

Lind, Millard E. *Yahweh Is a Warrior*. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1980. 232 pp. Paperback, \$9.95.

Twentieth-century biblical scholarship has produced several theses about Israel's holy war. Lind has divided them into two broad categories, the first representing the works of Friedrich Schwally, Johannes Pedersen, and Gerhard von Rad. These scholars interpret the miraculous character of holy war as a late theological reinterpretation, not derived from the historical event itself.

The second group of scholars, represented by Rudolf Smend, Albert Glock, Fritz Stolz, and Manfred Weippert, calls the conclusions of the first category into question, postulating earlier historical or mythological elements to account for the theological reinterpretation. Lind rejects the position of the first category of scholars and goes beyond the second group by arguing that Israel's view of holy war is grounded in the Exodus experience, which involves the prophetic figure and already emphasizes the miracles of Yahweh over human fighting. Obviously, Lind opts for an early date for Exod 15, and seems to have considerable respect for the historical facticity of Israel's earliest tradition.

Essential to Lind's thesis is the idea that the OT sources reflect a critical opinion of the way kingship understood itself and holy war. The king saw himself and his armies as the means of obtaining victory, while the theological understanding of holy war saw Yahweh as king and the prophet as the one who announced Yahweh's salvation and denied that victory depended on the militia. This contrast between the prophetic perspective and the intentions of monarchy is reflected through much of the Pentateuch and the histories from Joshua to 2 Kings. Although the pro-kingship narratives of 1 Sam 8:12 pose a problem for the consistency of his thesis, Lind maintains that this does not negate the idea that the Deuteronomistic sources had a unified conception of the theo-political order, thus of warfare.

Lind closes his book by projecting his thesis through the messages of the great prophets and later apocalyptists, especially Daniel, on into the message of Jesus in the NT. There is thus an affirmed continuity in the theo-political scene from the beginning of Israel to the teaching of Jesus, according to Lind.

Some scholars will not be convinced by Lind's attempt to undo so much of the critical work on the history of warfare in early Israel, although one must compliment the author for his courage.

David Noel Freedman points out in the "Foreword" that it remains to trace Lind's thesis through the rest of the Hebrew canon. This observation points out the book's major weakness, since the thesis embraces the idea that the theo-political order manifested in the testimony of Jesus is the

legitimate understanding of that order in the OT, from its earliest to its latest expressions. Inevitably Lind's thesis will encounter difficulties with some of the royal Psalms, Esther, and certain prophetic traditions such as Micah's prophecy of a new David, and the tradition of war, found along with one of peace, which states that the remnant of Jacob will destroy all of their enemies.

If one is tempted to subordinate these witnesses to more compatible testimony, one is working with a canon within a canon. Or if one is pushed, as Lind is, to make the observation that even though the figure of the king dominates in Ps 18, but that the emphasis on the leadership of Yahweh limits the king's power, one begins to wonder if choosing the view of Yahweh's miraculous victory, or Israel's victory, announced by a prophet, is an exclusive OT view of the theo-political order. Perhaps the king was tempted to exercise the Enlil power of neighboring monarchs, but does this exclude the part of the anointed king as a representative of the people from the victory in the name of Yahweh?

Another question which should be addressed in a book such as this is related to the recognition that beginning with the monarchical period miracles of deliverance, such as contained in Exodus, no longer occurred as earlier. In fact, the question of whether Yahweh acted at all was raised by some voices in Israel. The prophets responded by redefining the activity of Yahweh in the political and military events outside of Israel which were now turned against Israel. While the prophets testify that judgment had fallen on Israel because she had broken the covenant, the Psalter wonders why God, contrary to his promise, had turned the edge of the king's sword and not upheld him in battle. Does this picture open up a wider debate over the place of the king in warfare and focus our attention on the realities of politics and human suffering under some of these systems, or is Lind right in suggesting that the true representatives of the kingdom are those who suffer and wait for Yahweh's new act?

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Nida, Eugene A., and Reyburn, William D. *Meaning Across Cultures*. American Society of Missiology Series, 4. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1981. vi + 90 pp. Paperback, \$5.95.

The purpose of this book is to offer a "practical guide to help people understand how misconceptions can arise because of differing cultural backgrounds" and to set forth "the principles of communication that guide one's judgment as to the validity of various types of adaptation and restructuring that occur in many present-day translations of the Bible" (p. vi).