

exalted status of this world need God's redemption through Christ, they have no inherent grounds for asserting superiority over those of any supposed inferior estate. Watkin concludes the work with a discussion of how Christian eschatology answers Deleuze's conviction that continuous change is the only constant by arguing how the fact of such change points one to the ultimate hope of the world's total redemption and restoration.

Gilles Deleuze is an invaluable work for exposing the Christian reader to the influential thought of this important postmodern philosopher. It exemplifies erudite, lively Christian engagement with postmodern thought, confirming what it means for Christians of every tradition to "bring every thought captive." This book is a useful text for upper undergraduate and graduate level classes in postmodern philosophy. However, it will present a significant challenge to the general reader who has not studied philosophy previously—especially modern and postmodern philosophy. Notwithstanding this caveat, Watkin's book serves as both a guide and a model for philosophically trained Christians to engage the intellectual systems that have and continue to shape the deepest assumptions of our culture. With this monograph, Professor Watkin has rendered an invaluable service to the church.

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The Qur'an and the Christian: An In-Depth Look into the Book of Islam for Followers of Jesus, by Matthew Aaron Bennett. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2022. 253 pp. \$17.99.

Two years after publishing a more general book on Islam in Ben Merkle's "40 Questions" series (2020), Matthew Bennett has published an in-depth examination of Islam's holy book, the Qur'an. The author is a veteran missionary (North Africa and the Middle East) who writes to help Christians be more effective in their personal witness to their Muslim neighbors. Bennett states that one's understanding of the Qur'an is crucial to reaching his Muslim friends with the gospel.

In addition to his personal experience, Matthew Bennett has written many articles on Islam, including an additional volume on the topic of atonement (*Narratives in Conflict: Atonement in Hebrews and the Qur'an*, 2019). He is also a professor of missions and theology at Cedarville University and an accomplished scholar, frequently lecturing on Islam.

Bennett avoids presenting a polemical approach to Islam in this book; rather, he aims at helping the reader show love to his Muslim friends by accurately understanding their beliefs while also presenting how their views are contrary to the Bible (9). He believes that it is helpful for Christians to understand the common ground that they have

with Muslims but qualifies that they must also understand how “divergent” the two theological pathways are (12). It is important to note that he does not believe that the two worldviews can be harmonized (13).

The book is divided into three sections: (1) The Qur’an as Revelation, (2) The Qur’an as Text, and (3) The Qur’an and the Christian. The first section (chaps. 1–3) is somewhat basic compared to the other two sections. Bennett opines that for one to reconstruct the timeline of the writing of the Qur’an, one would have to resort to studying the events of Muhammad’s life and then finding the Surahs that fit the circumstances (32–33). Having a correct chronology is essential to applying the doctrine of abrogation, for if one verse is to cancel out an earlier verse, it would be necessary to know the chronology of the Qur’an’s Surahs.

In the second chapter, Bennett presents some of the overarching themes of the Qur’an: *tawhid*, “the oneness of God which keeps God from interacting with man on a personal level, since God had no person-to-person interaction in eternity past” (47); the ninety-nine names of God, the most expressive of these being the name “Compassionate” (51); obedience to God’s will as the central concern of the Qur’an (52); and the absence of any possibility of Muslims developing a personal relationship with God (62).

Chapter 3 investigates the hortatory features of the Qur’an. Since the Qur’an is primarily a “book of guidance and remembrance,” much of its instruction concerns ethical behavior (69). It is important to note that the Qur’an teaches that man is capable of being perfectly obedient to God’s will. Bennett asserts that the *salat* (prayers) is the “heart and soul” of Islamic piety (82). He discusses *jihad* briefly, noting the common belief that Islam allows for a greater and a lesser jihad (86). Unfortunately, he does not question the idea of a greater jihad (inner struggle for piety) as being original to Islamic theology (see Irving Hexham, *Understanding World Religions: An Interdisciplinary Approach* [Zondervan, 2011], 428–40, for an opposing view).

Part 2 (chaps. 4–6) of Bennett’s book addresses the text of the Qur’an: he answers questions related to how previous Muslim texts (Torah, Psalms of David [*Zabur*], and the Gospel [*Injil*]) are regarded in Islam, why Islam does not primarily speak against polytheism, and how the Qur’an can conflate biblical characters and historical events from divergent eras together.

First, Bennett explains why Christians are often befuddled by their Muslim friends’ lack of interest in reading the three pre-Islamic scriptures (Torah, Psalms of David, and Gospel) even though the Qur’an endorses their divine authority. Muslims believe that the originals have been lost, and it really does not matter that we have them because the Qur’an makes them unnecessary (108).

Chapters 5–6 make the interesting assertion that although Islam was birthed in a thoroughly polytheistic culture, most of the Qur’an is directed against Judaism and Christianity (117). Bennett wrestles with the Muslim claim that the Qur’an does not borrow from the Bible,

concluding that the evidence speaks otherwise (138–39). In my opinion, Bennett’s most significant contribution here is that the Qur’an is more of a “mosaic” than a “puzzle” in which all the pieces neatly fit together. This model accounts for the conflation of biblical characters and stories in which the individuals like Moses, Pharaoh, Haman, and Korah appear to coexist in the same era. They are thematically arranged in the Qur’an.

In part 3, Bennett encourages Christians to read the Qur’an to better understand and evangelize their Muslim neighbors (160). Bennett suggests that however laudable the motives might be of those who have created methodologies to evangelism Muslims, if those methodologies undermine the authority and truths of God’s Word, they must be avoided.

Bennett critiques Kevin Greeson’s CAMEL and Korbani approaches to Muslim evangelism, as well as the Insider Movement and Bible translations that render divine filial language in inoffensive ways. He also critiques a more recent theory of Abdulla Galadari (*Qur’anic Hermeneutics*, 2018) that utilizes intertextual polysemy to show that the Qur’anic Jesus can be harmonized with John’s presentation of Jesus in his Gospel. Bennett spends nine pages showing the methodological flaws of this approach to texts. The final chapter provides an approach for how to use the Qur’an in personal witness that will not validate the Qur’an’s authority.

The *Qur’an and the Christian* provides a great companion volume to Phil Parshall’s *Understanding Muslim Teachings and Traditions*. Both books have the Christian evangelist in mind, emphasizing how to share the gospel without compromise. Both are sufficiently well-researched without sacrificing readability. However, I would not replace Gordon Nickel’s *The Quran with Christian Commentary: A Guide to Understanding the Scripture of Islam* with Bennett’s tome, as Nickel serves the Christian community by providing a verse-by-verse commentary. Bennett’s book addresses the key ideas about the Qur’an that a Christian needs to know to effectively witness to his Muslim neighbors.

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Bioethics: A Primer for Christians, by Gilbert Meilaender. 4th edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. 172 pp. \$20.99.

Bioethics is a burgeoning field of applied ethics. Gilbert Meilaender (Senior Research Professor at Valparaiso University) dates the genesis of the discipline to half a century ago (xiv), and this is the fourth edition of his *Bioethics: A Primer for Christians*. The fact that the work is in its fourth iteration attests to its readability and usability, and the fact that a new edition is necessary attests to the field’s ever-changing nature. This