

not mean that they always had apotropaic significance when used together. Smoak admits as much when he notes that the Ekron Dedicatory Inscription and the Kuntillet 'Ajrud Pithos B graffito use שמר and ברך as part of a broader, Northwest Semitic blessing tradition that could be applied to a variety of contexts, not all of which are apotropaic. Smoak is right to stress the performative nature of the Priestly Blessing, but it need not have originally functioned apotropaically as it did at Ketef Hinnom, even if the ancient Israelites did place the blessing on themselves as suggested by Num 6:27.

Second, the observation that the term פָּנָה along with the Hiphil of אור "to shine" can represent God's presence in the divine sanctuary does not demonstrate that the Priestly Blessing originated in the late Judean monarchy within the context of the Jerusalem temple as Smoak argues. The Hebrew Bible does not exclusively limit God's presence as denoted by the term פָּנָה to the Jerusalem temple and, as Smoak admits, it is not clear that all the occurrences of פָּנָה with אור in the Psalter refer to the temple in Jerusalem (as opposed to the tabernacle, for example).

Despite these weaknesses, *The Priestly Blessing in Inscription and Scripture* enhances our understanding of the Priestly Blessing. It fills a lacuna in the scholarship of Num 6:22–27, highlighting the importance of this passage's Northwest Semitic inscriptional context and laying a solid foundation for further discussion of the Priestly Blessing.

Benjamin J. Noonan
Columbia International University

Michael Carasik. *Deuteronomy*. The Commentators' Bible. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2015. Pp. xix + 274. ISBN 978-0-8276-0939-6. \$75.00 cloth.

Since my first introduction to rabbinic discussions on the Pentateuch, I realized that they often are a valuable aid in seeing issues in the text we as modern readers otherwise easily overlook. I have been looking for an accessible resource with their comments in English. There are available individual English translations of the works of Rashi, Rashbam, Ibn Ezra, and Nahmanides already. But with the publication of Carasik's volumes in *The Commentators Bible*, an English version of the genre *Miqra'ot Gedolot* (or "large format volume"), the most important comments of these major Jewish medieval commentators is now available in a reader-friendly format for modern readers with varying knowledge of Hebrew. This is a review of the fourth volume in the series, published in 2015 on Deuteronomy. Previously, the volumes on Exodus (2005), Leviticus (2009), and Numbers (2011) have been published. The final volume on Genesis is expected in 2018.

The volumes have been given a layout and binding that is simply a delight. It is printed with a clear script. The layout of the volume is simple, allows quick reference, and invites the reader to join the century-long dialogue on the texts of Torah. As Carasik puts it: "The page is set up as a conversation among the commentators, in which the reader is encouraged to join" (p. xii). On the large-print pages, we find the Hebrew text in the centre, with Abarbanel's (1437–1508

A.D.) questions to the text below. The reader is thus immediately provided core questions that invoke reflection. Of course, it is possible to linger here awhile, going back and forth between the text and the questions. Before reading the various commentaries the volume thus invites to independent reflection.

On the top of the page, two translations are provided, the more literal OJPSV (Old Jewish Publication Society Version) from 1917 and the more idiomatic NJPSV from 1985 (New Jewish Publication Society Version). It is therefore not necessary to know Hebrew in order to benefit from these volumes. Comparing these preeminent translations already indicate variations and possibilities of understanding the Hebrew text. This also brings out issues in the Hebrew text that provoke further reflections.

The third element on the page, which also takes up most of the space, are the comments of the four medieval commentators Rashi (1040–1105 A.D.), Rashbam (ca. 1085–ca. 1174 A.D.), Ibn Ezra (1091/92–1167 A.D.), and Nahmanides (1195–ca. 1270 A.D.). While previous rabbinic commentaries had often been done in the style of midrash, that is, focusing on atomistic elements in a biblical passage without necessarily paying attention to context and assuming that no element of the text was redundant, Rashi instead emphasized the “straightforward sense” of the text. He was followed in this by his grandson Rashbam. While Ibn Ezra and Nahmanides were influenced by the contemporary philosophical streams, Nahmanides was inclined to more mystical interpretations. Thus, he more or less departs from the prime emphasis on the “straightforward sense” of the text of Rashi and Rashbam.

