

Walther Zimmerli, *The Fiery Throne: The Prophets and Old Testament Theology*, Fortress Classics in Biblical Studies. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003. 179pp. \$16.00, paper.

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Born in Switzerland in 1907, Walther Zimmerli was a pastor and prolific scholar who died in 1983. Through the course of his life, Zimmerli led the Göttingen project on the Septuagint, edited *Vetus Testamentum*, worked with epileptics, served as a “house father” at the Reformed Theological Student House in Zurich, and was a chaplain in the Swiss army. The present volume is a collection of significant essays (translated from German) published between 1963 and 1985.

The volume opens with a short biography of Zimmerli (xi–xiii), followed by the original publication data for the 8 essays in the book (xiv–xv). The first essay, “Prophetic Proclamation and Reinterpretation,” explores the use and transformation of Israel’s traditions in Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Deutero-Isaiah (*sic*), concluding with theological reflections.

This is followed by a piece titled “From Prophetic Word to Prophetic Book.” The question here is, “What can be said regarding the progression from the oral, situation-bound prophetic word to the written message, which was lifted out of its original context and has apparently become timeless?” (23–24). Zimmerli searches out indications of the transcription and redaction of the prophecies in Isaiah, Amos, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

Chapter 3 treats “The ‘Land’ in the Prophets,” followed by “Visionary Experience in Jeremiah” in chapter 4. Next come three studies on Ezekiel: “The Message of the Prophet Ezekiel,” “The Word of God in the Book of Ezekiel,” and “Form and Tradition in the Book of Ezekiel” in chapters 5–7.

The last essay is titled simply “Biblical Theology,” where Zimmerli rightly recognizes, “The question demands attention because of the situation of Christian preaching. If texts from both parts of the Bible are read and expounded in the Christian pulpit, how can this be possible unless the preacher renders an account about a ‘speaking of God’ that is nurtured by both testaments, in other words about ‘biblical theology’?” (118).

Since these essays were already in print in English, it is quite a compliment to Zimmerli that Fortress would choose to include the collection in their series and make them newly available. The essays are rendered less useful by Zimmerli’s critical orientation; still, he is intimately acquainted with the texts and it is convenient to have these studies in one handy volume. This book will be read mainly by scholars and Ph.D. students.

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