Avemarie Friedrich, Hermann Lichtenberger, eds. *Bund und Tora: Zur theologischen Begriffsgeschichte in alttestamentlicher: frÖ¼hjÖ¼discher und urchristlicher Tradition.* TÖ¼bingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996. viii + 346 pp. (gebunden), ISBN 978-3-16-146627-4.

Reviewed by Scott B. Noegel (University of Washington)

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Covenant and Torah: A Theological Inquiry

This volume brings together ten essays on the theological meaning and significance of Torah and covenant (*berith*) in the Hebrew Bible and in Jewish and Christian works of Hellenistic and Roman times. The meticulous documentation of the essays and the new insights and directions they offer make this book an excellent addition to the Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament series and a welcome contribution to the subject.

Heinz-Dieter Neef opens the book with an examination of the Hebrew *berith* and its relation to Israelite theology. Neef outlines the problems that the term poses for scholars and provides an excellent overview of previous research on the topic. His analysis is thorough, as with all of the articles in this volume, making for a wonderfully detailed and nearly exhaustive treatment of the topic. Neef demonstrates that the Hebrew Bible conceives of the *berith* in multiple ways and that Israelite theology is neither static or monolithic. Neef demonstrates, for example, that Hosea's conception of the *berith* is personal, while the Deuteronomist conceives of it as a historical treaty reminding worshipers of Horeb and Is-

rael's forefathers. In the book of Samuel the word *berith* takes on royal aspects, while the Priestly source sees the *berith* as eternal and given through signs. Nevertheless, while each source puts its own spin on the conception of the *berith*, each also contains some elements of the other. Neef concludes: "... man sollte nicht einfach von 'dem Bund' im Alten Testament sprechen, denn dabei besteht leicht die Gefahr, dass Bund ein theologisches Allerweltswort wird" (p. 20).

Beate Ego examines several biblical periscopes for the ways in which they cast Abraham's obedience to God (Gen. 12: 1-9; 18: 19; 22: 15-18; and 26: 3b-5). Ego argues that each periscope represents a different stage in a complex history of editing, and thus, also a different stage in the development of Israelite theology. Ego observes that the obedience of Abraham constitutes the thematic backbone of the Abraham saga: "Abrahams Gehorsamstaten bilden geradezu den erzaehlerischen Rahmen; innerhalb dessen der Jahwist sein Oeuvre praesentiert" (p. 28). Ego then moves to Gen. 22: 15-18 and its characterization of Abraham as a prototype of the Torah's faithful in Israel. Here Ego notes that the language is reminiscent of "dtn-

dtr Sprachstil" (p. 30), and asserts:

Es wird aber dennoch deutlich, dass der Redaktor dieser knappen Ausdeutung der 'Opferung Isaaks' Abrahams Gehorsam als Paradigma fuer die Befolgung des goettlichen Gebotes verstanden haben moechte. Das Motiv fuer Abrahams Gesetzegehorsam deutet sich hier gleichsam in nuce an, ohne jedoch zu seiner vollen Entfaltung zu gelangen (p. 30).

Ego next examines the significance of the plural form of God's "commandments," "statutes," and "directions" (*toroth*), in Gen. 26: 3b-5 and concludes: "Abraham befolgt ganz generell Gottes Tora, seine Gesetze und Gebote, und vermag so Verdienste zu erweben, die seinen Nachkommen zum Segen gereichen. Aus dem Gehorsam Abrahams wurded der Toragehorsam des Patriarchen" (p. 32). Ego also sees the depiction of Abraham in Gen. 18: 19 as anticipating the conception of Moses as a prophetic law giver, a conception which "ist insgesamt eine Weiterentwicklung und Modifikation der 'klassischen' Lehren festzustellen, die auf ein relatif spaetes Stadium dtn-dtr Denkens hinweisen" (p. 35). Ego sees his analysis as confirming that the story of Abraham is the result of continual editorializing and layering of later interpretations, and that "... das Theologumenon des gesetztestreuen Patriarchen das Ergebnis eines innerbiblischen Traditionsprozesses darstellt, der vermutlich in fruehnachexilischer Zeit zum Abschluss gekommen ist" (p. 26).

