

Bruce makes no attempt to analyze the personalities of Paul's close associates, even though hints in the NT almost beg that such an attempt be made. For instance, Bruce makes no effort to contrast the personalities of Timothy and Titus. Timothy appears timid and retiring (1 Cor 16:10, 11), especially so if the Pastoral letters reflect Paul's estimate of his character. On the other hand, Titus comes across in the NT as a powerful, self-assured personality—a person willing to be paraded before the apostles as a “model Gentile Christian” (Gal 2), succeeding in Corinth, where Timothy failed (2 Corinthians, esp. 7:15), and appearing to be in little need of Paul's direction while working in Crete.

Certain other questions are also bypassed—such as, what the kind of people who gathered around Paul tells us about the personality of the apostle, and what first-century history, geography, and sociology suggest concerning the activities, occupations, and interests of Paul's associates. Bruce's book would undoubtedly have made a greater contribution to Pauline scholarship if the author had interacted more with historical and sociological studies of the first century and if he had explored the possibilities implicit in the time and place of the NT record.

Negative reactions aside, it must be stated that this book is nonetheless indeed a helpful pointer to a neglected area of NT scholarship. *The Pauline Circle* provides a good starting point for the study of Paul's “friends and co-workers, hosts and hostesses, [who] had no other motive in being so helpful than love of Paul and love of the Master whom he served” (p. 99).

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Brueggemann, Walter. *The Message of the Psalms*. Augsburg Old Testament Studies. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984. vi + 200 pp. Paperback, \$10.95.

This is a rather slender volume, but its usefulness extends considerably beyond its physical size. Its title-page describes it as a “theological commentary,” and that it is. The aim of the author is to give the reader the heart of the theology of each of the psalms discussed. This calls for a format different from the typical exegetical commentary's verse-by-verse discussion. While the psalms are examined by sections in broad outline, no attempt is made to break the psalms down into smaller units than these. Because the treatment of the psalms is thematic and theological, their order of presentation follows the nature of their contents rather than their order of appearance in the Psalter. About a third of the total psalms in the Psalter are discussed in this work.

The categories of psalms followed are rather standard, but those standard categories are grouped into a larger tripartite overall scheme for the whole Psalter. This is the major contribution of this commentary. The three categories employed for this purpose are (1) psalms of orientation, (2) psalms of disorientation, and (3) psalms of reorientation. All of the lesser categories of psalms are subsumed under these three major headings, and the three chapters which constitute the heart of the book cover these topics in order. Under the heading of psalms of orientation come the following: (1) songs of creation (Pss 8, 33, 104, and 145); (2) songs of torah (Pss 1, 15, 24, and 119); (3) wisdom psalms (14 and 37); (4) songs of retribution (Ps 112; "songs of recompense" would have been a better title); and (5) songs for (special) occasions of well-being (Pss 131 and 133).

The psalms of disorientation are examined in the second main chapter. This is the longest chapter of the book, which is appropriate since psalms in this category are the most difficult for laypersons and professional theologians alike. The largest number of psalms in this group belong to the subcategory of individual laments. Three of these are examined (Pss 13, 35, and 86). Next come the communal laments, and three of these are also examined (Pss 74, 79, and 137). From these large general categories Brueggemann goes on to more specialized types of disorientation psalms, including two that pose special problems (Pss 88 and 109).

In all of these psalms of disorientation treated up to this point the main viewpoint expressed in them has been that of the human speaker who has found himself in one kind of predicament or another. There is another point of view from which that predicament can be examined, however, and that is from God's point of view. These psalms give, as Brueggemann terms it, a "second opinion" about the matter. Pss 50 and 81 are the examples of this type treated here. Following this, the subgroup of psalms known as the "penitential psalms" is examined (Pss 32, 51, 130, and 143). Finally come three psalms of submission (Pss 49, 73, and 90).

The third major section of the book covers the psalms of reorientation. These psalms express thankfulness for a restored state, for having been brought successfully out of trials, troubles, disease, or warfare. Brueggemann includes here the royal psalms, and he discusses eight of them, four of which are from the subcategory of enthronement songs (Pss 93, 96, 97, and 99). Along with the royal songs come two major sections that study the individual songs of thanksgiving (Pss 30, 34, 40, and 138). and the communal songs of thanksgiving (Pss 65, 66, and 124).

Since the Psalter is such a large and varied corpus of literature, one can always find some psalms where the categorization or treatment can be criticized. This is just as true of this commentary as it is of any other one on the Psalter. In general, however, I would say that Brueggemann has done very well in categorizing the psalms, in presenting the heart of their messages, and in providing a very useful overall framework in which to fit

them. While other schemes of organization could be suggested, his is probably as good as or better than the others that are available. The basic outline of psalms of orientation, disorientation, and reorientation appears to fit well the body of literature and its contents, and enables the reader to understand the psalms better.

Some points on which one could take issue with Brueggemann might be noted in passing. In general he is quite sensitive to NT parallels and applications, but it seems to me that his remarks on the Messianic significance of Ps 22 are a bit weak. I would suggest also that he has missed a considerable part of the point of Ps 29 in that the divinely directed storm described there represents a judgment specifically upon Canaanite territory. He has grappled with a number of the more-difficult imprecatory psalms, and for this we can express our appreciation inasmuch as these are usually passed over lightly by other writers on the psalms. It seems to me, however, that he could have taken a more positive view of Ps 109 by noting the covenant context from which the curses present in this psalm derive.

I have now used this volume in a seminary class on the psalms, and in general the students were pleased with it and found it helpful. One of the assignments in this class was to write up a sermon for delivery to a congregation, and I was interested to see that, without any urging from me, a number of the students spontaneously included an explanation of the system of psalms of orientation-disorientation-reorientation as a part of the introduction to the psalm from which they chose to preach. Thus, the members of the class seem to have voted in favor of the usefulness of this format and system of thought for the Psalter, as presented in Brueggemann's commentary.

I, personally, have found this volume to achieve its purpose well and to provide a positive and useful contribution to the literature on the psalms. Its demonstrated value in my seminary class on the psalms has led me to plan for its use again in this context. However, for such use it should be supplemented with a more exegetically oriented commentary—such as Craigie's volume on the first fifty psalms that I reviewed previously in *AUSS* 23 (1985): 299-302.

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De Vries, Simon J. *1 Kings*. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 12. Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1985. lxiv + 286 pp. \$19.95.

De Vries's commentary on 1 Kings brings to twelve the number of available works in the new set of 52 proposed volumes of the Word Biblical