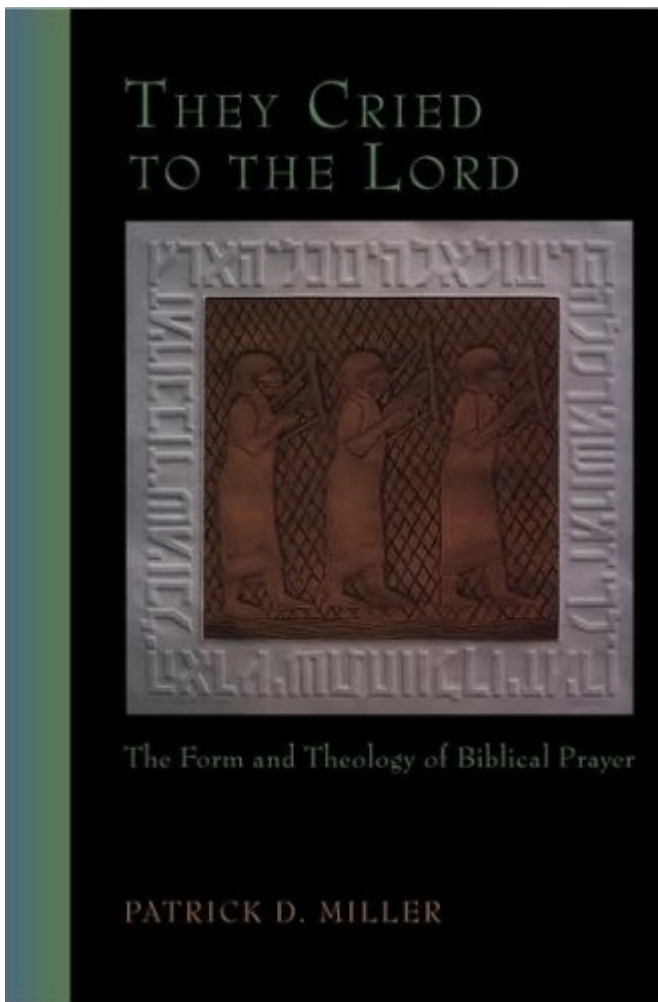


The Psalms

selected by [Walter Brueggemann](#) in the [May 2, 2012](#) issue

## In Review



### **They Cried to the Lord**

By Patrick D. Miller

Fortress

# THEOLOGY OF THE PSALMS

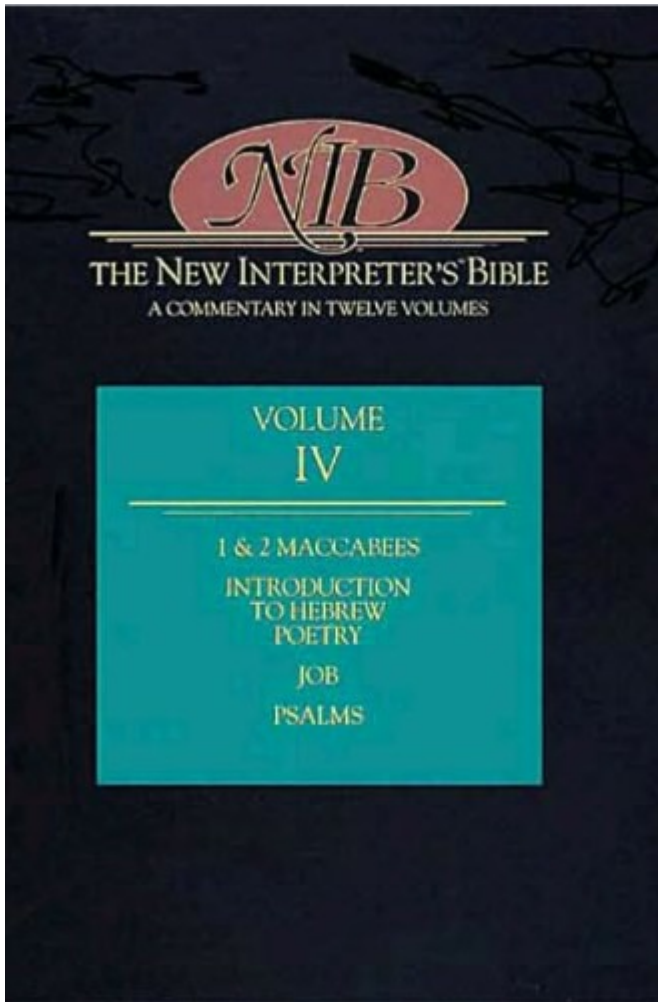
Hans-Joachim Kraus

A CONTINENTAL COMMENTARY

## **Theology of the Psalms**

By Hans-Joachim Kraus

Fortress



## **The New Interpreter's Bible**

By J. Clinton McCann Jr.  
Abingdon

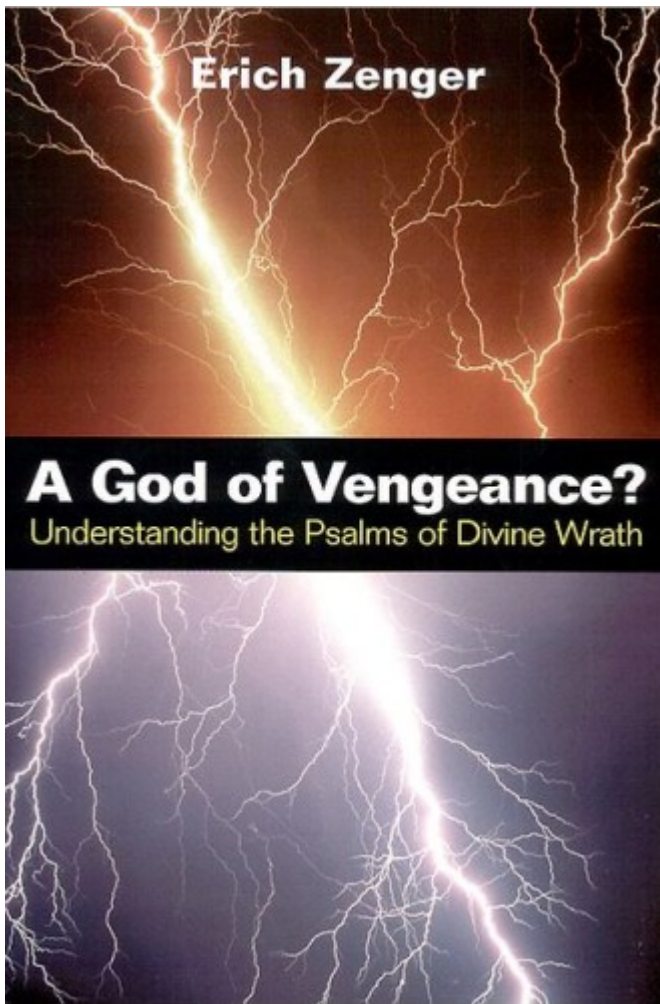
PRAISE  
and  
LAMENT  
in the  
PSALMS



Claus Westermann

**Praise and Lament in the Psalms**

By Claus Westermann  
Westminster John Knox



## **A God of Vengeance?**

By Erich Zenger

Westminster John Knox

*They Cried to the Lord: The Form and Theology of Biblical Prayer*, by Patrick D. Miller (Fortress). Though billed as a study of biblical prayer, this is the most helpful and comprehensive study of the Psalms we have that moves from critical data to acute theological sensibility. The book follows the defining categories of Hermann Gunkel's genres but shows how these stylized modes of speech carry the rhetoric and substance of faith.

*Theology of the Psalms*, by Hans-Joachim Kraus (Augsburg Fortress). This book, along with Kraus's two-volume commentary, *Psalms 1-59* and *Psalms 60-150* (Augsburg Fortress), constitute the culmination of the great German commentaries and the best summary of them. Kraus has a refined theological sense and carries his

interpretation to the New Testament. A special feature of the book is his extended exposition of the Psalms most widely utilized in the New Testament.

