



## PREFACE

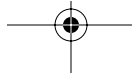
This is one of three volumes I hope to write on Old Testament Theology. The introduction explains why there will be three. This first volume amounts to a theological commentary on the Old Testament story. So, for instance, the contents of the “law,” the Prophets and the poetic books will not come into focus here. I hope that the detailed contents page may help readers locate material on themes that may interest them, such as, say, the significance of leadership or community or the land or the way God acts in history. One or two advance readers have also suggested that the volume might be useful to preachers. I do not object to that.

Translations of the biblical text are my own and follow the Masoretic Text (MT), except where otherwise indicated. Where MT incorporates more than one version of the text or where, for example, LXX suggests an alternative Hebrew text, I have not reckoned that we must necessarily choose just one form, but I have generally avoided modern attempts to reconstruct the text. Where versification differs between English and printed Hebrew Bibles, I give the latter in square brackets, e.g., Psalm 89:12 [MT 13]. To preserve the distinction between *yiqtol* and *qatal* (imperfect and perfect) verbs when Hebrew poetry uses both in referring to the past, I have generally translated the *yiqtol* by verb forms such as “would pour down dew” (Prov 3:20).<sup>1</sup> In referring to Israel’s God, I have used the term *Yhwh*, especially where the text does so, deferring to the fact that the text does not provide us with its vowels. I have not deferred to LXX and subsequent translations by replacing *Yhwh* in my written text by a word for “the Lord.” On the other hand, in light of the fact that this is a work of Christian theology, I use the politically incorrect terms B.C. and A.D. In transliterating Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, I have generally followed the Society of Biblical Literature academic system but have occasionally transliterated well-known words such as *shalom* in the familiar way. Where I give no page number in citing a commentary, the reference is to its discussion of the passage in question. Any italics are from the author I am quoting unless otherwise noted. In general, I assume a readership that has undertaken such study of the Old Testament as will have given them some understanding, for example, of the reasons for assuming that Moses did not write the Pentateuch or that several prophets contributed to the book called Isaiah.

I am grateful to students in OT 805 at Fuller Theological Seminary who worked through the material in this book and made valuable comments, some

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<sup>1</sup>See the discussion of “A Secure Home” in section 2.6 below.





of which appear explicitly in the pages that follow. I am particularly grateful to my research assistant Benjamin Galan and to Joseph Henderson for compiling the subject index, and also to my editor Dan Reid for wise advice. And I am grateful to Fuller Seminary for encouragement to undertake this work, for sabbatical leave that hastened its completion, for the library and the enthusiasm of librarians to obtain works they did not have, and for its flexible scheduling that allowed me to write so much of the volume sitting on the patio with Ann, listening to CDs.

