

issues remain. If sacrifice is centralised, and comes to be associated with the ruling social structures, would it not result in social centralisation, at least in terms of power structures? This, however, might be an issue which could result from the text's application rather than something inherent in its ideology. It would also have been useful to recognise that not all interpreters have argued for the associated ideas of demythologisation and secularisation. They are certainly prominent themes amongst some interpreters (albeit understood differently), but some have accepted the general theme of centralisation without also adopting these associated themes. Vogt's use of Wright and McConville indicates his awareness of this, so the point could have been made more clearly, but his contribution lies in the detail with which he has been able to establish his point. Vogt has thus provided a stimulating work that will need to be taken seriously by future interpreters of Deuteronomy.

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Joshua

Jerome E. D. Creach

Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching

Louisville: John Knox Press, 2003, xiv + 135 pp.,
£13.99, hb; ISBN10: 0-8042-3106-0

SUMMARY

Creach offers a reading of the book of Joshua that is particularly sensitive to the issue of violence presented in the text. Following the normal format of the Interpretation series, he shows considerable depth in wrestling with the narratives where this is particularly important, but the treatment of chapters 13-22 is unfortunately slight in comparison. Preachers looking for help with the narratives in the other chapters will find this an excellent resource, but the imbalance in treatment limits the work's value.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Creach bietet eine Leseweise des Josuabuches an, die der Gewalt, die im Text präsentiert wird, besondere Aufmerksamkeit widmet. In Aufnahme des üblichen Formats der Reihe zeigt er beachtlichen Tiefgang im Ringen mit den Erzählungen, in denen dieses Thema besonders wichtig ist, doch die Behandlung der Kapitel 13-22 ist vergleichsweise dünn. Prediger, die Hilfe in Bezug auf die Erzählungen in den anderen Kapiteln suchen, werden das Buch als exzellentes Hilfsmittel empfinden, doch die unausgewogene Behandlung schränkt den Wert des Gesamtwerkes ein.

RÉSUMÉ

Dans ce commentaire du livre de Josué, Creach s'intéresse particulièrement à la question de la violence et consacre un traitement approfondi aux récits où ce thème est important. Le traitement accordé aux chapitres 13-22 reste

en revanche bien succinct. Les prédicateurs trouveront d'excellentes idées dans le commentaire des récits, mais le déséquilibre réduit la valeur de l'ouvrage.

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The book of Joshua is problematic for many Christians. The level of violence it records, especially as this is manifested in the application of the ban where captured people were devoted to destruction, means it is not necessarily one that receives a great deal of attention in preaching today. Facing up to these issues, Creach attempts to read this text in a way that is sensitive to the concerns of contemporary readers, but also from the conviction that the community of faith is impoverished by its non-attendance to Joshua because of the way it shows a portrait of God and God's demands on his people that the modern church needs to hear. As one expects in a series concerned with assisting preachers, this is a theologically committed reading of the text, one that is particularly concerned with bridging the gap between text and world.

In a brief introduction, Creach sets out his guiding assumptions about the book. He largely follows the dominant critical position that sees Joshua as part of the Deuteronomistic History and which therefore is particularly concerned to address the needs of the exile, though he does not follow this through in a reductionist fashion. Rather, the position of the exiles is often the way in which contemporary readers are able to approach the text. He is also careful to explain that he does not treat Joshua as a work of history in the modern sense of the word, arguing that our role as readers is to enter Joshua's world and have our history and world shaped by it. Doing this inevitably means wrestling with the issue of violence as it is presented in the text, and Creach signals his intent to do this by devoting a considerable portion of his introduction to it, arguing that Joshua's authors do not treat violence in a simplistic way, and that their own wrestling with this issue can guide us as contemporary readers.

The body of the commentary then works this out in the traditional manner for this series, offering exegetical essays on each passage rather than offering detailed comment on particular points, though of course where necessary to support a particular conclusion Creach does not hesitate to provide detail. The reading offered is clear and preachers will find much that is helpful, though there are always points on which one might differ. As is flagged by the introduction, Creach takes time to explore the issue of violence as it occurs in various passages, often pausing for extended theological reflections. Yet there is also something rather curious in this because it means that the issue of the occupation of the land is largely passed over. I suspect that the allocation of the land in chapters 13-22 will be difficult for most preachers simply because it seems rather dull or irrelevant (though in fact these chapters stress Yahweh's faithfulness in giving the land), but those looking for assistance here will be largely disap-

pointed. Indeed, chapters 14-19 receive barely two pages of comment. What we have therefore, is more properly a commentary on chapters 1-12 and 23-24 with short notes on the rest. This is an unfortunate imbalance and lets down an otherwise excellent resource.

