to bracket, and his historical conclusions have congenial potential for those who wish to engage the theological questions in a way continuous with classic Christian belief.

One general reflection. It is always good to read a work in which the traditional disciplines of philology and history are well utilized. And the creating of dialogue space through the bracketing of religious commitments is a well-known, and rightly valued, strength of historical-critical work on the Bible. Nonetheless, the widespread contemporary raising of ideological and cui bono questions may make possible and, in some contexts, require a renewed handling of the question of whether or not there is life-transforming truth at stake in the subject matter of these scholarly debates. If Hurtado were perhaps to turn his attention to questions other than the ancient historical, in a mode that moved beyond modernity's characteristic ways of setting up issues of religious truth, we would be even further in his debt.

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In this book Mark Kinzer, as professor and ordained rabbi, argues the case for post-missionary messianic Judaism. By this theologically innovative term, he is describing a movement consisting of Jews who have accepted Jesus as the messiah and yet wish to remain within the tradition of Judaism and follow basic Jewish practice. He seeks to demonstrate how this movement can speak to both Christian and Jewish communities in order to bridge the gap between the two traditions that historically has generated needless pain and suspicion.

The work represents a sustained reflection on the part of Kinzer. Although at one level his thoughts came with disarming ease as they have also preoccupied him professionally and personally for more than fifty years. His chief aim is to offer a way in which the schism between Judaism and Christianity can be healed, resulting in 'a bilateral ekklesia in solidarity with Israel that affirms Israel's covenant, Torah, and religious tradition' (pp. 309–10, his italics). Key to achieving this is a repudiation of Christian supersessionism (the idea that Christianity replaces Judaism rendering the latter a purposeless religious system), and a new understanding on the part of the global church in relation to Judaism.
as a religion and the Jews as a people. Central to this transformation is a renewed appreciation of the Jewishness of Jesus.

Kinzer sets out his arguments over nine well-written chapters beginning with an exegesis of New Testament texts that permits and affirms the old Covenantal ways of Abraham and his people even when it fails to embody explicitly a commitment to Jesus. On his reading, both Jewish practice and the Covenant are essentially unaffected by the coming of the messiah in the person of Jesus Christ. His interpretation of the gospels and epistles (and he does not shy away from the hard Pauline and Johannine texts) concludes that all Jews are actually, 'obligated to follow basic Jewish practice' (p. 23), and that the covenant and God's love remain binding for the Jewish people. Such a conclusion could only be realized in an ekklesia, 'of two distinct but united corporate bodies' (p. 23), one being Jewish and the other Gentile in nature. He then turns to the historical growth of Christian supersessionism and argues that the subsequent Jewish response – a firm 'no' to Jesus – actually affirmed God and the Covenant and as such affirmed Jesus' own positive affirmation of God. Despite the Jewish 'no' to Jesus, both Jews and Jesus were still proclaiming God.

To further affirm the validity of Judaism in the new Christian era, Kinzer goes on to argue that later rabbinic tradition is, despite some differences, actually compatible with the fundamental teaching of the New Testament. Many will find such a claim contentious and will no doubt find his exegesis equally problematic. But we no longer suppose that one reading of a text reveals definitive authorial intent and contemporary hermeneutics continually surprises us with unexpected conclusions. In the final chapters, Kinzer traces the emergence of nineteenth century Hebrew Christianity, and twentieth century Hebrew Catholicism and Messianic Judaism and highlights how these initially missionary-based movements could become vital components of his desired bilateral ekklesia of those who have faith in Jesus as messiah. His concern at every point as the final chapter heading makes clear is to 'heal the schism'. Until this is done, and here Kinzer draws on a telling metaphor of Pope John Paul II, the church 'breathes with only one lung' (p. 510).

Kinzer's arguments and scholarship command respect and bring a welcome clarity to the often controversial field of Christian-Jewish relations. Structurally the book is well organized. It contains a useful introduction which locates his concerns and provides a concise overview of his general arguments. Kinzer also clearly explains his terminologies. This is particularly useful in a book that refers to Jesus as 'Yeshua' and both Christians and Jewish Jesus believers as 'Yeshua believers'. He is meticulous in separating his idea of post-missionary messianic Judaism from missionary messianic Judaism in order to avoid any colonial, or supersessionistic implications. Some may find his terminology distracting or frustrating, but the demarcations are
neither arbitrary nor superfluous. They represent a genuine attempt to help bring Christian and Jewish traditions closer together through the reality of postmissionary messianic Judaism. Kinzer succeeds in putting this relatively new movement on the theological map in a convincing and powerful way. Future Christian–Jewish dialogue without reference to this movement will be incomplete or impoverished at best.

The real value of his work is that it offers an important bridge between Christian and Jewish traditions through his close examination of messianic Judaism. The three practical steps forward that he advocates in his concluding chapter make possible a healing process without full agreement over the messianic identity of Yeshua or all the implications of the Incarnation. His plea for greater respect for the Jewish community among Christians will also be welcomed in all Jewish circles. More than this, however, such a stance enables two great monotheistic traditions to realize their deeper continuities and origins rather than their differences. Kinzer follows Michael Wyschogrod and challenges the Christian community to recognize the implications of the rejection of supersessionism. This is surely one of the most pressing needs in the Christian–Jewish relationship today. There can be little headway in dialogue between both communities if Christians continue to insist that Judaism is rendered obsolete by the New Israel predicated on Christ. Finally, Kinzer’s call for the churches to, ‘engage the Messianic Jewish movement in serious conversation and encourage (its) development in a post-missionary direction’ (p. 309), is a vital step toward greater understanding and mutual appreciation of both traditions through the recognition of and dialogue with a movement which links the two religions in a more profound way. The encouraging of a move toward a post-missionary perspective in Messianic Judaism will also help to allay Jewish suspicions of attempted conversions directed toward their door.

Kinzer aims the book primarily at Christians, but Jewish readers with an interest in the field will also find it a rewarding experience that is both provocative and constructive in its approach. Although this considered work is unlikely to convince Orthodox Jews or conservative Christians, it will, I suspect, unsettle them as Kinzer anticipates in his introduction (p. 11). Much to his credit, he has succeeded in creating promising new space in the Christian–Jewish conversation that may enable both partners to see themselves bound together to the person of the messiah.

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