The thirty-six essays in this two-volume Festschrift were presented to Professor DeVries on his eighty-second birthday, December 20, 2003. They are a most fitting tribute, unfortunately offered at outrageous prices. There is no common theme among the essays; two are by DeVries himself; two by Kalimi; and five by Knierim. Has the Festschrift genre here lost its way?

In addition to his service in the pastorate and at various theological institutions, DeVries’s longest tenure was at the Methodist Theological School in Ohio, 1962–1988. He has remained active in scholarly pursuits throughout his long retirement. His bibliography runs to some 180 items, from 1950 to the present, including seven major books. The identical foreword by Rolf P. Knierim, introductory essay by J. Harold Ellens, and bibliography of DeVries are printed in both volumes (1:ix–xi, 1–5, 372–79; 2:vii–ix, 1–5, 279–86). Both volumes have indexes of scriptural references and authors (1:380–403; 2:287–301). Ellens contrasts the scholarship of Brevard S. Childs, which he labels “canonics,” with the “text-critical” studies of the honoree, although most scholars would
call the latter “historical-critical” studies. Ellens laments that the fruitful approaches of *Formgeschichte* and redaction criticism, typified, in his view, by the work of Knierim, David J. A. Clines, and DeVries, are passing from the field and being replaced by “the rather simple narrative studies and theological analysis of Walter Brueggemann,” and he judges that “contemporary biblical study has been seized and trivialized by the canonic approach.” Whatever one thinks of Brueggemann and Childs, these judgments seem harsh, sweeping, and, in fact, quite misguided.

Volume 1 contains the following essays: Brian R. McCarthy, “The Characterization of YHWH, the God of Israel, in Exodus 1–15” (6–20; Yahweh is essentially unethical and uses gratuitous violence to achieve his purpose); John William Wevers, “Two Reflections on the Greek Exodus” (21–37; the LXX translator knew Greek and Hebrew well, and the God he portrayed in the third century B.C.E. was transcendent and one); David Rolph Seely, “The Image of the Hand of God in the Book of Exodus” (38–54; the hand of God imagery is part of a very strong anthropomorphic depiction of God); Deborah L. Ellens, “Numbers 5.11–31: Valuing Male Suspicion” (55–82; he gender arrangements behind the social construction of male suspicion in ancient Israel are impossible for modern readers); Ronald E. Clements, “The Former Prophets and Deuteronomy—a Re-examination” (83–95; there are few references in these books to laws that can be found in a book, and this “law book” ideology has been imposed on Deuteronomy and the Former Prophets by a secondary level of editorial revision); Amira Meir, “On the Study of Pentateuchal Poetry” (96–113; the author adds Exod 17:16 and Num 21:27–30 to the lists of poetic passages compiled by Y. Kaufmann and M. H. Segal); J. Kenneth Kuntz, “Hendiadys as an Agent of Rhetorical Enrichment in Biblical Poetry, with Special Reference to Prophetic Discourse” (114–34; through hendiadic transformations, relatively colorless adjectival phrases are elevated into striking coordinate phrases that induce listeners and readers to take notice); John D. W. Watts, “Two Studies in Isaiah” (135–46; Is the speaker and prophet/scribe behind the “I” speeches in Isaiah Meshullam the son of Zerubbabel?); Hyun Chul Paul Kim, “The Song of Moses” Deuteronomy 32.1–43” (147–71; there are intricate connections among Deut 32, Isa 1, and Isa 40–55; future studies may also include Isa 56–66 in this linkage); Simon J. DeVries, “John Calvin’s Contribution to an Understanding of the Book of Isaiah” (172–99; once the question of christological centrism is set aside, Calvin’s seriousness in dealing with the Old Testament leaves the strong impression that it must be revered as a witness to the Word of God by Christians in every age); W. Eugene March, “Guess Who Is Coming to Dinner! Jeremiah 29.1–9 as an Invitation to Radical Social Change” (200–210; according to Jeremiah, God intends that we engage our society rather than pull back in defensiveness and anxious fear); Simon J. DeVries, “The Interface between Prophecy as Narrative and Prophecy as Proclamation” (211–46; a study of three prophetic legends [1 Kgs 13; 20:30b–43aa;
2 Kgs 5:1–27], Yahweh’s dealing with Sennacherib, and other narrative action in the prophetic books); Won W. Lee, “Balak: The Forgotten Character in Numbers 22–24” (247–61; Balak’s plan to curse his enemy Israel by employing Balaam is a fool’s idea that unfolds into inevitable failure); Yitzhak (Itzik) Peleg, “ ‘Yet Forty Days, and Nineveh Shall Be Overthrown’ (Jonah 3.4): Two Readings (shtei krie’ot) of the Book of Jonah (262–74; the overturnings in the book of Jonah and the presentation of the prophet in opposition to all those surrounding him lend support to the argument that the book of Jonah is a parody of prophecy); Kenneth E. Pomykala, “Jerusalem as the Fallen Booth of David in Amos 9.11” (275–93); Robert L. Hubbard Jr., “ ‘Old What’s-His-Name’: Why the King in 1 Kings 22 Has No Name” (294–314; although the context indicates that the Israelite king in 1 Kgs 22 is Ahab, the narrator’s depiction of him as anonymous whispers to the reader, “He’s history.”); Marvin A. Sweeney, “The Portrayal of YHWH’s Deliverance in Micah 2.12–13 Reconsidered” (315–26; these verses suggest that the subsequent exile and restoration of Jerusalem/Judah are an act of YHWH that is designed to purge Jerusalem and prepare it for its role as the center for YHWH’s rule over both Israel and the world at large); Naomi Steinberg, “Romancing the Widow: The Economic Distinctions between the ‘almana, the ‘ishsha-’almana, and the ‘eshet-hammet (327–46; the three terms refer to a woman without economic resources after the death of her husband, an inherited widow with sons, and a woman who is transferred by levirate procedures to the nearest patrilineal kin of her husband); and Isaac Kalimi, “The Date of the Book of Chronicles” (347–71; Chronicles is to be dated to the first quarter of the fourth century if the generations in 1 Chr 3:19–24 are calculated at twenty-three or twenty-four years).