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Bloodguilt, Atonement and Mercy: An Exegetical and Theological Study of 2 Samuel 21:1-14

Jin-Soo Kim

EUS 845

Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2007, xvi + 302 pp.,
£38.30, pb; ISBN 978-3-631-56637-4

SUMMARY

Kim's study of 2 Samuel 21:1-14 provides an extended treatment of a passage which is largely ignored within the wider studies of Samuel. Kim provides a theologically committed reading of the text which integrates synchronic and diachronic exegesis. Originating as a doctoral dissertation, it shows a sound awareness of the main literature and key questions surrounding the passage. Kim shows that the text portrays God as holy, just and loving whilst also integrating it into the larger movement of the books of Samuel.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Kims Studie zu 2. Samuel 21,1-14 bietet eine ausführliche Behandlung einer Passage, die in umfassenderen Studien zum Samuelbuch weithin ignoriert wird. Kim bietet eine theologisch engagierte Leseweise des Textes, die synchrone und diachrone Exegese integriert. Ursprünglich eine Dissertation, das Buch zeigt eine solide Kenntnis der wichtigen Literatur und der Schlüsselfragen zum Abschnitt. Kim zeigt, dass der Text Gott als heilig, gerecht und liebend portraitiert, und er integriert den Text auch in die größeren Zusammenhänge der Samuelbücher.

RÉSUMÉ

Voici une étude détaillée et approfondie de 2 Samuel 21.1-14. Kim en fait une lecture théologique fondée sur une exégèse synchronique et diachronique, qui reprend sa thèse de doctorat. Il se montre très bien informé des travaux académiques et des questions importantes soulevées par ce texte. Il montre que Dieu y est présenté comme saint, juste et aimant, et intègre le texte au mouvement de l'ensemble des deux livres de Samuel.

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This study of an otherwise enigmatic passage in the books of Samuel originated as a doctoral dissertation completed under Eric Peels at the Theological University of Apeldoorn in the Netherlands. Even if only as a text that has seldom been studied on its own, 2 Samuel 21:1-14 was ripe for such an investigation, but it also

bristles with a range of exegetical and theological issues which pose questions for those committed to a Christian reading of the Old Testament. Kim's subtitle is thus of considerable importance in establishing the purpose of this study which wants to ensure that exegetical study also addresses theological questions generated by the text within the context of faithful reading.

The book's origin as a dissertation is apparent from the opening two chapters. The first of these sets out the leading questions addressed and how it will proceed, while the second demonstrates the validity of these questions through a review of the principal literature. Kim here shows a wide grasp of the literature in English and German, though it is unfortunate that he did not include L. T. Simon's *Identity and Identification: An Exegetical and Theological Study of 2 Sam 21-24* (Gregorian University Press, 2000) since he shares many of Kim's concerns. Kim might have strengthened this section by noting that few have studied this passage outside of larger concerns about Samuel, but he demonstrates that the key issues within the text are the death of the Saulides and Rizpah's enigmatic action in response. But he is also attentive to the theological issues being raised and notes that the image of God portrayed here is viewed by many as problematic.

With these issues noted, Kim provides his reading of the text over the next five chapters. Each investigates a different aspect of the text, starting with text critical questions (largely supporting MT) and concluding with an investigation of the leading theological issue. The others are devoted to the specifically exegetical questions, and Kim here draws on the insights of E. Talstra (Amsterdam) in integrating synchronic and diachronic models of reading, though it is generally the case that his synchronic conclusions make him unwilling to accept a number of diachronic suggestions. This enables him to consider the relationship of this passage to the rest of Samuel, operating on a synchronic reading of the whole of Samuel, and arguing that the most important connections are with 1 Sam.8 – 2 Sam.8 and also 2 Sam.24. Read this way, Kim argues that the passage's genre is a form of prophetic history which stresses the importance of kingship which exercises justice under Yahweh. These exegetical conclusions allow Kim to address the theological issues, arguing that the passage points to the holiness, justice and love of Yahweh. A closing chapter claims to offer Kim's summary and conclusions, though the fact that the Dutch abstract (*Samenvatting*) is essentially a translation of this makes clear that it is much more of a summary of each chapter than a conclusion as such.

Although there are points at which Kim's argument could be strengthened, especially in the case of his chapters on genre and the theological issues where he sometimes seems to be laying out his presuppositions rather than developing his argument, this is an intriguing and stimulating work that will hopefully generate discussion of this passage. There are a few misprints, but it