internal administrative and political concerns of the respective cities but also of their relationships with other cities and states.

In this work, DeVries, through his use of literary and archaeological evidence, has produced an interesting and insightful introductory text to the cities of the biblical world. It provides the basic information the student new to the field of biblical studies requires, and, by means of the short bibliographies contained at the end of each chapter, offers him or her a useful starting point from which to commence more advanced study.

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The monograph Prophecy and Inspired Speech, originally a PhD thesis for the Department of Ancient History in Macquarie University, Sydney, 1987, is a new approach to the study of ‘inspired speech’ (i.e., speaking in tongues and prophecy) in the early church. Traditionally, it has often been believed that some of the Corinthian converts brought their pre-Christian Hellenistic experience of ‘ecstatic speech’ into the church and Paul found this to be problematic. With this assumption, 1 Corinthians 12-14 was commonly believed to be a dispute between Paul and the Corinthian Christians over their understanding of inspired speech.

Forbes argues, however, that these two widely held hypotheses are absolutely wrong. He asserts that early Christian glossolalia and prophecy were substantially different from the inspired speech of Hellenistic popular religion. He claims that they were different in terms, phenomena, concept and theology, and therefore such hypotheses cannot be used to interpret 1 Corinthians 12-14. The confusion arose because speaking in tongues, as well as the many types of Hellenistic ecstatic speech, was unintelligible when there was no interpretation. However, he says that the gift of glossolalia in Acts 2 as well as in 1 Corinthians 12-14 was primarily the ability
to speak unlearned human languages (γλώσσαι) by divine endowment. On the other hand, the inspired speech in the Hellenistic religion was unintelligible only because of the obscure metaphors and images used (thus needing to be interpreted) and not because it appeared like unlearned foreign languages.

Furthermore, Forbes insists that early Christians understood the term προφήτης against the background of the Septuagint, and thus the meaning was substantially different from that understood by their non-Christian Hellenistic neighbours. For example, he says that the crucial terms μάνις, πρόμαντις, κατοχή, describing Hellenistic prophecy, are not attested in the early Christian writings. He argues that unlike Hellenistic popular religion, the early Christian groups had no priestly hierarchies, institutionalised prophetic ritual, or even particular places for oracular speech. By arguing that there is no significant parallel between the early Christian practice of inspired speech and Hellenistic notions of inspired speech, he suggests the Jewish ‘Wisdom’ speculation described by R.A. Horsley should be used as the background better to understand the dispute.

This book is well structured and Forbes’s ideas are clearly presented. At the outset, he seems to have reflected a contemporary ‘Pentecostal’ understanding of glossolalia. However, his conclusion that Christian glossolalia and prophecy were unique developments in the Hellenistic environment remains debateable. It is clear that because of its monotheistic beliefs, the early Christian church generally had an antagonistic attitude towards the Hellenistic ecstatic religions, which tried to communicate their diverse deities, and from which it attempted to distance itself in many ways. However, this does not mean that the early Christian church was not affected by any Hellenistic cultural influences. It seems that Forbes underestimates the complexity of the ecstatic religious phenomenon in relation to its relation to its cultural and social environment. In terms of altered states of consciousness, the mystical dimension and the popularity of such experience at least, common elements between the Hellenistic and Christian phenomena can be found.

Forbes’s argument that glossolalia in Acts 2 (which did concern actual foreign languages) is normative for interpreting glossolalia in 1 Corinthians 12–14 also undermines the possibility of a difference in perspective which exists between Luke and Paul. Nevertheless, this is a stimulating piece of work, and Forbes has