

BOOK REVIEWS  
BOEKBESPREKINGS

Barnes, L L & Sered S S (ed.) 2005. *Religion and healing in America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press  
**Reviewer:** Prof Jacques Theron, Department of Practical Theology, University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Bauer S W 2008. *The art of the public grovel: Sexual sin and public confession in America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

**Reviewer:** Prof Graham Duncan, Department of Church History and Church Polity, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.

Best WD 2005. *Passionately human, no less divine: Religion and culture in black Chicago. 1915-1952*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

**Reviewer:** Prof Graham Duncan, Department of Church History and Church Polity, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.

Burridge, Richard 2007. *Imitating Jesus: An inclusive approach to New Testament ethics*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company

**Reviewer:** Dr Dion Forster, Research Associate, Department of New Testament, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.

Frankfurter, David 2006. *Evil Incarnate: rumours of demonic conspiracy and satanic abuse in history*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press

**Reviewer:** Dr Rodney Moss, Department of Theology, St Augustine College of South Africa, Johannesburg.

Greenawalt, Kent 2006. *Religion and the Constitution: Free exercise and fairness*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press

**Reviewer:** Prof Christina Landman, Research Institute for Theology and Religion, University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Kramer, Gudrun. 2008. *A history of Palestine: From the Ottoman conquest to the founding of the state of Israel*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

**Reviewer:** Dr Erna Oliver, Department Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology, University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Nkomazana, F & Lanner, L (ed.) 2007. *Aspects of the history of the Church in Botswana*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster

**Reviewer:** Prof Graham Duncan, Department of Church History and Church Polity, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.

Palmore, E B, Branch, L & Harris, D K (eds.) 2005. *Encyclopedia of ageism*. Birmingham: The Haworth Press

**Reviewer:** Dr Jan du Preez, Pastor, Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, Silverton, Pretoria.

Peterson D C 2007. *Muhammed: Prophet of God* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans

**Reviewer:** Prof Graham Duncan, Department of Church History and Church Law, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.

Sawyer, John F A 2006. *The Blackwell Companion to the Bible and culture*. Oxford: Malden, MA: Blackwell

**Reviewer:** Prof Christoph Stenschke, Missionshaus Bibelschule Wiedenest, Bergneustadt, Germany and Department of New Testament University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Sheehan, Jonathan 2008. *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, scholarship, culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

**Reviewer:** Prof Humphrey Mogashoa, Department of Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology, University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Sorkin, David 2008. *The religious enlightenment: Protestants, Jews and Catholics from London to Vienna*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

**Reviewer:** Dr Erna Oliver, Department of Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology, University of South Africa, Pretoria.

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**Reviewer:** Dr Erna Oliver, Department of Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology, University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Vorster J M 2008. *The challenge of contemporary religious fundamentalism*. Pretoria: Church History Society of Southern Africa

**Reviewer:** Prof Graham Duncan, Department of Church History and Church Polity, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria.

Wuthnow R 2006. *American mythos: Why our best efforts to be a better nation fall short*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

**Reviewer:** Prof Graham Duncan, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.

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**Resensent:** Dr Ralph Barnard, Algoa Bybel Akademie, Uitenhage.

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**Resensent:** Dr Erna Oliver. Departement van Christelike Spiritualiteit, Kerkgeskiedenis en Missiologie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, Pretoria.

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**Resensent:** Dr Erna Oliver. Departement Christelike Spiritualiteit, Kerkgeskiedenis en Missiologie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika. Pretoria.

Joubert, S 2008. *Woorde van lewe: 50 inspirerende oordenkings vir jou lewenspad*. Vereeniging: Christelike Uitgewersmaatskappy

**Resensent:** Dr Erna Oliver. Departement van Christelike Spiritualiteit, Kerkgeskiedenis en Missiologie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, Pretoria.

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**Resensent:** Prof Christina Landman, Navorsingsinstituut vir Teologie en Religie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, Pretoria.

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**Resensent:** Dr Erna Oliver. Departement Christelike Spiritualiteit, Kerkgeskiedenis en Missiologie, Universiteit van Suid Afrika, Pretoria.

Venter, Piet, Symington, Johann & Van Wyk, Amie 2007. *Augustinus. Belydenisse: Getuienis oor 'n lewe in God*. Wellington: Lux Verbi

**Resensent:** Prof Christina Landman, Navorsingsinstituut vir Teologie en Religie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, Pretoria.

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**Resensent:** Prof Christina Landman, Navorsingsinstituut vir Teologie en Religie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, Pretoria.

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Stoop, David & Stoop, Jan 2007. *Die volledige huweliksboek*. Wellington: Lux Verbi.

**Resensent:** Prof Christina Landman, Navorsingsinstituut vir Teologie en Religie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, Pretoria.

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Barnes, LL & Sered, SS (eds.). 2005. *Religion and healing in America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 535 pages + xvi pages. ISBN 0195167961. Price: US\$29.95.

**Reviewer:** Prof Jacques Theron, Department of Practical Theology, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa.

