
BOEKAANKONDIGINGS/BOOK NOTICES

ALGEMEEN / MISCELLANEOUS

Browning, Don S 1987. *Religious thought and the modern psychologies. A critical conversation in the theology of culture*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. Pp 268. Available from Lux Verbi at R60,30.

'The question this book addresses is a cultural problematic of great general significance. Will our culture be oriented and directed by our inherited religious traditions, or will it gain its orientation from the modern psychologies? Or is there a way to state their appropriate relations, thereby giving each its proper place?'

While contending that the modern psychologies are indispensable for modern life, Browning shows how they often transcend themselves to become quasi-religious ethical systems. Using the theological resources of Reinhold Niebuhr and the philosophies of religion of Paul Ricoeur and William James, Browning critiques the assumptions of four cultures within the modern clinical psychologies: the culture of detachment (Freud), the culture of joy (Rogers, Maslow, Perls, Jung), the culture of control (Skinner), and the culture of care (Erikson, Kohut). This is the first full-scale theology of culture involving an analysis of the culturally influential modern psychologies.

Don Browning is Alexander Campbell Professor of Religion and Psychological Studies at The Divinity School, University of Chicago. He is the editor for the Fortress Press series Theology and Pastoral Care, and the author of *Religious ethics and pastoral care* (Fortress Press 1983).

Brandon, Mark Lau & Padilla, C René (eds) 1986. *Conflict and context. Hermeneutics in the Americas*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Pp 323. Available from Oxford University Press at R 53,80.

Organized to investigate the implications of the growing trend towards contextualization of the gospel, the 'Context and Hermeneutics in the Americas Conference' was held in November 1983.

This book is a collection of papers, study group reports, and transcriptions of plenary discussions from that conference. It records the lively, candid, and occasionally fiery

discussions that took place when a culturally and denominationally diverse group of Christians grappled with vital issues facing the church.

Among the questions addressed at the conference were:

How does a church's cultural context affect its interpretation of the Bible? What impact does this have on such basic theological concepts as Christology, soteriology, and ecclesiology? What dangers exist in contextual hermeneutics? What checks can be helpful?

Conference participants include Samuel Escobar, Clark Pinnock, J Deotis Roberts, David M Scholer, Moises Silva, Aída Bescancon Spencer, Orlando Costas, Virgil Cruz, and Grant Osborne.

Mark Lau Branson is Dean of the Fellowship Bible Institute in San Francisco.

René Padilla is General Secretary of the Latin American Theological Fraternity and Pastor of La Lucila Baptist Church in Buenos Aires.

Heie, Harold & Wolfe, Daniel L (eds) 1978. *The reality of Christian learning*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Pp 339. Available from Lux Verbi at R 53,05.

Building on recent foundational studies of the relationship of faith and learning, this book presents concrete examples of ways in which a Christian perspective can be brought to bear on scholarship in various academic disciplines.

The editors present a typology of various strategies for faith-discipline integration, which are then exemplified by two essays in each of seven disciplines - political science, sociology, psychology, biology, mathematics, the arts, and philosophy. In each discipline a principal essayist addresses a significant issue from a Christian perspective; a respondent then analyzes that essay, suggesting at least one alternative approach.

This in-depth understanding of alternative strategies will provide a valuable springboard for further integrative work on the part of scholars and students in many different disciplines.

Harold Heie is Vice President for Academic Affairs and Professor of Mathematics at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa.

David Wolfe is Professor of Philosophy at Gordon College, Wenham, Massachusetts.

BYBELENSIKLOPEDIE / BIBLE DICTIONARY

Myers, Allen C (ed) 1987. *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*. (Revised edition.) Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Pp 1094. Available from Lux Verbi at R65,40.

This comprehensive, up-to-date reference tool provides a helpful and reliable guide for reading and studying the Bible. Nearly 5 000 entries identify every person and place named in the Bible, examine the contents and background of each biblical book and related writings, describe the physical and cultural aspects of the world of the Bible, and explain and interpret important focuses of biblical theology - matters that the Bible student may encounter in reading and discussion. Although primarily evangelical in focus, *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* addresses objectively the broad spectrum of interpretation.

