

that "separate 'theologies' of individual books, or groups of books, should be produced" (53, cp. 144), as well as "smaller" studies on more closely defined topics rather than an all-encompassing biblical theology (54). For Barr, then, biblical theology should pursue a theme or topic throughout the OT and NT, or it should confine itself to an exhaustive theological analysis of a limited text corpus, even "individual passages when seen properly in context" (145). Here I would like to side with Barr. The range of themes, motifs, and concepts in the biblical books, as well as various theologies of individual books or groups of writings, should be incorporated into biblical theology. To add to Barr's suggestion, after these multi-oriented theological endeavors have been accomplished, it may be possible to undertake the next level of biblical theology: to analyze relationships between them and consider the possibility of theological unity at a higher hierarchical level. Barr may feel uncomfortable with this, of course, as he criticizes previous efforts to arrive at comprehensive biblical theologies.

In conclusion, *The Concept of Biblical Theology* is a book to which everyone who is seriously engaged in this field should give careful attention. It mines the riches of a seasoned scholar's splendid analyses of his peers, and it draws the reader into intense reflection on the theological and philosophical contours of biblical theology. It can be hoped that in the future we will see Barr's own comprehensive OT or biblical theology, which will certainly be eagerly awaited by the scholarly community.

Berrien Springs, Michigan

MARTIN PRÖBSTLE

Brueggemann, Walter. *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1997. 736 pp. Hardcover, \$48.00.

In this weighty volume Walter Brueggemann not only presents his approach to the genre of OT studies, but also his assessment of the past, present, and future of the field. He defends the need for a new work by asserting that critical theological exposition is currently in a state of disarray. He then proposes that the resultant theological unsettlement provides a "multilayered pluralistic" atmosphere that is begging for a "new and fresh" theology of the OT. Brueggemann's goal is to avoid the temptation to "reductionism" of past OT theologies by focusing on process in the community presenting the text rather than on substantive or thematic matters. The book's subtitle provides three indicators of how Brueggemann intends to accomplish this mission. First, rather than making history or ontology his starting point, he investigates Israel's reflection on Yahweh by analyzing its "Testimony" and counter testimony in a court setting. Second, recognizing that testimony can be confusing, Brueggemann analyzes the resultant competing and conflicting "Disputes." Third, in spite of the competing disputes in the testimony, Brueggemann analyzes Israel's testimony, which takes a firm stand in "Advocating" that her truth is better than all other competing concepts of truth.

Because Israel's testimony is so crucial, Brueggemann takes seriously the OT text in its final form. He points out that Historical Criticism's emphasis on layers and sources detracts from the text, which is the only source of Israel's testimony. To Brueggemann the order in which Israel gave her testimony is so critical that he normally rejects critical attempts to reorder the text. He proposes that Israel's

testimony is reality enough, thus precluding the need to look for any pretext reference. In order to develop this reality, he constructs a theology based on grammar. To him, full sentences rather than individual words define the normative shape of Israel's testimony. For his purpose, he defines a sentence that contains a subject (Yahweh), an action verb, and an object. Seeing the verb as that which controls the sentence, Brueggemann breaks camp with those who focus on a static ontological definition of God. He consequently finds in the text a dynamic God and an object dependent on his action.

Brueggemann consistently and articulately follows a clear logical flow throughout each chapter as well as the entire book as he follows a presentation-of-testimony-in-a-courtroom theme. In 750 pages Brueggemann first examines Israel's core testimony about Yahweh by analyzing verbs, adjectives, and nouns, then her countertestimony about Yahweh's hiddenness, ambiguity, and negativity, then her embodied testimony about Yahweh in the form of Torah, king, prophet, cult, and sage. Then he concludes with "new and fresh" suggestions for theological interpretation. Though Brueggemann resists hegemonic treatment of the OT, he cannot help but at times posit important themes built around Israel's testimony.

Brueggemann's impressive intellect becomes evident not only in his engaging thought processes but also in his vocabulary, which may drive the reader to occasional dictionary usage. He writes not only as a scholar with helpful, comprehensive, and at times interdisciplinary footnotes, but also as a pastor with helpful and practical advice. To Brueggemann OT theology should be more than an intellectual exercise; it should also affirm practice that effects a transformation (conversion) and that gives Yahweh life in his people and his people life in himself. Brueggemann is particularly pastoral in his treatment of the hiddenness and negativity of the OT, demonstrating that one can live a life of faith in an ambiguous world while trusting in a sovereign yet hidden Yahweh.

