

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.,
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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

is overall a well-produced and stimulating work which adequately demonstrates the possibilities of combining detailed exegesis with a theologically committed reading of Scripture.

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Psalmen 51 – 100

Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger

Freiburg: Herder, 2008, 727 pp., € 100,-, hb; ISBN
978-3-451-26826-7

Psalmen 101-150

Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger

Freiburg: Herder, 2000, 912 pp., € 125,- hb; ISBN
978-3-451-26827-4

SUMMARY

The commentary on Psalms 51-100 by Hossfeld and Zenger offers a poetological analysis of the individual psalms presenting them each in the context of the fractional collections of the Psalter. In the second volume on Psalms 101-150, this promising approach has been continued and further improved.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der Kommentar von Hossfeld und Zenger zu Ps.51-100 bietet eine poetologische Kommentierung der Einzelsalmen und stellt diese jeweils in den Kontext der Teilsammlungen des Psalters. Im zweiten Band 101-150 wurde dieser vielversprechende Weg fortgesetzt und weiter verbessert.

RÉSUMÉ

Le commentaire des Psaumes 51-100 par Hossfeld et Zenger analyse la poésie de chaque psaume en le situant dans le contexte de la collection à laquelle il appartient au sein du psautier. Dans le deuxième volume consacré aux Psaumes 101 à 150, les auteurs poursuivent cette approche prometteuse en l'améliorant.

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After the first part had appeared in the year 2000, eight years later it is followed by the volume on Psalms 101-150. Already in the first commentary (51-100), Hossfeld and Zenger (HZ) declared that the volume on Psalms 1-50 will appear last. The introduction can be written only when each individual psalm will have been commented and, thus, the total arrangement of the Psalter will have been included.

In the volume on 51-100 HZ specified the line of approach for the comments (10): On the one hand, the analysis of the "individual shape of the text" is being dealt; on the other hand, the arrangement of the individual psalms within the context of "each partial com-

position" is considered. The general approach of HZ is illustrated in detail in the comments on Ps 51 by Zenger (38ff.). Each interpretation is preceded by *bibliographical notes* on the psalm. With regard to Ps 51, the list comprising 25 titles is extensive, as one would expect. As for the other psalms, three or four references may suffice (e.g. Ps 77). The broad horizon which includes literature in various languages (German, English, French, Italian, Spanish and Dutch) is remarkable. A special *translation* into German is provided for each psalm, which clearly observes the poetry of the Hebrew text without sounding clumsy. In a few instances, additional explanations are given in brackets; e.g. 51:5:

Surely I was sinful (i.e. embroiled in sin) at birth,
Sinful (i.e. as sinner) from the time my mother
conceived me.

The presentation of the text already incorporates the arrangement of verses which is referred to in the subsequent analysis. Questions concerning *text and translation* follow in minor typeface. Here, a detailed assessment of the Hebrew syntax is provided. In addition to text-critical aspects, controversial topics are debated if necessary. For example, with regard to Ps 51, the syntactic function of v.6cd is clearly discussed and evaluated.

The ensuing *analysis* consists, first of all, of the *analysis of genre*. As for Ps 51, Zenger examines in detail Würthwein's thesis that this is a so-called sickness psalm. Zenger presents Würthwein's view fairly, but clearly disagrees with his perspective. Zenger's main counterargument is influenced by the overall structure of the Psalm, which is symptomatic of the commentary's approach. He argues that especially the statements in the centre of both main parts vv.3-11 (v.6cd about "justification") and vv.12-19 (v.16 about "righteousness") speak against a "sickness doctrine" imported into the psalm" (44).

In the second step of the "analysis", HZ elucidate questions on the agenda as concerns *literary criticism*. Zenger classifies Ps 51:20-21 as a secondary appendix (from the perspective of poetry and syntax), acknowledging a tension with regard to a theology of sacrifice in v.18f. At the same time, however, he recognizes a valuable continuity of this perspective in vv.20-21.

A *classification of the structure* of the psalm comes next. Here, Zenger contests eliminations in Ps 51 (v.16) and, by and large, identifies a basic dual structure in vv.3-11 and vv.12-19. After *questions of date*, HZ deal with the *interpretation per se* of each psalm. Zenger selects the heading of Ps 51 as guideline for its reading, placing the psalm in the context of the second Davidic Psalter. Detailed comments follow the arrangement of verses. The comments accentuate aspects of poetry and theology of each psalm. Key verses are explained and lines of history of tradition are traced. The verse-by-verse interpretation precedes the section on *context, reception and implication*. In particular in this section on context, the ways of recent research on psalms become evident. Zenger considers Ps 51 "a programmatic introduction of