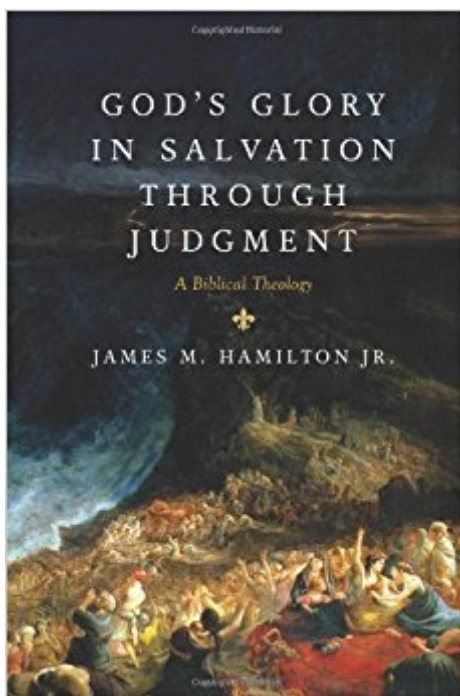


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# God's Glory In Salvation Through Judgment: A Biblical Theology



## Synopsis

In Exodus 34 Moses asks to see God's glory, and God reveals himself as a God who is merciful and just. James Hamilton Jr. contends that from this passage comes a biblical theology that unites the meta-narrative of Scripture under one central theme: God's glory in salvation through judgment. Hamilton begins in the Old Testament by showing that Israel was saved through God's judgment on the Egyptians and the Canaanites. God was glorified through both his judgment and mercy, accorded in salvation to Israel. The New Testament unfolds the ultimate display of God's glory in justice and mercy, as it was God's righteous judgment shown on the cross that brought us salvation. God's glory in salvation through judgment will be shown at the end of time, when Christ returns to judge his enemies and save all who have called on his name. Hamilton moves through the Bible book by book, showing that there is one theological center to the whole Bible. The volume's systematic method and scope make it a unique resource for pastors, professors, and students.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 640 pages

Publisher: Crossway (November 4, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1581349769

ISBN-13: 978-1581349764

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 1.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 41 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #98,488 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #111 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology > Salvation Theory #2039 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Religious Studies > Theology

## Customer Reviews

"I was riveted. Never do I sit down and read sixty pages of ANY book that I get in the mail. But I could not stop reading and could not stop rejoicing over God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment. It is the kind of overview of redemptive history Edwards wanted to write. It's what I hoped would be written." — John Piper, Founder, [desiringGod.org](http://desiringGod.org); Chancellor, Bethlehem College & Seminary "As readers of Scripture we long to know the message of the Bible as a whole. We do not want to miss

the forest for the trees. Unfortunately, there are few books that help us to be faithful to the whole counsel of God. What a delight, then, to read Jim Hamilton's book where the story line of the Scriptures is unfolded. Hamilton rightly sees that the glory of God is at the center of the scriptural record, demonstrating with careful attention to the biblical text the supremacy of God in both the Old Testament and the New. Scholars, students, and laypeople will all profit from reading this work, which instructs the mind, enlivens the heart, and summons us to obedience.

—Thomas R. Schreiner, James Buchanan Harrison Professor of New Testament Interpretation and Professor of Biblical Theology, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky

“In an era when centers in general no longer hold, Hamilton makes a strong case for the centrality to biblical theology of what C. H. Dodd called the two-beat rhythm of biblical history: salvation through judgment. Hamilton discovers this theme in every book of the Bible and argues that it is the heartbeat of God's ultimate purpose: the publication of his glory. In seeking to do justice to scriptural unity and diversity alike, Hamilton's work represents biblical theology at its best.

—Kevin J. Vanhoozer, Research Professor of Systematic Theology, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School; author, *Biblical Authority after Babel* and *Faith Speaking Understanding*

“Centered on the important themes of salvation and judgment, Hamilton's book models well how a thematic approach toward biblical theology might be applied to the whole of Scripture. It is to be warmly welcomed as an invitation to reflect on biblical truth and an opportunity to dialogue on how the unity of the Old and New Testaments may be articulated best.

—T. Desmond Alexander, Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies, Union Theological College, Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK

“Who said that the search for a center in biblical theology is a dead end? In this bold and courageous book, which deals with the entire Bible, James Hamilton Jr. dons the mantle of an explorer in search of the holy grail of biblical theology. As he journeys through the Bible, there are many sights in the biblical landscape that will arrest the attention of those who accompany him, including the pivotal revelation of God in Exodus 34:6-7. Hamilton's thoughtful analysis and reflection provide many insights into the biblical text. While you may not agree with all of his conclusions, you won't come back from your journey with him without a greater sense of God's majesty and glory. Rather than being a dead end, this is a gateway into a new world.

—Stephen G. Dempster, Professor of Religious Studies, Crandall University

James M. Hamilton Jr. (PhD, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary) is professor of biblical

theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and preaching pastor at Kenwood Baptist Church. He is the author of God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment and the Revelation volume in the Preaching the Word commentary series.

