
David Baker's book is the published form of his Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Sheffield, 1975, done under the supervision of D. J. A. Clines. In this book a clear, readable style combined with balanced scholarship results in an excellent critical survey of the major modern views of the relation of the two Testaments. After an introductory review of the major data of Old and New Testaments and highlights of the history of interpretation, Baker devotes the bulk of the book to an exposition of the views of A. van Ruler, K. H. Miskotte, Bultmann, Baumgärtel, Vischer, von Rad, Vriezen, Rowley, and C. H. Dodd. A score of other writers are discussed in short notes. The relatively short discussions of each writer are enhanced by the inclusion of bibliographies at the end of many of the sections, and inclusion of a comprehensive bibliography of 140 pages at the end.

In sorting out the differing views, Baker cites published criticisms of the major views, as well as offering brief criticisms of his own. In particular, van Ruler and Miskotte are criticized for being too exclusively oriented in terms of the Old Testament; Bultmann and Baumgärtel for their opposite orientation in terms of the New Testament. With some qualifications, Baker prefers the history of salvation position of von Rad, the continuity-discontinuity emphasis of Rowley and Dodd, and some aspects of typological interpretation (Vischer, von Rad).

This book is an excellent tool for exploring the possibilities for frameworks in which to study the relation of the Old Testament to the New Testament. But in covering such a large topic, the book inevitably has its limitations. Only the very large-scale questions about the relation of the Testaments are handled; and only a survey of the major positions is attempted. Moreover, the reader will be disappointed if he wants primarily arguments deciding among positions, rather than expositions of the positions.

Baker's own preferences, in my opinion, are generally good. But these preferences are not very well grounded within the limits of the book. A solid decision among the positions requires some reflection on the role of presuppositions. More specifically, a decision on an issue as fundamental as that concerning the relation between Old Testament and New cannot be grounded in modern scholarly consensus or in common sense or in one's notion of what Christianity or the Christian church requires, but only in the testimony of Scripture itself. Hence a fundamental advance cannot be achieved without awareness of the philosophical, apologetic, and hermeneutical problem of circularity. But such discussion is outside the scope of this book.

Moreover, another key factor in assessing the two Testaments is reflection on the relation between the Testaments as covenant documents on the one hand, and God's salvific-judgmental acts in history on the other. No non-evangelical work can produce a satisfactory answer at this crucial point. The value of Baker's book is in revealing what remarkably positive contributions have been made from standpoints largely outside the conservative evangelical community. I
regret that there was not scope in the book to consider the way in which Meredith Kline's work (The Structure of Biblical Authority) points beyond such positions to a fully evangelical solution.

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