

in a way that can be digested by the general reader, this book also deserves careful attention by scholars who study the relationships between theology and science.

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Greidanus, Sidney. *Preaching Christ from Psalms: Foundations for Expository Sermons in the Christian Year*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016. xx + 595 pp. Softcover. USD 33.25.

This book is the last volume of Sidney Greidanus's series on preaching Christ from the Old Testament, published by Eerdmans. The series reflects Greidanus's academic expertise, high regard for Scripture, and Reformed (Calvinist) background. Other books from this series include *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (1999), *Preaching Christ from Genesis* (2007), *Preaching Christ from Ecclesiastes* (2010), and *Preaching Christ from Daniel* (2012). The Old Testament is often neglected in Christian preaching due to its widely, but unjustly assumed, inferiority to the New Testament when it comes to Christian theology and practice. Some people struggle to see how the Old Testament relates to the person and work of Christ. In his series, Greidanus seeks to demonstrate that Christ, as God's self-revelation and salvation, is the very center of the Old Testament, and so should be of every sermon from the Old Testament.

In his book, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, Greidanus provides seven sound hermeneutical-homiletical approaches from the Old Testament text to Christ in the New Testament. These methods are followed in this book, and are: redemptive-historical progression, promise-fulfillment, typology, analogy, longitudinal themes, New Testament references, and contrast (34–37). As the author observes, these approaches sometimes overlap, but the issue is “not so much to identify the precise classification as it is to find a legitimate bridge from the Old Testament text to Christ in the New Testament” (34n113). The goal of this book is to encourage preachers to preach Christ from all the Psalms (Christocentric approach), and not just to use a select few of the Psalms as preaching texts. For Greidanus, preaching Christ means “preaching sermons which authentically integrate the message of the text with the climax of God's revelation with the person, work, and/or teaching of Jesus Christ as revealed in the New Testament” (5). In other words, the author seeks to understand a psalm not only in its original historical context and the literary context of the Old Testament, but also in the context of the New Testament. The author seeks to demonstrate that there are ways to preach Christ from every psalm, and not only from the Messianic or royal psalms.

In addition to being Old Testament texts, the Psalms are viewed by some as inappropriate for preaching because they are biblical prayers, and so supposedly have originated as human words addressed to God. Greidanus addresses this and other common objections to preaching the Psalms, and provides a biblical-theological rationale for preaching Christ from the Psalms (ch. 1). He thus joins some recent trends that seek to restore the Psalms to

their rightful place in Christian preaching (see, for example, the writings on this subject by E. Achtemeier, W. H. Bellinger, Jr., J. C. Howell, W. E. Hull, D. Macleod, J. C. McCann, Jr., and others).

Rather than spend extensive effort in discussing higher criticism in scholarship of Psalms, Greidanus does a wonderful job of giving brief practical guidelines for literary, historical, theocentric, and Christocentric dimensions of the interpretation of Psalms; this is certainly more relevant and motivating for the average reader of the book. Many readers will find the steps from text to sermon (37–45; Appendix 1) and the expository sermon model (Appendix 2) very helpful.

The main body of the book (chs. 2–23) consists of literary-theological analysis and homiletical exposition of twenty-two Psalms that *The Revised Common Lectionary* assigns for the reading in Year A of the Christian year (Pss 1, 2, 8, 22, 23, 29, 32, 47, 51, 72, 80, 95, 96, 100, 104, 118, 121, 122, 130, and 146). The author encourages preachers to choose Psalms as their preaching texts for Christmas and other Christian feast days, and not the usual biblical texts, thereby discovering new perspectives on these events. He applies the practical methods and steps of the interpretation of Psalms outlined in chapter one to each chosen Psalm, and, at the end, provides a sermonic exposition where the results of various analyses are integrated to produce a coherent and meaningful message. Moving forward from exegesis to delivering a sermon is often a challenging task. After they have gone through all of the steps of interpretation, some preachers and seminary students have difficulty understanding the significance of the gathered information, and struggle with choosing relevant information to include in their sermons. For this reason, they will greatly appreciate the author's easy-to-follow steps toward effectively bringing exegesis and homiletics together. The sermon expositions on the chosen Psalms are enriched by quotes from many renowned Psalm scholars of different backgrounds, including A. Anderson, R. Alter, J. Goldingay, D. Kidner, T. Longman III, A. Ross, N. Sarna, M. Tate, and S. Terrien. Each study of the chosen Psalms also includes suggestions for the worship service: texts for presentation slides, and a relevant closing prayer and song. Additional sermons by Greidanus (Ps 23) and his two former students, R. Faber (Pss 72 and 80) and R. Berkenbosch (Col 1:15–20), are given in the Appendix (Appendices 4 and 5).

