
Pro Rege

Volume 6 | Number 2

Article 10

December 1977

Promise and Deliverance, Vol. I (Book Review)

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Recommended Citation

De Jong, James A. (1977) "Promise and Deliverance, Vol. I (Book Review),"

Pro Rege: Vol. 6: No. 2, 34.

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the creation in a series of six days—how insistent should one be that they must be taken chronologically, as Young does? While the reviewer does not himself adopt the Framework Hypothesis of Meredith Kline (see *The New Bible Commentary: Revised*, 1970), he does wonder if a strictly chronological approach to the creation days may be putting too much burden on poetic prose; the creation days of Genesis 1:1-2:3 may be partly topical and partly chronological, Days One through Five being somewhat indefinite, and Days Six and Seven being chronologically most recent. If this is not adopted, there is a real problem in the relationship of Days Three and Four if one insists upon a strictly chronological sequence (as Young does, p. 129).

(3) There is no discussion of Richard Leakey's discovery of Skull 1470 etc. in east Africa (a most remarkable and important find!), although it is pictured on p. 147. Thought by Leakey to be 2-3 million years old, yet remarkably like modern man, this discovery and its dating *demands* discussion! (Probably Young finished his manuscript before Leakey's discovery, but it is unfortunate that he did not revise it or add a postscript to his book).

(4) On p. 172 Young inclines toward accepting the idea of a universal Flood without an adequate exegetical study, something not characteristic of him elsewhere. What does "all flesh" and "all the earth (or land)" mean, especially in the Hebrew? Is Moses thinking in global terms, or would an extensive regional flood be agreeable to Scripture? The question is not easily settled from the Bible. The view that the Flood may have been regional is well set forth in J. D. Davis, *Dictionary of the Bible*, 4th rev. ed., pp. 235-237 (1924).

These few blemishes notwithstanding, *Creation and the Flood* is an excellent book that deserves to be read by every thinking Christian.

Promise and Deliverance, Vol. I, by S.G. De Graaf, translated by H. Evan and Elisabeth Wichers Runner, Paideia Press, St. Catharines, Ontario, 1977, 423 pages, \$9.95. Reviewed by James A. De Jong, Associate Professor of Theology.

This work initially appeared in 1936 in the Dutch language. It was entitled *Verbondsgeschiedenis* (History of the Covenant), and was designed to instruct church-education teachers in the telling of Bible stories, particularly those dealing with historical passages. De Graaf's emphasis is that these stories and ac-

counts are always first of all an account of God's sovereign and electing work in and through the lives of his people. Only secondarily do they say something about the human figures in the Biblical records. This emphasis gives the explanations of De Graaf a strong, covenantal continuity. It also exposes the unity within the Bible in an unusually forceful and insightful manner.

Simply written, this work is profound in content. Undoubtedly this combination explains its wide usage and the devotion shown it by two generations of teachers, students, elders, and pastors. This reviewer, since he began preaching, never constructs a sermon on an historical passage without consulting De Graaf. And De Graaf's insights into the meaning of such passages is always refreshing, often brilliant, and usually on target. For years there have been suggestions that this book be translated into English. And its appearance this year as the first of a projected four-volume English edition is both overdue and enthusiastically welcomed.

Perhaps once in a decade or even a generation a work appears that is substantive and formative for both the professional churchman and the spiritually inquisitive Christian. De Graaf's work has the rare trait of speaking on both these levels. And if this translation receives the attention and circulation that it deserves, sales will boom, preaching will assume a new, more-Biblical focus in many congregations, and authors and teachers of church-education materials will benefit immensely. The Reformed community throughout the world owes the Runners a great debt of praise and gratitude.

Since every translation of an important book has its own history and context which parallel those of the original, a footnote can be added here. In this era of Alex Haley, the Runner translation can be seen as an exposure of the spiritual roots of Evan Runner and the significant number of students on whom he has had such a lasting and significant influence. If anyone would understand the robust Biblical piety inspiring the vision of these men on the North American continent, the place to begin is with De Graaf's study.

We wish Professor and Mrs. Runner stamina for the completion of this important project. Their translation is generally smooth, lucid, and accurate. The publisher is to be commended for the attractive, durable, and economical format in which he has marketed the first volume. At this price the book is a bargain among the best Reformed literature in Biblical studies currently available.