The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary is based on a translation of the 1975 edition of the internationally respected *Bijbelse Encyclopedie*, edited under the direction of W H Gispen. This English revision reflects recent archaeological discoveries and the breadth of current American biblical scholarship, including insights from the critical analysis of literary, historical, and sociological issues.

Features of *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*:

- * Nearly 5 000 entries plus 650 cross-reference entries - some 1 150 000 words - identify every person, place, and object named in the Bible.
- * Extensively revised and updated, this English edition - more than 40 percent larger than the prior edition - features 286 entries on topics not previously treated.
- * Entries reflect archaeological discoveries and the breadth of current American scholarship.
- * Evangelical in focus, the dictionary displays sensitivity to the broad spectrum of interpretation, presenting divergent viewpoints as objectively as possible.
- * Charts, photos, line drawings, and a 12-page Hammond colour map section enhance the reader's understanding.
- * Articles feature pronunciations and, in transliteration, the relevant terms in Hebrew, Greek, and other ancient languages.
- * Bibliographies direct the reader to significant works reflecting various viewpoints.
- * Based on the Revised Standard Version, the dictionary notes alternate readings and nuances in the King James Version, New International Version, Jerusalem Bible, and other modern English translations.
- * Supplementary aids include lists of abbreviations, pronunciation guide, and transliteration key.

This is a valuable tool for practical use.

ETIEK / ETHICS

Smedes, Lewis B 1983. *Mere morality. What God expects from ordinary people.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Pp 282. Available from Lux Verbi at R21,00.

About this book, Smedes writes in the introduction:

'Morality is a basic component of any human sort of life, a reality we feel surely even if we cannot define it clearly. We do have choices, and they are sometimes between real moral options. The choices we make can put us in the wrong with God and our ideal selves - or leave us in the right. And being in the right means being in harmony with God's design for our humanity.

'What do I mean by mere morality? It is not morality plus something else. What I am going to talk about in this book is not a special brand of morality for extraordinary folk. Mere morality does not make you a saint or a hero. All it makes for is humane living.

'Mere morality does not oblige people to undertake specifically Christian acts of devotion; it only requires what needs to be done if we are to be human.

'God does reveal to us what he expects us to do, and that what he expects us to do is the sort of thing that people must do if they are going to live as human beings.'

Following this line of thought, Smedes then examines the significance of the second table of the ten commandments for humanity. He deals with people's rights and needs, respect for authority, human life, covenant, property and truthfulness.

This is already the second print of *Mere morality*, originally published in 1983.

NUWE TESTAMENT / NEW TESTAMENT

Theissen, Gerd 1987. *Psychological aspects of Pauline theology.* Translated by John P Galvin. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. Pp 433. Price at Lux Verbi R90,20.

Gerd Theissen here presents a psychological exegesis of key Pauline texts which illuminate how religious symbolism did and can alter human experience and behaviour. He combines a psychological-historical approach to the New Testament with a theological perspective.

Belief in Christ, Theissen suggests, enables previously unconscious aspects of life to become conscious, thus paving the way for new types of behaviour. Three

psychological theories - learning theory, psychodynamics and cognition - are used to explain this transformation of human experience.

Theissen then considers specific Pauline texts in light of these psychological theories: the secret of the heart (1 Cor 4:1-5; Rom 2:16; and 1 Cor 14:20-25); the veil of Moses and the unconscious aspects of the Law (2 Cor 3:4-4:6); the conflict between the Law and sin (Rom 7:7-23); glossolalia as the speech of the unconscious (1 Cor 14:1-40); and wisdom for the perfect as high consciousness (1 Cor 2:6-16). He concludes with observations on the behaviour- and experience-altering affects of Pauline preaching.

Gerd Theissen is Professor of New Testament at the University of Heidelberg. This book originally appeared in 1983 under the title *Psychologische Aspekte paulinischer Theologie*.

Sanders, Jack T 1987. *The Jews in Luke-Acts*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. Pp 410. Available from Lux Verbi at R53,05.

