible, in its depth and complexity.

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