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Review of *The Psalms of Lament in Mark's Passion: Jesus' Davidic Suffering*

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Ras Humsah, and the Desert Fringes. Part 2 concludes with a general bibliography. Z. reports all the relevant data on each site explored in the given landscape unit and then describes both the site and its associated pottery. The landscape units of Wadi Malih and Wadi el-Far'ah are particularly interesting, since these served as natural "highways" through the desert fringes and mountains of Manasseh. In the Wadi Malih, thirty-four, mostly tiny sites were found. Wadi Far'ah, on the other hand, is the richest of all the landscape units in terms of settlements, the number of which increase in Iron Age I, which Z. takes to be "an important stage in the settlement of the Israelite tribes" (p. 45).

Part 3, "Appendices and Indices," includes two appendixes and six indexes in about 150 pages. The appendixes are "The Flint Finds," by Haim Winter (pp. 659-737) and "The Coins," by Ya'akov Yannai (pp. 739-66). The indexes include a list of water sources in the territory surveyed in this volume; geographical names; a partial list of features; a list of Arabic villages, including their population; a site index; and a list of sites arranged by period.

The Manassite territory is very important, as it encompasses about 80 percent of the central hill country area. The survey of this region has been ongoing for over a quarter of a century. Four volumes of the survey have been published in Hebrew, with a fifth and final volume to follow. These have produced such a wealth of completely new data that the survey has been called "one of the most important ever undertaken in the land of Israel" (I. Finkelstein, *The Archaeology of the Israelite Settlement* [Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1988] 89). Those who are interested in the settlement history of the land of Israel will welcome access to these data from what was before a largely unknown territory, the eastern valleys and desert fringes of Manasseh. This newest volume in the survey of Manasseh makes a major contribution to the culture and history of the ancient Near East, and will be a valuable addition to the libraries of museums, universities, and scholars concerned with this area of research.

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STEPHEN P. AHEARNE-KROLL, *The Psalms of Lament in Mark's Passion: Jesus' Davidic Suffering* (SNTSMS 142; Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Pp. xiv + 239. \$95.

Stephen P. Ahearne-Kroll's work, based on his University of Chicago Divinity School doctoral dissertation (2005), seeks "to foreground the voice of the suffering David in the four [Psalms of Lamentation (= PssLam)] evoked in Mark's passion narrative and read it through the lens of these four psalms" (p. 1). A.-K. specifies that he is not searching for Marcan "source material" but demonstrating that these psalms are "an integral part of the multifaceted characterization of Jesus and Markan theological concerns" (p. 1).

In the introduction, A.-K. adduces his "key issues" for approaching the use of Scripture in the NT: exegesis, technique, and biblical interpretation in Second Temple Judaism, the motif of the suffering righteous one, and trajectories of interpretation (p. 9). He explains that his methodology includes issues in the study of the PssLam as a sub-genre of the Psalms.

Examining possible references to the PssLam in Mark's passion narrative, A.-K. pro-

vides a close reading for literary structure and rhetorical dynamics to determine the authorial intent behind the LXX of Psalms 21; 40; 41–42; and 68. He then discusses the depiction of Jesus in relation to David in the chapters preceding Mark's passion narrative; the overall portrayal, according to A.-K., is Jesus as a suffering royal figure.

To build his case for the four psalms of individual lament found in the Marcan passion narrative, A.-K. utilizes Ziva Ben-Porat's poetics of allusion: for an allusion to be an allusion and not an echo, readers must proceed through four stages: "1) recognition of the marker, 2) identification of the evoked text, 3) modification of the interpretation of the sign in the alluding text, 4) activation of the evoked text as a whole to form connection between it and the alluding text which are not based on the marker and marked items themselves" (p. 31). These four stages are so narrow that A.-K.'s conclusions appear forced. For example, A.-K. tells us that Joel Marcus includes Psalms 10 (MT) and 37 (MT) within the PssLam genre and thus finds "allusions . . . in Mark's passion narrative" (p. 61). Yet A.-K. dismisses them because he does not judge them to be PssLam. Such disregard is problematic. Might the evangelist have considered them to be PssLam, thereby causing the biblical author to reference them? Might readers like Marcus be reminded of the PssLam when reading the passion narrative, and consequently show Ben-Porat's poetics at work?

Likewise, although Mark 14:57 may be an allusion to MT Pss 27:12 and 35:11, A.-K. sees this reference as a "complex allusion" and eliminates it because "two psalms make it not simple" (p. 61). The explanation of the difference between "complex" and "not simple," "lexical" and "situational," becomes so convoluted that I could not tell whether Pss 88:9 and 69:9 should be considered background to Mark's passion narrative (p. 62). Conversely, A.-K.'s work on the use of Psalms 21; 40; 41–42; and 68 in Second Temple Judaism, particularly in the *Hodayot*, convincingly supports his argument.