“Psalms,” by J. Clinton McCann Jr. (in *The New Interpreter’s Bible, vol. 4: 1 & 2 Maccabees, Introduction to Hebrew Poetry, Job, Psalms*, Abingdon). Among the many fine commentaries on the Psalms, this one is the most perceptive and accessible. McCann has thought long and well on the Psalms, on the legacy of form criticism and on recent canonical proposals. His commentary moves regularly to theological insight that is reliable and compelling.

*Praise and Lament in the Psalms*, by Claus Westermann (Westminster John Knox). More than anyone else, Westermann is the true heir of Hermann Gunkel and has sharpened Gunkel’s genre analysis to show how the move “from plea to praise” is the master narrative through which the entire Psalter functions. Westermann wrote this book while he was being held as a prisoner of war by the Soviet Union in World War II; one can detect amid the rich critical work the pathos of one who personally relied on the theological claims of the poems. This book is the font of the enormous recent energy on the lament Psalms. Most of the recent studies of laments (including my own) are derivative from his work.

*A God of Vengeance? Understanding the Psalms of Divine Wrath*, by Erich Zenger (Westminster John Knox). Zenger frontally addresses the Psalms of imprecation and the cries for vengeance that permeate the Psalter—a motif that deeply vexes the faithful. Zenger shows the ways in which these cries are acts of hope that insist on justice from God. The book is an important, albeit brief, aid in taking such Psalms seriously from a theological standpoint.