Walter Gross investigates the meaning of the expression "new covenant" in Jer. 31: 31. After examining past scholarship on the subject, he discusses Church views on the text, with much space devoted to the views of the Rheinlaendische Synode der Evangelischen Kirche, and points out the importance of understanding this text for current Christian-Jewish dialogue. Gross applies a structural analysis to the pericope and contends that recognizing the importance of the Hebrew particle *ki* in this pericope is crucial to understanding the text's structure and meaning. He maintains that the last *ki* that appears in this textual unit (i.e., in 31: 34c) should be viewed as a causative, thus suggesting the discontinuation of a former covenant.

The volume then moves to Anna Maria Schwemer's careful socio-linguistic examination of the Greek terms *diatheke*, *suntheke*, and *nomos* in Jewish writings from Hellenistic Egypt. Under Schwemer microscope are the Septuagint, Josephus, the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, Ben Sira, 2 Enoch, *Vitae Prophetarum*, Wisdom of Solomon, 2 Maccabees, Jewish liturgical prayers written in Greek, and the work of Philo. Schwemer demon-strates that the Greek *nomos* is grounded in conception of Zeus the lawgiver as a king of man and gods, and that the Greek perception of Jewish practices in Hellenistic Egypt might have influenced the Jewish writers and translators' word choice when translating the Hebrew words for "law" and "covenant." Schwemer observes that by tracing the treatment of the term *diatheke*, one sees a development in thought concerning "covenant." For example, the use of *diatheke* in the Septuagint to translate *berith* could be compared to the use of the German "Gesetz," "Satzung," or "Anordung," (p. 105), whereas in Philo *diatheke* underscores God's charity, is identified with the Logos, and is given a privileged place in the *kosmos noetos*.

John R. Levison's study "Torah and Covenant in Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*" (hereafter LAB) is the only English article in this volume and the first thorough study of the themes of Torah and covenant as found in the LAB. Levison researches both the biblical and extra-biblical divine commands in the LAB and demonstrates how according to the LAB "entrance into the covenant requires adherence to the Law" (p. 122). He also investigates the LAB for the function that covenant and law hold for those outside the covenant and finds that, according to the LAB, covenant "is for Israel alone, and the Law for the preservation of Israel and the punishment of the nations" (p. 126).

Hans-Martin Rieger's contribution "Eine Religion der Gnade" critically reviews the "covenantal nomism" theory first evinced by E.P. Sanders in his *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (London and Philadelphia: 1977, p. 422ff.). As Rieger notes, Sanders had employed the term "covenantal nomism" to signify Judaism as a religious system in which God's grace and choice determined one's entry into the fold, and in which obedience maintained membership. This concept Sanders placed in juxtaposition to the "participationist eschatology" of Paul, which emphasized the participation and transformation of believers through faith in Jesus Christ. Sanders' work countered the views of previous scholars including F. Weber, Billerbeck, and Bultmann, who viewed Judaism as a system of "works righteousness" and "merit." Rieger argues that word semantic analyses would serve as a better means of evaluating the validity of the competing theories and provides in brief outline such a study by examining as proof texts Mishnah, Makkot 3: 16, Sifre Devarim on Deut. 32: 2, Tosefta Qiddushin 1: 13-16, and Tosefta Sanhedrin 13: 3. Rieger concludes: "Da es sich jedoch um Stellen handelt, die in hoehem Masses zur Falsifikation von Sanders' Theorie beitragen koennen und zugle-

ich von vertretern der Verdienst-Theorie zur verifizierenden Argumentation verwendet werden ..." (p. 158).

"Bund als Gabe und Recht," by Friederich Avemarie similarly takes as its point of departure E.P. Sanders' "covenantal nomism" theory and offers a semantic study of the term *berith* in rabbinic literature. After discussing the semantics of the lexeme as it pertains to God's gift to Israel, obligation and intention, the Torah and laws at Sinai, sin, and the accounts concerning Noah, Avemarie concludes that though Sanders was correct in asserting a unified conception of "covenant" in rabbinic literature, "... Der Bund, der Israels Heil begruendet, ist nicht, wie Sanders' kapitel *The election and the covenant* (84ff.) nahelegt, das Exodus- und Sinaigeschehen, sondern die an die Erzvaeter ergangene Verheissung, mitunter auch der Bund der Beschneidung" (p. 214). Thus, according to Avemarie, if we modify the rabbinic soteriology of Sanders, "... ist es durchaus angemessen, von einer rabbinischen 'Bundestheologie' zu sprechen" (p. 215).

