

The closest evidence for this is Kuntillet ʿAjrud, where references to Yahweh-of-Samaria and Yahweh-of-Teman appear in the same room, but it is difficult to know how these inscriptions relate to each other. The farthest Allen is willing to go is to say that some Israelites might have worshiped different Yahwehs, but the present evidence does not permit us to state that confidently.

The book closes with a conclusion that summarizes the book, a bibliography, four maps, an appendix with 60 pages of tables illustrating various points made throughout the book, and several indices. The charts are helpful, but I would have found them more beneficial if they were placed in the book where they were discussed rather than at the end.

The book is occasionally marred by typos, sometimes serious enough to confuse the reader (p. 118 is an example), but fortunately these seem to be concentrated in only a few sections of the book. Because the idea that the god lists are ranked in strict hierarchical fashion is such an important foundational idea for the book, it would have been good to provide more evidence for it (though Allen does supply a list of humans in one letter that are clearly referred to in hierarchical order). It would also have been beneficial to include more study of the texts that refer to the same god in different terms. Because ancient Near Eastern poetry is well known for its parallelism, it would have been good to create some guidelines for when we see two different gods as opposed to two different descriptions of the same god. Allen argues so strongly for his main thesis that one gets the impression that, anytime a different description appears, it must refer to a separate deity. Overall, the book is well structured and argued; I find myself in agreement with the author about his main thesis, though perhaps not as convinced as he is about it.

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James K. Aitken, ed. *The T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015. Pp. xxx + 592. ISBN 978-0-567-03134-1. \$170.00 cloth.

This volume is easily one of the most important English publications in the field of Septuagint studies in the last decade. Editor and contributor James K. Aitken has assembled a highly qualified team of contributors to the volume (see pp. xxi–xxvi) whose depth and breadth of scholarship makes the book an indispensable tool. Even as study of the Septuagint has grown remarkably in recent years, the field remains hindered by significant barriers to entry, most notably the complexity of the issues involved and the scattered secondary literature addressing them. This *Companion* volume fills a crucial gap, therefore, by furnishing an introduction to critical points of study, with bibliography, for every book of the Septuagint.

The layout of the book is fairly straightforward, and well described by Aitken as “a handy summary of features for each of the Septuagint books” (p. ix). To start, there is a glossary of terms commonly used in Septuagint scholarship, which, although only four pages long (pp. xxvii–xxx), makes this volume even more user-friendly. Technical concepts such as “*Kaige*,” or the difference between a “revision” and a “recension,” for example, often need clarification

even among Septuagintalists, and only worsen the learning curve for those interested in entering the field. This feature of the volume is thus very important.

Aitken offers further needed clarifications in his introduction (pp. 1–12). This includes, most basically, a definition of “Septuagint,” a term that derives from the legendary 72 translators who are said to have produced the Greek Pentateuch, that number later abbreviated by Josephus to 70 and thus appearing in Roman numerals as “LXX” (p. 1). But the term *Septuagint* now loosely designates everything contained in the Rahlfs-Hanhart *Septuaginta*, including the deuterocanonical books. Those unaware of the notion of a “Septuagint proper,” that is, the Greek Pentateuch, can be easily confused reading the secondary literature. Moreover, Aitken points out that “there is no one Septuagint, not only in terms of the books included, but in terms of the text itself” (p. 2). Multiple translations of single books, multiple versions, and manifold manuscripts lead scholars to distinguish between the (reconstructed) “Old Greek” (OG)—the original translation from Hebrew—from later recensions such as that of Symmachus. These and other distinctions made in the introduction make it well worth careful reading before using the *Companion*, even for those already involved in the field.

