

Among the essays that explore the variegated interpretations of the Simson narratives, readers will find a rather technical study of their Greek translation by Natalio Fernández Marcos, who considers the *Old Greek* a faithful translation of a slightly different *Vorlage* vis-à-vis the traditional Hebrew text; an overview of some important motives in early rabbinic readings of these chapters by Ronit Nikolsky; a discussion of Simson's heroic depiction in the fifth book of Flavius Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, which presents him as yet another brave hero of faith before the intended Roman audience; a German exploration of Simson's presence in the New Testament by Tobias Nicklas, who argues that more of him may be discovered than the single explicit reference in the Letter to the Hebrews suggests; and some comments upon the early Islamic reception of Simson as a saint by Erik Eynikel. The essays on modern interpretations are devoted to the colourful reception of Simson in music from the 16th to the 20th century (Kees Wisse), in European literature from Geoffrey Chaucer, the 'father of English poetry', to the French Romantic poet Alfred de Vigny (Karin Schöpflin), in fine arts ranging from the 17th to the 20th century (Klaas Spronk), and in three 20th century movies (Reinhold Zwick).

Taken together, these essays confront readers with the curious history of a biblical character, which is nicely illustrated by a series of figures in color print. Unfortunately, a few flawed references to the biblical texts themselves have survived the delayed editorial process that gave rise to the volume: the preface repeatedly refers to Judges 16–18 where Judges 13–16 is intended, whereas the essay by Erik Eynikel incorrectly locates the episode of Micah the priest in Judges 16–17 and the so-called outrage of Gibeah in Judges 18–21. These small errors notwithstanding, this volume offers a fascinating walk through both the Simson narratives themselves as well as through their variegated reception throughout the ages.

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Richard J. Bautch and J. Todd Hibbard, eds. *The Book of Isaiah: Enduring Questions Answered Anew: Essays Honoring Joseph Blenkinsopp and His Contribution to the Study of Isaiah*. Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2014. viii + 234 pp. \$35.00, £23.99. ISBN 978-0-8028-6773-5.

Joseph Blenkinsopp is a prolific Hebrew Bible scholar, whose close and enduring engagement with the book of Isaiah is most clearly attested by his three-volume commentary on that book in the Anchor Bible series. The volume under review collects thirteen essays on the book of Isaiah and Blenkinsopp's contributions to its study. The volume opens with Philip Davies's "In Praise of Joe Blenkinsopp," a cordial encomium on Blenkinsopp's personality and scholarship. The remainder of the volume consists of twelve essays, divided into two sections: "exegetical studies" and "thematic essays."

In "An Initial Problem': The Setting and Purpose of Isaiah 10:1-4" (11-20), H. G. M. Williamson argues that the position of Isa 10:1-4 makes sense

as it is and suggests that these verses may be a “later redactional conclusion to a previous section in the book” (20). Rainer Albertz, “On the Structure and Formation of the Book of Deutero-Isaiah” (21-40) offers a reconstruction of the literary development of Isa 40–55, positing three main stages of development (a first edition [DtIE<sup>1</sup>], the addition of the fourth servant song, and a second edition [DtIE<sup>2</sup>]) and various smaller additions (alignments with Trito-Isaiah, a scholastic redaction, idol additions, a great Isaianic redaction, and apocalyptic additions). Klaus Baltzer and Peter Marinkovic, “The Legal Capacity of Women in the Biblical Tradition of the Persian Period” (41-51) argue on the basis of Persian-period biblical texts that women enjoyed considerable legal capacity and independence in that period. In “The Lament in Isaiah 63:7–64:11 and Its Literary and Theological Place in Isaiah 40–66” (52-70), Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer proposes that Isa 63:7–64:11 contains an originally independent lament expressing the same outlook as the voice of Daughter Zion in Isa 49. The authors/editors of Isa 55–66 did not share this outlook and included the lament in their work in order to disprove it. Hans Barstad, “Joseph Blenkinsopp as an Interpreter of ‘Third Isaiah’” (71-82) surveys Blenkinsopp’s commentary on Isa 55–66 and connects the opinions expressed therein with current debates in the study of Trito-Isaiah. Andreas Schuele, “‘Build up, Pass through’ – Isaiah 57:14–62:12 as the Core Composition of Third Isaiah” (83-110) argues that Isa 57:14–62:12 belong to the same redactional layer and form the core of Isa 55–66.

