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Book Review: Exodus

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talks about how to inspire others as a leader. He includes a helpful chart on page 239 on how to honor others, and how to avoid dishonoring them.

Part 5: Shepherding the Flock. Using biblical expositions, personal testimony, and practical counsel, Earley talks about the following subjects in part 5: (1) Shepherding through Undershepherds; (2) Counseling the Flock; (3) Resolving Conflict; (4) Celebrating the Ordinances; (5) Doing Premarital Counseling and Weddings; and (6) Conducting Funerals.

Young pastors and aspiring pastors will benefit from this book. It is a helpful primer for the pastorate. Looking back on my journey, I would have benefited tremendously from it when I first began doing pastoral work. I appreciate the readability, biblical focus, and seasoned wisdom. Perhaps, others will want a little more on issues like sermon preparation and the role of elders in shepherding. Some time was devoted to sermon preparation, but more could be said about different issues, such as how to practically ensure a Christ-centered focus in each sermon. Elders were mentioned in the book also, but for those who wish to build their shepherding ministry around the plurality of pastors-elders, they will need to find some additional resources on the subject.

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Victor P. Hamilton. *Exodus: An Exegetical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. xxix + 721 pp. Hardback. ISBN 9780801031800. \$54.99 Hardback.

Within the larger context of study of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament within the church, Hamilton's commentary on Exodus makes an interesting contribution. Whereas many commentaries are expending effort on placing the teaching of OT books within the context of the church's theology, Hamilton's work has reverted in many ways to a traditionally exegetical treatment of the text. After a short introduction to the book as a whole, the commentary divides the text of Exodus into smaller portion, each of which has three sections: (1) an original translation prepared by Hamilton, (2) grammatical and lexical notes that provide information ranging from Hamilton's translation rationale to comparative philology to how phrases are used in other parts of the text, and (3) a running commentary about the text. This review will analyze briefly the contribution of the introduction as well as each of these sections of the commentary.

While granting the fact that commenting in detail on the translation and interpretation of forty chapters of Hebrew text demands much space, the introduction Hamilton provides seems somewhat lacking. He certainly hits some of the highpoints of structure and theological contributions; yet, a section of methodology would have been helpful. For the reader leaves wondering, among other things, about how his methodology relates to the modern

interpretive grid of OT studies, how he came to his theological conclusions, how he came to make applications to the Christian, etc. The introduction has not really answered the question this reviewer wanted to know: What distinguishes this commentary from others in such a way as to make a contribution? I certainly appreciate that Hamilton did not drone on about traditional critical scholarship, but at the same time, setting his comments within the larger veins of the discipline would be helpful, especially given that he quotes from such scholars as Brevard Childs.

When approaching each section of the text, Hamilton provides his own translation, which contributes greatly to the value of the commentary. The author's skill in the Hebrew language (as well as its cognates) is unquestioned. Although one may prefer some type of reference to the name of God (e.g. Yhwh) instead of the customary LORD, the translation is readable, helpful, and reliable, and the author is to be commended. Furthermore, the grammatical and lexical notes reveal an author that is highly skilled in all elements of Hebrew grammar and philology. He successfully interacts with the ancient translations and demonstrates his broad knowledge of the Hebrew Bible as a whole.

Hamilton also contributes much in his running commentary on the text. Not only does he show proficiency in those areas that are expected of tradition exegetical commentaries (such as interaction with historical, geographical, and Ancient Near Eastern matters), but he also shows that he has thought well about the poetics of biblical narrative, which is a more modern field of study. For example, on the former, he goes to great lengths to show the (dis)connections of the Covenant Code with other law codes of the ANE (pp. 359ff.). On the latter, multiple times he shows that the narrative is arranged in a chiasmic pattern, as for example in Exodus 19–24 (pp. 298ff.). He also shows his knowledge and implementation of inner-biblical exegesis, as seen in his comments on Isaiah 19 and Exodus 3 (p. 57).

Yet, the commentary also has some weaknesses. First, there seem to be some keen observations that are left without explanation. Examples might include a description of a chiasm with the names of the sons of Jacob (p.4), after which the reader might be left asking about the purpose (cf. also p. 36 and the explanation of the verb “quickly” and p. 130 with the connection of “teeming” with Genesis 1 and 6–8). Second, and most significantly, little help is provided in how Exodus can (or should) be taught and preached as Christian Scripture. The author obviously speaks of the text from a Christian perspective, but the preacher who needs assistance in properly preaching law texts to a congregation will be left wondering. The simple question of how the believer should relate to the law is left unanswered. Although there seems to be a latent understanding of how this should be done within Hamilton's traditions, his thoughts about how the church should read Exodus as well as the subsequent theological contribution of the book would be most welcome. In this light, the value for the modern preacher or teacher will be in the valu-

able exegesis of the details of the text and not the theological appropriation of Exodus to the church.

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