the reader is assumed. Even if these are not understood, however, Perrin’s lessons are not opaque.

Perrin’s analysis of texts of the themes of the kingdom offers insights that are vital to the life of the church. The “Relevant Questions” section inspire thoughtful reflection and discussion. Preachers and teachers will find many profound, enlightening explanations to deepen faith and understanding and to challenge unexamined assumptions.

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Tyler Mayfield is A. B. Rhodes Professor of OT at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. In this book, he presents the basics of each Bible book for readers who need a basic understanding of the Bible.

In the introduction, Mayfield states this book will guide readers in their Bible reading and help them understand how a particular section fits into the overall structure and purpose of each biblical book. He also specifies that it covers 66 books of the Protestant OT and NT. Regarding the OT, he briefly lists the Jewish, Catholic, and Orthodox canons. He selects the New Revised Standard Version to be used in this book and summarizes nine biblical time periods from the Matriarchal and Patriarchal Period (2000–1500 BCE) to the Roman Period (63 BCE—476 CE).

After the introduction, Mayfield writes about each book in seven chapters under the following headings: the Pentateuch; the Historical Books; the Poetic Books; the Prophetic Books; the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles; Pauline Epistles; and General Epistles and Revelation. He ends the book with an appendix of resources for biblical study, which lists recommended books such as atlases, dictionaries and encyclopedias, commentaries (both multi-volume and one-volume), and introductions. He provides three indices: people, places, and themes. Interspersed throughout the book are seven maps and one chart taken from two sources (OT from Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 2nd ed.; NT from Boring, *An Introduction to the New Testament*).

On each biblical book, Mayfield presents a synopsis, a chapter-by-chapter content outline (with the exception of Job and Proverbs), a list of people, places, and key concepts, and also several key verses. He adds special topics at appropriate places, such as days of creation in Genesis 1, the life of Abraham, and the life of Jacob at the end of the section on Genesis. There are some exceptions to the general format. For example, the sections on 1 and 2 Chronicles and Psalms do not have a section about important quotations.

Mayfield encourages those readers without any prior knowledge about the Bible to use this book to accompany their reading of the Scripture to help their understanding. The summarization of content will keep them continuing to read. For
each biblical book, Mayfield selects important verses that can be used for memorization exercises and spiritual edification.

This book can be used to prepare students for a formal Bible introduction or survey course. This book can also be used by laypeople who are interested in learning the basic facts of Scripture. This book is suitable even for M.Div. students who are without any knowledge of the Bible or with no prior training in the biblical field.

Since this book tries to avoid theological interpretation, one wonders whether it can really help students to read the Bible to understand the meanings of the text for its author and first readers. The author of the original text must have a definite theological purpose.

There are some minor errors: for example, the sons of King Solomon divide the monarchy into two kingdoms (p. 7), and tithing is giving of a portion of one’s income (p. 40).

Overall the book fulfills its stated purposes. However, for evangelicals, a similar book with a theological orientation is preferred.

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John H. Walton’s Lost World series provides ANE backgrounds that influence OT interpretation and unsettle traditional positions. Teaming up once again with his son, J. Harvey Walton, John Walton in the sixth volume in this series situates Torah in its ancient covenant and wisdom context, providing some helpful and surprising results. The clear organization of this book is helpful—five parts framing twenty-three propositions, each forming a chapter, ending with a summary conclusion and an appendix on the Decalogue.

Part 1, “Methodology,” contains two propositions. The first identifies the OT as an ancient document; the second distinguishes ancient and modern views of law. It is critical to the thesis of this book to differentiate between prescriptive “legislation” as a system of laws and descriptive “legal sayings” as instructions providing wisdom. As speech acts, legislation expects strict obedience to “laws” in the modern sense, while legal sayings function more as social customs and norms.

Part 2, “Function of Ancient Near Eastern Legal Collections,” lays an important foundation for understanding Torah. Proposition 3 dislodges the modern “legislative” view of law from the way the Waltons view Torah. This void is quickly refilled with Proposition 4, which suggests ANE legal collections be considered “wisdom,” and this becomes a recurring theme. Perhaps sensing how disorienting this will be for many readers, Proposition 5 reworks and combines Propositions 3 and 4. Proposition 6 provides context for Torah as an ANE suzerainty treaty. This is nothing new, but the authors use this context to support the claim that Torah is