Volume 2 contains the following essays: Rolf P. Knierim, “On Worldviews in the Bible of the Christians” (6–23; the Old Testament’s worldview of the indefinitely ongoing cosmos and human history appears as a critical complement to the New Testament); Thomas B. Dozeman, “The Holiness of God in Contemporary Jewish and Christian Biblical Theology” (24–36; the different emphases in the study of holiness within Jewish and Christian tradition illustrate the importance of interfaith dialogue for probing the full fabric of the Bible); Bill T. Arnold and David B. Weisberg, “Delitzsch in Context” (37–45; What was the impact of German nationalism on Friedrich Delitzsch? What were his Assyriological contributions?); Albert Pietersma, “Empire Re-affirmed: A Commentary on Greek Psalm 2” (46–62; unlike Ps 1, the Greek of Ps 2 suggests a relatively rich interpretive history); Isaac Kalimi, “Midrash Psalms Shocher Tov: Some Theological and Methodological Features and a Case Study—The View of God” (63–76; the sages maintained that God created the whole universe without help, that God is acting alone in history, and this must be defended against all kinds of nonbelievers); Edmund S. Meltzer, “Sinuhe, Jonah and Joseph: Ancient ‘Far Travelers’ and the Power of God” (77–81; in
the ordered cosmos of Egyptian Maat and of the Tanak, absolute power enables a divine being to act with absolute mercy); Moshe Aberbach, “Prophets and Prophecy in Targum Jonathan to the Prophets” (82–97; according to the Midrash, Jonah was a false prophet; in Targum Jonathan he was a true, but wayward, prophet); Ran Zadok, “Israelites, Judeans and Iranians in Mesopotamia and Adjacent Regions” (98–127; Israelites and Judeans were present in pre-Hellenistic Mesopotamia, and the Iranian presence in Babylonia was a source of interrelationship between the Iranians and the Judeans there); Joshua Schwartz, “Jew and Non-Jew in the Roman Period in Light of Their Play, Games, and Leisure-Time Activities” (128–40; an innocent game in a non-Jewish environment posed difficulties for the Jews, or changing political or social circumstances affected Jewish society and its attitude toward a specific game); Dean Phillip Bell, “Jewish and Christian Historiography in the Sixteenth Century: A Comparison of Sebastian Münster and David Gans” (141–58; comparison of Jewish and Christian developments promises to offer a powerful tool for a new approach to the history of early modern Europe); Wonil Kim, “Minjung Theology’s Biblical Hermeneutics: An Examination of Minjung Theology’s Appropriation of the Exodus Account” (159–76; the God of Minjung must be sought in, through, and beyond the God of the exodus, and that God must be sought dialectically in, among other places, the Bible); Rolf P. Knierim, “Revisiting Aspects of Bultmann’s Legacy” (177–98; this paper deals with Bultmann’s method of interpretation and the substance of Bultmann’s hermeneutic); Robert C. Tannehill, “Repentance in the Context of Lukan Soteriology” (199–215; the strong call for repentance in Luke-Acts may set us thinking about our own need for repentance, as individuals and as nations); Rolf P. Knierim, “On Punishment in the Hebrew Bible” (216–32; twenty-five different crimes merit capital punishment, according to the Hebrew Bible); J. Harold Ellens, “Biblical Metaphors as Psychological Agents That Legitimate Violence in Society” (233–44; Jesus’ healing of the man born blind offers a model of abuse, giving license to those kinds of misuse of others that are most natural in human society); Rolf P. Knierim, “Capital Punishment in Light of Biblical Interpretation” (245–67; the choice is whether to act as agents for the premature termination of the life of capital offenders or to implement alternative, remedial strategies for retribution while stopping before the authority for that final act); and Samuel Terrien, “Renaissance Artists and Biblical Exegesis” (268–78; the wily warnings of some Renaissance painters ask Christendom to confront change, from a new exegesis, with reverence, restraint, discipline, openness, and compassion).