

In spite of hesitations to fully embrace Leithart's Christological interpretation, his aspiration of bringing the OT to the church as an ongoing source of revelation is refreshing. In a discipline felt by many to have become increasingly distant from the church, theology, and even exegesis, biblical studies is in need of "reform." Like Elijah, Leithart is attempting to address the problem from within, rather than casting aspersions from a distance. For this, as well as for his engaging style and challenging observations, his contribution is welcome.

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Job. By Gerald Henry Wilson. New International Biblical Commentary 10. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007, xiv + 494 pp., \$16.95 paper.

Gerald Wilson (1945–2005) earned degrees from Baylor University (B.A.), Fuller Theological Seminary (M.Div., M.A.), where he studied under William S. LaSor, and Yale University (M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.), where he studied under Robert R. Wilson and Brevard S. Childs. Well known for his work on Psalms, Wilson served as a professor at the University of Georgia, George Fox University, the University of Portland, Western Evangelical Seminary, and finally at Azusa Pacific University. Unfortunately, he passed away after a heart attack on November 11, 2005, shortly after completing this NIBC volume on *Job*.

The approach of the NIBC, which is based on the New International Version, is neither "precritical," "anticritical," nor "critical," but rather that of "believing criticism" (pp. xi–xii). Wilson's introduction (pp. 1–16) is a bit less conservative than Gleason Archer's *Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (rev. ed. [Chicago: Moody, 1994] 503–15). "The core message of the book" is the necessity "to endure faithfully in the face of extreme loss and suffering" (p. 2). This theme, Wilson argues, "is particularly apt to address the questions of the dislocated Diaspora community," and he thus suggests a late date for the book's "final form" (p. 2). Wilson repeatedly raises the question of the book's integrity and entertains various possibilities as to when particular segments may have been composed independently (e.g. pp. 5–11), but in the end concedes that "there is an intentional editorial unity with a cohesive purpose and message in the canonical form of the book" (p. 11).

He contrasts two forms of wisdom literature that "stand in continuing tension": "retributive wisdom" and "pessimistic, questioning wisdom" (pp. 3–5). The former subgenre includes Proverbs and can be "almost naïvely positive." The latter includes *Job* and Ecclesiastes, which "counsels readers that the only way forward is to remain in a deep relationship of absolute dependence on God (what Israel calls 'fear of God'), acknowledging his sovereign freedom and admitting, along with *Job*, that knowing this God transcends (but does not remove!) the questions and doubts that diligent sages uncover in their searching" (p. 4). Pessimistic, questioning wisdom "cautions us against assuming a simple cause-and-effect relationship between our righteousness and the experience of prosperity" (p. 4). *Job*'s "ultimate purpose," however, is not to reject retributive wisdom, but to counsel "that maintaining a faithful relationship with God is the only adequate refuge in a world where suffering and injustice remain unavoidable realities" (p. 5).

The exposition is profitable, readable, and unimposing. It is divided into 167 sections that systematically work through the text verse by verse, averaging 2.3 verses per page. Unfortunately, the 167 sections are artificially parallel with each other and exclude

natural divisions for major and minor sections. Each section usually includes an introductory summary, condensed exposition, and brief "Additional Notes" on technical issues such as textual criticism. Apart from the introduction, the volume includes neither footnotes nor endnotes. Wilson rarely interacts with secondary literature and only sparingly references Hebrew words, which are always transliterated. The work closes with a one-page bibliography and fourteen pages of subject and Scripture indexes.

Dipping into the commentary may help demonstrate its flavor. (1) *Job*'s declaration "in my flesh I will see God" (19:26b) is not "an eschatological reference" to his bodily resurrection, but instead a yearning to see God before he dies so that God will vindicate him (p. 209). (2) *Job*'s assertion, "When he has tested me, I will come forth as gold" (23:10b), does not refer to God's purifying him during a trial. Rather, Wilson rightly argues, it expresses *Job*'s confidence "that such testing will prove him faithful" (p. 260). (3) The prologue proves that "Elihu is wrong about *Job*'s guilt," and God's speech proves that "he is also wrong about God's judgment on *Job*" (p. 13; cf. 357–420). Wilson's strong negative opinion of Elihu is debatable, but relatively little space is devoted to alternative views. (4) God "essentially ignores *Job*'s questions and demands" so that *Job* is forced "to continue (as are we!) with mystery. Neither does God seek to justify his actions or clarify his purposes" (p. 14). (5) Wilson's depiction of God's speeches as "bombastic" is somewhat offensive (pp. 8, 13, 359, 421). (6) God's overwhelming appearance is traditionally understood to be "a rebuke of *Job*'s inappropriate stance over against God," so "God's questions ridicule *Job*'s lack of understanding and power and force him to recant" (p. 420). Wilson disagrees since the prologue, God's speech, and the epilogue affirm *Job*'s blamelessness (pp. 420–21). *Job*'s repentance in 42:6 refers to his changed "opinion about God, his understanding of the deity, rather than repenting of a named sin" (p. 15; cf. 468). This line of argumentation is unpersuasive on many fronts. For example, God specifically rebukes *Job*'s spirit and words (40:2, 8). (7) Wilson gives a memorable personal illustration about *Job*'s response to God's first speech, comparing it to the eye of the storm during a hurricane (p. 449).

A spate of commentaries on *Job* is becoming available, and Wilson's contribution, which is neither devotional nor technical, does not seem to fill a niche. Layton Talbert's *Beyond Suffering: Discovering the Message of Job* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 2007) is a more practical, penetrating exposition, and forthcoming *Job* commentaries include the following: Michael Coogan (*Hermeneia*); Michael Fox (*Old Testament Library*); Richard Hess (*Historical Commentary on the Old Testament*); Tremper Longman III (*Baker Commentary on the Old Testament: Wisdom and Psalms*); Dennis Magary (*NIV Application Commentary*); and Choon-Leong Seow (*Eerdmans Critical Commentary*). Although not a top-tier exegetical commentary, Wilson's volume is an accessible and thought-provoking evangelical reference work.

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Women's Evangelical Commentary: New Testament. Edited by Dorothy Kelley Patterson and Rhonda Harrington Kelly. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006, xxxvii + 993 pp., \$34.99.

Written "by women for women," the *Women's Evangelical Commentary* is a one-volume guide through the NT purposed to mobilize women against the societal pressures of feminism and equip them to study and teach the Bible expositionally. Co-editors