

William P. Brown. *Deep Calls to Deep: The Psalms in Dialogue amid Disruption*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2021. 447 pages. \$39.99.

When one approaches sacred texts, either arriving for the first time or returning to them as to familiar landmark, one is invited not only to the world of the text, but simultaneously to delve deeper into one's current world. In *Deep Calls to Deep: The Psalms in Dialogue amid Disruption*, biblical scholar and theologian William P. Brown offers a guide on how to approach the Psalter with the aforementioned nuanced balance of both belief and searching as one engages the intentional variety of the Psalms. In short, the book is a rich survey of the diversity of dialogues and interpretations present within the Psalter itself -- countering a narrative that the book has one "voice" or one clear message. And by extension, amid many cultural and societal ills, Brown demonstrates how modern-day readers, and engagers, of the Psalms are also invited to lean into diversity and into dialogues amongst each other, where differences do not have to equal divisions.

Particularly in the face of pandemic, environmental catastrophes, white supremacy, partisan polarization, and more, *Deep Calls to Deep* is an invitation into the dialogical nature of the psalter, itself a "work of theological and literary diversity" (11). Brown initiates these conversations with sound biblical scholarship – including devoted attention to the Hebrew text and its nuances – which is coupled with social and cultural commentary. Not only does Brown place The Psalms into conversation with the Divine and with humanity, but he makes the distinct move of placing The Psalms into conversation with each other. By highlighting the examples of diverse dialogue within the Psalter itself, Brown demonstrates how the Psalms are collected and "set up to talk to each other" (29), a model which he suggests readers of the Psalms can emulate.

Brown divides the book into four main sections: namely, "Torah," "Prophets," "Writings," and "Reflections." Each section, and their respective subsections, are carefully curated to follow the journey of the Hebrew Bible as it is modeled through the artistic expression of the community's hymns and songs. Tracing from "In the Beginning: A Primordial Dialogue," to the work of judges and prophets in "Establishing Justice: Prophetic and Psalmic," the reader goes on the journey alongside the community, and is able to witness the emerging conversations. Brown is careful not to represent a unitary voice, nor to call for one from readers, but through the various expressions of lament, praise, and thanksgiving, the reader is encouraged to remember "biblical wisdom covers the epistemological spectrum from confident certainty to unsettling uncertainty" (333). Through an analysis of David, certainly a prominent figure in the collection of psalmic literature, the reader is exposed to the complexities and diversities present within one individual, let alone within a community.

While *Deep Calls to Deep* offers an in-depth analysis of the scriptural text itself that biblical scholars will find refreshing, its work is not limited to biblical studies. The book – both its content and its structure – is particularly generative for preachers and other practitioners of religion who are interested in exploring and stimulating diversity within their own faith communities. As Brown articulates in the conclusion, "If the Bible can 'make room' for 'divergent perspectives,' then so can its readers" (444). The diversity of the biblical text, as Brown explicates through the Psalms, is an ongoing and open invitation to its readers that dialogue and diversity is to be cherished and embraced. In so doing, we, too, might wrestle together through our epistemological uncertainties and move together in our quest for justice.

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