

Teresa Chai and Dave Johnson, eds., *The Old Testament in Theology and Teaching: Essays in Honor of Kay Fountain* (Baguio City, Philippines: Asia Pacific Theological Seminary Press, 2018). vii + 192 pp. \$14.99 paper, \$2.99 ebook.

The editors, Teresa Chai and Dave Johnson, of this volume have offered a welcome *Festschrift* to honor Kay Fountain who had previously served as a professor and the Academic Dean of Asia Pacific Theological Seminary, along with serving the wider Church and academy of the regions of Asia and the Pacific. As with all *Festschriften*, the essays are uneven due to variant authors and foci for each contribution, but each relate in some fashion to the life and ministry of Fountain.

In chapter one, Adelina Ladera offers a historical-biographical sketch for Fountain. Chapter two provides reflections both surveying and indicating potential construction toward the idea of Asian theological education by Tham Wan Yee. Chapter three, co-authored by Itzhaq Shai, Chris McKinny, Benjamin Yang, and Deborah Cassuto, walks through a number of elements related to the archeological background of Tel Burna (of which Fountain has been a part during numerous seasons of excavation). Chapters four through nine focus on various texts of the Old Testament in ways connected to the research and teaching of Fountain: two chapters on reading Esther (Tim Bulkely reading Esther as a man; followed by Jacqueline Grey reading Esther as a response to marginalization), an anthropological perspective on the Gideon encounter with the “angel of the LORD” (by Dave Johnson), two chapters on the function of the Spirit (the first by Wonsuk Ma examining the Spirit in the lives of Samson and Saul; the second, by Lian Sian Mung exegeting the Spirit in Isaiah 11:1-5), and finally noting the place of wisdom in the book of Daniel (by Tim Meadowcraft). The volume concludes with a chapter by Teresa Chai considering briefly an Old Testament pedagogy on mission.

The contribution of a brief biographical sketch is helpful for orienting readers who might or might not be familiar with Fountain and offers a general orientation toward the reasons for the dedicatory contributions that follow. Tham Wan’s chapter on Asian theological education examines a number of the models in relation to theological education that have been variously associated with locations (Athens, Jerusalem, Berlin, Geneva). As a Pentecostal pastor-scholar (and the current president of Asia Pacific Theological Seminary) he proposes a prophetic model that is “teleological” following most closely to the so-called “Jerusalem” model of being missional (which is accidentally mis-

labeled as “Athens” in the bottom left box of Figure 1 on page 29). His proposal includes numerous suggestive considerations for application as theological education faces an uncertain future globally. His contribution provides perhaps the most pragmatic chapter of the volume and should be a required preliminary read for those involved in higher education globally to give due consideration to the challenges of contextualized theological education. His work reminds the reader that understanding one’s context is not a simple matter, but becomes an important (oft-neglected) matter as globalization expands in ways more likely to monoculturate with a dominant cultural identity driving theologizing and theological education.

The multi-authored archeological contribution is a welcome addition for a Pentecostally oriented project as it testifies to the work of Fountain to enter this field herself that has not often found many Pentecostals engaged. Perhaps just such an article (and her persistent involvement in digs in Israel) might inspire a generation of Pentecostal and Asian scholars toward such endeavors.

The two chapters offering readings of Esther are provocative in the most positive sense. Considerations of reader sensitivities and orientations should be forefronted as both chapters have done well. Drawing, as each does, upon some level of influence by the doctoral work of Fountain, both authors provide re-hearings of the story of Esther from what might be considered the margins though actually listening to the heart of this text (per their readings).

Johnson’s essay on the calling of Gideon provides a unique perspective in light of both ancient and contemporary cultures, which regard spirits and divine guidance by variant embodied means to be part of the experience of life. He rightly notes that numerous western readings have tended to explain away the more spiritual elements of this account, while many Majority World contexts consider such experiences to be normalized in some fashion. A weakness of this essay consists in the use of the generic “God” (100-101, 108, 112-113) where the use of Yahweh or LORD would have been preferable (and is unevenly specified only at certain points: 105-108, 112) to distinguish that the god spoken of is the specific God of Israel in the narrative of Gideon (in contrast to the gods Asherah and Baal who are both mentioned in Judges 6 and contrasted with the power of Yahweh as the national deity of Israel).

This is a similar problem in Ma’s chapter on the Spirit in relation to Samson and Saul where “God” is offered when “Yahweh” (or some indication of Israel’s specific covenantal deity follows the biblical text more closely) should be used, particularly in reference to the “Spirit of the LORD”. It is possible that Ma has also misunderstood the function of the Spirit upon Samson and Saul to provide potentiality for moral

transformation even as Saul's "heart/spirit" is "new" upon his Spirit endowment. He contends that this moral element seems lacking, but it is suggestive in an overall reading of the function of the Spirit in Judges (see my forthcoming, *A Theology of the Spirit in the Former Prophets: A Pentecostal Perspective* [Cleveland, TN: CPT Press], particularly chapters four and eight). What is most helpful in Ma's contribution is his fresh reading of these two characters in relation to the Spirit which is often neglected in wider pneumatological studies and typically relegated to offering only secondary (at best) contributions to any Christian construction of pneumatology.

The other pneumatological contribution, by Mung, provides an intriguing and helpful reading of the function of the Spirit in Isaiah 11:1-5. The poetic elements and inter-textual readings provide a background that illuminates the ways (both charismatic and non-charismatic) that the Spirit is described as functioning particularly in relation to the one anointed. Depending upon the reader's Hebrew level this chapter could be helpful (it provides and discusses Hebrew at various levels extensively throughout) or difficult (as some terms are not translated and those not having sufficient acumen in Hebrew might not appreciate the extent of the arguments fully).

Meadowcraft's connection between the "divine life" and "wisdom" in Daniel provides a further development of Daniel as a book first-and-foremost concerned with wisdom. It hones this focus by inviting reflections upon the ways in which Daniel (and several characters in Daniel) are participants in the divine life as ways of wisdom embodied.

Finally, Chai's brief survey of the missional nature of Old Testament pedagogy is a helpful introduction, but perhaps too brief in that it does not properly engage many portions of the Old Testament and the portions it does engage are only in a cursory fashion. This still remains a helpful beginning toward reflecting on the ways in which the trajectory of the Old Testament has always pointed toward God's cosmic redemption.

The most likely readers to benefit from this volume would be theological educators and students of the Old Testament, though well-studied pastors and students would also benefit from the contributions. Such a volume provides a fitting tribute to a life given for the work of the kingdom in training future workers and faithfully seeking to hear and pass along the Scriptures in theological reflection.

Reviewed by Rick Wadholm Jr.