Finally, at the bottom of the page, Carasik provides further annotations, where he has found the comments by commentators in need of clarification. Here, he also includes some additional comments by other rabbinic interpreters, like Bekhor Shor, Hizkuni, Abarbanel, Sforno, and Gersonides. The reader will also find an introduction, a glossary of terms, a list of names used in the text, notes on source texts, a special topics list, and resources for further study.

It is important to note that Carasik has not included the complete commentaries of Rashi, Rashbam, Ibn Ezra, and Nahmanides. This is the strength and weakness of the volume. As a selection they give key comments, but still make it necessary to consult other editions for their full comments. Carasik gives the criteria for when he has omitted, retained, and changed (pp. xvii–xviii) comments. Generally, comments are omitted when they are deemed superfluous and add little to the dialogue. On the other hand, comments may be retained when they do not add much, but still another commentator disagrees with it, or if the comment gives the reader a sense of the commentator’s flavor. The most serious limitation of these volumes, however, is the method of translation. No doubt, the terse comments may in some cases have been rather unintelligible by modern readers, as they presuppose an in-depth knowledge of the Hebrew text and are formulated in a compact manner. Carasik has solved this by taking the freedom to add words, phrases, or clauses to make the comments clearer for a modern reader, or reorganize the material to make connections between text and comments clearer. It means that these volumes have limited value for serious research on the commentators. For such studies, students should go to the complete translations of these available in English or, even better, to the originals in Hebrew. Without checking these, it is also difficult for a reader to

know whether a comment is the exact statement by the commentators, or an “updated” or “elaborated” version of it by Carasik.

With its limitations, the volume on Deuteronomy in *The Commentators' Bible*, together with the other volumes in the series, is a handy and welcome contribution for those who want to read the key comments by the major Jewish medieval commentators. Independent of knowing Hebrew, readers interested in these comments should be able to profit greatly from these volumes.

Kenneth Bergland
Andrews University

Thomas B. Dozeman. *Joshua 1–12*. The Anchor Yale Bible 6B. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2015. Pp. xxii + 627. ISBN 978-0-300-14975-3. \$100.00 cloth.

This new addition to the Anchor Yale Bible series, replacing R. G. Boling's previous volume published in 1982, covers the book of Joshua in the way one would expect from an Anchor Bible commentary. Dozeman's introduction (94 pages long) covers compositional issues, textual criticism, central themes of the book, and reception history. As standard in the series, a translation and bibliography are included at the beginning of the book. The book ends with complete translations of the MT and LXX in parallel columns (Dozeman's attention to the LXX and its frequent divergences from the MT is a valuable part of the commentary) as well as a list of all the geographical terms in the book, giving the name in Hebrew, English, and Greek as well as its occurrences in the book of Joshua.

Dozeman's argues (against the majority of scholars) that the Deuteronomistic History flows better if it moves directly from Deuteronomy to Judges. Joshua is then viewed as an independent work composed after the Pentateuch was completed. He presents some good arguments for his view (especially in regards to the multiple accounts of Joshua's death), but it leaves a large hole in the account of early Israelite history that seems difficult to account for and is a rather abrupt transition directly from the death of Moses (Deut 34) to the death of Joshua (Judg 1). One result of this view is that in numerous places throughout the commentary Dozeman highlights how texts in Joshua draw on both deuteronomistic material as well as priestly material (e.g., p. 206).

Dozeman also sees extensive postexilic influence throughout the book. The geography of the book reflects a Persian context in which the areas where the Torah influences life are delineated rather than areas politically controlled by Israel (p. 217). Rahab's proclamation of the “God in heaven” is most similar to the Persian kings in the postexilic books, though the antimonarchic theme of Joshua puts the idea into the mouth of a commoner rather than a king (p. 245). The critique of Achan and the tribe of Judah fits best with the conflict over the legitimacy of Jerusalem in the postexilic period (Ezra 4–5; Neh 3–6), culminating in the Maccabean destruction of the Samaritan temple (p. 355). The destruction of the Canaanites likewise fits into the exclusive ideology found in the postexilic period (p. 386). Not all the parallels are exact; the role of the Gibeonites parallels