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This Festschrift was prepared to honor A. G. Auld’s lifetime of contributions to the study of the Hebrew Bible and to mark his mandatory retirement from Scottish academia at the age of sixty-five. The editors include a colleague and two former Ph.D. students, and there are papers by thirty of his friends, colleagues, and former students to mark the occasion, which is all that space would permit. A majority is U.K.-based (eighteen), with a number from the Americas (seven) and the balance from Europe (four) and Israel (one). The introductory pages include a tribute to Graeme in the form of a biography, followed by a list of his publications. The articles are then arranged alphabetically, rather than thematically. A list of contributors and author index complete the volume.

Like all such volumes, the topics cover a wide range and are not all focused on historiography, in spite of the subtitle. And, typical of such volumes, the quality varies among the individual contributions; a few are polished and offer stimulating food for thought. Most, however, appear to be embryonic studies that remained un- or underdeveloped due to good intentions but a lack of time or are simply summaries of past published ideas. It is unfortunate that the editors did not invest the additional time and effort to prepare scriptural and subject indexes, which would have made the volume much more user-friendly, given its size and range of material.
W. B. Aucker writes about the seeming attribution of priestly functions as well as royal healing powers and the royal obligation to provide basic staples for his people to Elisha in 2 Kings 2–8 and argues that chapters 4–5 are an implicit critique of kingship.

J. Barton argues for the liturgical use of the Deuteronomistic History in the exilic situation of lament and penitence. At some point in its redaction, it was shaped to function as a corporate confession of sins committed by the many generations of Israelites and was intended for recitation within exilic institutions of worship in Judah or Babylonia.

G. J. Brooke discusses why no copies of Chronicles were among the Qumran texts, even though it influenced three second-century b.c.e. works found there: the Temple Scroll, the Apocryphon of Joshua, and the Tables of Priestly Works. He suggests that it fell from favor among this sectarian group after the Hasmoneans embraced it in the first century b.c.e. He also notes that the Chronicler knew a text of Samuel that was close to that found in 4QSam², which is earlier than the MT version.

R. E. Clements argues that 2 Kgs 25:27–30 is editorial and is meant to portray Jehoiachin as an exile among exiles, whose survival is dependent upon the recognition accorded by the foreign ruler. The underlying message is that the divine protection promised to David remained valid in spite of the changed circumstances, where Israel is now to live among the nations under the shadow of an heir of the Davidic line. The verses are a midrash on the promises typified in Ps 18:43–50.

D. J. A. Clines details twenty points of bad translation in Ps 23 before providing his own fresh translation.

A. H. W. Curtis examines whether the portrayals of Keret and Danel in the Ugaritic texts as kings dispensing and upholding justice are fact or fancy. He argues that they reflect historical practice and that at Ugarit, kings may have sat in the palace gate rather than the city gate, as in other towns.

P. Davies argues that Benjamin holds the key to understanding how and why the biblical historiographical enterprise was initiated and why postmonarchic Judeans assumed the name “Israel.” Benjamin was once part of Israel and then became part of Judah. He argues that a Benjaminitite “history of Israelite origins” can be traced from the acquisition of Benjamin in Joshua to Saul’s death in 1 Samuel. It, together with Auld’s proposed “Book of Two Houses,” were the major components of the Deuteronomistic History, a Judean historiographic enterprise in which “biblical Israel” was created by giving Judah the
leading role within a fictitious, early twelve/thirteen-tribe Israel that combined the components of the two separate kingdoms.

J. Day writes on Gibeon and the Gibeonites, plodding through the various biblical references and surveying various views voiced in connection with each. His contribution lies in pointing out what he considers to be historically plausible and, therefore, solid evidence or convincing argument.

M. Douglas expands on Auld’s observation that the Balaam stories in Num 22–24 contain deliberate parallels in language and structure to Samuel, on which it is dependent. She argues that the entire book of Numbers has been modeled on the whole of Samuel, with its plot structurally based on Samuel’s in the way J. Wesselius has argued Exodus is plotted on Herodotus’s histories.

L. L. Grabbe explores the structure of the Chronicle of the Kings of Judah as a source for the Deuteronomistic History, postulating that it gave brief but factual information on each king of Judah but also recorded the accession and deaths of the kings of Israel. He cites one Mesopotamian chronicle in which data from the reigns of Babylonian, Assyrian, and Elamite kings is interwoven as an analogy. The author/compiler of the DtrH used the Judahite chronicle as a framework and filled it out with other material, often legendary or semilegendary.

A. P. Hayman discusses the text-critical decisions common to scholars who prepare critical editions of Jewish texts from antiquity. His particular focus is the earliest recoverable text of the Sefer Yesira, from which most variants in manuscripts and recensions can be explained.