Is there a center around which the entire Bible can be organized and understood? James M. Hamilton Jr. believes that there is and in this book he sets out to demonstrate that the center of Biblical theology is that there is an essential connection between salvation and judgment which consistently brings glory to God. It is a magisterial claim and I believe that Hamilton demonstrates it convincingly. He begins with a chapter describing his thesis and then works through the various genres and sections of the Bible, beginning with the Old Testament and the Law and concluding with the New Testament and the Revelation to John. Each book of the Bible is gone through in a systematic manner, allowing Hamilton to show that not only is the Bible a unified book but it is a book unified around a very particular theme. He closes with a chapter addressing several arguments against his thesis and a final chapter of practical and pastoral application. I am a pastor of the Calvinist persuasion and fond of the work of continental Reformed theologians such as Calvin, Turretin, a Brakel and Bavinck, as well as Old Princeton, so that the idea of God's glory being central in all things is something I identify with. The result is that reading this book was like preaching to the choir, as if I was sitting with the conductor of an orchestra who was showing me the coherence of the score. Pastors and theologians identified with other traditions, or having a more of a social justice understanding of their ministry, would likely find Hamilton's work lacking and something they might desire to continually push back against. And I would suggest that they open their Bible, read the areas relevant to his writing, read their Bible again, and let God's Spirit be their teacher. They might be pleasantly surprised at the beauty of the Biblical canvas when seen from the center of glory in salvation through judgment.

Thorough. Thought-provoking. Thrilling. The author proposes that God's glory in salvation through judgment is the theological "center" of the Bible, and then makes a strong case for it in this book's 500+ pages. The author shows that God's glory in salvation through justice is an overarching pattern in the Bible's narrative of creation, fall, exile and restoration. It is also the pattern of major biblical events like the fall, flood, exodus, exile from the land, the death and resurrection of Jesus and the return of Jesus. It is also the pattern of each individual believer: sin, guilt, trust God for mercy and join Him in seeking His glory. The author's method of surveying the Bible book by book kept me turning the pages to the end but also makes this a convenient reference tool. I also liked

Chesterton's quote about the "wild secrecy of the wind". Home run.

There have already been some great reviews that explain the content and method of the book. My goal is to write a review that helps recount how Dr. Hamilton presents the doctrine of justification. First, he rightly recognizes the difference between God's attribute of righteousness and obedience to the law. He references many sources that uphold the view of imputed righteousness, but his own description of it is different than much of what I've heard. His doctrine would be closer related to the idea of imputed justification. The person who has faith is not justified on account of having Christ's good works credited to their own account, but on account of Christ's atonement for their sin. (But granted, Hamilton affirms that Christ's perfect obedience was necessary for him to be a sufficient sacrifice.) Another way to say this is that a Christian comes to be justified because their sins are forgiven in Christ, but God does not look on them as having done the good things that Jesus accomplished. I personally agree with much of his presentation on this issue, but the use of the word "imputed" instead of "counted" or "reckoned" makes his presentation slightly murky at points. He shies away from engaging the New Perspective, which is disappointing. Nevertheless, his understanding of faith as the means of justification under the Mosaic covenant is in line with the NP. Yet astoundingly, he still insists that Paul's point in Galatians is that God made faith the means of justification because works failed to do the trick, which confounds his own logic about the continuity of faith as the means of justification throughout redemptive history. If he simply stuck with his own prior conclusion, it would be easy for him to see that what Paul is doing in Galatians is trying to show that the rituals, sacrifices, and purity laws of the Torah that used to properly function as aids to faith are no longer needed in light of the coming of Christ and the outpouring of the Spirit; moreover they hinder the work of the kingdom and create unnecessary confines on New Testament believers. Paul's not saying that the law used to be the way people were justified, but faith took its place; he's saying that whereas the law aided faith in the Old Testament, it hinders it in the New. Despite this (which is obviously a fairly lightly treated topic in a book with such scope), I'm giving this five stars because it's the best and most comprehensive biblical theology I've read. and I believe his understanding of the theological center of the Bible being God's glory in salvation through judgment is correct, though as he recognizes, there are other themes that shine light on the unity and purpose of the Bible as well.

Could the author really reduce the underlying theme of the Bible to such a simple statement? I was skeptical that this was an accurate distillation of the Bible's theology, especially including both

testaments at once. Especially coming on the heels of having read Gregory Beale's masterful New Testament Biblical Theology. And yet by the end of the book I was convinced that Hamilton's thesis is both reasonable and accurate. Viewed through the author's theological lens, I came to a better appreciation of numerous Biblical texts. A highly enjoyable read!

This is an excellent biblical theology. It follows the central theme of Scripture thoroughly through all 66 books of the Bible. This is great for both the academic and the lay person and it constantly allows God's glory in salvation through judgement to be seen to the reader. The result being a greater awe and understanding of God and human history.

This is a text book for a seminary class I am taking online from the author. It is easy to read, understand and Dr. Hamilton does a great job of pointing to the central theme of Biblical Theology, God's Glory. Get this for your library even if you are not in school.

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