

are suffered, but what kind of [person] suffers them.' What sort of people will we be when we suffer, as we surely will? Guthrie encourages us to get our perspective right so that, when suffering comes, we can respond in faith and walk humbly with our God.

Though my son is now fully recovered, I am thankful for the wisdom of these chapters which, I pray, will prepare me to face the next challenge as God would have me do.

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**TO PLOUGH OR TO PREACH: Mission Strategies in New Zealand  
During the 1820s**  
**Malcolm Falloon**

London: Latimer Trust, 2010 75pp £3.99pb ISBN: 9780946307739

It's nearly 200 years since Christian mission began in New Zealand. Malcolm Falloon is writing in view of this anniversary and with two groups in his sights. Firstly, and explicitly, contemporary historians who downplay or simply dislike the early missionaries because they view their work as simplistic or coercive. Secondly, and implicitly, contemporary Christians who might prefer to prioritise social change over gospel proclamation—hence the title.

The first group is dealt with quite swiftly in the introduction. The paradigm of missionaries being 'as destructive as bullets' is already being reassessed by historians who view missionaries just like any other person engaged in relationships with indigenous people—relationships which mutually influence one another—and who are not 'vehicles of "cultural imperialism"'. (At this point it might have been good to make use of Don Richardson's work. Baldly stated, he argues that Westerners were going to corrupt these societies with contact anyway, and so it is far better for other-person-centred, Christ-glorifying Western missionaries to be there.) Falloon also addresses this paradigm implicitly through the rest of his chapters as he tries to show how the missionaries were more concerned for the wellbeing of the indigenous peoples, the Maori, than the many traders in the area.

The missionaries' desire for the Maori to be better off is really where the book focuses. In essence, it concerns whether betterment precedes or proceeds conversion and therefore where missionaries should put their resources. Is civilisation the herald or handmaiden of the Gospel? Is conversion a consequent or prerequisite for any lasting form of civilisation? Should you prioritise ploughing (to create civilisation) or preaching (to create conversions)?

Putting aside questions of how civilisation is defined and the ethnocentric assumptions which can go with this, these are important questions which Christians in every age have to address. They are part of a package of issues surrounding Christ and culture, and we see them played out within churches (with ongoing discussions about the right/wrong (delete as appropriate) place of social action and proclamation) and without (as Islam, for example, critiques Christianity for the failings of Western civilisation), as well as in the 'wanted' pages of mission agency magazines because they readily show an agency's priorities.

Falloon points out that these questions surrounding civilisation and conversion in New Zealand reflected a wider debate in missionary circles of the early 19th Century. Falloon shows how this debate was played out in 1820s New Zealand by focusing on two men: Samuel Marsden (the Senior Chaplain to the New South Wales' penal colony, with oversight for New Zealand) and Henry Williams (Church Mission Society missionary and local leader in New Zealand). Marsden was heavily influenced by the 'evangelical humanitarianism' of William Wilberforce, as were other missionaries like David Livingstone. Whilst one could be civilised and not a Christian, an uncivilised Christian did not exist. This meant that the early strategy among the Maori was trying to make them 'civilised' through helping them with agriculture and trade. Preaching was done, but teaching people Christ was not of first importance.

Henry Williams came on the scene in 1823 and argued for a change of approach. His call fell on hearing ears both in New Zealand and back in CMS HQ in London because little fruit had been seen with the strategy so far. Falloon includes as an appendix Williams' letter to London critiquing Marsden's approach: too much time was engaged in temporal things, too much agriculture led to surpluses and trade in muskets, the Maori were unsure of missionaries' motives, and the missionaries did not know the people well enough to teach them Christ. Williams advocated language learning, not just for trade but for proclamation and Bible translation. As language analysis could mean working privately on grammar and vocabulary, he also urged constant visitation. He was also concerned with education, and bringing girls into schools would save them from the ravages of the traders and sailors.

Wonderfully, Marsden did not take Williams' critique and new approach badly, but humbly and was satisfied with the mission's progress. Indeed, by mid-1827 there were 400 copies of translated Scripture portions, 120 children being schooled and conversions (where there had been none). The Maori now knew that missionaries' visits to them were not for trade and so some lost interest, but others were attracted to the message especially when missionaries used Maori concepts to explain biblical truths.

