

*Make the Old Testament Live: From Curriculum to Classroom.* Edited by Richard S. Hess and Gordon J. Wenham (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998, 218 pp.).

Old Testament scholars and professors will gladly welcome this tremendous literary contribution to the field of pedagogical development. In this landmark work, eminent scholars, Hess and Wenham, have brought together eleven other scholars from five continents to write a volume on how to teach the Old Testament to contemporary university and seminary students. The thrust of these thirteen essays addresses problems of curriculum, context, and communication. These essays also discuss such topics as which parts of the Old Testament should be taught, what approaches work best with each level of students, and what modern educational methods are best for teaching the Bible.

The layout of the book is quite user friendly. There is a simple three-part division: (1) Content, (2) Context (seminaries, universities, and societies), and (3) Communication. It may be worthwhile to note that the bulk of the contributors write on how to integrate Old Testament instruction into a particular context (chps. 4-11). At the start of each essay, there is a paragraph that exposes the reader to the author and the chief aim of his essay. There are also footnotes rather than endnotes and there is an excellent annotated Old Testament bibliography that encompasses the following categories: Introductions, Theology, Histories of Israel, Archaeology, Atlases, Translated Collections of Ancient Near Eastern Texts, Ancient Near Eastern Histories, Hebrew Lexicons, Biblical-Theological Dictionaries, Concordances, Hebrew Grammars, OT Canon/Textual Criticism, Sociological and Anthropological Studies, Feminist, Minority, and Third Wave Studies, Literary Approaches, Israelite Religion, and Commentaries by Bible Books.

Three essays that this reviewer found worthy of special attention were “Bringing Alive the Old Testament: It’s Role in the Wider Curriculum,” by Richard S. Hess; “From Student to Scholar: Surviving as an Old Testament Ph.D. student,” by Rebecca Doyle; and “Studying the Original Texts: Effective Learning and Teaching of Biblical Hebrew,” by David W. Baker. These three essays alone are worth the price of the book. Yet, the reader can rest assured that he or she will find several essays that may just change the way he or she teaches this sacred book.

This reviewer welcomes a sequel on how to teach and preach the Old Testament for those who are in the pastoral ministry. This would be most helpful.