

Book review

Joshua P. Yoder

Peace and Justice Shall Embrace: Power and Theopolitics in the Bible, ed. Ted Grimsrud and Loren L. Johns. Telford, Pa.: Pandora Pr.; Scottsdale: Herald Pr., 1999.

P*ace and Justice Shall Embrace* is a Festschrift for Millard Lind, professor emeritus of Old Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary and author of *Yahweh Is a Warrior*, an important treatment of warfare in the Hebrew Bible from a peace church perspective. The book features nine essays from an impressive range of Millard Lind's students, many now teaching at the seminary level themselves. The book also includes an exhaustive bibliography of Lind's published work, assembled by his daughter, Sarah Lind.

As the title suggests, the essays focus on the political dimension of the Hebrew Bible, a theme in Lind's teaching that made a deep impression on many of his students. Some of the articles are more autobiographical, others more topical; some are wide-ranging, others more narrowly scholarly. They cover an impressive range of biblical texts, from the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Amos to wisdom writings such as Ecclesiastes and the Wisdom of Solomon. Less well represented are the books of the Pentateuch.

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Peace and Justice Shall Embrace is an interesting read, giving a sense of the current thinking of Mennonite biblical scholars and theologians and their engagement with the work of the previous generation. None of the articles is so scholarly as to be inaccessible to the average pastor, and most are short enough and readable enough to be consumed in under an hour, making ideal reading for busy pastors without a

lot of time to invest. I found little that is strikingly original in the broad themes addressed, but much of interest in the elaboration of specific Scripture texts.

Despite the wide range of texts covered, the book lacks any treatment of the Mosaic law. This surely is an important part of theopolitics in the Hebrew Bible. Many Christian readers may not notice the absence of any studies on Leviticus or Deuteronomy among the offerings, but in my view these books are an important voice in the biblical conversation about what constitutes justice and righteousness in human societies.

Perhaps a more serious weakness of the Festschrift is the absence of any women's voices. Did Millard Lind have no female students who would have been qualified to contribute to the book? The lack of articles by women (save for the bibliography by Sarah Lind) is puzzling and seriously limits the strength of the whole enterprise. I would love to know how some of Millard Lind's female students would reflect on his teachings on power and politics in the Hebrew Bible.

I particularly appreciated J. Denny Weaver's contribution, "Making Yahweh's Rule Visible." This essay made the strongest connection of any of the articles between an understanding of the Bible and contemporary political action rooted in it. Pastors operate on the threshold between exegesis of the Bible and action in the world. We are constantly challenged to articulate how biblical texts can be translated into actions, practices, and structures in the lives of Christian disciples and Christian communities. We need more of this kind of incarnated exegesis from scholars who are able to relate the biblical story to concrete work in churches and in the wider world.

About the reviewer

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