

position in Egypt. There is a marked gradual disappearance of God by the end of the Genesis narrative.

The final chapter of the book pulls together all the aspects of the character God and then turns to specific literary perspectives of characterization. Humphreys asserts that while the character God is basically understood through His actions and speech, there are instances where His appearances, feelings, and thoughts come to the fore. As such, He is a “full-fledged” character in Gen 2-36 and an “agent” in Gen 37-50.

The numerous endnotes (257-271) and bibliography (273-281) complete the book and demonstrate the author’s engagement with scholarship.

Several factors commend this book: (1) the logical flow of thought throughout; (2) the emphasis that in Genesis God is not an absentee God as some suppose that He is; (3) the level of engagement with the narrative is generally impressive, especially in the many thought-provoking questions; and (4) besides investigating significant Hebrew words that enrich the scope of his research, Humphreys also studies some concepts against their ANE background. As such, *The Character God in the Book of Genesis* makes a significant contribution to the literary approach of studying the Hebrew Bible.

However, the work is not without some concerns: (1) Genesis was not written for the sake of literature; hence, engaging it in this direction may be disturbing to some people with strong religious convictions; (2) sometimes the author turns from his central focus and dives into details of the narrative, making the character God appear as a minor theme; and (3) at times Humphreys emphasizes the complexity and becomingness of God more than the text requires.

Despite these reservations, the book makes it clear that God is the central figure in Genesis. For this reason, I recommend it for readers interested in literary studies of the biblical narrative. Students of Genesis may find this book valuable.

Daniel Bediako

Strobel, Lee. *The Case for a Creator*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004. 340 pp.

Lee Strobel is a legally trained investigative reporter who documents his spiritual journey from atheism to faith in God. He has written several award-winning books, including *The Case for Faith* (Zondervan, 2000) and *Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry and Mary* (Zondervan, 1993). He has also been the teaching pastor at Willow Creek Community Church in suburban Chicago and Saddleback Valley Community Church in Orange County, California. With such a background one can readily note that Strobel’s writing is done with the intent of presenting compelling evidence in order to prove his case so that the ordinary citizen will be educated and at the least, think seriously about the issue at hand.

Strobel describes himself as once being defiant and combative against claims for creationism and a Creator. Having studied evolutionary theory, he was

convinced that “*The Origin of the Species* trumped the Bible. The critical thinking of scientists overpowered the wishful thinking of theists. To me, the case was closed” (275). But in *The Case for a Creator* he demonstrates a drastic change of mind. In the first two chapters (7-29), he discusses the underpinnings of evolution, such as Darwin’s “Tree of Life” and the Missing Link, indicating that the main point is to deny the existence of a supernatural Creator and elevate natural selection instead. Strobel’s task is to dismantle such ideas and to do this he consults several scientists, all authorities in their fields and engaged in research at leading universities and institutes, with scores of scholarly publications among them. In the next eight chapters, the core of the book, Strobel succeeds in showing, using the qualitative method of research and investigation, that the scientific evidence points unmistakably to the existence of a Grand Designer, God. For example, after examining the “icons of evolution” (35), Strobel indicates that the claims of evolution are weak, illogical, unscientific and even fraudulent. In the words of biologist Jonathan Wells,

I believe science is pointing strongly toward design. To me, as a scientist, the development of an embryo cries out, “Design!” The Cambrian explosion—the sudden appearance of complex life, with no evidence of ancestors—is more consistent with design than evolution. Homology, in my opinion, is more compatible with design. The origin of life certainly cries out for a designer. None of these things make as much sense from a Darwinian perspective as they do from a design perspective (66).

Over and over, in these chapters covering the fields of cosmology, physics, astronomy, biochemistry, biology (especially DNA) and even the emerging, if not enigmatic, field of “the experience of consciousness” (249), the same conclusion comes to the foreground. Finally, in his concluding chapter, “The Cumulative Case for a Creator,” Strobel says with conviction: “I found the evidence for an intelligent designer to be credible, cogent, and compelling” (283). He finds that the depiction of the Creator, in both Scripture and science, is essentially the same. In the end, there are no contradictions between science and faith; they may be fused. They are both founded in God.

The book closes with an appendix summarizing one of Strobel’s earlier books, *The Case for Christ* (Zondervan, 1998) followed by a section (299-305) dealing with provocative discussion questions on *The Case for a Creator*. Although I am disappointed that Strobel does not deal at all with the issue of the age of the earth, even though this was forwarded by a few of the scientists whom he interviewed, several factors recommend this book: (1) it is carefully researched and investigated as evidenced by the extensive endnotes (307-28) and selected bibliography at the end of each chapter; (2) the discussion is lively and intriguing, not dry and wry as one would expect in dealing with material of this sort; and (3) the evidence is compelling.

This book is useful for anyone who has an interest in the relation between science and faith. Though it requires slow, thoughtful reading, even the nontechnical reader can gain much from its insights.

Kenneth D. Mulzac

Vos, Howard F. *Wycliffe Historical Geography of Bible Lands*. Revised edition. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003. viii + 856 pp.

Howard F. Vos is Emeritus Professor of History and Archeology at King's College, New York. An experienced archeologist, traveler and scholar, this prolific author has written or edited about twenty-five books, including *Nelson's New Illustrated Manners and Customs* (Nelson, 1999) and *Archaeology and Bible History* (Zondervan, 1992).

*Wycliffe Historical Geography of Bible Lands* is a revised version of the 1967 edition but the ideals are the same, providing sound, updated material on all the Bible lands: Mesopotamia, Egypt, Palestine, Phoenicia, Syria, Iran, Cyprus, Asia Minor, Greece, Malta, and Italy. Divided into eleven chapters, each thoroughly discussing one of the Bible lands, this book follows a logical pattern; first establishing the territory as a true Bible land and then detailing features such as geography, history, archeological findings, personalities, kingship and kingdoms, cultures and the intermingling of peoples, settlements and cities, politics and governance. Each chapter ends with research notes and a bibliography dealing with issues in that particular land. Thousands of details are brought vividly to light in Vos' vigorous and easy-to-read style.

A very interesting feature of this book is that it covers the entire Bible. It is not infrequent that a shortfall of works of this nature is to concentrate on Palestine (and perhaps Egypt) and focus largely, if not exclusively, on the Old Testament. Vos avoids this pitfall and engages the reader by weaving elements from outside the Bible with those within. This creates a picture where the Bible comes alive with a renewed freshness in its own space and time.

Vos has achieved a comprehensive presentation of the historical geography of the Bible lands by providing a logical way of dealing with each land. Generally, he follows the contours of the Bible in his investigation. Since the earliest events in the OT took place in Mesopotamia, it is dealt with first. Egypt is then canvassed because the Israelites lived there for hundreds of years, even though their forefathers, the Patriarchs, occupied Palestine before the migration to Egypt. Palestine is given great coverage since almost a millennium's worth of events, in both Old and New Testaments, took place there. Since Palestine and Phoenicia enjoyed relations during the United Monarchy, the chapter on Phoenicia is presented before that on Syria, which had political links with the kingdoms in the Divided Monarchy. After the fall of Israel and Judah to the Assyrians and Babylonians, respectively (both Mesopotamian powers), the whole area was