An extract from the author's preface reads:

'The bulk of this study is divided into two parts ... The first attempts to clarify Luke's portrayal of various groups: the Jewish leaders, Jerusalem, the Jewish people, the Pharisees, and the outcasts and other peripheral elements in Jewish society.

'This is necessary in order to understand the overall portrait, but it may not entirely clarify that portrait. To be sure the overall portrait is made clear, the systematic analysis proceeds, "commentary-like", through Luke-Acts, tracing the interplay of the various themes discussed in part one ...

'I have, in fact, often thought of this study as a single-issue commentary with a long introduction; the length of the "commentary" reveals with what a prominent issue in Luke-Acts we are here dealing. One may also hope that Part Two will give this work a more enduring value for the future student of Luke-Acts, who may want information about how Luke portrays the Jews in one or another passage of his two-volume work.'

Jack Sanders is Professor of Biblical Studies and Chairperson of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Oregon. He is the author of *Ethics in the New Testament*.

Malherbe, Abraham J 1987. *Paul and the Thessalonians. The philosophical tradition of pastoral care*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. Pp 120. Price at Lux Verbi R24,50.

An excerpt from the introduction reads:

'This book deals with Paul's practice rather than his theology. It especially traces the way in which Paul established a church in the important city of Thessalonica, the capital city of the Roman province of Macedonia, maintained contact with it in order to ensure its continuing nurture, and instructed its members on how to care for one another.

'Rather than simply organize a church, Paul founded, shaped, and nurtured a community. In so doing, he was sensitive to the needs of individuals within the community who had committed themselves to new beliefs and a new way of life. Paul was, in fact, engaged in pastoral care, although he does not describe the enterprise in that manner.'

Abraham Malherbe is Buckingham Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation at Yale Divinity School, and author of four other books, including *Social aspects of early Christianity* (Fortress Press).

OU TESTAMENT / OLD TESTAMENT

Mays, James Luther & Achtemeier, Paul J (eds) 1987. *Interpreting the prophets*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Pp 287. Available from Lux Verbi at R40,45.

The contents of this volume appeared originally as five issues of *Interpretation: a journal of Bible and theology* (1978-85) which were planned as a coherent series. The purpose of this volume is to offer students and interpreters a resource and companion to the study of the prophets that is somewhat different from the usual historical-critical introduction.

Here the concerns of critical research and religious use of the prophets are brought together. Instead of developing one approach to the study of these prophetic books, these studies represent the dynamic variety of approaches pursued in the current study of the prophets. The authors make up a panel of scholars whose contributions to the study of prophecy mark them as the best available.

The contributors are Walter Brueggemann, Brevard S Childs, R E Clements, John J Collins, James L Crenshaw, Michael Fishbane, John G Gammie, Moshe Greenberg, William L Holladay, Klaus Koch, Werner E Lemke, James Limburg, Carol A Newsom, Thomas M Raitt, J J M Roberts, James A Sanders, David C Steinmetz, W Sibley Towner, Gene M Tucker, Robert R Wilson, Hans Walter Wolff.

James Mays is Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. He was the editor of *Interpretation* and wrote many major books on the prophets.

Paul A Achtemeier is Professor of New Testament at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia and the current editor of Interpretation.

Holmgren, Fredrick Carlson 1987. *Israel alive again. A commentary on the books of Ezra and Nehemiah*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Pp 162. Available from Lux Verbi at R21,60.

This is the latest addition to the fast growing compendium of the International Theological Commentary series.

About the series the following is pertinent:

International in both scope and authorship, and theological in approach, the International Theological Commentary moves beyond a descriptive-historical approach to offer a relevant exegesis of the Old Testament text as Holy Scripture. The series aims, first, to develop the theological significance of the Old Testament and, second, to emphasize the relevance of each book for the life of the Church.

Recognizing that in our age, especially, a commentary on the Bible must transcend the parochialism of the Western civilization, the International Theological Commentary is sensitive to issues that are the special problems of those who live outside the 'Christian' West. Authors from more than 17 countries, representing a wide range of geographical, ideological, and ecclesiastical backgrounds, read the Hebrew text of the Old Testament in the twin contexts of Israel and our present day.

This edition focusses attention on Ezra and Nehemiah.

