

enough depth and clarity to provide a helpful *entré* into the world of the text for the would be reader.

As mentioned above, Skehan's translation is an adaptation of the NAB, which has the advantage of being a clear, straightforward version while never being lyrical in its rendition of Ben Sira's poetry. The Notes, which are consistently brief, chiefly discuss textual variants among the various Greek manuscripts and the Hebrew manuscripts from Qumran.

Following the pattern of many Anchor Bible volumes, the Commentary is mostly a technical discussion of aspects of translation with helpful comments to illuminate the historical, social, theological environment in which the book was produced. As a result, it is primarily useful to the expert or the student of translation rather than the pastor or layperson seeking sermon material or spiritual guidance. Di Lella's prose is clear and readable throughout, though on occasion his style becomes repetitious (e.g., pp. 290-303 where almost every paragraph begins with "The next poem...").

In summary, Di Lella and Skehan have produced a useful work that represents a worthy addition to the Anchor Bible series and will provide the basis of much fruitful work for many years to come.

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THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE WAW-CONSECUTIVE: NORTHWEST SEMITIC EVIDENCE FROM UGARIT TO QUMRAN. By Mark S. Smith. Harvard Semitic Studies 39. Pp. xiv + 100. Atlanta: Scholars, 1991. Cloth, \$24.95.

In the introduction to this slender volume, Mark Smith states very clearly, "The main purpose of this presentation is to address three historical questions: (1) the grammatical origins of the *waw*-consecutive; (2) the development of the form in Biblical Hebrew prose; and (3) the distribution of the form in the Hebrew texts of Qumran" (p. xi). In well-organized fashion, the three chapters of the book ("Early Extra-biblical Evidence," "The *Waw*-Consecutive in Hebrew Prose," and "The *Waw*-Consecutive in the Qumran Literature") then set out to address these three issues. (Note that certain issues are not discussed, e.g., the accentual shift in the *waw*-

consecutive and the occasional attestation of the *waw*-consecutive in biblical poetry.)

The survey of early extra-biblical evidence concentrates mainly on the Ugaritic and Amarna evidence. Smith accepts the dominant view (first stated by G. Bergsträsser [1918]) that the converted imperfect (*wyqtl*) “derived from independent usage of the **yaqtl* preterite” (p. 12), a usage attested not only in the Amarna letters and in the Ugaritic poetic narratives, but also in other Semitic languages in specific environments (e.g., Arabic, viz., *lam yaqtl*). In Hebrew, the specific environments which continued the usage of a preterite *yaqtl* were (a) the presence of “*waw* + doubling of the initial radical (in MT tradition)” (p. 12; sic: it is the prefixed pronominal indicator which is doubled, not the first root letter of the verb); and (b) the presence of various particles, for example, *ʔāz*, *beʔerem*, and *ʔerem*. To explain the phenomenon of the doubling of the consonant following the *waw*, Smith relies on T. O. Lambdin’s (1971) posited “junctural doubling.”

As for the converted perfect (*wqtl*), whereas Bergsträsser argued for its development due to *Analogiebildung* (i.e., once *wyqtl* was used to refer to the past, *wqtl* emerged to refer to the future), Smith takes a different approach. In his detailed study of the Amarna letters, W. L. Moran (1950) noted that *qatala* is used in both apodoses and protases of conditional sentences with references to future time. C. H. Gordon (1967: 69) detected several examples of *wqtl* in conditional sentences in Ugaritic, and of course also in Biblical Hebrew (BH) *qatala* is used in the apodoses of conditional sentences. It is from this background, Smith claims, that the converted perfect emerged, though its extension “from dependent to independent clauses was apparently an inner Hebrew development” (pp. 14-15).

In the second chapter, Smith addresses the use of the *waw*-consecutive in Hebrew prose, both biblical and inscriptional (and along with the latter treats the presence of the *waw*-consecutive in Moabite, Deir ‘Alla, and Aramaic). A major issue for Smith is the question of whether or not the *waw*-consecutive was used in spoken Hebrew. The evidence indicates that a distinction is made in the Bible between narrative and direct discourse: the *waw*-consecutive is used more consistently in narrative; in direct discourse it is used alongside freestanding forms (*qtl* and *yqtl*) and participles. The question remains, of course, as to how accurately direct discourse in the Bible reflects true spoken Hebrew (for my own view see Rendsburg, 1990). Smith’s conclusion is cautiously worded: “although the extent of the *waw*-consecutive in the spoken language cannot be resolved, it would appear that the *waw*-consecutive was primarily a literary usage” (p. 27).

