

this matter, W. seems to take on the role of apologist for John's christology: "Christ inflicted great suffering in hopes of repentance not because he wanted even Jezebel to undergo final judgment at the eschaton" (p. 104). One does not learn from this commentary that "Jezebel" may have been no more problematic than Lydia, the seller of purple goods (Acts 16:14). If W. is correct that "the very heart of apocalyptic is the unveiling of secrets and truths about God's perspective on a variety of subjects" (p. 34), should a socio-rhetorical commentary not address the thorny ethical problem that arises with the text's rhetorical stance (in the proclamations in Revelation 2–3) that makes John's perspective into Christ's perspective? The problem here goes beyond the immediate "behind the text" debate regarding the possible views within the Jesus movement regarding meat that had been sacrificed at a local temple. At issue is whether a hermeneutic of trust, such as that implied in W.'s commentary, adequately deals with the Jezebel material. (Regarding a hermeneutic of trust vis-à-vis a hermeneutic of suspicion, see Richard Gaillardetz, *By What Authority? A Primer on Scripture, the Magisterium, and the Sense of the Faithful* [Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003] 26). A better treatment of the Jezebel material, and still the best introductory rhetorical analysis of John's Apocalypse, is Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's *Revelation: Vision of a Just World* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991).

Without excusing these caveats, overall this commentary does a fine job of explicating a difficult biblical book in a way that is accessible to the intended audience.

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JEAN ZUMSTEIN, *L'Évangile selon Saint Jean (13–21)* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2007). Pp. 328. Paper €39.90.

Jean Zumstein, a well-known specialist in Johannine literature, is a professor of NT at the faculty of theology in the University of Zurich. He has published, with Labor et Fides, *La communauté johannique et son histoire* (1990), *Miettes exégétiques* (1992), and *Le protestantisme et les premiers chrétiens* (2002).

Zumstein explains that he begins with John 13–21 (a second volume will address chaps. 1–12) because he finds the Gospel's hermeneutical key in the farewell discourses, whose principal themes appear in 13:31–38. For an introduction to John's Gospel, he recommends his own article on John in Daniel Marguerat (ed.), *Introduction au Nouveau Testament: Son histoire, son écriture, sa théologie* (MDB; 3rd ed.; Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2004) 345–70; see my review in the online *Review of Biblical Literature* (2005).

According to Z., although John 1–12 describes the revelation of Christ before the world, chaps. 13–21 evoke Christ's revelation to his own. John's solemn style echoes both liturgy and poetry, even though the Fourth Gospel is the least rich of the canonical Gospels in vocabulary. Z. also finds the Gospel of John marked by a profound, sagacious, and extraordinarily original interpretation of Jesus.

There are two clearly defined levels in this volume. The commentary proper, which follows the Gospel, concentrates on interpretation. Complementary notes present text-critical comments, historical information, literary analysis, and so on, and include different positions defended in Johannine scholarship. Z. states that, at times, it is almost impossible

to reconstruct the pre-Johannine tradition (p. 218). The conclusion gives a synthesis of John's exegetical density. Z. insists that John's primary intention is not to produce an objective report but to elaborate a theological interpretation of the events. For example, he argues that the death of Jesus is marked not by the absence but by the presence of God and so by divine solicitude (p. 156).

This is the best commentary on John that I have read, and it indicates that French exegesis remains at a very high level. I have always believed that students should be required to read a commentary in a language different from their own. There seems to be an affinity between the French language and the spiritual dimension of John. What I like about this commentary is that it is marked by the simplicity of a true master. For example, Z. emphasizes the quintessence of Johannine theology—the fundamentals of its theology, christology, and soteriology (p. 68). He insists that one must attend to the context of the key text, 14:4-11, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." The truth remains exterior to the disciple and is inseparable from love. At such points I often wished that Z. had given more extensive treatment to the theological problems that have so often surfaced in the history of interpretation. He does note (p. 296 on John 20:30-31) that the Gospel is not fundamentally polemical but that it aims to comfort the Christians and in particular the Jewish Christians in the face of Jewish objections. He finds rather improbable many of the hypotheses that have been raised during the history of research, including the idea that John was a missionary Gospel, or one aimed at Hellenistic pagans, Samaritans, Jews, or Diaspora Jews.

The bibliography includes some of the best English-speaking scholars (including John Ashton, Raymond E. Brown, R. Alan Culpepper, D. P. Duke, Robert T. Fortna, J. Louis Martyn, Francis J. Moloney, Mark Allan Powell, Mark W. G. Stibbe). Each section has a carefully selected list of articles. I would have liked more indexes, such as names and biblical passages, and more attention to the patristic writings and other older commentaries, as well as to feminist scholarship and liberation perspectives.

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