With an expanding number of commentary series available, the serious Bible student can still benefit from a succinct, single commentary covering the Bible's books. A recently published option is the Fortress Commentary on the Bible. It surveys, in two volumes, the Old Testament and Apocrypha and the New Testament.

The heart of the commentary is its passage-by-passage exposition, arranged in three sections: The Text in Its Ancient Context, The Text in the Interpretive Tradition, and The Text in Contemporary Discussion. Essays exploring genre, such as the 23-page overview that introduces the Old Testament prophets, are especially helpful.

Most noteworthy is the commentary's diversity of contributors in terms of gender, ethnicity, and denomination. Even with such variety, there is an even-handedness, balance, and charity of interpretation that readers will appreciate. Preachers, teachers, and students of the Bible who want to consider a full range of interpretive options will find a wealth of insight in these volumes.

REVIEWED BY ABRAM KIELSMEIER-JONES