

New Dictionary of Biblical Theology

Preface

Throughout most of the 19th and 20th centuries biblical theology has undoubtedly been the Cinderella subject in the academic study of the Bible. Although knowledge of the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament has increased remarkably in recent years, this has been, to a large extent, at the expense of our understanding of how these two parts of the Christian Bible relate to each other.

Against this background the Two Testaments Project was launched at the Swanwick Jubilee Conference of the Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical and Theological Research in July 1994. It was to be a co-operative venture involving the Biblical Theology Study Group of the Tyndale Fellowship and Rutherford House, Edinburgh. When a small planning group, consisting of Geoffrey Grogan (chairman), Desmond Alexander (secretary) and David Searle, subsequently presented the idea of a Dictionary of Biblical Theology to Frank Entwistle and David Kingdon of IVP, their enthusiasm for the project led to the appointment of Desmond Alexander and Brian Rosner as main editors, with Steve Carter of IVP as organizing editor and Don Carson and Graeme Goldsworthy as consulting editors.

As main editors our first tasks were to decide upon the format of the Dictionary and to commission authors. We opted for a tripartite arrangement, with Part One providing an introduction to the whole subject of biblical theology. The articles in this section are intended to provide the reader with a clear statement of the basis upon which the rest of the Dictionary is built. Part Two discusses the theology of those books of the OT and NT which are most commonly accepted as canonical within Christianity. The third section focuses on topics which, in our opinion, are of central importance for an understanding of the unity of the Biblical corpus. In the interests of keeping the volume to a

manageable size, some sacrifice of detail has had to be made in these two sections. However, we hope that the Dictionary will prove to be a helpful resource for those who want to familiarize themselves with the Bible's theology.

To those who have contributed articles we are most grateful. The nature of this Dictionary sometimes required contributors to work beyond their own area of specialism. Experts in the OT were asked to interact with the NT, and vice versa. To each one who gave so patiently of time and energy in writing we are deeply indebted. We hope that the end result is a volume that not only brings together the best of evangelical scholarship from throughout the world, but also will be a stimulus to further research and writing in the somewhat neglected field of biblical theology.

Our task as editors was eased considerably by the thoughtful and meticulous attention given to this project by Steve Carter. His contribution has been enormous and for this he has our heartfelt thanks. We are also grateful to his many colleagues in IVP who have played a part in bringing this volume to completion, and to its freelance copy editor, Alison Walley. Finally, we have benefited greatly from the expertise of our two consulting editors, Don Carson and Graeme Goldsworthy. When our own abilities were stretched to the limit, they proved invaluable sources of knowledge and wisdom.

Editing this Dictionary has been a mind-expanding and heart-warming experience. We pray that those who use it will likewise find their minds expanded and their hearts warmed as they contemplate both the simplicity and the complexity of God's revelation to humanity. It is our hope that a better understanding of biblical theology, this Cinderella of subjects, will lead each reader to a deeper knowledge of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Life.

DESMOND ALEXANDER
BRIAN ROSNER