

tiles and the rest combined (pp. 81-82). Bassler seems to prefer the first option that defines "Israel" by "faith" as the common denominator. With this definition, Gentiles who have faith may be considered as part of this Israel, and the rest of Israel who do not have faith are excluded. However, she still leaves the decision to her readers: "Many options: how does one decide?" (p. 84). She follows Charles Cosgrove's conclusion that a text like Rom 9-11 should be examined not based on Paul's view of the future of Israel but on one's presupposition about the future (p. 85).

In the last chapter, "Then Comes the End . . .," Bassler emphasizes the issue concerning the final state of the resurrected ones at the Parousia. She selects four main discussions: 1) the resurrection at the Parousia (1 Thess and 1 Cor), 2) the naked soul? (2 Cor 4:16-5:10), 3) to depart and be (immediately) with Christ (Phil 1:21-24), and 4) the cosmos and the Parousia (Rom 8:18-25). She considers Paul, while projecting the end-time events that he presented within the framework of first-century Jewish thought. The result of Paul's approach, according to Bassler, is "a rich complexity that stimulates reflection" (p. 96). Bassler concludes that for Paul, resurrection is certain but how God will do it remains mysterious (p. 96).

This book is small in size but with great insights. Its content is well represented in the title. It not only introduces main Pauline theological themes but also stimulates the curiosity of careful readers to dig deeper. Bassler's art of asking questions has navigated her readers to follow her discussion from one step to the next. This book is highly recommended for New Testament students as a starting point for further study in Pauline theology.

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Skip MacCarty, *In Granite or Ingrained? What the Old and New Covenants Reveal about the Gospel, the Law, and the Sabbath* (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 2007), xv + 344. ISBN 978-1-883925-57-4. Softcover. \$19.99

Skip MacCarty's book is an attempt to find an answer to the question of the relationship between the Old and New Covenants, especially between the Sinai covenant and New Covenant. As the author explains, his book is written as a protest against the point of view that the Sinai covenant, and the Ten Commandments as part of this covenant, were given only to the Israelites and Jesus abolished both of them (xii).

Although the book is written in popular language and contains many examples of imagery to clarify some issues, the author uses an impressive bibliography and quotes from many authoritative sources. Thus the book combines the solidity of an academic work with the simplicity of a popular publication.

At the outset, MacCarty reveals his presuppositions. He considers the basis of all of God's covenants with humanity to be love. Every biblical covenant in human history is an adaptation of the "everlasting covenant" which exists between the Persons of the Trinity, grounded in their love relationship (5, 10).

The method of MacCarty's study is very simple. He tries to understand the essence of the New Covenant, or as he calls it, the DNA of the covenant. Pursuant to this purpose, he analyzes two passages which seem to most fully characterize the New Covenant: Jer 31:31-34 and Heb 8:8-12. Drawing on his analysis, MacCarty identifies four essential characteristics, or "DNA markers" of the New Covenant: (a) *sanctification*, "the righteousness from God imparted to the believer" (29); (b) *reconciliation* – the goal of every covenant God made with humanity (30); (c) *orientation to mission* – to spread the knowledge of God (31); and (d) *justification* – God removes sins and gives believers the right to have access to Him (32).

Having identified these markers, MacCarty tries to find them in the Old Testament covenants. He concludes that the Sinai covenant completely fits the characteristics of the New Covenant: sanctification (Lev 11:45; 19:2); reconciliation (Lev 26); mission orientation (Ex 19:5-6); and justification (Exod 34:1-7).

Such a conclusion inevitably provokes another question: if the Sinai covenant is a "New Covenant" then what is the difference between the Old and the New Covenant? The author gives a simple but convincing answer. According to MacCarty, when the biblical authors speak about the Old or New Covenant there is no differentiation between various historical eras, but only between different religious experiences of the covenant people. Whereas the Old Covenant experience was expressed in rebellion against God's law or in an attempt to consider salvation in a legalistic way, the New Covenant experience implies salvation by faith when the believer lives in accord with God's laws because they are written on the individual's heart. As an example of this, the author analyzes the dichotomy between the two covenants mentioned in Gal 4 (94-95). So, it is possible to live in the Old Testament era and receive the New Covenant experience (Heb 11) and to live in the New Testament era and fall into the Old Covenant experience (Gal 1:6, 7).

Following this, the author discusses the most debated issues about the covenants. The relationship between Love and Law is examined in chapter 8. MacCarty denies the claim that whereas the Old Covenant was based upon Law, the New Covenant was founded on Love. He argues that Love has always been the basis of the Law and finds many arguments supporting his position. For example, there are plenty of references to God's love in the book of Deuteronomy, the book, which has traditionally been considered as a collection of laws (145-146). On the other hand, as MacCarty observes, in spite of the fact that the New Covenant is the Covenant of Love, there are many commandments in the New Testament and some of them imply very severe punishment in case of violations (155-158). Thus, the author shows that it is wrong to speak about one covenant as the Covenant of Love and about another as the Covenant of Law.

The question about the signs of the covenants is considered in the chapter 9. Special attention is paid to circumcision and the Sabbath as covenant signs. MacCarty believes that circumcision in the New Covenant era was replaced with the ceremony of the baptism (176). He draws this conclusion from the fact that both ceremonies are initiation rituals for entering God's covenant. The Sabbath in the New Covenant era, according to the author, is still as valid as in Old Testament times because it remains the sign of the covenant rest (219). The author finishes his work with a discussion of practical issues as to how believers can internalize either the Old or New covenant experiences in daily life (chapter 12).

This book is a great contribution to the understanding of the relationship between the Old and New covenants. The author not only seeks to explain some embarrassing questions, but he seeks to build a theory which could be applied to many difficult issues related to the doctrine of the covenant(s). The question, which remains unclear is this: if the Old Testament covenant was already the "New Covenant" why do we need the New Testament New Covenant? The Bible rather portrays the Old Covenant as contrasting with the New Covenant (Heb 8:13), instead as "one unified, developing covenant" (41). But, probably this is a theme for another book.

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Communicating Christ in Asian Cities, by Paul De Neui, editor. William Carey Library, 2009. Pp. x + 297. ISBN 978-0-87808-007-6. Paperback. \$18.00.