

*The Forgotten God: Perspectives in Biblical Theology. Essays in Honor of Paul J. Achtemeier on the Occasion of His Seventy-fifth Birthday.* Edited by A. Andrew Das and Frank J. Matera. Louisville/London: Westminster John Knox, 2002, pp. xv + 300 pp., n. p.

Andrew Das and Frank Matera, former Ph.D. students of Paul Achtemeier, have edited a number of essays focusing on the doctrine of God to honor their Ph.D. supervisor.

Probably the best way to capture the scope of the book is to list the essays and authors.

"In Appreciation of Paul J. Achtemeier" by Leander Keck; "Introducing the Forgotten God" by Andrew Das and Frank Matera; "The God Who Creates and Governs" by Dean McBride Jr.; "The God Who Reigns: The Book of Psalms" by James Luther Mays; "'Slow to Anger': The God of the Prophets" by Patrick Miller; "The God Who Makes People Wise: The Wisdom Literature" by Richard Clifford; "'God' within the Narrative World of Mark" by Jack Kingsbury; "The God of Israel and the Salvation of the Nations: The Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles" by John Carroll; "Telling God's Story" by Francis Moloney; "The God of Mercy Who Rescues Us from the Present Evil Age: Romans and Galatians" by Richard Hays; "God's Power in Human Weakness: Paul Teaches the Corinthians about God" by PHEME PERKINS; "All the Fullness of God: Concepts of Deity in Colossians and Ephesians" by David Hay; "The Savior God: The Pastoral Epistles" by Joseph Fitzmyer; "God in Hebrews: Urging Children to Heavenly Glory" by Harold Attridge; "God Ever New, Ever the Same: The Witness of James and Peter" by Luke Timothy Johnson; "God and Time in the Apocalypse of John" by David Aune; "Preaching and Ministry in the Service of the God of the Bible" by Elizabeth

Achtemeier. The listing of names indicates that the contributors are well-known for their work in biblical studies.

Many honorary volumes solicit essays on a topic of interest to the contributor, but this volume pursues one topic in biblical theology, i.e., biblical teaching about God. Furthermore, "God" is studied from the standpoint of the canon as a whole, so that soundings are taken from various corpora in the scriptures. Each of the authors explicates the particular contribution of the writer(s) in question to delineate what is taught about God. One of the advantages of biblical theology surfaces in such an approach, for each contributor attempts to discern the particular angle or perspective of God in the literature under consideration. As readers we see the multifaceted nature of God's revelation of himself.

It is impossible in a short review to include the diversity of insights found in this volume. Patrick Miller's essay could be interpreted to provide ammunition for those defending God's openness. Open theism should certainly be rejected, but we can still glean insight from Miller's article, for his essay points clearly to a God who relates to his creatures—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and not the abstract God of some philosophers. On the other hand, the sovereignty of God is featured in the essays on the Psalms and the wisdom literature, and we can conclude from this that the entire canon of scripture must be consulted to form our doctrine of God. I cannot resist saying that readers should consult the outstanding work of John Frame in this regard, *The Doctrine of God* (Presbyterian and Reformed).

Jack Kingsbury's fine work in narrative theology is put to good service in his stimulating essay on "God" in Mark. Kingsbury demonstrates that liberalism and even

redaction criticism failed to read Mark on its own terms. He forges well the connection between "theology" and "christology" in Markan thought. We are not surprised to see that Richard Hays traces out the story of God's saving work in his article on Romans and Galatians. Joseph Fitzmyer rightly attunes us to God and Christ as Savior in the Pastorals, bringing to center stage a theme that is particularly emphasized in these letters. Luke Johnson locates the doctrine of God in both James and 1 Peter in their pastoral witness, arguing that moral exhortation in both letters cannot be separated from theological grounding. Johnson rightly argues that the christology of James is quite high when all the clues of the letter are rightly assessed. Finally, one of the best essays in the volume is the concluding chapter by Elizabeth Achtemeier. She reminds preachers that we are to proclaim the work of God in Christ instead of moralizing. The storyline of the Bible is to be the subject of our preaching, especially in a day when so many are ignorant of the redemptive account found in the scriptures. The advice in this chapter is a goldmine and every preacher ought to read it. No one will agree with everything contained in this work, but insights abound for students, teachers, ministers, and preachers.

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