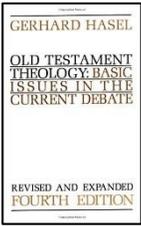
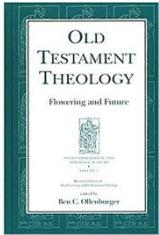


An Introduction to Old Testament Theology



Hasel, Gerhard. *Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate*. Fourth Edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.



Ollenburger, Ben C. *Old Testament Theology: Flowering and Future*. Second Edition. Sources for Biblical and Theological Study Vol. 1. Warsaw, IN: Eisenbraun's, 2004.

Both Hasel and Ollenburger present an analysis of the historical roots and development of OT theology as a discipline of academic study. Put forward your analysis of the two presentations, giving what the two analyses have in common and what they differ in regarding content and emphases.

Hasel provides a brief yet thorough summary of the background of OT theology as a discipline. Hasel begins his discussion on the “Beginnings and Development of OT Theology” with a brief background of the discipline’s roots in the Reformation period. He notes that while the Reformation authors did not necessarily engage in biblical theology as a discipline, the principle of “Sola Scriptura” played a significant role in the disciplines rise a century later. Hasel identifies Wolfgang Jacob Christmann as the first to use the phrase biblical theology (*Teutsche Biblische Theologie*, 1629), though Christmann’s work is no longer extant; however, Henricus Diest’s *Theologia biblica* (1643) is available and shows the beginnings of the discipline. According to Hasel, these early works identify biblical theology as a collection of proof-texts from both testaments “to support the traditional ‘systems of doctrine’ of early Protestant Orthodoxy” (Hasel, 11). Thus, biblical theology began as a subsidiary discipline to systematic theology/orthodox dogmatics. Hasel notes this trend in theologies by Schmidt, Hulsemann, Maius, Baier, and Weismann, dating from 1671-1739. However, German Pietism and its Reformation emphasis on a return to the Scriptures began subtly to change the direction of biblical theology. Spener, Haymann, Deutschmann, and Weidner (1675-1722) led a movement that, by 1745, had liberated biblical theology from its role as a subsidiary discipline to the “the possibility that Biblical theology can become the rival of dogmatics and turn into a completely separate and independent discipline” (Hasel, 13).

Building on this foundation established by the Pietists, as well as the influence of rationalism and the Enlightenment, Busching published a theology that Hasel regards as the first example of biblical theology as distinct from and a rival to dogmatics. Semler continued this trend in his *Treatise of the Free Investigation of the Canon* (1771-75), emphasizing that not all of Scripture was inspired. Consequently, Semler argued that one should see the Bible as merely another historical document which ought to be investigated only by means of a historical and critical methodology (Hasel, 14). Though some such as

Zacharia and Ernesti hold on to the inspiration of the Bible, Semler's view largely prevails and becomes a foundational position for Johann Philipp Gabler, a man who Hasel notes makes the most significant contribution to this new discipline with his 1787 lecture at the University of Altdorf. In this address, Gabler differentiates between biblical theology, which possesses a historical character, from dogmatic theology, which possesses a didactic character. Gabler, moreover, promoted an inductive, historical, and descriptive approach that had three methodological considerations: 1) "Inspiration is to be left out of consideration"; 2) "Biblical theology has the task of gathering carefully the concepts and ideas of the individual Bible writers"; 3) "Biblical theology as a historical discipline is by definition obliged to 'distinguish between the several periods of the old and new religion'" (Hasel, 16-17). With this foundation, Bauer continued the historical direction of the discipline, even moving towards separating biblical theology into OT and NT. Even still, his three-fold structure of theology, anthropology, and Christology betray a dependence on dogmatic categories (Hasel 17).

