

major themes through the letters. This is one of the main strengths of his work.

In line with the series intention, Ngewa divides the chapters into preaching units with an African illustration opening each chapter. Although the chapters are arranged this way, the content is a bit more robust than the average homiletical commentary. Throughout the work Ngewa sprinkles African illustrations and applications. Such illustrations and applications might not always hit the mark for Western readers but, on the other hand, a look at the text from a different viewpoint might help the Western reader grasp timeless truths from a fresh perspective. On the whole, Ngewa presents a balanced view of African culture, praising aspects that reflect a biblical worldview and critiquing those that contradict it.

The only major weakness I found with Ngewa's interpretations related to female leadership in the church. In his less-than-clear comments on 1 Timothy 2:9–15 Ngewa sees the restriction on women teaching as being confined to women teaching their overseers and the restriction on women exercising authority as a restriction on exercising authority in an overbearing way, rather than as a complete restriction on exercising authority (p. 53). Although he does not use the terms egalitarian or complementarian, he seems to reflect more closely the egalitarian position.

A small nuisance with the work is that the biblical text under consideration is not included at the beginning of each chapter. Rather, the full biblical text is fragmented and embedded in the author's sentences as each chapter progresses. I much prefer reading the full biblical text before considering the author's commentary. While this could be done with an open Bible, including the biblical text within the commentary makes this easier.

For African pastors conversant in English or Western missionaries serving in Africa, this volume should definitely be added to one's library. For the broader Western audience, Ngewa's work would be a good addition to one's library as well. Not only will it add to one's understanding of the Pastoral Epistles, but it will also increase appreciation for what God is doing in other parts of the world.

Rob Howell

*The New Moody Atlas of the Bible*, by Barry J. Beitzel. Chicago: Moody Press, 2009. xii + 304 pp. \$49.99.

*Zondervan Atlas of the Bible*, by Carl G. Rasmussen. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010. 304 pp. \$39.99.

In the late 1980s Moody and Zondervan each published a Bible atlas (Barry J. Beitzel authored the former and Carl G. Rasmussen the

latter). Two decades later, and less than one year apart, both publishers have produced new and expanded editions by the same authors. This review will examine these new editions.

The *New Moody Atlas of the Bible* is divided into two unequal chapters. Chapter 1 covers physical geography (72 pp.), and chapter 2 concerns historical geography (189 pp.). The atlas features 188 newly digitized maps (10 of which form a complete double-page spread), 61 photos, three artist's reconstructions and illustrations, and one table on climate. There are a remarkable number of endnotes—822 total (169 from chap. 1 and 653 from chap. 2)—which contain numerous bibliographic data. The end matter also includes a three-page map citation index, a five-page general index, and a one-page general reading bibliography.

Compared to the 1985 edition, the 2009 edition omits a brief ten-page chapter on “The History of Biblical Mapmaking” as well as a four-page timeline from 10,000 B.C. to A.D. 100. However, the 2009 edition contains an additional forty-eight pages, 23 maps and 701 notes. The updated and greatly expanded endnotes make the atlas more valuable to a wider audience. Whereas the 1985 edition many times simply stated various archaeological findings, the 2009 edition provides both the general reader as well as the scholar with greater documented evidence and further reading. Approximately 24 percent of the pages in both the 1985 and 2009 edition are without illustrations.

Like the *New Moody Atlas*, the *Zondervan Atlas of the Bible* is divided into a geographical section (79 pp.) and a historical section (180 pp.). The maps' color scheme (green for lower elevations, degrees of tan for higher elevations and white for the highest) and 3D imaging technology together effectively demonstrate the land's topography. The atlas includes 116 maps, 137 photos, eight tables or charts, and two excursus boxes within the text. Each section begins with helpful timelines of biblical events as well as events in neighboring regions. The end matter includes a two-page bibliography, one-page glossary, two-page timeline of biblical history, three-page Scripture index, and two-page person index.

With over 60 additional pages, the Zondervan 2010 edition has 15 more maps and 90 more pictures than the 1989 edition. Like its predecessor, the new edition is very successful in illustrating topography. Unlike its predecessor, the new edition does not include endnotes.

Both atlases begin with a geographical section, which includes a general introduction to the role of geography in connection with the biblical text. Beitzel explains the role of geography in understanding history and in understanding the Bible. He explains how Palestine is a component of the “Fertile Crescent” and provides a description of Palestine's geopolitical districts as well as its historical terminology (such as “Sea Peoples”). Rasmussen's geographical section provides an introduction to the Middle East as a whole as well as the geography of Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Mesopotamia. Both atlases explain

the climate, geology, and hydrology as well as the transportation routes of Israel.

In the second section, both atlases follow the outline of biblical history beginning with the Garden of Eden through to the spread of Christianity in the Roman world. In regard to the Exodus sea-crossing, Beitzel believes Lake Timsah (or nearby) to be most probable. Rasmussen states that a junction a little farther south, near the Great and Little Bitter Lakes, “is as plausible as any” (p. 105). Beitzel argues for the traditional southern Sinai hypothesis (Jebel Musa), while Rasmussen writes that “Jebel Bisher deserves careful attention” (p. 105). Both atlases include a helpful section on the history of Jerusalem.

One of the key strengths of the *New Moody Atlas* (Beitzel) is its expanded endnotes. Rasmussen’s *Zondervan Atlas* includes information and photos regarding recent excavations and discoveries, such as Herod’s tomb (found at the Herodium) and the pool of Siloam (not to be confused with the pool at the end of the route for Hezekiah’s tunnel). Two helpful additions to the *Zondervan Atlas* are its very extensive “geographical dictionary and index” (pp. 273–303), which assist the reader in pinpointing locations on maps. In particular, the dictionary provides useful descriptions of the biblical locations, including key biblical references.

While both atlases are highly recommended, the following breakdown of material is intended to help one choose an appropriate text.

	Moody	Zondervan
Disciplines of Historical Geography		✓
Historical Development of Jerusalem	✓	✓
Gridded Maps	✓	
Extensive Endnotes	✓	
Bibliography	✓	✓
Glossary		✓
Timeline of Biblical History		✓
Index of Scripture References	✓	✓
General Index	✓	✓
Annotation of Biblical Places		✓

Both Moody and Zondervan have received awards for their atlases. Both publishers and authors should be applauded for outstanding works that will no doubt prove to be treasured resources to the Bible reader.

Kevin Paul Oberlin