

BOOK REVIEW

Mackie, Timothy P., *Expanding Ezekiel: The Hermeneutics of Scribal Addition in the Ancient Text Witnesses of the Book of Ezekiel* (FRLANT, 257; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015). 339 pp. Hbk. US\$125.00.

Timothy P. Mackie is an adjunct Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at Western Seminary in Portland, OR. *Expanding Ezekiel* is the published edition of his doctoral dissertation, supervised by Michael V. Fox. Simply stated, ‘The body of the dissertation is a commentary on all the various types of scribal expansions’ in Ezekiel (p. 8). His monograph is separated into six chapters: (1) ‘Introduction: The Aims and Outline of This Study’, (2) ‘Identifying Scribal Expansion: The Text of Ezekiel in the MT and OG’, (3) ‘Categorizing Scribal Expansion: A Descriptive Typology of Textual Expansion’, (4) ‘Expansions That Focus on the Immediate Co-Text: Explicitation and Elaboration’, (5) ‘Expansions That Coordinate Multiple Co-texts: Harmonization and Assimilation’, and (6) ‘Conclusions and Prospects’. The following review, first, summarizes and engages with the content of Mackie’s monograph. Secondly, it provides a recommendation at the end that helps the reader determine if this volume is appropriate for his or her area of study.

Chapter 1 addresses Mackie’s aim and the focus of his monograph. Expanding on his scope of research, Mackie states, ‘This is a study of the ancient manuscript witnesses of the book of Ezekiel...[which] explores the interrelationships between the production, transmission, and interpretation of scriptural scrolls by Jewish scribes during the late Second Temple period’ (p. 12). With this as his topic, Mackie focuses in ‘on the techniques employed by these scribes as they passed down, and contributed to, the scriptural texts they were preserving’ (p. 12). In order to develop his topic and focus, Mackie presents three methodological steps that are taken in this present study. First, Mackie presents a methodology for identifying scribal additions in the text of

Ezekiel. Secondly, building from the first step, Mackie evaluates ‘340 potential instances of scribal expansion in Ezekiel’ (p. 12). Mackie defends his use of Ezekiel as a corpus by stating ‘that our current text witnesses to Ezekiel provide ample evidence of scribal expansion’ (p. 16). With Ezekiel as his corpus, he analyzes the purpose and function, and the source of scribal expansion. Thirdly, Mackie provides a selective commentary on a few of the 340 potential instances of scribal expansion that best meet his criteria of the previous two steps.

In Chapter 2, Mackie provides an overview of literature and defines his terminology used throughout this study. Within this realm of discussion, he states that he will, first, ‘show how the textual problems in Ezekiel are not unique, and how they fit within current scholarship on the history and development of the biblical text, especially as it pertains to the Old Greek (OG) translation’ (p. 16). Secondly, Mackie addresses the ‘problems of method when using the [OG] as a witness to the Hebrew text of Ezekiel, as well as the text-critical issues relating to the [OG] translation itself’ (p. 16). Finally, he presents a broad set of criteria for identifying scribal expansion in the MT and OG additions in the Ezekiel text. Mackie’s criteria include (1) the alignment of textual witnesses (B-Text: B, 967), (2) translation technique, (3) traditional text-critical criteria, (4) literary-critical criteria, and, added later, (5) redaction-critical criteria.

One significant issue I found in Chapter 2 has to do with a confusion of terminology. To the well-versed reader, it may be less of an issue, but to the up-and-coming textual criticism student or unfamiliar scholar, Mackie is unclear in his use of the terms OG and LXX. At times, especially when quoting other scholars like E. Tov, Fox or W. Zimmerli, for example, the terms seem interchangeable at times, but not in other instances. I was unable to find a clear definition of either ancient witnesses arguing that they are the same or distinct—LXX as reference to the Greek translation of the Pentateuch and OG as reference to the Greek translation of the rest of the Old Testament. I believe it would be helpful for the reader to understand the distinctions between these two ancient witnesses prior to reading this monograph.