Over the course of the 19th Century, biblical theology (now split into OT and NT) changed drastically. There were three major shifts in OT theology during this period: influence of philosophy, salvation history, and history-of-religions. W. de Wette, a student of Gabler, was perhaps the first to introduce a thoroughly philosophical system into his biblical theology with the publication of his *Biblische Dogmatik* (1813). He adopted a Kantian philosophy and emphasized a synthesis of faith from Hebraism to Judaism to Christianity (Hasel, 18-19). William Vatke continued the trend in philosophical theology, adopting a Hegelian model of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. The next primary shift came with the "salvation-history school" whose most prominent contributor, J. Ch. Konrad von Hofmann, "found in the Bible a record of linear saving history" in which God was at work to redeem mankind (Hasel 22). This salvation-history approach was dominant for only a short while, however, as Julius Wellhausen's "history-of-religions" approach took center stage in 1878. Wellhausen's contributions would set the course of OT theology for nearly a half century until a revival of OT theology post-World War I. The landscape began to change drastically with the work of Eissfeldt in 1926 and his distinction between the historical work, which was objective, and the theological work, which was subjective. As Hasel notes later, the issue of whether OT theology is primarily historical or theological is still hotly debated today, and much of this debate returns to Eissfeldt's categories. However, Eichrodt challenged this conclusion, arguing that any historical work was still itself subjective because it required selectivity. Following on the heels of Eissfeldt and Eichrodt's contributions, OT theology began a "golden age" that extends through Wright, Vriezen, von Rad, Zimmerli and others into the present (Hasel, 26-27).

Hasel's summary succeeds in many respects. For one, Hasel shows the foundation of the discipline in the Reformation insistence on *Sola Scriptura*. Thus, whatever OT theology was, is, or will become, it ought to be concerned with the Scriptures first and foremost. Additionally, Hasel's careful analysis aids the reader in understanding the reasons for each of the shifts in OT theology. For instance, one can understand how the dogmatic categories of systematic approaches would eventually clash with attempts to discuss the theology that the Bible itself contains, the theology that itself promotes. Thus, Hasel shows how the shift of biblical theology from the realm of systematic, dogmatic categories to a more historical discipline is a logical step. Finally, Hasel succeeds in drawing contrasts between various approaches. For example, while giving positive characteristics of both Eissfeldt and Eichrodt, Hasel is clear in how and why Eichrodt rejected Eissfeldt's subjective/objective categories and the implications of such a disagreement.

Ollenburger begins his analysis with a brief discussion how biblical theology grew out of the struggle to relate the historical-critical method to dogmatic theology. This controversy led to Gabler's inaugural

address in 1787, which is the customary date for the genesis of biblical theology as a distinct discipline. He then moves on to a discussion of Bauer and his statement that historical interpretation necessitated a move away from dogmatic theology, though Bauer's theology itself still followed dogmatic categories.

Soon after biblical theology gained recognition as a distinct discipline it was influenced by philosophy. The works of von Ammon, Martin, de Wette, and Kaiser are examples of biblical theologies that were established on philosophical framework. While these scholars employed this philosophical framework towards a study of pure religion (de Wette) and universal religion (Kaiser), there were others such as Baumgarten-Crusius, Gramberg, and Colln who proceeded from a purely historical manner. These two approaches, often in much tension, were for the first time "resolved" in the work of Vatke. Vatke argued that OT theology must be historical because it deals with OT religion, but purely historical approaches are not sufficiently objective. Thus, in order to address OT theology on an objective basis, it must also be philosophically grounded. Consequently, Vatke employed a method that meshed historical-critical interpretation with the philosophical framework of Hegel.

Though Vatke's exact method did not survive, Ollenburger notes the influence it had on the subsequent work of Steudel, Havernick, Oehler, Hofmann, and Schultz and their salvation historical presentations. Each of these scholars worked from the foundation that OT history was accurately representative of actual history and thus should be the subject matter of OT theology. In most of these attempts at OT theology, Ollenburger argues that there was an inconsistency between theory and execution (9). However, where the others failed, von Hofmann succeeded. His contribution was in asserting that "biblical theology is thinking *in* our relation to God, not about it" (9).

While the first to conceive of OT theology as purely a study of the history of Israel's religion was August Kayser, the most prominent among the new history-of-religions movement were Gunkel and Wellhausen. The aftermath of Gunkel and Wellhausen's work was a virtual standstill in OT theology. Any discussion of OT theology was invariably a discussion of the history of Israel's religion. This stranglehold on the discipline lasted for nearly fifty years. Though Koberle, Kittel, Staerk, Steuernagel and others attempted to challenge this view, it was not until the works of Otto Eissfeldt (1926) and Walther Eichrodt (1929; first theology in 1933) that OT theology moved beyond the history-of religion position.