When it comes to the treatment of critical issues in each book of the Septuagint, each chapter follows the same outline. After listing the modern editions of the text under discussion, the points addressed are: (1) general characteristics of the translation in relation to MT and its major codices, (2) conjectured time and place of its composition, (3) qualities of the Greek language used in the translation, (4) analysis of the translation technique and composition of the Greek version, (5) key text-critical issues in the book, (6) features of exegesis in the Greek version, (7) early reception history, and (8) bibliography. While every chapter contains all of these sections, in some chapters a given section will be much longer or shorter depending on the issues involved, occasionally with further subsections included for greater detail. Most chapters are between 10 and 20 pages in length, including a 2- to 4-page bibliography.

Despite the general brevity involved in much of the discussion, these seven headings are well selected and guide the contributors toward a thorough treatment of each book. Particularly valuable is the inclusion of the discussion of the language employed in each book’s translation. An excellent example of this is that of Trevor V. Evans, for the book of Numbers. There, he points out that the Greek employed in its translation is a “natural” example of early Koine, which he illustrates using literary and nonliterary examples. The language, while representing the Hebrew literally in most cases, also displays style and even independence from the underlying Hebrew at certain points (see pp. 61–63). Too often in biblical studies scholarship the Septuagint is treated as a kind of linguistic plaster-mold of the Hebrew, used as a textual witness to variants without the necessary critical investigation first required of the translation unit itself. Within the community of Septuagint studies, however, there is a lively ongoing discussion regarding the nature and original purpose of the Septuagint per se, and therefore also its language. Was it meant as a “reading aid” or “interlinear” tool for consulting the Hebrew original and therefore dependent on it to some extent? Or was it intended to function independently of the Hebrew and thus to stand alone as a Greek composition in some way? Addressing this question—and many others—is a necessary step toward re-

sponsibly incorporating the Septuagint into the study of the text of the Hebrew Bible. Especially when paired with the recently released third edition of E. Tov's *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015), this *Companion* equips the biblical studies community for much more effective research in the Greek OT.

As Aitken points out in the preface, while the *Companion* supplies the reader with a great wealth of knowledge, it also highlights points in the study of the Septuagint where the need for more investigation remains. This is expanded in the introduction, where Aitken points out the reasons to study the Septuagint beyond textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible. These include the study of early biblical exegesis in Hellenistic Jewish communities and linguistic investigation of the development of Koine Greek, among others (p. 2). There is a tremendous range of inquiry within Septuagint studies that is wide open to both aspiring and established scholars, and this *Companion* will certainly help orient those interested as they begin their investigation of these equally important issues.

There are a few weaknesses in the *Companion*. For the most part, this is limited to the treatment of certain chapters by scholars whose familiarity with their assigned books is not as thorough as that of others whose work is more Septuagint focused. Even in these cases, however, the reader will benefit from the guidance provided in the bibliographies where they wish to delve more deeply into particular issues. Second, in light of the usefulness of the glossary as it is, one might have wished that it were longer than four pages. Perhaps this sort of project is worthy of a separate undertaking altogether, but certainly many other terms employed throughout the volume could easily have found themselves defined in the Glossary as well (e.g., "calque," "interlinear paradigm," "register"). Despite these minor complaints, and considering the sheer scale of the undertaking and the thoroughness with which it was executed, the *Companion* is a major contribution to the discipline of Septuagint studies. No research library should neglect this volume, and those whose work encompasses the Greek versions of the OT may wish to invest in it as well, or await the release of a more affordable paperback version in time.

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Matthew Richard Schlimm. *This Strange and Sacred Scripture: Wrestling with the Old Testament and Its Oddities*. Grand Rapids: BakerAcademic, 2015. Pp. xvi + 254. ISBN 978-0-8010-3979-9. \$22.99 paper.

The Bible's wide and long distribution makes works such as Matthew Richard Schlimm's both necessary and surprising: surprising because a book so well known should need no introduction, and necessary because a book so ancient and varied can easily come to be misunderstood over time.

Schlimm's book addresses a number of concerns among 21st-century readers who, rightly or wrongly, find that the Bible exhibits a taste for vulgarity, a flair for violence, a penchant for sexism, and a frightfully angry deity. His 12 chapters are accompanied by an ample bibliography (21 pp.), and three