A. G. Hunter investigates the specialized, liturgical use of dûr in Pss 14:5; 24:6; Jer 3:31; and Gen 6:9; 7:1 in the sense of “assembly” or “company.” In the first three instances, it refers to pilgrims seeing or seeking Yahweh; in the last two, to the wicked and corrupt from whom Noah is set apart to become the father of a righteous, Yahweh-seeking company.

W. Johnstone argues that the repeated version of events at Mount Horeb in Deut 4:9–5:31 implies that the original “D” version of events in Exod 19:1–24:8 must have contained both the Decalogue and the Book of the Covenant. He then notes the literary parallels between the two in Exod 20, except for the Third Commandment, prohibiting the taking of the divine name in vain, which is absent if one reads verse 20 as is currently done. He proposes that the Third Commandment is alluded to in Exod 20:24b and again in 23:13b. Verse 24b does not relate to what precedes it, stating that a theophany justifies the
building of an altar; rather, it is an independent reassurance that “throughout the whole land where I permit my name to be invoked, I shall come to you and bless you,” paralleling the Third Commandment.

G. N. Knoppers suggests that 2 Kgs 17:34b–40 is an alternate, corrective view of postexilic Samarian history to that preceding it in 17:23–34a. It presents the residents of Samerina as native descendants of Jacob, ethnic Israelites, and so assumes continuity rather than the discontinuity presented in the prior segment. Verses 34b–35a and 40 are editorial comments framing an oracle identifying Yahweh’s relation to the children of Jacob and their obligation, stemming from membership in the covenant community, to worship Yahweh alone. The unit rebuts the claim that the postexilic northern population worships Yahweh in spite of being ethnic Israelites.

L. Kucová looks at all references to prostration as a posture expressing royal reverence in the stories of David. She notes that in Chronicles, only the foreigner Araunah does obeisance before David, while in Samuel and Kings, Israelites and resident aliens perform the act. Obeisance as royal etiquette only appears in 1 Sam 20–1 Kgs 2, indicating that it was not a traditional motif used to describe how people routinely approached their king. Instead, she suggests the Araunah story served as the origin for what was made into a recurring theme by a particular writer. The author portrayed it as something initiated by David himself and used to his advantage to become king, but then was used against him as a manipulative tool later in his reign.

T. H. Lim analyzes the fifty speech acts of characters in the book of Ruth to determine its literary voice. There are twenty-six female speeches and twenty-one male ones, so the book represents both male and female points of view. In each chapter the perspective shifts from male to female and from main to secondary characters. He finds insufficient indication as to whether the author was male or female.

J. R. Linville argues that there need not be a direct relationship between the textual reality and the author’s lived reality in prophetic books. Working with Joel, he observes that reconciling the book’s diverse imagery into a plausible historical scenario does not yield proof of the author’s historical circumstances. The core of the text could be a literary construct.

S. L. McKenzie examines the Chronicler’s account of Jehoshaphat to explain its uniqueness. He finds 17:1–9 to be created by the Chronicler; 18:1–19:3 to be borrowed from the latest textual version of Kings; 19:4–11 and 20:1–30 probably to be created by the Chronicler, and 20:31–37 to be taken from 1 Kgs 22:41–49. The ambivalence toward this king stems from the Chronicler’s reading of Kings through his own theological lens.
R. F. Person Jr. suggests that the Deuteronomistic History and the Chronistic History stem from different, competing, contemporaneous scribal schools. The scribal guild displaced from Jerusalem to Babylon after 586 B.C.E. created an early history, which was then expanded by a segment of this school that was sent back to administer Yehud with Zerubbabel, creating the Deuteronomistic History. Meanwhile, the parent group continued to expand it as well, and that version, Chronicles, wound up back in Yehud when more scribes returned with Ezra. Ezra gave priority to the latter group, which ended further Deuteronomistic literary activity but led to the expansion of Chronicles into a longer history that included Ezra and Nehemiah.

H. S. Pyper proposes that the book of Jonah originated as a midrashic narrative built on two sources: (1) the preexisting psalm now found in chapter 2; and (2) 2 Kgs 14:23–29. Its author read the psalm and literalized four of its metaphors in his prose composition.

D. J. Reimer focuses on the extant stories of interpersonal forgiveness in the Hebrew Bible to examine its narrative ethics: Jacob and Esau; Joseph and his brothers; and Abigail and David. The stories share a renewal of life that accompanies reconciliation, instead of death resulting from vengeance in stories where forgiveness is refused. He concludes that, in the writers’ worldview, there was no obligation to forgive but that, to effect reconciliation and a resumption of the status quo, both parties needed to move toward one another.

