

BOOK REVIEWS

Doukhan, Jacques B. *Secrets of Daniel: Wisdom and Dreams of a Jewish Prince in Exile*. Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2000. 191 pp.

Jacques B. Doukhan is Professor of Old Testament Interpretation and Jewish Studies at Andrews University. He is editor of two journals, *Shabbat Shalom* and *L'Olivier*, and is a well respected author. His book, *Daniel: Vision of the End* (Andrews University Press, 1987), was favorably received.

In *Secrets of Daniel*, Doukhan establishes the universality of Daniel's message and appeal. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all venerate the book. Philosophers, psychologists, scientists, poets, and artists have been inspired by its great themes. "Indeed, the book of Daniel does not exclusively belong to the religious tradition but also to the secular heritage" (9). Daniel's appeal is appreciated, says Doukhan, not only because of its beautiful poetic devices (echoes, parallelisms, word plays, and rhythms) and languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and loanwords from Akkadian, Persian, and Greek), but also because of its spirituality. One must "understand" (a key word in the book) not only the interrelatedness of history and prophecy but also the value of prayer, a key component of the book. It is this that roots the book "in the human experience" (10) and dissuades asceticism.

Each of the twelve chapters of Daniel forms a chapter in *Secrets of Daniel*. Doukhan divides each chapter into pericopes, though he does not always provide the grounds for such a division. The pericope is then discussed as a whole rather than by means of a verse-by-verse commentary. Here he pays attention to the elements of exegesis: literary analysis, linguistics, historical background, theological analysis, and interpretation. Each chapter closes with an outline of the structure of that chapter in the book of Daniel, followed by endnotes.

Several notable factors make this book an outstanding contribution to Daniel studies:

1. Doukhan indicates that the Great Controversy theme underscores the entire book of Daniel. He comments, "Behind the confrontation between Babylon and Jerusalem the prophets see a conflict of another dimension. We must read the book of Daniel, then, with this perspective in mind" (14). Doukhan demonstrates this conflict with remarkable consistency. While evil may seem to triumph over good, in the final analysis, good ultimately prevails. Doukhan illustrates this in chapter three where the three Hebrews are vindicated. He concludes, "The

'success' of the Jews teaches us that the grace of God is never expected, but is reserved for *those who have lost everything and who expect nothing in return* (58, emphasis mine).

Doukhan repeatedly demonstrates the relationship between the twin themes of judgment and salvation within the context of the Great Controversy. Speaking of the centrality of the "Son of Man" in this light, he remarks:

This same 'son of man' who had participated in the procedure of judgment reappears to save the multitude of 'saints' in the inauguration of His Kingdom. The 'son of man' has the last word on who will be saved and who will not. He is the link between the judgment and the kingdom. To pass from the judgment to the kingdom we must go through Him. (118)

Finally, the Great Controversy culminates with victory for God and His saints. Certainly, "The victory of Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 1 has its answer in the ultimate victory of Michael And with His victory, that of His people is assured." (183)

2. The emphasis on the meaning of the passage itself is significant in this volume. Commentators steeped in historico-grammatical exegesis often emphasize historical events to which Daniel refers, at the expense of grappling with the text. Doukhan cannot be accused of this. The text speaks to us, especially as he elucidates key words (e.g., *krt*, p.148) and the internal structure of several pericopes (e.g., the chiasm of the seventy weeks/years of Dan 9, p. 143).

3. Although Doukhan never uses the label "relevance," the reader experiences the personal impact of the biblical passage. For example, the weight of waiting bears heavily in the closing scenes of chap. 12. But "we do not know how to wait" (189). Still, as the eschaton draws close we must learn to wait and walk. Indeed, "Waiting is the only way to survive. It is the last message Daniel hears from the angel: 'Blessed is the one who waits' [Dan. 12:12]" (ibid).

4. Finally, the simplicity of language and vividness of thought captivates the attention and encourages, almost demands, the reader to read on. This is especially valued as Doukhan maintains dynamic dialogue with the rest of the Bible and with other scholars. Yet the book is not peppered with endnotes (although I think that footnotes make for easier reading).

Nevertheless, I think that this book could have been of greater value if attention had been paid to the following factors:

(1) A translation that demonstrates the dynamic quality of the original Hebrew and Aramaic should have been provided. This could have been placed at the beginning of each chapter.

(2) Instead of placing the overall delineation of each chapter from Daniel at the end of each of his chapters, Doukhan should have placed it at the beginning. This would have enabled the reader to get a better grasp of the plot and movement of that particular chapter. Placed at the end, it appears to have been merely tacked on.

(3) A description of the general characteristics of Daniel as an apocalyptic book should have been given. This would have been especially helpful to general readers who are unfamiliar with such issues.

(4) A select bibliography and at least a subject index would have been helpful for the person who wants to pursue further study in this important book.

I think that pastors, teachers, students, and general lay readers will find this book engaging, stimulating, and beneficial. The next time I teach a class on the book of Daniel, *Secrets of Daniel* will be the textbook.

Kenneth Mulzac

Dybdahl, Jon L., ed. *Adventist Mission in the 21st Century: The Joys and Challenges of Presenting Jesus to a Diverse World*. Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1999. 314 pp.

This book is a compilation of essays written by missionaries from everywhere to everywhere (78, 165, 176, 287). They represent an international group. The Introduction states it aptly,

Africans and Australians, Asians and Europeans, South Americans and North Americans, are here together. So are women and men, scholars and administrators, pastors and teachers, as well as lay people all involved in some way in the cross-cultural mission of the church.

The book is divided into four sections. The first, the Background (17-35), is comprised of two chapters. It presents a brief history of, and traces the major developments in the missionary movement of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church. The details presented indicate that Adventist mission is in a state of malaise. There is need to expend time, energy, effort and resources to rejuvenate SDA missions. Several new initiatives and the establishment of the Office of Global Mission may help in this renewal, but more needs to be done.

Section II, Biblical and Theological Issues (37-113), canvasses several key issues such as the validity of cross-cultural missions, the challenges of world religions, secularism, cultural adaptation, and finance. These chapters provide the biblical foundations which anchor SDA mission. The church's emphasis on remnant theology urges a comprehensive effort to spread the everlasting gospel world mission. This would incur considerable expense, sacrifice, devotion and consecration, but nothing should interfere with its proclamation. This is even more urgent than just a generation ago, because the church now faces a plurality of religions which are themselves highly evangelistic and missionary-minded. Adherents of these religions are not relegated to the mission fields but are everywhere. Further, we can no longer measure the success of missions by counting the countries where there is an Adventist presence. Evaluation must now