Brueggemann succeeds in bringing a "new and fresh" look into the field of OT scholarship by addressing contemporary social issues such as homosexuality and feminism with a text-based perspective. He also employs this perspective in addressing theological issues such as monotheism, creation *ex nihilo*, asserting one's self before Yahweh, the common need for closure versus the openness of Yahweh, and the term "son of man." Brueggemann is "new and fresh" as he takes on Historical Criticism, even suggesting that Moses was a real individual. He adds influential insights in his opposition to the normal Christian "legalistic" label for OT moral, cultic, and purity laws. However, in his support of OT law as a definition of relationship he nevertheless passes off the Sabbath law as that which merely provides a unique mark for Jews.

Brueggemann allows his thought to be influenced by a broad spectrum of scholars. These include Jewish as well as Christian scholars, whom he divides into the "centrist" camp (such as Childs, Barr, Levenson, Rendtorff) and the "marginal" camp (such as Tribble, Pixley, Mosala). It appears that Brueggemann's label of "marginal" is dominated primarily by the theological left. Despite his "new and fresh" perspective, Brueggemann is still affected by the Historical-Critical method as illustrated by his treatment of Second Isaiah as exilic.

Brueggemann can be repetitious and wordy, but in such a lengthy presentation

the repetition helps keep the reader focused. While not the lightest vacation reading, this book is a must read for any scholar who wants to keep abreast of current OT theological trends. At the same time, the book is also a must read for the pastor who is looking for biblically based insights and applications for sermons and Bible studies.

Andrews University

KEITH MATTINGLY

Doukhan, Jacques B. *Secrets of Daniel: Wisdom and Dreams of a Jewish Prince in Exile*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000. 191pp. Paperback, \$12.99.

"The book of Daniel contains a universal message that transcends denominations and cultures. The book of Daniel concerns all of us," writes the author, who is a professor of Hebrew, Old Testament exegesis, and Jewish studies at Andrews University. Whereas Doukhan's first English book on Daniel, entitled *Daniel, Vision of the End*, dealt with the prophetic section of the book of Daniel, *Secrets of Daniel* offers an exposition of the whole book. This work is divided into twelve chapters, each dealing with the corresponding chapter from the book of Daniel. The Prologue to the book introduces Daniel as a book of prayer, wisdom and understanding, and promise.

The chapters in Doukhan's book are divided into three parts. First, there is an introduction that provides the historical and linguistic context. An exposition of the text follows, subdivided into sections that discuss smaller units of Daniel's chapter. The structure of the chapter is given at the end, followed by footnotes.

I commend the author for writing a book that treats the complete book of Daniel, rather than just one section of it. The end result, in this case, is a more balanced approach to Daniel's message. For example, Doukhan offers a detailed analysis of the seven prayers in Daniel's book and suggests a close link between the visions of this prophet and a life of consistent prayer.

In writing on Daniel's visions, Doukhan attempts to blend prophecy and history. He asserts that "history confirms the prophecy" (122), and also that "history fulfills the vision down to the smallest detail" (123). In doing this, the author is consistent in giving primacy to the wider biblical context.

The book is well written and richly documented, and it makes good reading for a wide circle of readers. I would like to mention a few points on which it could be improved. First, if the structure of a biblical unit is a vehicle of meaning, then it would be most helpful to have it in the beginning of the section on exposition. Second, a nonspecialist reader may wish to have more explanation on the chiasmic structures proposed in the book. Third, some statements dealing with the historical fulfillments of the visions, especially toward the end of the book, do not match the facts found in the proposed structures. In the text, for example, it is stated that "the first month of the year" is Nisan (158), yet in the structure on p. 164 it is the month of Tishri. Finally, there are a few typos such as the name "Ulich" on p. 11, note 6. These are only minor points of concern.

In conclusion, I would like to recommend Doukhan's book to everyone who is seriously interested in Daniel and its message. In particular, the book is a must for undergraduate theology students and seminarians.

Walla Walla College  
College Place, Washington

ZDRAVKO STEFANOVIC