

it not? Granted, the essay on Hebrews does cover this ground to some extent, as I mentioned above, but, in spite of this, perhaps more attention could have been directed here. No doubt at least part of the reason why Gunton's and Watson's essays are included as part of the collection is to provide this needed attention. Having said that, this book is both stimulating and helpful, therefore heartily recommended.

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***Habakkuk: A New Translation with  
Introduction and Commentary  
(The Anchor Bible 25)***

**F. I. Andersen**

New York: Doubleday, 2001, xxii + 387 pp., US  
\$45.00, hb, ISBN 0-385-08396-3

**SUMMARY**

This commentary on the book of Habakkuk by a seasoned scholar provides a wealth of material, particularly relating to literary features and general historical background, as well as a brief introduction to Hebrew poetry. But it is not very well organised and theological issues are not explored in any depth. It has a lot to offer to Old Testament scholars and students although its usefulness for theologians and preachers is limited.

**ZUSAMMENFASSUNG**

Dieser Kommentar eines Gelehrten, der bereits andere Kommentare zu prophetischer Literatur und Beiträge zur hebräischen Poesie geliefert hat, bietet reichhaltige Erörterung der literarischen Eigenheiten des Habakukbuches nebst einer kurzen Einführung in die hebräischen Poesie und zeigt gute Kenntnis des allgemeinen historischen Hintergrundes. Der Kommentar ist jedoch nicht besonders gut organisiert und zeigt sich wenig interessiert an theologischen Fragen. Er hat Einiges zu bieten für Alttestamentler und Studenten, doch sein Wert für Theologen und Prediger ist begrenzt.

**RÉSUMÉ**

Ce commentaire sur le livre d'Habaquq par un spécialiste aguerri est riche en informations, et présente un apport particulier pour ce qui concerne les procédés littéraires et l'arrière-plan historique général. On y trouve aussi une brève introduction à la poésie hébraïque. Il n'est cependant pas très bien agencé et les questions théologiques ne sont pas abordées en profondeur. Il est d'un grand intérêt pour les spécialistes de l'Ancien Testament et les étudiants, mais d'une utilité limitée pour les théologiens et les prédicateurs.

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"The interaction between Habakkuk and Yahweh documented in Hab 1:2-2:6a retains in its literary presenta-

tion some of the liveliness and untidiness of actual experience," (222-23). This comment on the first part of the book of Habakkuk could be applied to Andersen's commentary itself. The commentary invites readers to participate in the author's interaction with the biblical text in all its liveliness and some of its untidiness. It contains a wealth of material and offers the excitement of studying Habakkuk with a mature scholar but the lack of a strong finishing touch sometimes leaves one confused and enlightened at the same time.

Andersen has a strong interest in the poetry of the text and offers helpful discussion of it. But our understanding of ancient Hebrew poetry is far from certain and Andersen does not see the need to explain his presuppositions. His principles for establishing the line-division are unclear, as the line-division in the transliterated Hebrew text offered frequently diverges from that adopted in his translation. While we are given interesting ideas, there is no fully coherent system to apply or closely argued case to contend with.

Andersen seeks to address "the general reader as well as the professional scholar" but while on some occasions he takes great care explaining new concepts, at others he presumes a fairly detailed knowledge of grammatical terms and concepts or is in danger of losing general readers by using Hebrew script. It also needs pointing out that in keeping with the series, Andersen's "general reader" is more interested in literary than theological matters. Those wrestling with the theological implications of violence and other topics addressed in the book are likely to be disappointed.

As regards specific interpretative decisions, the following may be of interest: Andersen follows the straightforward and traditional reading of chapters 1-2 as the report of a dialogue between the prophet and Yahweh. While he allows for the possibility that 1:5-11 are a quotation within a speech extending from verse 2 to verse 17, he considers such a move unnecessary and suggests that moderns may be asking for more logical coherence than readers in antiquity. Andersen fails to see how "we shall not die" (traditional Hebrew text in 1:12) could be meaningful in context and decides that the reading "you won't die" is the better. He recognises, however, that the traditional reading cannot easily be explained as a pious correction and puts forward the idea that the consonantal text could be read as a niphal participle (rendered as "one who is not dead"), in which case "you won't die" corrects a misunderstanding of the consonantal text. In 2:2 Andersen proposes that "and explain it upon the tablets" may be a reference to dictation. There is no interaction with Tsumura's discussion of Akkadian evidence and argument in favour of understanding the second imperative as "make plain."

In 2:4 Andersen follows an idea that has recently gained popularity among commentators, namely to link "faith/fullness" not with the righteous person but with the vision, or possibly Yahweh. As Anderson wavers between the two, readers will find support both for "he"



in verse 3 switching to "its" in verse 4 and for the vision being the topic in verse 3 and God being the referent for some of the pronouns in verse 4 (with the "swollen is his throat ... in him" of the translation becoming "... against him (God)" in the comment). I agree that "the dependability of God is inseparable from the certainty of his word" (215) but found the discussion of the precise reference of the pronouns less than clear.

