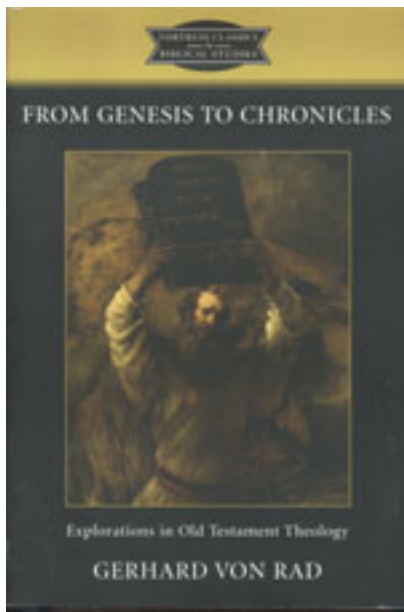


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Rad, Gerhard von
Edited by K. C. Hanson

From Genesis to Chronicles: Explorations in Old Testament Theology

Fortress Classics in Biblical Studies

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Henning Graf Reventlow
University of the Ruhr
Bochum, Germany D-44801

This is mainly a republication of a collection first offered in English in 1966, but recently out of print and unavailable. For the most part, it contains the articles of the famous Old Testament scholar Gerhard von Rad (1901–71) that first appeared in the German original under the title *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* in 1958 (vol. 1, because in 1973 a vol. 2 of the same title was published in the same series [ed. R. Smend; Theologische Bücherei; Munich: Kaiser]). The editor changed the sequence of the articles in the translation against the original to allow an arrangement following the canonical books treated. This rearrangement also allowed to the publisher give to the volume a new title, whereas the earlier translation preserved the original title in English (*The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays* [trans. E. W. Trueman Dicken (whose preface has also been reprinted, p. xix—which only people acquainted with the earlier translation volume can appreciate), introduction by Norman W. Porteous; Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1966]). One paper (no. 6; originally published in *Int* 15 [1961]: 3–13, retranslated into German in *Gesammelte Studien II* [154–64]) has been added, and the one on “Die Vorgeschichte der Gattung von 1. Kor. 13,4–7” (*Gesammelte Studien I*, 281–96) has been dropped. To the reader’s surprise, under the title “Acknowledgements” (vii–viii), the first publication places of the papers before they were collected in the *Gesammelte Studien* are noted. This

might have been done for copyright reasons, as no one having the original collections will go back to the dissipated first prints.

Whatever caused these changes, the result cannot convince. This regards the new title—in a bibliography, under this superscription one would rather expect a reader excerpted out of the main works of von Rad—and the new arrangement, obviously chosen for the new title of the collection. Only a second look at the titles inside (v–vi) shows what the volume actually contains. All in all, one would have preferred an unaltered reprint of the 1966 edition, perhaps supplemented by some additional important articles.

But all these objections are less significant in view of the fact that a number of G. von Rad's innovative papers, which prepared the way for the blossoming of Old Testament science in Germany during the first decennia after the Second World War, are again made available to a new student generation in the English-speaking world. Anyone who, as the present reviewer, has been among the hearers of the engaged and inspired teacher in those times will remember the lively atmosphere in his classroom. That the Old Testament, usually the second in estimation of the two parts of the Bible, contained theologically important material—a historical report that should first of all be renarrated—we learned in the early 1950s before von Rad published his *Theology of the Old Testament*. The papers in *Gesammelte Studien I* were preparations for this work.

The volume contains the following articles: part 1, "From Genesis to Joshua" (1) "The Form-Critical Problem of the Hexateuch" (1–58), originally a separate booklet; (2) "The Promised Land and Yahweh's Land in the Hexateuch" (59–69); (3) "Faith Reckoned as Righteousness" (70–74); (4) "The Joseph Narrative and Ancient Wisdom" (75–81); (5) "There Remains Still a Rest for the People of God" (82–88); (6) "Ancient Word and Living Word—Deuteronomy" (89–98)—here the catchword "Preaching" of the original title has been skipped, seemingly against von Rad's own intention; (7) "The Tent and the Ark" (99–114); and (8) "The City on the Hill" (115–22).

Part 2, "From Samuel to Kings," contains: (9) "The Beginnings of Historical Writing in Ancient Israel" (125–53), on the Deuteronomic History, regarded as the work of a single author with M. Noth; (10) "The Deuteronomic Theology of History in 1 and 2 Kings" (154–66), closely related to the preceding paper; and (11) "The Royal Ritual in Judah" (167–73); the topic is debated.

Part 3, "From Psalms to Chronicles, includes: (12) "The Theological Problem of the Old Testament Doctrine of Creation" (177–86), an early example (1936) of von Rad's thesis that the topic of creation does not belong to the basic themes of Old Testament theology (in his commentary on Genesis [ET in OTL, 1963²], as known, he speaks about the *Vorbau*

of the creation story in Gen 1–3); (13) “‘Righteousness’ and ‘Life’ in the Cultic Language of the Psalms” (187–204); (14) “Some Aspects of Old Testament Worldview” (205–22, first published in 1964, added to the third edition of *Gesammelte Studien I* [Munich, 1965], contained already in *The Problem of the Hexateuch*, 1966]), which is an important paper because von Rad here for first time abandons his isolated focus on history as the main theme of an Old Testament theology (cf. his late book on *Weisheit in Israel* [Neukirchen, 1970]; ET *Wisdom in Israel* [Nashville 1972; numerous reprints]); (15) “Job 38 and Ancient Egyptian Wisdom” (223–31); and (16) “The Levitical Sermon in 1 and 2 Chronicles” (232–42), which is known for von Rad’s supposition that the hortatory passages in Chronicles have Levites as authors.

One hopes that the collection will fulfill again its role of keeping alive the work of this famous scholar.