

and blessing.

On the more technical side, it would have been interesting to consider the impact of at least three levels of redaction, of the Jacob story itself, of the book of Genesis, and of the Pentateuch and beyond. One wonders too how long scholars will continue to use the language of the Documentary Hypothesis when they are really talking about something quite different. The term 'Priestly' for example, is used here only of a redactional function, and without any reference to priestly interests.

Though these are not minor matters, they do perhaps indicate the stimulating nature of this book, and its potential impact on a series of related issues. This volume will certainly have an impact on future interpretation of the Jacob story, and the emphasis on the role of the divine perspective is especially welcome.

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### *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*

**T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker**  
[eds.]

Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2003, xxii + 954 pp.,  
£32.99, hb, ISBN 0-85111-986-7

#### SUMMARY

This volume is a very worthy addition to the four earlier volumes in IVP's sister NT series. It contains 159 articles from the pens of 86 contributors located mainly in North America and the UK. It includes the anticipated variety of article types, with no article being less than a thousand words long, and some of them being fairly substantial (up to 26 pages in length). Many of the contributors are already well-known in the evangelical constituency (and beyond) for significant works in their allotted subject area. The publishers anticipate three distinct audiences for the work: students, church educators, and scholars, although the first two categories are likely to be the main beneficiaries.

#### ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieser Band ist eine sehr wertvolle Ergänzung der vier früheren Bände des IVP-Pendants zum NT. Er enthält 159 Artikel von 86 Autoren, die hauptsächlich aus Nordamerika und aus Großbritannien kommen. Er beinhaltet die erwartete Vielfalt von Artikeltypen. Keiner der Artikel ist weniger als 1000 Wörter lang, und einige sind recht umfangreich (bis zu 26 Seiten). Viele der Autoren sind bereits in der evangelikalen Welt (und darüber hinaus) gut bekannt aufgrund signifikanter Arbeit in den zugeordneten Gebieten. Die Herausgeber gehen von drei verschiedenen Adressatenkreisen aus: Studenten, kirchliche Ausbilder und Gelehrte, obwohl die ersten beiden Kategorien wahrscheinlich am meisten von dem Werk profitieren werden.

#### RÉSUMÉ

Ce volume vient s'ajouter aux quatre volumes déjà parus dans la série sur le Nouveau Testament publiée par IVP.

Il contient 159 articles rédigés par 86 auteurs, principalement d'Amérique du Nord et du Royaume Uni. Les articles sont de types variés. Ils font tous plus d'un millier de mots et certains d'entre eux sont très substantiels (jusqu'à 26 pages). Parmi les auteurs, beaucoup sont déjà bien connus du monde évangélique et au-delà pour des travaux d'envergure dans le domaine relatif au sujet qui leur a été imparti ici. Les éditeurs comptent que cet ouvrage bénéficiera aux étudiants, aux enseignants dans les Églises et aux spécialistes, même si les deux premières catégories seront sans doute celles qui en tireront le plus profit.

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This volume is a very worthy addition to the four earlier volumes in IVP's sister NT series and fills this reviewer with anticipation for the remaining volumes in the OT series. It contains 159 articles from the pens of 86 contributors, the vast majority of whom are from North America and the UK.

The dictionary includes the anticipated variety of article types. However, no article is less than a thousand words long, with the result that one will not find here the kind of brief article found in other dictionaries on each place or personal name occurring in the text of the Pentateuch (e.g., no articles on 'Amalekites', 'Ararat', or 'Nile'), although some of these may be listed in the 12 page Subject Index towards the end of the volume. Also, other subjects that have dedicated articles in other dictionaries are either not covered here at all (e.g., 'Anger', 'Adoption'), or, are subsumed under related categories (e.g., 'Glory' is mentioned under both 'Holiness' and 'Tabernacle'). On the other hand, one finds articles here on subjects (e.g., 'Alien') that are not always covered in other dictionaries.

Some articles provide fairly substantial treatments of their subjects, e.g., 'Sacrifices and Offerings' (26 pages); 'Tabernacle' (20); 'Law' (18); 'Covenant' (17); and 'Ethics' (15). Many of the contributors have already written significant works on their allotted subject (e.g., McConville on 'Deuteronomy', Walton on 'Creation', Goldingay on 'Hermeneutics', Fretheim on 'Exodus', and Williamson on 'Covenant').

The publishers anticipate three distinct audiences for the work: students, church educators, and scholars. On the basis of the content and depth of many of the articles this is a reasonable assumption, although the first two categories are likely to be the main beneficiaries. Undergraduate students should find many of the articles very helpful in the early stages of their preparation of essays and dissertations, while postgraduate students beginning their research could also derive benefit from the summaries of the present state of scholarship, and also from the (often) significant bibliographies. Scholars may find that some of the articles from outwith their particular research area provide helpful orientations to the subject, particularly if they are required to teach undergraduate classes in these areas. Preachers and other church educators will benefit from the subject overviews



contained in many articles, and will be enabled to keep abreast of more recent trends in pentateuchal scholarship which has seen a revolution in many of its aspects in recent decades.

