

THREE SEASONS OF CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP: A LITERARY-CRITICAL AND THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE NARRATIVE OF SAUL, DAVID AND SOLOMON

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ABSTRACT

This research is an investigation into the charismatic leadership of Saul, David and Solomon. In terms of methodology (chapter 1) the study is a strict synchronic reading and is keen to demonstrate the theology explicit or implicit in the text. This study assumes that charismatic leaders emerge in crisis situations and in order to resolve the particular crisis by the charisma granted by God's spirit.

In regard to Saul, the second chapter argues that Saul proved himself a charismatic leader as long as acting resolutely and independently from Samuel, his mentor. He failed, however, because in Samuel's shadow he could not establish himself as a charismatic leader - he remained dependent on the prophet.

The third chapter studies David's leadership. He was successful because of his autonomy and resolution. Also he was a successful charismatic leader as long as he remained independent. King David, however, was gradually sidelined by his general. Another major theme of the David narrative is the clash between the concepts of charismatic military leadership and that of oriental kingship. David's military leadership and the charisma related to it are constantly challenged by the concept of oriental kingship.

Chapter four is a study on Solomon's leadership. Although at his emergence he had lacked charisma, he wisely chose the leadership skills needed to lead Israel properly. Attention is, however, drawn to the tension between Solomon's leadership benefiting Israel and the royal pretension manifest in royal projects.

The relationship of the new charismatic leader with the old leader is scrutinised: how the new leader is appointed, how he emerges, how the old persists - in one word the transition and succession in leadership. An evaluation of the activity of the charismatic follows: could he resolve the crisis in which he emerged and to the end of which he was granted God's spirit? To what extent were these leaders charismatic? What is the characteristic of an emerging charismatic leader?

Most significantly, this is as much a leadership study as an literary-critical interpretation. Therefore, more general conclusions regarding charismatic leadership are drawn.

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