

further research will be done must also be the author's own anticipation, for he concludes his study with a number of suggestions for further research, and the list is undoubtedly not meant to be exhaustive.

The particular merit of the study, in this writer's view, is the attempt to relate the Sabbath question to broader issues, to hermeneutical issues. The Sabbath question is very much a hermeneutical question and in a Christian context very closely related to the question of the OT and its place in the canon. It is to Müller's credit that he has attempted to look at the problem in this enlarged perspective.

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Thiele, Edwin R. *Knowing God*. Nashville, Tenn.: Southern Publishing Association, 1979. 127 pp. Paperback, \$4.95.

Edwin R. Thiele is internationally known to OT scholarship for his books and articles on the chronology of the kings of Judah and Israel during the Divided Monarchy, and his reconstruction of that chronology has justly been referred to by Siegfried H. Horn as a "breakthrough" (see *AUSS* 5 [1967]: 213). But Thiele's many years of pastoral, editorial, and teaching experience have given him, as well, the burden and insights to write materials of a more popular and devotional type, the book here under review being an outstanding example. A worthy addition to Southern Publishing Association's Horizon Series, it reveals the author's phenomenal mastery of biblical materials, while at the same time making its presentation in a popular and heart-warming style.

This book focuses on the center of all biblical theology: God. With a virtually compendious notice of both OT and NT materials, supplemented by comments based on the author's own perceptive analysis, the volume carries us through such topics as "The Eternal God," "The Supreme Ruler of the Universe," "The Triune God," "God Becomes Man," "God Is Love," "The Saviour God," "Our Father in Heaven," and a number of others (there are thirteen short chapters in all).

In his Introduction, Thiele posits that "leaders in any field—in industry, finance, religion, or commerce—must know God if they would, with insight and foresight, guide others in accord with what is best for all concerned" and that "society acquires its shape by what men know, or do not know, about God and how they respond to His influence upon the human heart." He indicates that the book "will explore the question of how children of men can become transformed into children of God, and what steps they may take that will make them wiser and better, more like

God Himself. Only by such means will we be on the way to having a better world—more peaceful and stable, more prosperous and happy. Only thus will we find a solution to the problems that threaten to engulf us.

“And only by learning to know God will men discover the secret of life in its fullness, both here and with God in heaven tomorrow” (p. 8). Both the present and future aspects here mentioned are, indeed, kept in view in the volume; but it is clear, too, that the presentation is meant to emphasize experiential practicalities for everyday life in a troubled, distressed world.

The simplest way to give an impression of the nature and style of the book is to provide a few sample quotations (though any small selection cannot, of course, give an adequate impression of what the book is really like). In chap. 7, entitled “On Earth Peace, Good Will Toward Men,” Thiele relates the fact of “terrors prevailing on earth” (even though most people prefer peace to war) to the fact that “peace comes from God, while His enemy brings war.” Nevertheless, victory has been won by God at the Cross: “In spite of Satan’s seeming supremacy when he put to death the Son of God, God achieved the real victory. God was very much in control, and He still is today.” “The kingdom of God is a kingdom of peace. Heaven’s inhabitants are children of peace because they have God’s peace and love abiding within them. They walk in paths of peace because they follow His law. With such beings there can be no war, turmoil, unrest, or ill will.” “Peace comes from righteousness, and righteousness from God” (pp. 60-63).

In chap. 10, “Our Father in Heaven,” Thiele points out that “man’s most vital need is God. His greatest good and joy is God. Christ came here to give man a knowledge of God because He was God and He was the Son of God. He knew God as His Father and the children of earth as His brothers and sisters.” “The most effective thing that Jesus could do to bring home to men the lessons that He came to teach was to have them become acquainted with God as their own personal Father as well as His. Christ wanted men to learn to know God as the compassionate Father of love, closer and better than any human father could ever be.” Furthermore, “As God loved, so ought men also to love. The distinguishing characteristic of those chosen to have a place in His kingdom was to have a tender, loving interest in those about them” (pp. 97-98).

In chap. 12, “Fear Not; I Will Help Thee,” Thiele raises the question: “But how can I know my relationship to God? How can I know that my way is God’s, and that He is with me to always give me the help I need?” The author points out that “much depends on the way I make my decisions. Do I think first of myself or Him? Do I do what I would like to do, or what the Lord would have me do? Do I put aside my will for His?

Do I take others into consideration in what I plan and do? Do I welcome advice or resent and ignore it? Do I choose pleasure over duty?" (p. 119).

Proceeding next to a number of questions about the "course I follow" ("Am I rash, lazy, careless, negligent, or indifferent? When I start on a trip do I have sufficient gas in the tank and money in my pocket?" Etc.), Thiele observes that "often we make serious mistakes and then expect God to compensate for our negligence or indifference. Certainly God 'knoweth our frame' and 'remembereth that we are dust,' and He repeatedly comes to our aid in the difficulties that we bring upon ourselves. But we must take care not to try to involve God in endorsing carelessness or disobedience. Often the best thing God can do for us is to let us learn through suffering." And Thiele concludes, "The God we serve is able, kind, and good. He knows us and wants to do for us what is for our best good. His promise is, 'Fear not, I will help thee.' And help He will, whether we can understand or recognize it or not. When we cannot see, we still can trust. The God who has helped His children throughout the past is still our help today" (pp. 119-120).

Both the "down-to-earthness" and inspirational tone of the book are apparent in the foregoing quotations, even though these quotations are admittedly too few and random to provide adequate illustration of the volume's nature and flavor. Only a reading of the book itself can furnish a full appreciation along these lines. Indeed, *Knowing God* is a valuable addition to Christian literature on God, abounding in OT and NT allusions and references placed in meaningful context for the needs of today. It provides enjoyable, stimulating, inspirational—and above all, helpful—reading.

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Von Rad, Gerhard. *God at Work in Israel*. Trans. John H. Marks. Nashville: Abingdon, 1980. 223 pp. Paperback, \$6.95.

This book contains a translation of nineteen lectures of eminent OT scholar Gerhard von Rad (1901-1971). Most of the lectures were delivered in the 1950s and 1960s. Seven of them represent short radio addresses; ten were not published heretofore.

The lectures are organized into two groups. The first contains critical paraphrases of biblical passages: "The Story of Joseph" (pp. 19-35) is based on Gen 37-50; "The Story about Balaam" (pp. 36-39) relates Num 22-24; "Judges 12:5-7" (pp. 40-42) is concerned with Jephthah's wars; "The Story about Samson" (pp. 43-46) paraphrases Judg 13-16; "Naaman: A