Hermann Lichtenberger's " 'Bund' in der Abendmahlsueberlieferung," analyzes the synoptic gospels and epistles for their treatment of the expression "blood of the new covenant" (Mk. 14: 24; Matt. 26: 28; Lk. 22: 20 1 Corin 11: 25). After reviewing previous scholarly treatments, Lichtenberger compares the Septuagint's similar phraseology in Exodus 24: 8 and discusses what makes Jesus' covenant "new." He points out the differences between the New Testament pericopes, specifically with regard to their mention and use of the cup and the wine, and emphasizes their mutual dependence on Exodus 24. Lichtenberger also studies Targum Onqelos to Exodus 24: 8 and the relationship between the New Testament references and Isa. 53: 12 and finds: "Durch die Kombination der Traditionen vom suehnenden Bundesblut und von der stellvertretenden Lebenshingabe des Gottesknechts werden verschiedene neutestamentliche Deutungen des Todes Jesu in dem einen Kelchwort zusammengefuehrt" (p. 225). Lichtenberg concludes:

Es ist deutlich, dass ein urspruenglicher Wortlaut der *verba sacramenti* nicht rekonstruierbar ist (wohl nicht einmal ein aeltester!). Alles aber dautet darauf hin, dass-gerade weil so vielfaeltig theologisch befrachtet und verschieden herzuleiten –das Stichwort "Bund" sehr alt, wenn nicht urspruenglich ist. So erscheint es durchaus moeglich, dass die Stiftung des Bundes fuer Jesus selbst Deutekategorie seiner Lebenshingabe war. Dann haette

Jesus sein Bundesschweigen zultezt doch gebrochen (pp. 226-27).

In Versoehnung ohne Vollendung?: Roemer 10,4 und die Tora der messianischer Zeit," Gerbern S. Oegema investigates Paul's autobiographical statements for their theological placement within ancient Judaism and studies Paul's views of the law as found in Romans 5-6, 10, 11, and 15. After providing a review of previous approaches to the pericope offered over the last sixty years, Oegema concludes that the context of Romans 10: 4 suggests that for Paul, "dass Christus nicht nur das Ende und das Ziel, sondern auch die Erfuellung der Tora (d.i. Gottes Wirkens bis zum Ende der Geschichte) ist ..." (p. 257).

Joerg Frey concludes the volume with an examination of the seventeen occurrences of the word *diatheke* in the letter to the Hebrews and finds the concept of covenant central to the message of the letter. Frey compares the reference to Melchizedek in Psalm 110: 4 with Hebrews 7: 22, and with the mention of a "better covenant founded on better promises" in Heb. 8:6. Frey also sees the "new covenant" mentioned in Jer. 31: 31ff as the background for Heb. 8: 7-13 and 10: 15-18 and concludes *inter alia* that *diatheke* is central to Hebrew's soteriology, that it corresponds to the Hebrew *berith*, and that the conception of *diatheke* in Hebrews depends in large part upon Jer. 31: 31-34 and Exod. 24: 8. Nevertheless: "Vielmeher ist der durchgehende Bezugspunkt und das *strukturierende Zentrum* der *diatheke*-Aussagen das *Christusbekenntnis*, das der Autor voraussetz und durch die Verwendung des *diatheke*-Motivs interpretiert" (pp. 295-96).

Each of the articles in the volume displays methodological acumen and offers new directions for research. The combination of philological, literary, and textsemantic approaches contained in the collection illustrates that many theological insights can derive from methodologies infrequently employed by theologians. The book also places a useful bibliography at the end of each article and provides helpful indices of names, terms, Hebrew and Greek words, as well as verses discussed in biblical and post-biblical Jewish and Christian literature. The volume's primary contribution, however, is in the complexities it reveals with regard to ancient theological conceptions of covenant and Torah.

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