Reflecting to some extent the diverse intended audience, it was refreshing to find an article on 'Preaching from the Pentateuch' (pp 637-643) in which McMickle offers some statistics that underline the relative rarity of preaching from anywhere in the OT, let alone from the Pentateuch. He then develops his work under three headings: 'The Necessity of Preaching from the OT' in which he reminds us rightly that 'it is impossible to understand the ministry of Jesus and Paul or the theology of the NT without having ... understanding of the ... Pentateuch'; 'Preaching from the Pentateuch'; and 'Principles for Christian Preaching from the OT', under which heading he covers, as well as allegory and typology, issues of continuity and discontinuity, liberation theology, promise and fulfilment, and salvation history. In the section on 'Preaching from the Pentateuch,' McMickle, highlights 'creationism versus evolution' as a significant preaching theme, thus revealing the article's North American provenance. It would have been helpful to see more emphasis placed on the theology of creation in relation to that of temple, an area in which a fair amount of research and writing has been undertaken in recent years. Other issues highlighted as being worthy of the preacher's attention are: the role and status of women in the community of faith, especially with regard to leadership; the institution of marriage; and environmental issues. On the whole I found this section disappointing, but perhaps that betrays my own preference for a more biblical theological approach.

In his article on 'Hermeneutics' Goldingay considers 10 different approaches to the interpretation of the Pentateuch (Christological, Doctrinal, Devotional, Ethical, Feminist, Imperialist, Liberation, Midrashic, Modern, and Postmodern) before finally anticipating 'an increased flowering of newer approaches' in the coming decades. With respect to the 'Doctrinal Interpretation' we may agree with much of what Goldingay writes as well as with his conclusion that 'the framework of Christian doctrine may be allowed to open up questions, but it must not be allowed to determine answers,' even if we are not so ready as he to excoriate 'the rule for the faith' that came to be embodied in the Apostles' Creed for being 'devastatingly effective in silencing the OT and marginalizing the place of Israel in the church's thinking.' One wonders if the silencing of the OT, particularly in Western pulpits, may be blamed more on the influence of some of the elements of 'Modern Interpretation.' In the light of the recent Iraq War, Goldingay's analysis of the 'Imperialist Interpretation' makes sober reading and we all – whether British, American, Israeli or whatever – would do well to heed his warning that 'interpretation of the Pentateuch in the light of the conviction that our particular nation is an embodiment of Israel needs to be accompanied with interpretation in the light of the

possibility that our nation is an embodiment of Egypt.' Goldingay is almost as critical of some more recent interpretative approaches (e.g., liberation, and feminist) which illustrate 'the way in which an interpretive stance or commitment both opens interpreters' eyes to aspects of the text that have been ignored and also risks assimilating the text to the commitment that the interpreters have already made.'

Occasionally, contributors 'take critical assumptions to task, seeking at least to identify the albatross if not to remove it'. One such instance is with the article on the 'Religion of the Patriarchs' (671) where the author has chosen 'to offer an alternative' to the standard critical approach 'without proof' with the result that students will have to look elsewhere for help with responding to the critical approach. On the other hand, the sermon preparation of preachers is likely to benefit from the article.

As is usual with works of this genre, the contributions vary in approach and quality and are therefore of variable usefulness to one or other of the anticipated audiences. However, at the price, this is a treasure trove of great value and one that scholars, pastors and (where finances allow) students should have within easy reach.

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***Encountering God's Word:  
Beginning biblical studies***

**Edited by Philip Duce & Daniel Strange**

Leicester: Apollos, 2003, 219 pp., £9.99, pb,  
ISBN 0-85111-792-9

**SUMMARY**

This valuable book is aimed at students beginning biblical studies at university level and comprises four essays written by different authors delivering courses of university standard. Essays (1) and (2) discuss beginning study in the Old and New Testaments respectively. Number (3) deals with biblical hermeneutics in a post-modern world, and (4) examines the roles of faith and evidence in believing the Bible. The authors take a sympathetic approach to both the methods of modern scholarship and also to the question of evangelical integrity. Hard questions have to be wrestled with but, the contributors maintain, it is possible to do this while being fully committed to the veracity of scripture and also from the perspective of experimental faith. Highly commended.

**ZUSAMMENFASSUNG**

Dieses wertvolle Buch richtet sich an Studenten, die das Studium der Bibel auf Universitätsniveau beginnen. Es umfasst vier Essays von verschiedenen Autoren, die universitäre Kurse unterrichten. Essays (1) und (2) diskutieren die Fragen zu Beginn des Studiums des Alten und des Neuen Testaments. Nummer (3) behandelt biblische Hermeneutik in der Postmoderne, und Essay (4) untersucht die Rolle