When the Jews returned to Israel from captivity in Babylon in the 6th and 5th centuries B C, they faced many hardships. Despite these struggles, their leaders Ezra and Nehemiah believed that God was working with them to accomplish his purpose, which was to restore a faithful community.

Israel alive again interprets the books of Ezra and Nehemiah in the context of the Hebrew Bible, exploring the theological meanings of these often slighted books, and emphasizing their relevance for the church today.

Like the other commentaries in the series, *Israel alive again* is intended for the layperson, student, and pastor. Its theological exposition makes it valuable to scholars as well.

Fredrick Holmgren is Professor of Biblical Literature at the North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago. He is co-editor of the International Theological Commentary and the author of several books.

Maarsingh, B 1987. *Numbers. A practical commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Pp 122. Price at Lux Verbi R19,35.

Practical and expository, this new series of paperback commentaries - Text and Interpretation - aims to provide the reader with clear and concise explanations of every book of the Bible.

Each commentary begins with an introduction, which discusses the origin of the book of the Bible under consideration, as well as its author, composition, and related matters. The commentary proper treats the Scripture text section by section, to help readers understand the book as a whole.

In this edition the book of Numbers is the theme. In 100 short sections Numbers is commented on in a practical way.

Originally written in Dutch, this is an English translation by John Vriend.

The author, B Maarsingh, is Senior Lecturer Emeritus of Old Testament and Hebrew at Utrecht University, the Netherlands.

PASTORALE TEOLOGIE / PASTORAL THEOLOGY

Wolterstorff, Nicholas 1987. *Lament for a son*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Pp 111. Available from Lux Verbi at R15,05.

A well-known Christian philosopher, Nicholas Wolterstorff has authored many books that have contributed significantly to scholarship in several subjects. In *Lament for a son* he writes not as a scholar, but as a loving father grieving the loss of his son.

In brief vignettes Wolterstorff explores with a moving honesty and intensity all the facets of his experience of this irreversible loss. Though he grieves 'not as one who has no hope', he finds no comfort in pious-sounding phrases that would diminish the malevolence of death.

The book is in one sense a narrative account of events - from the numbing telephone call on a sunny Sunday afternoon that tells of 25-year-old Eric's death in a mountain-climbing accident, to a graveside visit a year later. But the book is far more than narrative. Every event is an occasion for remembering, for meditating, for Job-like anguish in the struggle to accept and understand.

A profoundly faith-affirming book, *Lament for a son* gives eloquent expression to a grief that is at once unique and universal - a grief for an individual, irreplaceable person. Though it is intensely personal, says Wolterstorff, 'I have decided now to

publish it, in the hope that it will be of help to some of those who find themselves with us in the company of mourners.'

Louw, D J 1987. *Versoening in geweld. 'n Pleidooi om vrede in Suider-Afrika*. Pp 56. Kaapstad: N G Kerk-uitgewers. Prys by die uitgewers: R10,95.

Die titel van hierdie stuk weerspieël die kritieke toestand van ons tyd, asook die haglike posisie waarin die kerk tans in Suider-Afrika verkeer. Selde in die geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika was daar 'n tyd dat die betekenis van die begrip 'versoening' so 'n dringende aktualiteit verkry het as juis in die huidige politieke krisis. Die belangrike vraag is: wat beteken versoening wanneer die lewe van elke dag geweld, bitterheid, haat, angs en wantroue tussen mense, en veral Christene, na vore roep?

Die slotsom van hierdie studie is dat indien die Christelike kerk in Suid-Afrika as konflikgenererende faktor opereer en nie as vredemakers nie, dit toe te skryf moet word aan 'n foutiewe ekklesiologie onder invloed van òf 'n apartheidsideologie, òf 'n revolusie-ideologie en dus aan 'n verwronge interpretasie van die kerk se teologiese bestemmingsfunksie.

Maar, in die *koinonia* kan die kerke in Suid-Afrika mekaar vind, en 'n eenheid ontwerp waarbinne sigbaar getoon word dat mense uit verskillende groepe mekaar kan vind en vir mekaar sorg kan dra. Die kerk moet as nuwe verbondsgemeenskap mense iets laat proe van die vreugdevolle samesyn van die bruilofsmaal van die Lam van God.

