

*Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period.* By Richard N. Longenecker. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids/Vancouver: Eerdmans/Regent College, 1999, xli + 238 pp., \$20.00.\*

First issued in 1975, Longenecker's classic treatment on the NT writers' use of Scripture in its ancient context has served a generation of scholars and students supremely well. With the original work long out of print, this second edition is particularly welcome. The extensive new preface covers topics such as "Quotations or Allusions"; "The Distribution of Biblical Quotations"; "The Fulfillment Theme in the New Testament"; "Is There a *Sensus Plenior* in the New Testament's Use of the Old?" "Can We Reproduce the Exegesis of the New Testament?" and "The Relation of the Testaments." Also, the bibliography has been updated and some references added to alert readers to significant recent developments.

Much has happened since the initial publication of Longenecker's seminal work. Richard Hays contributed his *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (1989), drawing from M. Fishbane not only the term "echoes" but also the method of "inner-biblical exegesis" and the primacy given to "intertextuality." Responding to Hays, Longenecker expresses skepticism owing to the lack of necessary controls and constraints, preferring to focus on explicit quotations and verifiable allusions. In an important reiteration of a principle undergirding the first publication of this work, Longenecker contrasts innerbiblical with extrabiblical exegesis and reaffirms his commitment to compare the NT's use of Scripture with that of other contemporary Jewish groups (including the sect at Qumran).

Under the heading "Can We Reproduce the Exegesis of the New Testament?" Longenecker returns to his interaction with Hays. While Hays speaks of a "bold hermeneutical privilege" that calls us to "create new figurations out of the texts that Paul read . . . perhaps discerning correspondences that did not occur to Paul himself," and "to perform imaginative acts of interpretation" (xxxvii, citing Hays, *Echoes* 187–190), Longenecker believes that our task is (1) to understand via historical-critical exegesis the essential convictions, central proclamation, and living ethos of the earliest Christians; (2) to try to discern how these convictions were variously contextualized; and (3) to attempt to recontextualize those matters in the contemporary circumstances encountered by the Church.

To name but one more issue that has been the subject of extended debate in recent decades, that is, the question of whether or not there is a *sensus plenior* in the NT, Longenecker concurs with D. Moo's assessment in the affirmative.

I am certain that the second edition of this nurturing, well-synthesized work will be to a new generation of Biblical scholars and students what the first edition was to the previous one. A guild characterized increasingly by fragmentation, atomistic exegesis, and trendiness can ill afford to be without the sure and guiding hand of one who epitomizes a holistic, broad-based, and judicious approach to a field of inquiry that owing to its complexity places great demands on the one who seeks to understand Biblical revelation in its original cultural framework.

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