

theologian this helps reorient my mind. As a pastor I am left searching for ideas regarding implementation. Perhaps, Goheen and Sheridan might follow this with a more praxis-oriented publication for pastors seeking practical assistance in this urgent missionary encounter.

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David M. Moffitt, *Rethinking the Atonement: New Perspectives on Jesus' Death, Resurrection, and Ascension* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2022), pp. xvii + 298. \$35.00

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Having greatly appreciated David Moffitt's first book, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Brill, 2011), I was eager to read this second volume. Comprised mostly of previously published articles and chapters further developing Moffitt's central thesis, the book argues for the centrality of Jesus' resurrection and ascension in the letter to the Hebrews, while considering its exegetical and theological implications. The details of the argument will perhaps best be explored in journals more focused on biblical studies. For the purpose of this journal, I will attend to the theological claims, implications and possibilities raised by the biblical arguments.

Moffitt's central thesis is that the death of Jesus is not the focus of the Letter to the Hebrews when it comes to the atonement. Rather, the atonement is a rich event, having to do with the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. Hebrews in particular, with its consistent and thorough engagement with the Pentateuchal sacrificial system, is more interested in the manipulation of the blood than it is in the death of the sacrificial victim. The death, of course, is a necessary prerequisite – but the manipulation of the blood is what actually does the cleansing of priests, garments, the altar, tabernacle and people as a whole. And the manipulation of the blood, according to Hebrews, occurs as the risen Jesus enters the heavenly temple, equipped with his own blood.

My question, going into this book, was whether Moffitt was going to use this thesis to develop a comprehensive systematic account which would, in effect, minimise the death of Jesus in important ways, or whether he would choose to develop his insight as an important aspect of the work of Christ, highlighting the role of the resurrection and ascension in the atonement, while allowing other aspects of Christ's saving work to play their respective role. And the answer is abundantly clear: without a doubt, Moffitt favours the latter approach, in which he draws consistent and clear distinctions between the sacrificial elements of Christ's work, and other extra-sacrificial elements, in which Jesus' death or resurrection may play a more central role (cf. chapter 4, for instance). In other words, Moffitt advances a rigorous and biblically nuanced argument for one aspect of the atoning work of Christ, meant to be fully compatible with a richer and fuller account.

The possibilities this approach raises are quite exciting. On the one hand, Moffitt's work clearly distinguishes between penal/judicial and cultic/sacrificial aspects of the atonement, allowing each to play their appropriate role within the doctrine. This makes for rich possibilities as we re-engage the sacrificial material throughout Scripture, without burdening it with largely foreign penal/judicial motifs and categories. On the other, this contributes to an emphasis on the divine holiness within theological studies. God is a holy God, and we, in our sin, are impure, unclean. To delve into the meaning of these claims is an exciting endeavour, which I find to have been underdeveloped in recent thought.

My frustration with the book is one that I tend to have with biblical studies generally, which is to say that it is a fruitful and generative frustration: Moffitt consistently takes us right up to the point of making claims about who God is, how he acts in Christ, about his holiness and his purifying work – and then stops short of delving into the meaning of these claims. This book makes me all the more eager to understand the holiness of God – in fact, it demands that I engage in such study, for Moffitt shows again and again how the biblical reflection on the work of Christ demands such a pattern of thought. But Moffitt himself shies away from the kind of reflection I would like to see. Several paths come to mind here, including studies of God's holiness by John Webster and Mark C. Murphy, and P.T. Forsyth's studies of the atonement. Many such studies revolve around the doctrine of holiness, or theological developments of the doctrine of the ascension, which come at the same material Moffitt considers, but from another more theological angle, such as the works of Andrew Burgess and Douglas Farrow.

But the tension is a fruitful one. Moffitt's goal is to mine the biblical text (Hebrews in particular) for patterns of thought honouring Scripture's integration of the work of Christ and the sacrificial system in ways that demand a series of rich and fascinating modifications to common understandings of the atonement. But to my encouragement, these modifications come, according to Moffitt, in a manner complimentary to and expansive of other aspects of the work of Christ.

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William G. Witt and Joel Scandrett, *Mapping Atonement: The Doctrine of Reconciliation in Christian History and Theology*

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The atonement is a topic of considerable theological interest at present. It has been for some time. *Mapping Atonement* is an addition to the secondary literature that attempts to give an historical and theological overview of the doctrine. It is clearly written,