In his exegesis of Mark 10:4-52; 11:1-25; 12:1-12; and 12:35-37, A.-K. holds that the evangelist prepares readers for the use of the PssLam in the passion narrative where the four Davidic psalms portray the magnitude of Jesus' suffering and express commensurate pathos. Here returning to Ben-Porat's study of literary allusion, A.-K. "calls into question the supposed necessity for Jesus' death within an apocalyptic framework of meaning" (p. 170). Likewise, he finds that Isaiah 53 is not the best or only model for Jesus' suffering and death in Mark; in Mark 14–15, Jesus is a suffering *royal* figure. A.-K. relies on 11QPs^a 27.2-11, Josephus, and Philo as well as the assumption at the time of Mark's composition that David wrote the Psalms. Several interesting trajectories that flow from but are not essential to A.-K.'s conclusions are then discussed, for example, whether the centurion at the cross confesses Christ's divinity or mocks the crucified one.

Although A.-K. takes pains not to overstate his case—he maintains that the suffering Davidic messiah does not exclude the Isaian suffering servant—I wonder whether his thesis requires such a thorough treatment. Early Christian writings exhibit wide berth in quoting OT and pseudepigraphic literature. The evangelists borrowed heavily from them and intended for readers to recognize connections. So too with PssLam, David, and Christ the royal suffering figure. If A.-K. is not searching for source material, then why hold to Ben-Porat's poetics so unbendingly? Did the ancients limit the PssLam to the four A.-K. follows? Could not the PssLam have entered into the Marcan narrative through the evangelist's stream of consciousness?

Ahearne-Kroll makes a worthy contribution to Marcan research by providing another

vantage point from which to view Jesus' passion. He also offers new insight on the difficult question of the relationship between the lament and the praise/thanks-giving in PssLam. He clarifies that the praise functions as the second half of the bargain; if God rescues the psalmist, the psalmist will praise God always. Finally, he exhibits a NT corpus whose intertextuality is richer and more complex than often assumed.

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MICHAEL F. BIRD and JAMES G. CROSSLEY, *How Did Christianity Begin? A Believer and Non-Believer Examine the Evidence* (London: SPCK; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008). Pp. xviii + 206. Paper \$19.95.

Bird, an evangelical believer, and Crossley, a secular nonbeliever, self-consciously model their dialogical procedure after Marcus Borg and N. T. Wright's *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions* (San Francisco: Harper, 1999). B. and C. differ by examining much broader historical questions about Christian origins. The dialogue is broken into seven parts: (1) the historical Jesus, (2) the resurrection, (3) the apostle Paul, (4) the Gospels, (5) earliest Christianity, (6) reactions by Scot McKnight and Maurice Casey, and (7) final reflections.

A short review permits only a brief, selective critique. Although the treatment of the historical Jesus concentrates on "his claims," C.'s contextual approach is certainly incisive. He stresses social change as a result of urbanism and perceived injustices, as well as reversal of traditional Judean attitudes toward wealth (C. may have in mind Prov 10:22 or 22:4), in accounting for Jesus' historical activity. For instance, "Jesus was following in the footsteps of *I Enoch* in his attacks on the rich" (p. 4). C. does not engage the current archaeological debate about the social character of Galilee. The meaning of Jesus' kingdom proclamation is uncertain both in terms of time of arrival and social content. Jesus disputed not the validity of biblical law but the expanded interpretations of it. Jesus anticipated his death before the temple incident, and it is likely that he held a "martyr theology whereby his death would have some benefit for others" (p. 11). Post-Jesus christological titles developed out of Jesus' usages and mundane Judean meanings. According to C., too much has been attributed to Jesus in the birth of Christianity, and much has been projected onto him in later Christian tradition.

Bird states that historical study related to Jesus is a "necessary task of discipleship" (p. 18). Surprisingly, B. begins with arguments about a literal virginal conception and the literal miracles in the history of Jesus. B. also defends a literal bodily resurrection (see his confession, p. 50). Moreover, if Jesus had a reputation as a doer of mighty deeds, then he must have done them historically, and thus moderns must therefore accept literal miracles. Jesus' deeds furthermore are different from those of Apollonius and other wonder-workers of the time, since "he claims to perform these miracles with a sense of unmediated authority and is not simply a medium for some higher power" (p. 22). B.'s approach needs much more temper by study of christological trajectories and tradition criticism. Neither Q nor Paul knows of a virginal conception; Q is not interested in christology per se (even the Son of Man is distinct from Jesus); and Jesus' message about God's *basileia* does not necessarily have christological entailments.

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