R. Rezetko challenges the standard identification of Late Biblical Hebrew. He shows that “late” common nouns are a trivial percentage of vocabulary in Chronicles and rarely substitute for “early” counterparts. Instead, biblical books combine mostly “early” and occasionally “late” vocabulary. Common nouns that are allegedly “late” are seldom absolutely so, as shown by their extrabiblical attestation, and are explainable by nonchronological interpretations.

T. C. Römer argues that Numbers was the last book of Torah created and was a forerunner of midrashic literature. Most of the prescriptions in chapters 1–10 would have better fit in one of the other four books of the Pentateuch but apparently could no longer be interpolated because they were closed to important additions. Israel’s rebellious sojourn in the wilderness, developed in chapters 11–20, is not a traditional underlying theme of the Pentateuch but a late invention stemming from the creation of Numbers. The wilderness traditions in chapters 11–20 are reinterpretations of an old, positive tradition of sojourn seen in Hosea and Jeremiah, now made into a cycle of rebellion.

M. L. Steiner tries to identify when during the Iron Age Jerusalem might have been viewed as a “holy city.” Three criteria are considered: the centrality of the temple; the existence of a pilgrimage network; and the morphology, function, and centrality of the town during
the period. She concludes that the idea took root in the seventh century, after Sennacherib’s invasion that left Jerusalem the “primate city” in Judah, a thriving metropolis with international traders and artisans.

E. Tov suggests that etymological exegesis, the analysis of the semantic content of clusters of letters in Hebrew/Aramaic, underlies all ancient translation of the Hebrew Bible. Pronunciation and parsing were not influential. Sometimes translators took a shortcut and relied on only two root letters, especially in instances involving weak verbs, which led in some instances to mistaken meanings due to a misidentification of the underlying root. Biliteral theory was developed by medieval Jewish grammarians and revived in scholarly literature from the eighteenth century onwards.

J. Trebolle reexamines the validity of Auld’s model for generating his “Book of Two Kingdoms,” noting that the MT text of 1-2 Kings has undergone expansions particularly in references to Moses and David and in quotations or references from the book of Deuteronomy; the LXX and Qumran preserve an earlier form of the Hebrew text. Auld’s proposed model may be valid for 1 Kgs 3–10 of the MT and LXX//2 Chronicles 1–9 but does not seem to work for the rest of 1 and 2 Kings. In the vision at Gibeon (1 Kgs 3:4–15//1 Chr 1:6b–13), the Chronicler seems to have accessed northern traditions that contained more references to Saul and Gibeon that what can be distinguished in Samuel-Kings.

J. Van Seters reexamines the lynchpin of Auld’s hypothetical “Book of Two Kingdoms”: that the Chronicler did not know the Court History of David as part of the common source. As a corollary, he looks at the reconstructed “shared” text dealing with the reigns of David and Solomon to see if it makes coherent sense. He concludes that the Chronicler used a text of Samuel–Kings that already had been shaped by Deuteronomistic concerns and had been expanded with later additions, such as the Court History.

H. G. M. Williamson analyzes the function of narratives beginning with a common or proper noun + qal perfect of the verb hayah, discussing the six occurrences in the Hebrew Bible. He concludes it was intended to alert the reader that there was more in what follows than meets the eye, rejecting the current view that it introduced fiction.

G. T. K. Wong argues that the call narrative for Gideon in Judg 6 is literarily dependent on the call narrative of Moses in Exod 3–4; they are not independent examples of a type-scene for call narratives. The parallels drawn between the two figures set up the possibility that Gideon will be a new Moses, but the ironic contrasts in the story show readers that Gideon is merely an old, idolatrous Aaron.
N. Wyatt takes a fresh look at Deut 32:6b, 8–9, offering translational notes and his own rendering of each verse. In verse 8, he retains the MT reading “Israel” versus bn ‘lm in Qumran and the LXX; the sons of Israel must number twelve for the immediate offspring or seventy for the extended family (Gen 46:27; 49:28). He observes that the Qumran and LXX tradition should be rendered “sons of El,” with the final three consonants understood as a genitive singular with enclitic mem. In the original, these verses identified Yahweh with El Elyon, not with one of the subordinate divine “sons.” Finally, the God of the exodus may have been El, the savior God.

Most of the authors have built their contributions around comments or ideas advanced by Auld in his career, affirming, nuancing, expanding, or rejecting them. The result is a volume that reinforces the positive impact the honoree has had on the field of Hebrew Bible. He has repeatedly demonstrated our need to reexamine our presuppositions and not to let theories become complacently accepted factoids. The assembled essays provide a representative sampler of current reactions to Graeme’s ideas, and it will be interesting to see if they remain representative of the future reception of his proposals.