Ollenburger's analysis of the development of OT theology until 1933 is in many ways quite helpful. Beginning with Gabler's address, Ollenburger traces the changes of OT theology through the philosophical, salvation historical, and history-of-religion movements that characterize the discipline's history. Ollenburger's discussion on the philosophical movement is quite helpful. He gives excellent analysis of how philosophical frameworks influenced biblical theology, and he does a superb job of showing Vatke's contribution in bringing historical and philosophical convictions together. Ollenburger also does a good job of showing the influence of Gunkel, Wellhausen, and the history-of-religion movement. However, there are a couple of points that Ollenburger could address better. First, he gives virtually no background of the discipline until Gabler's address. While this may be the date when biblical theology was "born," there is nothing to suggest what led Gabler to make such a distinction between biblical and dogmatic theology. Additionally, Ollenburger does not adequately show the causal connection between the movements from philosophical to salvation historical approaches or from salvation history to history-of-religions. While his discussion of each issue individually is well done, the lack of connection leaves the reader confused as to how these things would come about at all.

Hasel and Ollenburger both engage in their writing with the purpose of tracing the history of OT theology as its own discipline. They are also similar in that they both trace the movement from Gabler to philosophical movements to the salvation history movement to the history-of-religion movement. Additionally, with few exceptions the two agree on the major players involved. Both discuss Vatke, von Hofmann, and Wellhausen, among others, with similar sentiments and comments about each scholar's contributions. However, there are several places where the two diverge. For one, Hasel has a wider scope. Rather than starting at Gabler and ending at Eichrodt, Hasel moves from the Reformation to the present day. Another difference is the development of some points. For example, Hasel is more concerned with showing the reasons for the movement from philosophy to salvation history to history-of-religions. He gives background such as the renewed interest in inspiration as reasons why the salvation history movement supplanted more philosophical approaches (22). Ollenburger is lacking in this type of explanation. However, in his concern for showing how the movement came about, Hasel gives less information about the details of the movement itself, particularly with respect to the philosophical movement, an area that Ollenburger is particularly strong in. Overall, both appraisals are helpful for introducing how biblical theology became its own discipline, but Hasel's has more projection toward where it is going in the future. Though, to defend Ollenburger, the rest of the book is meant for that end; it was not the purpose of his essay to show where it is going. Nevertheless, in evaluating the two on their own merit, Hasel's appraisal gives more perspective.

Hasel's book has the subtitle, *Basic Issues in the Current Debate*. Describe what the "basic issues" are, according to Hasel. In doing so include for each issue the main players and their positions on the issue.

Hasel deals with four basic issues in his work, *Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate*—methodology, the question of history, the center of the OT and OT theology, and the relationship between the two testaments. For each issue, Hasel identifies the primary issues involved and the major players in the discussion.

Hasel's discussion on methodology is substantially longer and more detailed than the latter three issues. In the course of his discussion on methodology, Hasel outlines ten categories and then identifies the primary scholars under each of these categories, comparing and contrasting the nuances of their approaches. The first category is the dogmatic-didactic method. Hasel identifies this method as organizing OT theology according to dogmatic theology and its typical division of God—Man—Salvation or Theology—Anthropology—Soteriology (39). Under this category, Hasel identifies Georg Lorenz Bauer, R.C. Dentan, M. Garcia Cordero, and D.F. Hinson. Little is said about Bauer other than reminding the reader that Bauer was the first to employ this scheme under the name of OT Theology. Though Dentan affirms the covenant formula later used in more thematic approaches, he nevertheless maintains his commitment to the dogmatic method. This method, however, leads him to chapters on "God and the Natural World" and the "Names of God," both of which are worthy of OT theological reflection, but do not fit well into his dogmatic framework (41). While Dentan only dealt with the doctrine of God, Cordero and Hinson both completed OT theologies along the lines of Theology—Anthropology—Soteriology. After dealing with theology and anthropology, Cordero's section on soteriology dealt with Messianic expectation, eschatology, and personal salvation among other ideas. Hinson understood OT theology to be about God's revelation of Himself and recognized the OT as the preparation for the NT.

Hasel's second category is the Genetic-Progressive Method and he primarily focuses on Chester K. Lehman and R.E. Clements. The emphasis of the genetic-progressive method is on historic progression, thus emphasizing "the unfolding of God's revelation as the Bible presents it" (42). Lehman structures his three part work according to the three part division of the Hebrew canon. One significant problem that Hasel notes with Lehman's work is that the tripartite structure of the Hebrew canon does not lend itself to historic progression because the canon does not give evidence itself of any such intention. Clements presents a more helpful approach than Lehman in Hasel's eyes for two main reasons. First, he refuses to limit the OT to a single theme or center. Second, he emphasizes that the OT canon "in itself and by itself is the authoritative norm for OT theology" (45). However, the glaring weakness for Clements is his complete dismissal of wisdom literature. While Hasel notes that wisdom literature is the most difficult aspect to integrate into an OT theology (45), he nevertheless criticizes Clements for his nearly complete disregard for it. Hasel comments that Clements' canon become little other than the Law, Prophets, and a few Psalms.