One of the common objections to preaching Christ from the Psalms is that preachers might read Christ into a book that was not historically about Him. Greidanus disagrees with such a view. He believes that a psalm may have one meaning in its own historical context (e.g., the time of the monarchy), but it may acquire another meaning at a later stage in redemptive history. Like some previously mentioned advocates of Psalms in preaching, he maintains that the meaning of a psalm is not restricted to its original intent or use in Israel's liturgy. Thus, for example, the prayers for the Davidic king are no longer applied to the Israelite kings, since no king in Israel was ever fit to fulfill them, but instead are understood as prayers for a coming Davidic King or the Messiah. Yet, while it is possible that some Psalms acquired an

eschatological/Messianic meaning in a later historical and literary context, the notion that most Psalms originally contained the predictive element pointing to the Messiah lies at the core of the New Testament authors' view of the Psalms as prophecies about Christ (e.g., Ps 2:7 in Heb 1:5; Ps 16:8–11 in Acts 2:25–28; Ps 110:1 in Acts 2:34–35). Greidanus maintains that God's promises of a coming Messiah are not limited to the genre of prophecy, but are also found in the Hebrew narrative, apocalyptic literature, and within the Psalms. The New Testament writers recognized this in their preaching Christ from the Old Testament. Although he argues that preaching Christ from the Psalms means directing the message toward Christ in the New Testament, Greidanus seems quick to discharge the New Testament way or method of preaching Christ from the Psalms. He follows the generally accepted assumption that the New Testament authors did not interpret the Psalms in their original historical context and Old Testament setting, but rather, began with Jesus, and then chose the Psalms which reminded them of Him and "used" them to explain or illuminate His person and work (7–8). In other words, he believes that they read Christ back into the Psalms. Some readers may wonder whether Greidanus implies here that the New Testament authors were wrong in doing so, and would certainly appreciate more light on this subject. Some readers may also conclude that if we do not consider the prophetic aspect of the Psalms to be about Christ as the apostles did, then our preaching Christ from the Psalms may be reduced to comparing the message of a psalm with the message of the New Testament, and showing that they have similar and, at best, harmonious teachings. Greidanus is right in stating that the authors of the New Testament never intended to teach a hermeneutical method. Yet, to state that "today preachers cannot simply copy their way of doing so [preaching Christ from Psalms] but will have to use a responsible, modern hermeneutical method" (8) is a rather quick dismissal of the New Testament way of preaching from the Psalms. An important question imposes itself here: If preaching Christ from the Psalms involves moving forward from the Psalms to Christ in the New Testament, should we not pause, at least, to examine more closely the New Testament writers' hermeneutical-homiletical practice? If not, we may be at risk of uncritically following the modern methods of interpretation at any cost.

To do justice to the author, however, the importance of sound hermeneutics can hardly be exaggerated, because today it guards the interpreter against possible eisegesis. Far from providing a purely secular interpretation to the Psalms, Greidanus makes the Psalms come alive in the light of God's revelation in Christ. He shows how God "kept faith" with the psalmists by sending His only Son to this earth to reconcile us to Himself through Christ's death (135). Greidanus's analyses of the Psalms lead to one conclusion—that Jesus performed the saving acts and upheld the truth described in the Psalms.

This book is recommended as an excellent textbook for biblical interpretation and preaching for pastors, students, and laypersons. The author's simple style of writing, practical and clear steps, examples of interpretation of

Psalms and sermonic writing, and Christocentric focus will certainly appeal to the general readership.

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Heinz, Daniel, ed. *So komm noch diese Stunde! Luthers Reformation aus Sicht der Siebenten-Tags-Adventisten*. Lüneburg: Advent-Verlag, 2016. 370 pp. Softcover. EUR 19.80.

In 2017, Protestants celebrate a very special jubilee, the quincentenary of Dr. Martin Luther's posting of his ninety-five theses about the Catholic indulgence, which is designated as the birthday of the Protestant Reformation. Innumerable books and articles have been published on Luther's life, his works, and his heritage. And this year, of course, the number is again going to increase considerably.

An interesting new perspective is given in this book edited by Daniel Heinz, written entirely in German. It deals with several aspects of Luther's Reformation from the Seventh-day Adventist perspective. The editor himself contributes five essays. As former Dean of the faculty of Theology at Bogenhofen Seminary (St. Peter/Hart, Austria) and presently head of the Archive of Seventh-day Adventists in Europe (Friedensau, Germany), he has authored books about the history of Adventists in Austria and Germany, as well as a biography of Ludwig Richard Conradi, the missionary of Europe. Added to this are numerous articles on Adventist history in Europe and other books he edited, mainly in the same field.

Another major contributor is his father, Hans Heinz, author of nine essays in this book. He is well known for his expertise on Catholic theology and Reformation history. He has published many theological articles and books, lectured for more than twenty years at Bogenhofen Seminary, and has been president of this institution for seven years.

The remaining fifteen essays are authored by other Austrian and German Adventist scholars (in alphabetical order): Thomas Domanyi, Walter Eberhardt, Johannes Hartlapp, Denis Kaiser, Dieter Leutert, Christian Noack, Rolf Pöhler, Winfried Vogel, Daniel Wildemann, and Reiner Zimmermann. The preface is written by Artur Stele.

This collection of essays moves from "Reconsidering: 'Repent, Germany, in the time of grace'" (part one), and "Evaluation: 'The Bible alone is the right lord and master'" (part two) to "Preserving: That the time of his kingdom may come soon!" (part three).

The topics dealt with include biographical aspects (Luther's vita, important journeys and places, his merits in terms of the German language, and Christian hymns), historical backgrounds (Europe and Catholicism in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries), Luther's view on pivotal doctrines (justification, baptism, and communion), his understanding of important Adventist teachings (the Sabbath, baptism and Anabaptists, and eschatology and the return of Christ), and implications for today's Adventist understanding