Falloon admits that his 'to plough or to preach' dichotomy is simplistic and one which neither Marsden nor Williams would have been happy with (which makes me wonder about the wisdom of having it as a title). For example, for all Williams' concern to teach Maori Christ in a contextualised way, he also cared for abused Maori girls through schools. However, it does show that then, under God, as his word was taught in an understandable way and Christians shared their lives alongside God's word, much fruit resulted and the church in New Zealand moved from ploughing to harvesting. Might it be so here too.

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**THE PSALMS AS CHRISTIAN WORSHIP: A Historical Commentary**

Bruce K. Waltke, James M. Houston, with Erika Moore

Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2010    xii + 626pp    £18.99pb  
ISBN: 9780802863744

This book is a treat. Bruce Waltke has been teaching the Psalms for more than five decades. His textbook on Hebrew syntax is a recognised reference work, and his magisterial *Theology of the Old Testament* was published a year before this volume. Alongside, we have James Houston's expertise in the history and theology of spirituality, 'with' Erika Moore's chapter on the Second Temple Period. This is not chiefly a commentary, nor a formulaic *how to*; it is a *how they did* and a *why we must profit*.

Part I is much broader than the Psalms, and offers a superb history of exegesis from the apostles to the present day. While it is focussed on the Psalms, most of these 90 pages apply to all of the Bible. We are given a tour of how the presuppositions of exegesis have changed over the centuries, from the allegories of Augustine to Calvin's plain sense, on to the apostasy of post-Enlightenment criticism, and to more recent signs of sanity. Here is a strong apologetic for the authority and purpose of God's word and for accurate exegesis that is rooted in historic orthodoxy. They strive to provide an evangelical 'accredited' method of reading the Bible which employs typology, Biblical Theology ('the canonical-Messianic approach') and more, alongside grammatico-historical exegesis. Their brief description of the shape of the Psalter as a deliberately arranged book will be invaluable to any reader of the Psalms.

Refreshingly, they tell us that while the allegorical method was indefensible, it produced orthodox results because it was employed by believers and is much to be preferred to the scientifically rigorous methods of modern scholars who are in rebellion against the author of the Bible. While insisting that even such scholarship can help believing scholars,

they are concerned by the lack of profit which the church is seeing from all this study.

They have chosen to write a survey of the Psalms to encourage a restoration of the Psalter to its invaluable place in the worship, devotion and counselling of God's people. To that end, Part II offers 500 pages of commentary on thirteen selected psalms: 1-4, 8, 15-16, 19, 22-23, 51, 110, 139. They offer a historical survey of interpretation, a fresh translation, comment on literary features, and a verse-by-verse exposition. Let us eagerly await the remaining 137!

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### ON GIANTS' SHOULDERS: Introducing Great Theologians from Luther to Barth

Michael Reeves

Nottingham: IVP, 2011 171 pp £8.99pb ISBN: 9781844744954

This is the companion volume to the author's *The Breeze of the Centuries* which looked at the Apostolic Fathers, Athanasius, Augustine, and Aquinas. Michael Reeves introduces the reader this time, in a lively and engaging style, to Luther, Calvin, John Owen, Jonathan Edwards, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and Karl Barth. As with the previous volume, this one begins by paying tribute to C.S. Lewis' view of the past and our modern tendency towards 'chronological snobbery,' which sets us up for what follows.

With a racy look at the historical narrative, the chapter on Luther takes a close look at the Heidelberg Disputation as a convenient way in to Luther's thought, and a brief look at some of his other early works. The chapter on Calvin is similar, giving a good defence in the historical section of Calvin's involvement in the Servetus affair ('it seems absurd that Calvin should be held personally responsible') and then (inevitably!) a broad look at the *Institutes*. In contrast to some modern scholars, Reeves thinks (quite rightly) that Calvin believed in the complete inerrancy of the Scriptures, and gives some good references for that in both *Institutes* and commentaries. He also looks at some of the disagreements between Calvin and the Lutherans, but doesn't indulge (thankfully) in that other modern debate about whether Calvin believed in limited atonement.

Reeves on John Owen is an enlightening experience, and focuses mainly on Owen's Trinitarianism. He mentions Owen's many and varied works, including his massive Hebrews commentary, though I'm not sure what he is getting at (or that I quite agree) when he says, 'commenting on commentaries can get very tedious!' On Edwards, he helpfully steers