SISTEMATIESE TEOLOGIE / SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Molnar, Thomas 1987. *The pagan temptation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Pp 201. Price at Lux Verbi R25,85.

Humankind has a basic need to discover meaning in the world. This need, says Thoman Molnar, can be satisfied not through the exercise of reason, but only through myth and symbol, which mediate the transcendent to the human level.

Although they were originally constituent elements in the Christian worldview, myth and symbol were gradually rejected as the church began to emphasize instead the power of rational thought. Through the exercise of reason, a 'rationalistic' Christianity can discover some truth, but that rational truth is never sufficient to lead one to assent in faith to the redeeming God above. Rather, it merely pushes the frontier of the unknown farther away. In the face of a rationalized and

demythologized Christianity, many have sought alternate myths and symbols to understand the world. This is the pagan temptation.

There has been a continuous pagan influence throughout Christian history, says Molnar, that has grown increasingly coherent, assertive and organized, especially from the fourteenth century onwards.

In the twentieth century the pagan influence is pervasive, as many Westerners turn from Christianity to seek meaning in pagan myth and in the new occult. The only way to counter the pagan temptation, says Molnar, is to restore myth and symbol to a vital role in the faith.

Thomas Molnar, the author of many books and articles, is at present Visiting Professor of Philosophy at Yale University.

Ritschl, Dietrich 1987. *The logic of theology. A brief account of the relationship between basic concepts in theology.* Translated by John Bowden. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. Pp 310. Available from Lux Verbi at R65,05.

This book is about the logic of theology. Faced with the many complex problems of the modern world, from the questions raised by pluralism and new scientific discoveries to the attacks on established tradition by contemporary scholarship, theology seems to be on the verge of completely falling apart or degenerating into ideology.

What holds it together? What validates its arguments? These are the questions which are addressed here.

Ritschl divides his discussion into three parts. The first is a reconnaissance of the present situation; the second is concerned with the search for truth; and the third explores how theology is put into practice in ethics, pastoral work, and theology.

Here is one of the most fascinating studies to appear from the German-speaking world in modern times. It originally appeared in 1984 under the title *Zur Logik der Theologie, Kurze Darstellung der Zusammenhänge theologischer Grundgedanken.*

Dietrich Ritschl is Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of Heidelberg.

Pacini, David S 1987. *The cunning of modern religious thought.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press. Pp 165. Available from Lux Verbi at R47,70.

Running counter to the stream of much current thinking, David Pacini questions the character of the modern period as a 'secular' age.

Pressing the core notions of the secularists beyond their self-evident bases in common-sense wisdom, Pacini examines the consequences of cultural self-images that rest upon unacknowledged religiousness. The modern themes of historical

understanding, religious experience, human rights, and narcissism are all considered in detail.

Pacini's radical interpretation of modernity as a contemporary recapitulation of the Augustinian outlook, challenges the most precious assumptions of the 'post-modernists', and will serve as a controversial counterpoint to today's deconstructionist discourse.

Jürgen Moltmann, University of Tübingen, comments: 'In these well-grounded and elegantly written essays, David Pacini interprets "modernity" not in a secular, but in a religious way. A fascinating experiment making you rethink what you have learned, and requiring you to revise old prejudices.'

David Pacini is Assistant Professor of Historical Theology at the Candler School of Theology, Emory University.

Hopper, Jeffery 1987. *Understanding modern theology 1. Cultural revolutions and new worlds*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. Pp 179. Price at Lux Verbi R40,45.

Hopper explains to 'non-specialist but serious readers how and why the profound differences between modern theology and pre-modern theology developed'.

He examines the major cultural revolutions that have occurred since the formulation of the various traditional theologies - revolutions which have challenged the assumptions on which the theologies were built.

Investigating the beginnings of modern science, the beginnings of modern philosophy, recent scientific revolutions, the emergence of depth psychology, and the development of historical-critical biblical scholarship, Hopper illumines 'the possible implications of their collective impact for the Christian faith'.

Jeffery Hopper is Professor of Theology at the Methodist Theological School in Delaware, Ohio.