

BOOK REVIEWS

Baker, D. L. *Two Testaments, One Bible: A Study of Some Modern Solutions to the Theological Problem of the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1977. 554 pp. Paperback, \$7.95.

This is a photomechanically reproduced typescript of a slightly revised Ph.D. dissertation submitted to the University of Sheffield in 1975. Its purpose is very well stated in the subtitle. Since the NT records the story of Jesus Christ and the birth of the Christian church, does this church then need an OT? If so, why? What is the relationship between the Testaments which constitute the Bible of the church? Is the NT to be considered as of greater authority than the OT? Or is the OT the real Bible for the Christian so that the NT is overshadowed by, and of lesser importance than, the former? How is the apparent tension between the Testaments to be resolved? These and other basic questions receive careful attention.

The opening chapter (pp. 19-93) provides a concise survey of the problem, with particular emphasis on the NT's view of the OT and the development of the problem from the Apostolic Fathers and Marcion through the Middle Ages, the Reformation, and on to our own century. The current issues of "progressive revelation" and neo-Marcionism receive special attention, and are shown to lead to a devaluation or virtual rejection of the OT, claiming that the OT is imperfect and inferior to the later superior stage, i.e. the NT.

The second part of Baker's study (pp. 95-154) takes up the solutions of theologians such as A. A. van Ruler and K. H. Miskotte who share the conviction that the OT is the essential Bible and the NT but its interpretative glossary or its Christian sequel, respectively. But to group together with the former the positions of J. Barr and H. Wheeler Robinson seems to reflect the same lack of discrimination and perception that is manifested in the section on "Sectarian Impatience." All attempts to view the OT superior to the NT are found to be wanting.

Next are treated several NT solutions (pp. 155-206). These view the OT as a non-Christian presupposition (R. Bultmann) or as a mere witness to the promise of Christ (F. Baumgärtel). The positions of E. Hirsch and F. Hesse are also briefly reviewed, compared and criticized. Baker points out that the NT solutions are faulty because they lead to an inadequate appreciation of the OT's contribution to the interrelationship between the Testaments. No mention is made of J. A. T. Robinson and P. van Buren whose positions are related to those who offer NT solutions. Surprisingly, A. H. J. Gunneweg's incisive critique of F. Baumgärtel is passed over in silence.

The fourth part of this study is not only the longest (pp. 207-359) but in every respect the most significant. Four "biblical" solutions are considered. The christological approach to the OT by W. Vischer is discussed in detail. The arguments in favor of a christological approach by E. Jacob, G. A. F.

Knight, and others are briefly (too briefly!) mentioned. Nevertheless the frequently misunderstood christological solution is rehabilitated. The second "biblical" solution affirmed by Baker is typology. This is clearly distinguished from allegory, symbolism, exegesis, prophecy, or a system. On the positive side typology is said to be historical and implies a real correspondence. "The basis of typology is God's consistent activity in the history of his chosen people" (p. 267). The third and fourth solutions are salvation history (G. von Rad and followers) and the tension between continuity and discontinuity (particularly T. C. Vriezen, H. H. Rowley, and C. H. Dodd), respectively. Although some fundamental weaknesses in von Rad's concept of salvation history are recognized, Baker feels that von Rad has made a contribution possibly greater than that of any other modern scholar.

But Baker's virtual identification of tradition history with salvation history in the work of von Rad must be challenged. Von Rad's traditio-historical method analyzes the growth of the OT from the earliest beginnings to the final form in which the canonized books are preserved. The resulting reconstruction of the history of tradition is a hypothetical picture of the development of "tradition before scripture" (J. Barr's phrase) and as such cannot be used to explain the theological relationship between the Testaments. By the time of Christ, the OT had already been fixed and canonized as Scripture for some time (see S. Z. Leiman, *The Canonization of Hebrew Scripture* [Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1976]), so that the use and interpretation of the OT by NT Christians cannot be taken to be another stage in the traditio-historical process. Hence the combination of tradition history with salvation history as a "biblical" solution for the equality of the Testaments must be called into question. This stricture does not mean that there is no agreement on a reciprocal relationship between the Testaments.

An appendix surveys the current debate about the center of the OT (pp. 377-386) and suggests that "there is indeed a unity in the Old Testament but it cannot be expressed by a single concept" (p. 386). This reviewer agrees with the first part of this sentence but has argued elsewhere that the center of the OT is God himself ("The Problem of the Center in the OT Theology Debate," *ZAW* 86 [1974]: 65-82). Baker leaves the impression, however, that he has not discerned the difference between the center of the OT as such and the function of a center as the key category for the structure of an OT theology.

On the whole this monograph is a highly informative investigation. Its main fault is that too many key issues are touched on without providing needed in-depth treatments. But in the end this may provide a welcome stimulation for others to carry on where Baker left off.

The volume is graced with useful indexes of authors, subjects, and biblical references. A very rich bibliography, which encompasses no fewer than 135 pages with about 1800 entries, will prove to be a treasure house for further research.