Chapter 3 expands upon the goal of Mackie’s monograph: ‘to understand the nature and dynamics of scribal additions in Ezekiel’ (p. 50). In order to explain the purpose, function and source of scribal expansion in Ezekiel, Mackie puts forward a descriptive typology. Of these three categories—purpose, function and source—two are

typological categories: (1) purpose and (2) function. Simply stated, Mackie uses these two typological categories to ask the following questions: ‘What is the *purpose* of any given scribal addition (inasmuch as we can detect it), and what is the *source* of its vocabulary?’ (p. 53).

By way of observation, I noticed in both Chapters 2 and 3 that Mackie does not provide an extensive engagement with opposing views of scribal addition. It would have been interesting to read Mackie’s thoughts toward the scholarly position that scribal additions in the MT and OG are in fact a myth. While it is reasonable to understand why he would avoid this topic, I believe an engagement with some opposing positions would have been helpful for reinforcing his thesis by way of discrediting such opinions. Furthermore, Mackie’s exercise in textual criticism, outside of the literary- and redaction-critical approaches, is an employment of the methods of Fox, Tov and Zimmerli. There is very little deviation from their terminology and criteria within Mackie’s text-critical category for discussing variances between the designated ancient witnesses.

In Chapter 4, Mackie discusses ‘scribal expansion which focuses entirely on matters within the immediate co-text’ (p. 71). This chapter deals primarily with the typological category of purpose in two ways. First, ‘Some additions serve to *mark explicit what is implicit* and have been triggered by potential or perceived ambiguities in the adjoining textual environment’ (p. 71). Secondly, ‘On the opposite end of the spectrum are *elaborative* additions’ (p. 71). He explains, ‘These are not generated by any perceived difficulties in the co-text, but express creative impulse that takes up some element in the passage and elaborates it in a new direction, or adds a new flourish to the poetic or narrative rhetoric’ (p. 71). It is in this section that the reader realizes that Mackie’s monograph takes on a rhetorical-critical approach to textual criticism—a rather interesting method for such a study.

Chapter 5 surveys and classifies scribal coordination, ‘the most numerous and expansive category of additions in Ezekiel’ (p. 121). This category of scribal coordination encompasses multiple co-texts. In order to analyze the differing relationships that exist between scribal additions that cover multiple co-texts, Mackie uses two categories: (1) harmonization and (2) assimilation. Briefly defined, harmonization encompasses ‘two (or more) passages [that] may be describing the same event or object, in which case the additions remove inconsistencies between the representations’ (p. 121). In opposition, assimilation

encompasses ‘the related texts [that] may simply share [a] particular terminology, and so the expansions are added to increase or create a more nuanced relationship between the two passages’ (p. 121).

Chapter 6 functions as the summarizing and concluding chapter to Mackie’s monograph. In this chapter, Mackie consolidates his observations and compares them with the scribal practices in other ancient Near Eastern literary traditions and examples from the Old Testament. Mackie states at the end of his monograph that scribal expansion and exegesis help us understand details and ideologies not only in Ezekiel, but in other texts from the emerging scriptural collection as well. For this reason, textual criticism and the application of literary and redaction criticism are important.

The most helpful part of this monograph is Mackie’s Appendices I and II. Appendix I, ‘Index of Scribal Additions’, ‘represents a list of the MT or OG additions considered from [Mackie’s] study’ (p. 219). While this appendix is in no way exhaustive, it is an impressive compilation of scribal additions. Appendix II, ‘Categorized List of Scribal Additions’, ‘represents the same index, but [is] organized topically according to the...typological categories [of Mackie’s monograph]’ (p. 219). Together, these appendices represent a helpful corpus of additions that can be vital to study of Ezekiel’s text-critical issues. These two documents alone make the monograph worth purchasing.

I recommend Mackie’s *Expanding Ezekiel* to anyone interested in Old Testament—OG and MT—textual criticism. While his work is an exercise in textual, literary and redaction criticism in Ezekiel, his work can be helpful for anyone interested in unifying multiple methodologies for the purpose of generating new insights into the Old Testament scriptural collection. Mackie provides a profound model for such endeavours.

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