The third category is the Cross-Section Method. Hasel spends a good deal of time on this section, highlighting at least five major scholars under this heading: Eichrodt, Vriezen, Kaiser, Mattioli, and Goldingay. For each of the scholars identified, Hasel highlights each one's view of the center of the OT. For Eichrodt, the center is covenant; for Vriezen, community/communion; for Kaiser, blessing and promise; for Goldingay, God's relationship with mankind. Mattioli receives a somewhat different discussion in that Hasel notes Mattioli's mixture of multiple approaches, from cross-section to genetic to dogmatic. Though Hasel agrees with Eichrodt in his insistence that every science includes subjective elements (48), he also criticizes Eichrodt for how his historical developments rarely come from the perspective of the NT. He goes so far as to say that in this respect, Eichrodt's work is "hardly an improvement over the earlier history-of-religions approaches" (50). Though Hasel presents other positives and negatives of those under this category, his clearest challenge is whether the OT can be limited to a single theme (51-52, 54).

The fourth category is the topical method, which Hasel distinguishes from the dogmatic method in noting how the former refuses to impose outside categories like the latter does. However, like the cross-section method, the proponents of this approach often identified a single or dual theme in OT theology. The three main scholars in this category are McKenzie, Fohrer, and Zimmerli. Hasel harshly criticizes McKenzie for his attempt to view the OT as if there is no NT. For Fohrer, OT theology is centered on the prophetic attitude of existence. For Zimmerli, there is an emphasis on movement from the primeval to the Mosaic influence in the Pentateuch and also from gift to requirement to response. While these scholars are all under the same category, Hasel notes at least seven ways in which they vastly differ: 1) starting points; 2) structure; 3) topics; 4) sequence of presentation; 5) center of OT theology; 6) evaluations of OT materials; 7) consistency in structure (71).

The fifth category is the Diachronic Method. Hasel spends his entire discussion of this category on the work of von Rad. He discusses von Rad's kerygma theology, identified as confessional statements of the continuing activity of God in history. He also emphasizes von Rad's notion of retelling, calling it ambiguous (74). The biggest issue that Hasel raises with von Rad's position, though he addresses several, is the question of how one can speak in a theological way when one can merely retell what is stated (74).

The sixth category is the Formation of Tradition in which Hasel identifies Gese and Stuhlmacher, though Stuhlmacher is primarily a NT scholar. Hasel notes that this position emphasizes the historical process of

the development. Among other criticisms, Hasel asks “whether this approach is actually Biblical theology or theology of tradition-building” (85).

The seventh category is Thematic-Dialectical and highlights Brueggemann, Terrien, Westermann, and Hanson. Hasel identifies Brueggemann’s emphasis on providence/election, Terrien’s emphasis on ethic/aesthetic, Westermann’s emphasis on deliverance/blessing, and Hanson’s emphasis on teleological/cosmic.

The eighth category deals with Recent Critical Methods, where Hasel identifies three major contributors: Barr, Collins, and Hogenhaven. He notes Barr’s statements that there is little hope for OT theology. Hasel identifies Barr by Barr’s own category of following a “synthetic modern biblical approach.” Collins is similarly categorized as following a “critical biblical theology.” Hogenhaven’s critical approach leads him to argue that “the OT must be interpreted within the context of the ancient Near Eastern culture to which it belongs’ (101). While all three are important in a discussion on OT theology, Hasel focuses more on their weaknesses than any contribution. In fact, the most Hasel seems to admit is that the three contribute to the discussion by revealing “the divergence of current opinion on the nature, purpose, and function of OT theology’ (103).

The ninth category is the “New Biblical Theology” Method. Hasel focuses in this section on the work of Brevard Childs. Childs’ most significant contribution is his “canonical approach” that sees the biblical canon in its final form as the appropriate context and normative foundation for biblical theology. This approach also has contributed to the growing emphasis on the relationship between the two testaments. One criticism of Childs is how his view of biblical theology in the context of the canon did not necessarily translate to his approach to OT or NT theology on a smaller scale. However, Hasel notes that Childs’ subsequent publication of *OT Theology in a Canonical Context* clarified many of these concerns. Overall, Hasel portrays Childs’ contribution in a very positive light.

