

A good dose of Bownd with God's blessing, expressed accessibly for this generation, would go far toward recovering greater faithfulness in worship—in the church, our families, and in society. Making the best spiritual use of our Lord's Day is both a sign and a means of evangelical and redemptive progress. Those most likely to benefit from Bownd's book must have an open mind, facility in reading older works, and a zeal to glean all that is profitable for the soul.

—D. Scott Meadows

John D. Currid. *Ecclesiastes: A Quest for Meaning*. Welwyn Garden City, UK: EP Books, 2015. 155 pp. Paperback.

John Currid, Professor of Old Testament at the Reformed Theological Seminary of Charlotte, North Carolina, is the author of this new volume in the Welwyn commentary series. Like others in the series, for which Currid also serves as editor, this is not an academic “study” commentary with focus on detailed, verse-by-verse exegesis and analysis. Rather, it is a devotional, thought-by-thought, spiritual reflection on the book of Ecclesiastes.

In the introduction, Currid begins by noting: “There is no book in the Old Testament that is as maligned and criticized as the book of Ecclesiastes” (5). He then contends that this disparagement is due to misunderstanding. According to Currid, “The heart of the book is the problem of man's attempt to find meaning in creation without knowing the Creator” (6). Though some have expressed doubts about equating Qoheleth with Solomon, Currid defends and assumes the traditional view of Solomonic authorship. He suggests that Ecclesiastes can be thematically divided into five parts: (1) The Problem (1:1–11); (2) The Quest (1:12–3:13); (3) Objections (3:14–7:29); (4) Practical Advice (8:1–11:10); (5) Conclusion (12:1–14).

The remainder of the book consists of Currid's analysis of and meditations upon sequential passages within these five sections. Though he provides some verbal and literary analysis along the way (e.g., in his discussion on pp. 51–52 of the poetic structure of Ecclesiastes 3:2–10, he points out the *merismus* pairings of opposites), the real value of the brief commentary is in the theological, devotional, homiletical, and pastoral reflections he shares along the way. Currid

is especially adept at offering simple yet satisfying explanations and insights into difficult-to-interpret verses (cf. his comments on pp. 151–152 on Ecclesiastes 12:3–8 as a figurative description of the aging and dying process, an interpretation in keeping with Reformed commentators of the past like Mathew Henry, Matthew Poole, and Charles Bridges).

Pastors who preach from Ecclesiastes will find this brief devotional commentary brimming with information, insights, and anecdotes to aid in their sermon preparation. I made liberal use of Currid's book while preaching a recent series through the book of Ecclesiastes, and found it to be helpful time and again. If you plan to preach or teach in Ecclesiastes, you will find this small book to be a ready aid.

—Jeffrey T. Riddle

Peter H. Davids. *A Theology of James, Peter and Jude: Living in the Light of the Coming King*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014. 340 pp. Hardcover.

In the series *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, published by Zondervan, Peter H. Davids wrote a valuable volume on the theology of James, Peter, and Jude. Having already written major commentaries on these books, he is well qualified for writing this volume. Placed in their historical order, James, Jude, and 1 and 2 Peter form four of the seven catholic or general epistles. At least two of the catholic epistles (James and 1 Peter)—and possibly the others, with the exception of 2 and 3 John—were letters sent to multiple churches. I agree with Davids that a good hearing is what these letters deserve, for it is true that their voices have been quite often neglected.

Peter, James, and Jude are one in the fact that they speak about Jesus as the Christ, the Anointed One. Sacrificial terminology is most prominent in 1 Peter. The title of “Savior” is found only in 2 Peter and Jude, but their particular christological emphases are built on a common foundation. In all four letters Jesus is confessed as Lord. Davids does not mention it, but I would state explicitly that this title clearly has the overtones of the Old Testament name of YHWH. This is certainly the case when Jesus is called “the Lord of glory” in James 2:1. David rightly remarks that another feature of these four letters is that all view sin as rooted in desire. He notes that a quarter of the uses