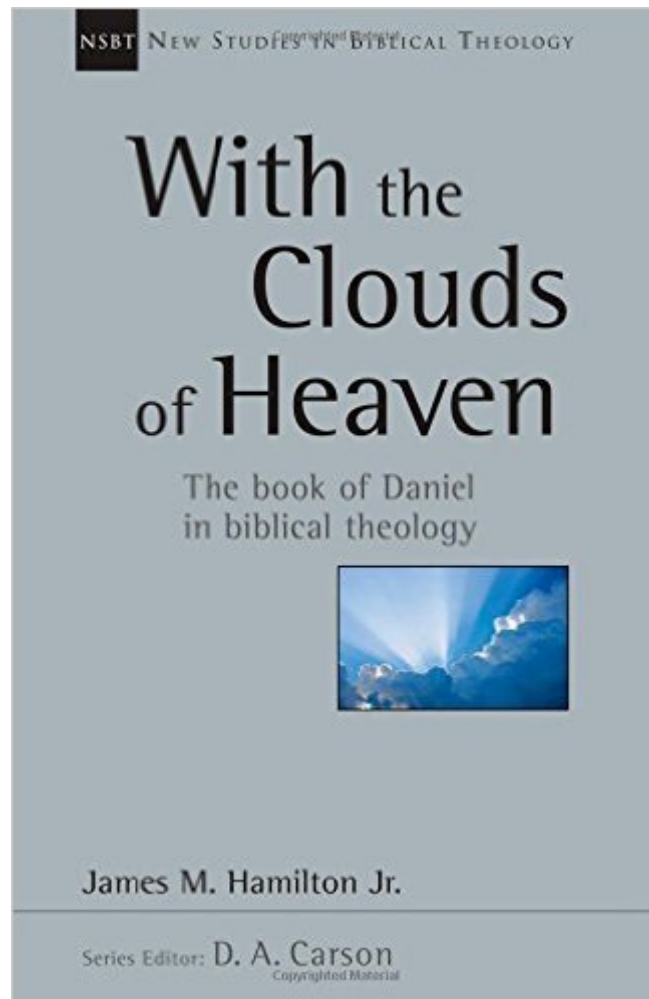


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With The Clouds Of Heaven: The Book Of Daniel In Biblical Theology (New Studies In Biblical Theology)



Synopsis

"And behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom." (Daniel 7:13-14 ESV). Perceiving a hole in evangelical biblical theology that should be filled with a robust treatment of the book of Daniel, James Hamilton takes this chance to delve into the book's rich contribution to the Bible's unfolding redemptive-historical storyline. By setting Daniel in the broader context of biblical theology, this canonical study helps move us toward a clearer understanding of how we should live today in response to its message. First, Hamilton shows how the book's literary structure contributes to its meaning, and then addresses key questions and issues, concluding by examining typological patterns. This New Studies in Biblical Theology volume argues that the four kingdoms prophesied by Daniel are both historical and symbolic—that the "one like a son of man" seen by Daniel is identified with and distinguished from the Ancient of Days in a way that would be mysterious until Jesus came as both the son of David and God incarnate. He elaborates that the interpretations of Daniel in early Jewish literature attest to strategies similar to those employed by New Testament authors and exposes that those authors provide a Spirit-inspired interpretation of Daniel that was learned from Jesus. He also highlights how the book of Revelation uses Daniel's language, imitates his structure, points to the fulfillment of his prophecies and clarifies the meaning of his "seventieth week." Addressing key issues in biblical theology, the works comprising New Studies in Biblical Theology are creative attempts to help Christians better understand their Bibles. The NSBT series is edited by D. A. Carson, aiming to simultaneously instruct and to edify, to interact with current scholarship and to point the way ahead.

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Customer Reviews

Having published both an introductory biblical theology (*What is Biblical Theology?*) as well as a full-scale whole-bible biblical theology (*God's Glory in Salvation Through Judgment*), it's not much of a surprise to see a volume from Dr. Jim Hamilton in IVP Academic's excellent *New Studies in Biblical Theology* series. In *With the Clouds of Heaven*, Dr. Hamilton provides an evangelical and canonical biblical theology of the book of Daniel that seeks to understand and explain Daniel's interpretive perspective to understand both how Daniel has engaged earlier Scripture to present his message and how later Scripture engaged Daniel to expound what he wrote (27). This volume begins in Chapter 1 with preliminaries. Here Hamilton defines biblical theology as "the attempt to understand and embrace the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors" (21), explores the issue of how we access the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors (a literary and intertextual exercise that assumes that later biblical authors correctly interpreted earlier ones), looks at the relationship between this definition of biblical theology and authorial intent and the implications on salvation historical and thematic studies, and briefly considers the difference between this approach to biblical theology and others. Because this approach to biblical theology is based on certain assumptions about the canon of Scripture, the rest of chapter 1 provides an overview of the canonical framework with which Hamilton works. The heart of this section is a defense of the traditional early date of Daniel. Here Hamilton provides a sketch of the historical evidence as well as theological reasons for an early date.

Daniel is one of the best loved books in the Bible. From the well-known stories of Daniel in the lion's den and his three friends in the fiery furnace that fascinate children to Daniel's prophecy of seventy weeks that challenges even the brightest of scholars, Daniel has something for everyone. For these reasons and more Daniel has received no shortage of attention. And yet there was still something missing. Hamilton explains in his preface that when he taught a doctoral level course on Daniel he could not find a book that approached Daniel from an evangelical perspective and also assessed Daniel using the tools of biblical theology. So he wrote one and *With the Clouds of Heaven: The book of Daniel in biblical theology* is the result. And what a book it is. The first thing that is noteworthy about this book is it contains Hamilton's most mature and compelling explanation of biblical theology yet. In the first chapter Hamilton describes the discipline of biblical

theology as first and foremost about understanding how the inspired authors of Scripture interpreted earlier writings in Scripture. Once the reader understands how the later authors of Scripture interpreted earlier authors of Scripture then he is able to adopt their interpretive lens so that he reads the Bible and views the world the way the authors of Scripture themselves did. This is the purpose of biblical theology. Anyone interested in biblical theology should at least read this first chapter and see if they don't find Hamilton's case thoroughly persuasive. The rest of the book seeks to understand Daniel in light of earlier and later Scripture.

James Hamilton is associate professor of biblical theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as well as preaching pastor at Kenwood Baptist Church. His commentary on Revelation was published in the Preaching the Word commentary series. The New Studies in Biblical Theology series has contributed many studies on both the Old and New Testament seeking to study particular elements of Biblical Theology from a canonical or theological perspective. Hamilton contributed a short introduction to Biblical Theology (What Is Biblical Theology?: A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns, Crossway, 2014). Perhaps what is unique about this volume is the focus is primarily on the book of Daniel. There are a number of elements of Hamilton's book attempt to trace broader themes of Biblical theology. For example Hamilton seeks to read the typologies from the book of Daniel through the Second Temple Period and the New Testament, especially the book of Revelation. Chapter 1 discusses methodological issues necessary for understanding Biblical Theology within the Canon in Scripture. Hamilton is clear he is an Evangelical who holds to a very high view of scripture including inerrancy. This will result in some rather traditional views concerning the book of Daniel. Chapter 2 places Daniel in the overall structure of salvation history in the Old Testament. Hamilton argues Daniel's main contribution to salvation history concerns the latter days when the little horn makes great boasts in persecutes God's people in the end times. In Chapter 3 Hamilton suggests a literary structure for the book of Daniel. Outlining the book of Daniel is notoriously difficult: should the change on language from Hebrew to Aramaic be used as a structural clue?

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