Finally, Hasel hints at his own position in the tenth category, which he labels Multiplex Canonical OT Theology. He essentially puts forward seven presuppositions or methodological foundations for this position. 1)OT theology is not identical to the history of Israel; 2)the task of OT theology consists of summarizing and interpreting the final form; 3)the structure of OT theology should not follow a systemized approach, but rather let each block of material speak alongside one another; 4)the sequence of OT theology begins with allowing books or blocks to speak alongside each other, then addressing themes as they develop or emerge; 5)multiplex approach of longitudinal themes avoids a unilinear approach of a single structuring concept; 6)the final aim of OT theology is to identify “the dynamic unity that binds all theologies and themes together” (114); 7)OT theology is part of larger whole and must stand in relation to the NT.

After his lengthy discussion on methodology, Hasel moves to the second basic issue—the question of history. In this section his concern is to identify how one is to understand the OT as it relates to history. Is it a history-of-religions, history of traditions, salvation history, a story, etc. Hasel begins with von Rad’s position that the OT is a history book, but one that contained two diverging themes: secular history dealing with the history of Israel and theological dealing with the kerygmatic version. While von Rad was content to allow these two to coexist, Franz Hesse was not, and turned von Rad’s thesis of OT as history book against him, arguing that one can only rest his faith on what actually happened. Hesse went on to argue that there could not, therefore, exist a separation between the history of Israel and salvation history because salvation history was necessarily contained in that history (115-118). Hasel then briefly

comments on how the historical-critical method has produced at least two version of the “proto-history,” which he identifies as the Alt-Noth school and the Albright-Wright-Bright school. Hasel also discusses the views of Eichrodt (that the OT witness is the reliable historical witness [121]), Baumgartel (that the whole OT is ‘witness out of a non-Christian religion’ [122]), and the distinction between Hempel’s *how* God has acted versus Osswald’s *that* God has acted (122-123). Another significant focus of Hasel’s in this section is on Pannenberg. As Hasel writes, “Pannenberg’s objective, in light of this analysis, is to create a situation in which faith can rest on historically proven fact in order to be saved from subjectivity, self-redemption, and self-deception” (126). Thus, God’s revelation is history. After Pannenberg, one of his “circle,” Rolf Rendtorff elevates tradition to the center of the discussion. Though Rendtorff introduces the term tradition to the center of the discussion, Hasel notes that he does little to move beyond von Rad (129). In Kraus, Hasel finds one with whom he can begin to agree. Kraus emphasized the necessity of finding the foundation, which he believes is the OT canon. However, disagreement continues to exist as evidenced by the various views of Frei, Barr, Stendahl, “New Criticism”, Childs, etc. Frei argued that the OT is “history-like,” yet Barr argued that the OT was better understood as story. Contra Barr, Stendahl says that story is insufficient because it allows one to view the bible as another in a long line of classic literature, rather than as normative. The “New Criticism” movement emphasized, among other things, that “the meaning of a text is a function of its place in a literary canon” (135). Though often linked to the New Criticism movement because of his emphasis on canon, Childs asserts no conscious dependence on this movement. One way that Childs significantly diverges from this movement is that his emphasis is not on the OT as a literature, but on the OT as canonical Scripture.

The third basic issue Hasel addresses is the center of OT theology. He begins with Eichrodt and his emphasis on covenant as the center. Hasel then moves on to numerous other scholars’ views. For Sellin, God’s holiness; for Kohler, God as the Lord; for Wilderberger, Israel’s election as the people of God; for Seebass, rulership of God; for Klein, kingdom of God; for Fohrer, rule of God and communion between God and man; for Vriezen, communion; for Smend, Yahweh the God of Israel and Israel the people of Yahweh. It is at this point that Hasel moves on to von Rad’s emphasis that the OT has no single center. Nevertheless, Hasel shows how von Rad used the Deuteronomistic theology of history as his overarching hermeneutical schema, thus elevating it in some respects to the “center.” Hasel next addresses other positions that, while not fitting precisely into the one center theme of the earlier scholars, nevertheless provides insight into the issue. For Schmidt, OT theology can be developed on the “exclusiveness of God as expressed in the first commandment (152); similarly for Zimmerli, the emphasis is on the confessional response of Israel in Dt. 26, “You... Yahweh.”