Finally, Smith addresses the issue of the *waw*-consecutive in the postexilic period. In late BH a clear change is visible: compositions such as Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Daniel used freestanding forms with greater regularity than did preexilic prose. But the *waw*-consecutive never died out completely, and in Qumran Hebrew it is still the dominant usage. The best part of this volume, in fact, is Smith's excellent treatment of the *waw*-consecutive in the individual Dead Sea Scrolls. Chapter 3 presents the data in extremely clear fashion, and the analysis is first rate (see especially the chart on p. 59).

Every Hebraist who has tackled the problem of the *waw*-consecutive has his or her own reconstruction of its development. While in many places Smith argues his case well, still I find myself in disagreement on some important points—several of which I already have expressed in print (in all cases, cited by Smith). Most importantly, when all is said and done, the only cognate to the *waw*-consecutive which matches the form piece-by-piece is the Egyptian *iw sdm-n-f* (here I base myself on G. D. Young [1953] and C. H. Gordon [1957: 275-276]). Both the Hebrew *wyqtl* and the Egyptian *iw sdm-n-f* are comprised of existential particle, pronominal indicator, past tense marker *n*, and verbal root. These elements are not in the same order, and space prevents me from discussing the various problems raised by this lack of a perfect match. Moreover, the functions of the two forms overlap to a considerable extent; this can be stated with confidence notwithstanding the debate among Hebraists concerning *wyqtl* and that among Egyptologists concerning *iw sdm-n-f* (cf. Polotsky, 1965).

A particular point of contention is the *dagesh* in *wayyiqtol*, which the Young-Gordon position sees as an assimilated *nun*, but which the Lambdin-Smith position attributes to junctural doubling. Frankly, I never have been convinced of Lambdin's theory of junctural doubling. The point of departure for this hypothesis was the definite article. I find it much more likely, however, to posit an original **han-*, cognate to Arabic *ʔal-* (*hal-* in Bedouin dialects). Indeed, Lihyanic attests to the form *hn-* (Rabin, 1951: 35), thus obviating the need for Lambdin's explanation of the *dagesh* following the definite article. By extension, the theory of junctural doubling should not be used to explain the gemination in *wayyiqtol*. Smith discusses the view which relates the converted imperfect to Egyptian *iw sdm-n-f*, and while he raises some interesting objections to the relationship, none of his arguments is compelling (see especially p. 5).

In defending the Egyptian connection, I would go further. The *waw*-consecutive developed as a commonly used form specifically in those areas

where Egyptian administration was strongest in New Kingdom times (in general, southern Canaan, the area covered by Hebrew, Moabite, and Deir 'Alla). This will explain the absence of this form in Phoenician, whose city-states seemed to have had a greater share of autonomy in the Late Bronze Age. Furthermore, this will explain why Aramaic did not develop the *waw*-consecutive. Here again I disagree with Smith, who contends that Aramaic did possess the *waw*-consecutive. But it is striking that the only Aramaic text which utilizes *wyqtl* is the Zakkur inscription, which shows Canaanite influence in several important ways (Greenfield, 1971). Smith (p. 18) also wishes to read the *wyqtl* form in the Demotic Aramaic papyrus. This is possible, but here, too, Canaanite influence is evident (witness the section which parallels Psalm 20; and in the section concerning Ashurbanipal the prologue presents a priest in the temple of Baal of Zaphon; Steiner and Nims, 1985).

Scholars will continue to debate these and other issues related to the *waw*-consecutive for years to come. With Smith's book in hand, the path will be easier. Differences of opinion aside, it is a lucid presentation of the data and a carefully argued statement.

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THE DIVINE ELECTION OF ISRAEL. By Seock-Tae Sohn. Pp. xvi + 296. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991. Paper, \$19.95.

Seock-Tae Sohn contends that the concept of the election of Yahweh's people Israel in the OT is not limited to passages in which the root *baḥar* appears, but encompasses all the words, phrases, metaphors, and relationships which the OT uses to describe Israel's election. An examination of these texts reveals that the main concern of OT writers who refer to Israel's election is not a past event in which Yahweh chose Israel to be his people, but the ongoing relationship between Yahweh and Israel. When Israel became aware that Yahweh had chosen her to be his special people, she used common, everyday metaphors to describe this. In order to perceive the OT concept of Yahweh's election of Israel, it is necessary to