Clarion Review

Historical

The God Whom Moses Knew
J. Roger Nelson
WestBow Press
978-1-4497-0221-2
Four Stars (out of Five)

The God Whom Moses Knew is more than a novel about the life and times of Moses. It is an exceptional exploration of history through fiction. Through the use of third-person narration, monologue, and dialogue, J. Roger Nelson attempts to expand the Old Testament description of Moses' life. The author does not presume to alter the biblical story of Moses, and the reader isn't subjected to alternate interpretations of the meanings of biblical verses. Old Testament teachings are not compared to those of other faiths, and no attempt is made to show contrasts between contemporary logic and that of Moses' era.

Instead, Nelson tells a great story, fleshing out the original to create a readable and thought-provoking epic. The following passage is his description of Moses' encounter with God in the form of a burning bush: "[Moses] saw before him a lone bush with flames leaping from it. He drew closer to investigate, amazed that its leaves and even its fruit were not even singed. As he approached, the bush spoke to him."

Validity of the Old Testament story is taken at face value, and dialogue between God and Moses is quoted directly from the Bible. To amplify the potency of his narrative, the author has written fictitious biographies of biblical characters. He includes end notes with each chapter to cite the sources of his research.

As its title suggests, the book introduces the side of God whom Moses knew—a vengeful, jealous, Old Testament God who demands blind obedience and blood sacrifice. This is quite different from the side of God seen in the New Testament—a God of peace, love, and forgiveness. In *The God Whom Moses Knew*, the author puts forth his own explanation for this change.

Nelson pays meticulous attention to historical details, and he provides maps and charts to supplement the story. Unfortunately, the text contains numerous occurrences of awkward syntax

that distract the reader from the subject matter.

As a physician, Nelson's work has been centered on physical healing. *The God Whom Moses Knew* is Nelson's way of calling people back to faith, in order to heal the spirit.

Lee Gooden