Hasel, however, sees attempts to unify the OT to a single center as too restrictive and narrow. Though he thinks Fohrer and Herrmann are headed in the right direction, even Fohrer’s assertion of rule of God and communion of God and man and Hermann’s proposal of the book of Deuteronomy are too narrow to express the whole of OT theology. Hasel continues to address other attempt at finding a center, such as Knieram’s suggestion of “the universal dominion of Yahweh in justice and righteousness” (164) and Dietrich’s view of righteousness. After dealing with all of these various themes and reasons why there is no central theme of OT theology, Hasel proposes that God himself is the unifying center of the whole OT. This view allows individual biblical books or blocks of writing to speak for themselves and let their unique themes and theologies emerge. This then aids in giving voice to the wisdom books and creation theology that are often omitted in other theologies. Additionally, this view affirms that the center cannot be forced into a static, organizing principle which structures OT theology. Finally, Hasel argues that “with

the recognition that God is the dynamic, unifying center of the OT one can speak of the unity and continuity of the OT in its most fundamental sense” (171).

Hasel’s fourth and final basic issue is the relationship between the testaments. Hasel begins this discussion by noting some who simply argue that the OT is a book of non-Christian religion. Prominent among these scholars are Bultmann, Baumgartel, and Hesse. Then there are those, such as Vischer and van Ruler, who make the OT all-important theologically, identifying the NT as merely the OT’s “explanatory glossary” (177). There are also those who took a Trinitarian approach (Wright, Barr, and Murphy), which argued that “once the true meaning of Christ is grasped within the context of the Trinity, then one can say that Christ is the destination and at the same time the guide to the true understanding of the OT” (178). Another more popular view has been that of typology, endorsed by Eichrodt and von Rad among others. Essentially, OT events, people, etc. are “prerepresentations of corresponding realities in the New Testament salvation history” (179). Another prominent approach is the promise-fulfillment schema, advanced by Westermann, Zimmerli, von Rad, and others. This approach finds unity between the testaments in that the OT contains “a history of promise which comes to fruition in the NT” (181). Fohrer has argued that there is no reciprocal relationship between OT and NT, rather the current only flows one way; thus, the OT is beginning and the NT is merely continuation. Meanwhile, Childs extends his emphasis on the canonical text to the whole of Scripture for his relationship.

Hasel’s answer is once again a multiplex approach with seven identifying features. 1) continuous history of God’s people; 2) Scriptural quotations; 3) foundation of NT key terms in OT; 4) essential unity of major themes; 5) guarded and careful use of typology; 6) category of promise/fulfillment; 7) salvation history. In summary of his multiplex approach, Hasel writes, “There is unity in diversity” (193).

Hasel presents his own proposals for doing OT theology at the conclusion of his book. Summarize each proposal he offers vis-à-vis the “basic issues” described in the book.

In the concluding section to his book, Hasel presents seven proposals for doing OT theology. These seven proposals are as follows: 1) biblical theology must be understood to be a historical-theological discipline; 2) the proper method must be both historical and theological from the starting point; 3) it is founded exclusively on materials from the OT, i.e. OT theology “is first of all a summary interpretation and explanation of the OT writings or blocks of writing” (203); 4) a presentation of the theologies of OT books will not follow a canonical sequence; 5) OT theology must allow the themes to be formed by the OT itself; 6) the aim of OT theology is to find an inner unity between the various themes that emerge; 7) a theology of the OT must demonstrate a relationship to the NT.

With respect to Hasel’s first proposal, that biblical theology must be understood to be an historical-theological discipline, Hasel does not sufficiently defend his conclusion. In his section on the question of methodology, Hasel presents his multiplex canonical approach. In this section, he is clear that OT theology is not identical with the history of Israel, nor is it a history-of-religions or history of tradition approach. Rather, his focus is on the final form of the text, the themes that develop from the individual books or blocks of writing, and an attempt to find a dynamic unity between these longitudinal themes (111-114). In light of these earlier statements (many echoed in the final section), how can Hasel simply state that OT theology is an historical-theological discipline? Does not his emphasis on the final form of the text and the theology drawn from the text already accept that the history contained in the OT is true and foundational because the OT text itself is normative for OT theology? Why must one then engage in

any additional historical work for the purpose of OT theology? Moreover, his subsequent explanation in the proposal section once again mentions drawing on the themes drawn from the biblical text itself (195). Rather than support his historical-theological stance, this statement seems to reinforce his acceptance of the final form as the normative foundation for OT theology, making additional historical work unnecessary. He seems to force himself into inconsistency simply for the purpose of maintaining the distinction between what the text meant and what it means. Could not Hasel more easily speak of the meaning of the text being fixed by the biblical author and the significance changing based on the historical situation as E.D. Hirsch and others have argued? Hasel's proposal, as such, is at best confusing if not inconsistent and unconvincing.