The second section opens with Willem Beuken’s “Major Interchanges in the Book of Isaiah Subserving to Its Umbrella Theme: The Establishment of Yhwh’s Sovereign Rule at Mt. Zion (Chs. 12–13; 27–28; 39–40; 55–56)” (113-132), in which Beuken illustrates how breaks between various parts in Isaiah serve as bridges between these parts and uphold the thematic interests of the book as a whole. Hyun Chul Paul Kim, “Little Highs, Little Lows: Tracing Key Themes in Isaiah” (133-158), surveys the use of metaphors of “high” and “low” in the various parts of the book of Isaiah. Ulrich Berges, “Kingship and Servanthood in the Book of Isaiah” (159-178), shows how the themes of kingship and servanthood are developed throughout the book of Isaiah, arguing that “the post-exilic hope for a new future heir to the throne from the house of David (...) plays no role in the final form of the book of Isaiah” (178). Marvin Sweeney’s “Eschatology in the Book of Isaiah” (179-195) walks the reader through the book of Isaiah and the eschatological perspective it articulates. Patricia Tull, “Consumerism, Idolatry, and Environmental Limits in Isaiah” (196-213) argues for a connection between idolatry and greed in the book of Isaiah and considers this connection in light of current concerns about human consumerism. Finally, Jacob Stromberg’s “Isaiah’s Interpretive Revolution: How Isaiah’s Formation Influenced Early Jewish and Christian Interpretation” (214-232) illustrates how Early Jewish and Christian perceptions and interpretations of the book of Isaiah may be foreshadowed in the literary development of the book itself.

As is to be expected in an edited volume, the quality and potential impact of these essays varies. Rather than evaluating each essay separately, however, it may be more helpful to point out how this volume illustrates current issues in Isaiah scholarship. First, many essays reflect an increased interest in the book of Isaiah as a whole rather than only one of its traditional three parts. This is

particularly true of the essays in the thematic section, but others (Williamson, Tiemeyer) exhibit a similar sensitivity to relations between the various parts of the book. Second, several essays (Kim, Berges, Tull) explicitly address the use of key concepts or metaphors in the book of Isaiah. Thirdly, several essays (Baltzer and Marinkovic, Stromberg) probe the implications of the literary history of the book of Isaiah for our knowledge about the Persian period and traditions developed in that era. This volume offers a neat survey of current scholarship on these issues and offers useful impetuses for further research.

This volume provides many insightful observations to scholars working on the Hebrew Bible, Early Judaism, or the New Testament. Its essays being written by a variety of leading Isaiah scholars, those wishing to familiarize themselves with the current state of Isaiah scholarship will surely benefit from this volume. Theologians from other disciplines may be drawn particularly to the essays in its second part.

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Alexis Torrance and Johannes Zachhuber, eds. *Individuality in Late Antiquity*. Ashgate Studies in Philosophy and Theology in Late Antiquity. Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014. ix + 193 pp. £60.00, \$109.95. ISBN 978-1-4094-4056-7.

The essays in *Individuality in Late Antiquity* focus on a recurring question of the first half of the first millennium: to what extent does the individual figure in the context of the powerful theological, philosophical, and mystical systems that appeared in the centuries following the death of Jesus Christ. The volume's editors, Alexis Torrance and Johannes Zachhuber, appropriately apply Karl Jaspers' descriptive term *Achsenzeit* to mark these centuries as "axial." Varieties of Neoplatonism, sects of Christianity, mystical cults of Hermes Trismegistus, Orpheus, Marsyas, Isis, and others reformulated the personalities of the classical *mythoi* as metaphorical archetypes of human existence.

Jewish monotheism asserted its own distinctiveness in opposition to that of the emerging Christian sects. Gnosticism also offered powerful arguments that could merge with elements of Neoplatonism and Christianity. The movements of the stars and planets as influences upon the destiny of individuals also figured in the mix. Even so, what one invariably notes about all these systems is what makes them axial, since they orbit round individual experience. Each offers a prescriptive path that an individual human being may follow in order to reach a goal that is paradoxically common to the other adherents of that system. This note emerges in each of the volume's nine essays.

Christoph Marksches explores individuality through the authors influenced by Valentinius Gnosticus, founder of the Valentinian Gnostic School, the most influential of the Gnostic sects. Valentinius likely was born in Egypt. He was educated at Alexandria and taught in Rome. Irenaeus and Clement have preserved in their writings much of what is known of his philosophical system, which mainly concerns his protomyth on the nature of the real. For the