

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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KENNETH A. STRAND

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

Critical Retelling" (pp. 47-57) is built on 2 Kgs 5; "The Prophet Jonah" (pp. 58-70) attempts to interpret the book of Jonah; "The Story of Job's Suffering" (pp. 71-75) and "The Discussion about Job's Suffering" (pp. 76-80) highlight some passages in the book of Job.

The second group of lectures comprise biblical texts considered thematically. These themes contain "The Mystery of Old Testament Israel" (pp. 81-96), "The Biblical Story of Creation" (pp. 97-107), "The Reality of God" (pp. 108-127), "The Origin of Mosaic Monotheism" (pp. 128-138), "God's Word in History According to the Old Testament" (pp. 139-159), "The Witness of the Prophets to God's Ways in World History" (pp. 160-175), "Wisdom in Israel" (pp. 176-182), "Brother and Neighbor in the Old Testament" (pp. 183-193), "Statements of Faith in the Old Testament about Life and about Death" (pp. 194-209) and "Psalm 90" (pp. 210-223).

These two groups of lectures increase the corpus of publications by von Rad, who interprets OT texts and themes utilizing form-critical and tradition-critical approaches (indeed himself a pioneer in the development of these research tools). These lectures furnish a wealth of information about the yield of these modern approaches in historical-critical research.

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GERHARD F. HASEL

Westermann, Claus. *Theologie des Alten Testaments in Grundzügen*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978. iv + 222 pp. Paperback, DM 22.00.

The eminent University of Heidelberg professor *emeritus* presents his long-announced *Theology of the Old Testament in Outline*. Although it is not as extensive as the tomes of such other scholars as W. Eichrodt, Th. C. Vriezen, G. von Rad, S. Terrien, etc., it takes its place among the works of G. Fohrer, W. Zimmerli, J. L. McKenzie, and the like.

This book is divided into six parts. The first one, "What Does the OT Say about God?" (pp. 5-27), provides a succinct section on methodology and then treats the topic under the headings of history ("Geschichte"), word of God in the OT, the response of man, and God's unity as possibility of interrelationship.

Westermann sees the task of OT theology as that of summarizing and the bringing together of what the whole OT has to say about God. This means for him that it is illegitimate to elevate one part of the OT to a status of being most important or to interpret the whole on the basis of such concepts as covenant, election, or salvation. To raise the question of