The message in the vision is identified as the series of five woe oracles (225, cf. 214) which are all specifically targeted at the Chaldean nation, although "they need not have been freshly composed for this application" (233). Andersen finds a key phrase in the middle of each oracle. For the difficult verses 9-10, Andersen suggests to read the second half of verse 10, after the pivotal sentence, as continuing the last and the first half sentence of verse 9 – in that order. The translation "and thy soul is sinful" in 2:10 is glossed later as "sinning (against) thine own life" but otherwise left unexplained; no reference is made to Prov. 20:2 which suggests that the reference is to forfeiting one's life. Andersen proposes that the blood in 2:12 "could be that of a foundation sacrifice" (243) but this suggestion does little to illuminate the text. More helpful is his observation that "a teacher of lies" in 2:18 is likely a reference to false prophecy as with "lies" in Isa. 9:14 and often in Jeremiah. Chapter 3 is an archaic poem with verses 3-15 referring to events in the past, appropriated by Habakkuk. Andersen is content to study the mt, showing no great confidence in our ability to recover a more original version, and attempts to discern poetic units larger than bicola and tricola.

In sum, most of the linguistic and historical information you might hope to find in a commentary is there but the organisation is poor and the writing diffuse, making it hard to find the discussion of any specific point. This is particularly true of textual criticism, where a concise display of the evidence similar to that in the Word Bible Commentary series would have been more helpful. In spite of a few surprising omissions, the commentary has a lot to offer to scholars and students of Habakkuk on the linguistic and literary side.

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*Deuteronomy and the Meaning of 'Monotheism'*  
(*Forschungen zum Alten Testament 2. Reihe 1*)

Nathan MacDonald

Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003, ix + 271 pp.,

£47.99, pb, ISBN 3-16-148054-6

**SUMMARY**

In this update to his PhD thesis, MacDonald addresses the 'meaning and significance of YHWH's oneness in Deuteronomy', seeking to show that 'most... scholars

share an understanding of "monotheism" that is only conceivable as a result of the Enlightenment' (pp. 1, 2). He reviews the historical development of the term 'monotheism' and tests it against the exegesis of Deuteronomy's monotheistic texts. He has convincingly shown that Deuteronomy's concept of 'monotheism' is better understood as a 'oneness' or 'uniqueness' that is inseparably tied to the theology of confession, love, remembrance, election and idolatry. He has been less successful in his claim that Deuteronomy (and the OT) allow for the existence of other gods.

**ZUSAMMENFASSUNG**

In dieser Studie, der eine Dissertation zugrunde liegt, widmet sich MacDonald „der Bedeutung und Signifikanz der Einzigkeit Gottes im Deuteronomium“. Er versucht zu zeigen, dass „die meisten Gelehrten ein Verständnis von Monotheismus teilen, das nur als Resultat der Aufklärung vorstellbar ist.“ (S. 1, 2). Er lässt die geschichtliche Entwicklung des Begriffs Monotheismus Revue passieren und vergleicht dazu die Exegese monotheistischer Texte des Deuteronomium. Er zeigt überzeugend, dass das deuteronomistische Konzept von Monotheismus besser als eine „Einzigkeit“ oder „Einzigartigkeit“ zu verstehen ist, die untrennbar mit der Theologie des Bekenntnisses, der Liebe, der Erinnerung, der Erwählung und des Götzen dienstes verbunden ist. Weniger überzeugend ist seine Behauptung, das Deuteronomium (und das Alte Testament) bezeugt die Existenz anderer Götter.

**RÉSUMÉ**

L'auteur met ici à jour sa thèse de doctorat sur la question de la signification de l'unicité de Yahvé dans le Deutéronome. Il cherche à montrer que la plupart des spécialistes partent d'une conception du monothéisme qui ne pouvait naître que comme la conséquence de la pensée du siècle des Lumières. Il retrace le développement historique du mot 'monothéisme' et examine les résultats ainsi obtenus à la lumière de l'exégèse des textes monothéistes du Deutéronome. Il montre de façon convaincante que le concept deutéronomique de monothéisme doit se comprendre comme celui d'une unicité qui est lié de manière indissociable à la théologie de la confession, de l'amour, du souvenir, de l'élection et de l'idolâtrie. Il est bien moins convaincant lorsqu'il prétend que le Deutéronome (et le reste de l'Ancien Testament) n'exclut pas l'existence d'autres divinités.

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This is an revised version of MacDonald's doctoral thesis at the University of Durham. In it, he tackles the 'meaning and significance of YHWH's oneness in Deuteronomy, the contemporary category of "monotheism" and the relation between the two' seeking to show that 'most... scholars share an understanding of "monotheism" that is only conceivable as a result of the Enlightenment' (pp. 1-2). The first chapter summarizes the origin and development of 'monotheism' in philosophy, Old Testament theology and Deuteronomy scholarship