Hasel's second proposal, that the proper method must be both historical and theological from the starting point, is likewise flawed since it is derived from his first conclusion. What is interesting is that Hasel's support for this historical and theological distinction is actually an example of exegesis outside the accountability of OT theology. But is this the historical/theological distinction that he has been discussing throughout? It does not seem so. While it would fit the what the text meant/what the text means distinction, it does not fit into his discussion on the question of history, which revolves around history of tradition, salvation history, and the questions of whether the OT is history, history-like, myth, story, or poem.

Hasel's third proposal, that OT theology is founded on materials from the OT, is consistent with previous discussion. He emphasizes the task in OT theology of summarizing OT writings and blocks of writings which is a primary focus of his multiplex canonical methodology.

Hasel's fourth proposal, that an OT theology will not follow a canonical sequence, is somewhat baffling. After his approval of Childs' emphasis on the final form and his own canonical leanings, it is strange that he would not only allow departure from a canonical sequence, but go further and argue that such an approach would not be preferable. This proposal is all the more confusing in light of his emphasis on approaching OT theology as interpreting the books and blocks of OT texts and highlighting the themes that emerge. Why then would one not follow a canonical sequence? What benefit is there to doing the arduous (and perhaps fruitless) historical work of dating the OT books in order to read them chronologically? If there is a benefit, he has certainly not mentioned it. Moreover, his point is dependent upon his undefended presupposition that the canonical order must be founded on something other than theological causes (204).

Hasel's fifth proposal, that OT theology must allow its themes to speak for themselves from the OT text returns to his previous discussions. As earlier in the work, Hasel defends his point well that the OT must be allowed to speak on its own terms.

However, Hasel's sixth point, which relates closely to the fifth, requires more explanation. His sixth point is that the final aim of OT theology is to find an inner unity among the various themes that emerge. The question, however, arises—how is this task any different than the search for a central theme that he condemns? If the task is to find unity in these themes, what is wrong with then defending one's unity of these themes as the inner unity, central theme of the OT after one has completed this task? Hasel gives a strong argument against different unifying themes that have been proposed; but if these are to be rejected, then what is one to do with the inner unity that one determines after finding a relationship among the different themes that have emerged? Once again, Hasel leaves too much unanswered.

Hasel's seventh proposal, that OT theology must engage the question of the relationship between the testaments, simply refers back to his defense of a multiplex approach. While I find his conclusions unsatisfying and unnecessarily inclusive, he is nevertheless consistent with his previous conclusions.

Overall, while Hasel gives an outstanding presentation of the various issues involved and their historical development, his own proposal for theology is lacking in many respects. It seems as though Hasel, while wanting to accept a more canonical approach, is nevertheless clinging to certain categories that ought to be discarded. Just as he notes views that were time and again dismissed throughout the development of this discipline, it is perhaps time that Hasel himself cast off some of the baggage that he seems to be clinging to.

Explain why Ollenburger titles his historical summary “Before 1933.” [What occurred in 1933?]

Simply stated, Ollenburger presents his historical summary up to 1933 because it was in that year that Eichrodt published his first volume on Old Testament theology. After providing a helpful discussion of the origins of biblical theology as its own discipline, Ollenburger concludes with a brief introduction to the influence of Eissfeldt and Eichrodt. He writes that while the two wrote important essays in 1926 and 1929, these essays “have proved remarkably—even increasingly—pertinent to contemporary issues and debates about Old Testament theology. Hence, they provide instructive background, and also occasional foreground, to the theologies and proposals that follow in this book” (11). The primary reason that Ollenburger ends his discussion at 1933 is that he finds Eissfeldt and Eichrodt's contributions so significant that he begins the rest of the book by letting them speak in their own words. Then, the subsequent developments of OT theology are presented by means of essays by prominent scholars that have contributed since that time.