

CRITICAL BOOK REVIEWS

Daniel: Wisdom to the Wise, by Zdravko Stefanovic. Nampo, ID: Pacific, 2007. 480 pp. ISBN 13: 978-0-8163-2212-1. Hardcover US\$34.99.

Zdravko Stefanovic, an Old Testament languages and biblical studies professor at Walla Walla University, challenges the popularized futurist, preterist and idealist systems of interpretation which currently dominate the scholarly study on *Daniel*. The author affirms the historicist school of interpretation.

Stefanovic's approach is not commentary from a critical point of view, but an attempt to expound the message of *Daniel* and to relate its message to the contemporary life of the modern reader. The analysis reflects a comprehensive view of the historical context with a heavy interest in hermeneutics and connections with other New Testament passage, especially the book of *Revelation*. While the author points out that chapter seven is the "strongest interlocking element in the whole book because it combines the visionary material with text in Biblical Aramaic," he also considers "the literary/stylistic plan as the primary structure because it is based on the two dominant literary forms in the book: stories (chaps. 1-6) and visions with auditions (chaps. 7-12)." (p. 39)

The book is a well organized and written commentary that goes deep into most of the issues in the book of *Daniel*. It begins with introductory material that discuss major topics, including *Daniel's* life and career as a Biblical prophet, kingdoms of Babylon and Medo-Persia, religion in Babylon, literary features of the book, historical setting, date, authorship, its purpose and theology, as well as approaches to the book and its influence on the New Testament. Chapters one to six forming a section, is then treated under three major headings: a concise literary type analysis; exegetical analysis with the text divided into sections and an expositional explanation of the content; and theological and application of the major themes of the section analyzed. Chapters seven to twelve likewise is treated but from the perceptive of prophecy and history; prediction, fulfillment, and applications; and the applications of *Daniel's* Prophecies. One is expected to find surprises here. The standard critical conclusions are not presented. The stories that make up *Daniel* 1-6 are related to and from historical *Daniel*; the visions are within the date and originate in the sixth century BC. The last part of chap. 11 is accurate in portraying and applying to a political and religious character at the end time, and not the later life of Antiochus IV. Since Stefanovic asserts messianism to the prophecies of *Daniel*, the theological applications presented along the way highlights Christ as

"only a man who called Himself the Son of man . . . and He offers His victory to all who will believe in Him." (p.422)

The theological analyses are apt for many contemporary Jews. If one wants to introduce students to the historicist treatment of Daniel and its logical theological conclusions, Stefanovic's work is probably the best. Seminary students and scholars alike will immensely benefit from this commentary. Of special importance is how the author allows the word of God to elucidate our understanding of the historic narratives and prophecies of Daniel. Above all, *Daniel: Wisdom to the Wise* offers hope to the reader, showing that behind the cosmic events and histories' play and counterplay is God whose sovereignty and total control is enough for this world. Thus, "through God-given wisdom can we know how to live our everyday life in anticipation of the glorious future." (p. 452)

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What Does God Know and When Does He Know It?: The Current Controversy over Divine Foreknowledge, by Millard J. Erickson. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003. 268 pp. ISBN 0310247691 Hardcover \$24.99

Millard J. Erickson is an evangelical theology professor and an established writer of over twenty-five books and numerous articles in theology. He writes in *What Does God know and When Does he know it?* to engage in a conversation about a recent debate on divine foreknowledge. He begins his book reflecting of the reformation began by Martin Luther that sparked a change in church history. In his reflection he thought, perhaps Open Theism might have reformation type ramifications for the church. Therefore, he endeavors to examine if the Open Theism presents a biblically based position that needs to be accepted (9). However, he makes this cogent statement that "neutrality and impartiality" should be properly distinguished (9). This is the principle that weaves and connects the book.

The book is organized into nine chapters. Chapters one and two discuss biblical positions of the two views. For each view claims to be biblical based and found. Chapter three which is connected to the first two chapters looks at hermeneutics. In particular, the methodologies used to arrive at conclusions. Chapters four and five discuss the historical development of the doctrine of divine foreknowledge. The notion is carried that through the course of church history the traditional view was well estab-