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***Israel's Prophets and Israel's Past: Essays on the Relationship of Prophetic Texts and Israelite History in Honor of John H. Hayes***

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This collection of essays, falling into three parts, is written in honor of John H. Hayes by his friends, colleagues, and former students. It is primarily an Anglo-Saxon endeavor, with contributors stemming from the U.S.A., Canada, England, and the Netherlands. The articles all investigate as to what extent the prophetic writings reflect actual historical situations. Hayes's own approach is affirmative: almost every aspect of a prophetic text needs to be understood as a direct reflection of a historical situation, and many of the prophetic books are rhetorical compositions connected with specific political-historical circumstances. The essays in this collection interact critically with Hayes's views from a variety of perspectives and using diverse methodologies.

The first part looks at the prophetic writings through a historical perspective. J. M. Miller comments on his own collaboration with J. H. Hayes, with particular focus on their joint two editions of *The History of Ancient Israel and Judah*. The reader is given insight into the pros and cons of joint authorship. Miller further provides a brief discussion of the legitimacy of the "history of Israel" genre.

M. Bishop Moore provides a methodological discussion as to the use of prophetic books in writing a history of ancient Israel: To what extent can prophetic books be considered historical, what specific information about the past do they contain, and how can that information be used correctly by scholars today writing about Israel's past?

E. Ben Zvi demonstrates the existence of two, largely opposite, tendencies within the prophetic literature. Most texts betray a conscious tendency to dehistoricize the writing

for the didactic purpose of conveying eternal truths about the relationship between YHWH and Israel. Only a few cases, such as Haggai and Zech 1–8, present themselves as anchored firmly in defined historical circumstances.

Finally, B. E. Kelle argues that the presentations in the Hebrew Bible of the Israelite prophets bring Greek political orators to mind. As the latter were involved in the politics of their time, so, by analogy, we should expect the Israelite prophets' speeches to have shaped and probably also distorted the political events that they were referring to for the sake of persuading their audience of a particular viewpoint.

The essays in the second part of the volume look at the prophetic books in their historical contexts. The first five articles are devoted to issues pertaining to the book of Amos.

G. M. Tucker offers a useful overview of the various attempts at dating the book of Amos. He looks at the possible allusions in the book to historical events and draws the tentative conclusion that Amos the prophet was active in the mid-eighth century B.C.E. On the same topic of dating, M. Z. Brettler discusses the issues of redaction, history, and redaction history in recent scholarship of the book of Amos, with focus on Amos 2:4–5. He argues that, given the likelihood that the book of Amos was created over a period of time, we have to differentiate between the date of each of the oracles and the date of the book. P. R. Davies provides yet another perspective as he argues that the textual evidence in the book of Amos suggests a fifth-century dating for the book as a whole, written to justify the triumph of Jerusalem over Bethel and the triumph of Judah over Israel.

J. G. McConville investigates the concept of "Israel" in Amos 7–9. He argues that the rhetorical function of the term "Jacob" (7:1–3, 4–6) is to contrast the notion of a historical "Israel" with the, from Amos's perspective, false notion of Israel that prevailed among his contemporaries. Finally, O. Borowski's short article argues that the Hebrew phrase מִזְרֶק (Amos 6:6) denotes a type of ring kernos unearthed at several archaeological sites in Israel.

The next two essays explore issues in the book of Hosea. S. A. Irvine argues that the metaphors used in Hos 13:15a allude to the political circumstances in Israel during the years 721–719 B.C.E. S. E. Haddox argues that Hosea's oracles, as they criticize the political leaders for offending YHWH through their political activities, are firmly rooted in a specific historical situation. Hosea's political rhetoric serves both to feminize these leaders and to emasculate them.

On a related issue, P. L. Day investigates the idea of "whoring" as a metaphoric vehicle for foreign alliances in Ezek 16:1–43, and she demonstrates that a metaphor need not have a direct counterpart in real life in order for an author to use it effectively.

The two following articles deal with the book of Isaiah. J. J. M. Roberts investigates the Egyptian and the Nubian oracles in Isaiah. After discussing the various possible historical circumstances that these rather vague oracles could refer to, he concludes that they are best dated to the reign of Hezekiah.

Along similar lines, B. A. Strawn explores the relationship between Herodotus's account of Sennacherib's defeat at Pelusium and the biblical account of the deliverance of Jerusalem (*Hist.* 2.141; 2 Kgs 19:35, etc.). He finds that the two accounts record a similar event and that they have structural similarities. After discussing the possible directions of influence, he argues that one of Herodotus's sources must have been akin to the narrative that is preserved in 2 Kings.

Three essays explore the historical contexts of the book of Ezekiel. M. A. Sweeney looks at Ezek 37:15–28 about the unification of Ephraim and Judah under Davidic rule. Sweeney suggests that the oracle reflects Josiah's reform, a reform that would have formed the temple education of the young Ezekiel. After the destruction of Jerusalem, the ideals of the reform receive new meaning, reflected in Ezek 37, as they are now understood in relation to the restoration of Jerusalem.

J. Galambush argues the battle between YHWH and God, as depicted in Ezek 38–39, portrays YHWH's final battle over Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia. She further looks at the reception history of these chapters and notes that many readers prefer to leave Gog's identity shrouded in mystery. She suggests that, as these readers believe in an omnipotent God, the need for God to destroy a historical Gog of Ezekiel's time becomes irrelevant.

A. W. Hunt suggests that, contrary to the common opinion that Ezek 40–48 is concerned with the supremacy of the Zadokites, Ezek 44:6–7 is a textual allusion to 23:38–39 that focuses on the role of foreigner in the envisioned society of Ezek 40–48.

B. Becking explores the relationship between the portrayal of Zerubbabel in Zech 3–4 and postexilic history. He interprets Zech 3–4 as a literary subunit, forming the kernel of the vision report, and, on this basis, suggests that the vision report gives the impression that Zerubbabel was a real-time character.

The essays in the third part of the book explore the prophets in later reception. C. A. Newsom explores the characteristics of the "historical résumé" (a schematic narrative that recounts the major events in history) in the literature of Second Temple Judaism. As these résumés assume the familiarity of the audience with the biblical events, they do not seek to convey information. Rather, their chief aim is to establish patterns of the past by which the future can be predicted.

D. L. Petersen argues, contrary to the common scholarly opinion, that Moses was not a model for prophets in ancient Israel. The references to Moses' prophetic office in Deut 18:15–22 and 34:10–12 diminish the prophetic office and subordinate all prophets to the figure of Moses, the promulgator of the Torah.

Finally, M. J. Buss provides an extensive overview of research on prophecy as a religious and sociological phenomenon, typical of but not restricted to ancient Israel. He concludes that Israelite prophecy is not altogether unique and that some aspects of Israelite prophecy are best interpreted as a phenomenon connected to a certain stage of social history. The book ends with a select bibliography of John H. Hayes.

The book provides a fascinating kaleidoscope of different methods, and the result is, as could be expected, polyvalent. The many different methods and ways of looking at the issue of extracting historical information from the prophetic writings provide valuable insight into epistemology. As such, it is well worth reading. At the same time, as to the specific subject matters, the reader gains little new knowledge. Rather the opposite! For example, this volume argues for both an eighth- and a fifth-century dating of the book of Amos. Furthermore, some of the essays do not provide much in terms of fresh research. In particular, Hunt's article is little more than a repetition (unacknowledged) of chapter 5 of her monograph *Missing Priests* (LHBOTS 452; London, T&T Clark, 2006). Finally, there are some technical oddities. For example, the font size on line 5 of page 173 is smaller than that of the surrounding text.