

Yet even with their thorough bibliography, readers who wish to learn more about a particular topic might find tracking down more detailed, thorough resources frustrating. Setting this minor criticism aside, González and González summarize the depth and complexity of Latin American Christian history in a single, digestible volume. *Christianity in Latin America* is a fast-paced book that will help illuminate an area of Christian history that might be ignored by many people because the field of study is too vast or daunting. If some people previously believed the history of Christianity in Latin America was monolithic, involving mostly Roman Catholicism, the authors remedy this oversimplification by representing all of Christianity in Latin America.

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And I Turned to See the Voice: The Rhetoric of Vision in the New Testament. By Edith Humphrey. Studies in Theological Interpretation. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2007. 238 pp. \$22.99 (paper).

Edith Humphrey's latest book is an original and substantial contribution to biblical and theological scholarship. It comprises several studies of New Testament vision-reports; some of the studies are revised and extended versions of earlier publications. As it stands, the book offers a dense and coherent treatment of the topic.

Humphrey shows that "where we find vision-reports, we inevitably find argumentation, either explicit or implicit" (p. 18). What differs among the various passages are the proportions according to which the visionary and the technical elements are combined. The book discusses the entire spectrum of New Testament visionary accounts, moving from vision-reports designed to complement and complete an argument (pp. 31–56, dealing with the visions of Paul and Stephen in 2 Corinthians 12:1–10 and Acts 7:54–60) to vision-reports that "direct the argument" (pp. 57–102, the intertwined visions of Peter and Cornelius in Acts 9–11, and Paul's report of his vision and subsequent conversion in Acts 22 and 26) to vision-reports that "shape the narrative" (pp. 103–150, such as the Transfiguration stories), and ending with the vision-reports in Revelation, which overwhelm logic and "fire the imagination" (pp. 151–194).

Humphrey notes that, despite being an established method in biblical studies, rhetorical criticism has not yet been brought to bear on texts claiming to report visionary experiences (p. 35). By the same token, scholars who deal with the stuff of apocalypses, heavenly journeys, divine "showings," and the like have only seldom had recourse to the toolbox of rhetorical analysis. This either/or approach has led to unfortunate misreadings of the New Testament. One of the passages discussed extensively in the book, Paul's account of being "caught up to the third heaven" (2 Cor. 12:1–4), offers a perfect illustration. If one strand of scholarship chooses to downplay the apostle's forceful plea against undue adulation of visionary exploits, seeing Paul simply as a charismatic visionary in the Jewish apocalyptic tradition and a precursor to later Hekhalot mysticism, other scholars are guilty of flattening Paul's rhetoric to mere power play (pp. 47–48). The originality of Humphrey's contribution lies precisely in providing a compelling solution that moves us beyond the false dilemma of Jewish apocalyptic vision versus Greek rhetoric. This holds true for the entire book, which argues that the non-technical element—the vision-report—is an integral part of a whole best understood in light of rhetorical technique; and the latter strengthens rather than undercuts the various New Testament claims to heavenly visions.

And I Turned to See the Voice is beautifully written. As one would expect from a scholar attentive to how authors convey their message, Humphrey writes in elegant and vivid prose, providing not only arguments but also striking analogies and a number of *bons mots* to illustrate and underscore the points being made. Ultimately, this book is not merely a contribution to rhetorical criticism, but also both a plea for a biblical hermeneutic of receptivity and welcome (pp. 195–207) and a responsible theological exercise that leaves the reader with a renewed appetite for the iconic appeal of vision-reports. As Humphrey suggests, texts should be approached "like welcome guests, rather than as inscrutable strangers, hegemonic hierarchs, or violent enemies" (p. 29). "Like the icon, the biblical text frequently works by means of inverted perspective, with the focal point not outside of the text, but inside of it, below the surface rather than at the level of the reader. The voices in the text call and the sights beckon, asking us whether we want to enter so as to really see and hear" (p. 205).

Aside from its primary audience—specialists of rhetorical criticism—this book should be of great interest to graduate students and scholars in the general area of New Testament studies and Christian origins.

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