This volume is the result of a conference held in 2001 at the Center for the Study of World Religions and the Boston Medical Center. A total of 29 essays have been included under five main headings, namely sites of healing (houses, streets, the ocean, local churches); healing from structural violence (Pentecostal healing in the Borderlands, war traumatised people, healing for the sake of justice, communing with the dead, spirituality and ageing); gendering of suffering and healing (healing as resistance, healing in Wicca, sexual healing); synergy, syncretism and appropriation (multiple meanings of Chinese healing in the USA, subtle energies and the American metaphysical tradition, and the nature of religious healing); intersections with medical and psychotherapeutic discourses (dimensions of Islamic religious healing, health, faith traditions and South Asian Indians, spirituality and the healing of addictions); and a concluding section comprising two chapters written by Marty (who is seen as an intellectual elder in the field of religious studies) and Koenig (one of the foremost medical researchers on the healing power of faith).

The editors convincingly argue and the essays show that, contrary to predictions that biomedical advances soon would eliminate vestigial needs for religious healers, spiritual and religious healing actually garnered new popularity, visibility and legitimacy by the turn of the 21st century. I agree with them that one might view the perceived conventional separation of religion and medicine in 20th century America – or for that matter in the whole of the Western world – as something of a cultural or historical aberration, and the re-emergence of religious healing in the 21st century as a rather unsurprising re-recognition of the connection between body and spirit, and between individual, community and cosmos.

This book supports the effort to bring together a thoroughly multidisciplinary and multicultural discussion of religious healing in the contemporary United States. As has been indicated above, the chapters in this volume look at religious healing in diverse settings such as Native American, European American, African American, Asian American, and Latin communities. In a very scholarly way each of the essays contributes to a better understanding of the new realities in terms of theories on healing and related practices. This book will be an invaluable resource for students of anthropology, religious studies, American studies and ethnic studies, and health care professionals, the clergy, students and anyone interested in the changing cultural landscape in the United States.

The fact that editors have tried to address such a wide range of ethnic and religious groups alerts readers to the possibility of embarking on similar research projects in other countries. This book could serve as the basis for such projects. I assume that two of the main problems would be to deliver the same quality of work as presented in this volume, and that not all communities in any given country have been investigated at such a scholarly level yet.

It would not serve the purpose of this review to evaluate individual chapters. Suffice it to say that I would wholeheartedly recommend the reading of the volume. Some chapters might be deemed strange, depending on one's own perspective and background, but the point is that all the chapters contribute to a much better understanding of the present realities with regard to religious healing.



Bauer, SW. 2008. *The art of the public grovel: sexual sin and public confession in America*. xi pages + 337 pages. Princeton: Princeton University Press. ISBN 978-0-691-13810-7. Price: US\$26.95; £15.95.

**Reviewer:** Prof Graham Duncan, Department of Church History and Church Polity, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

This is a fascinating book which focuses on public confession in modern America. The author demonstrates how the necessity of a type of confession which first developed among evangelicals in the 19th century has become *de rigueur* for any successful public admission of wrongdoing even when the culprit has no connection with evangelicalism and the context is distinctively secular. This, according to Bauer, is the result of a combination of Protestant revivalism, group psychotherapy and contemporary chat shows operative in the process of the conversion of evangelical style confession into a secular rite.

The major focus is on sexual sin for which the church has an obsessive and prurient predilection. The book is divided into a number of chapters, each one dealing with a specific case and a well-known personality. Examples are given of those who have successfully mastered the form and survived, including Bill Clinton, Jimmy Swaggart, David Vitter and Ted Haggart; and those who have failed to convince their public, such as Senator Ted Kennedy, Cardinal Bernard Law, Jim Bakker, Eliot Spitzer and Mark Foley. An important initial point is the difference between an apology and a confession; the former expresses regret and is a self-defence technique, while the latter expresses guilt or complicity and involves “a ceremonial laying down of power, made so that followers could pick that power up and hand it back ... aiming to rebalance the relationship between leaders and their followers” (p 3; cf. p 150). In the introduction, Bauer gives a helpful historical overview of the transition from private to public confession. She attributes the rise of public confession to the similarities between American democracy and American evangelicalism.

To survive, people often align themselves with the marginalised. Grover Cleveland identified himself with the poor and hungry; Aimee Semple Macpherson showed her allegiance to suffragettes and sufferers; while Jimmy Carter associated himself (unsuccessfully) with women by more clearly identifying with the oppressive male class that views women as sexual objects. The skill seems to lie in the ability to confess while not appearing to be predator. Public confession has a role in reassuring followers that the perpetrator will not take advantage of them as they have taken advantage of their victims. Where that cannot be effected, public confidence and trust are withheld. “Successful” confessions occur when there is a demonstration that the sinner is actually engaged in a fight on the side of good against evil.

Ted Kennedy and Bernard Law failed to make good their rehabilitation because, coming from the Roman Catholic tradition of private confession and hierarchical nondemocratic authority, they were unable to recognise the role of public confession in appeasement along with the surrender of power that the people might reassign it to them. Further, Law made a fatal error in siding with the paedophile predators and the power they exercised over the vulnerable.

This book is considerably enhanced by the inclusion of the actual texts of the statements, apologies and confessions of those people discussed in the text. It enhances our understanding of the abuse of power by respected leading members of society in church and state, and how it can be manipulated to produce specific ends which are a challenge to our moral sensibilities. It also makes a sad comment on our need to “give power back to” people who have abused the sacred trust placed in them.



Best, WD. 2005. *Passionately human, no less divine: religion and culture in black Chicago. 1915–1952*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. xxi pages + 250 pages. ISBN 978-0-691-13375-1. Price: US\$24.95; £14.95.

**Reviewer:** Prof Graham Duncan, Department of Church History and Church Polity, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

The subject of this book is the religious impact of the Great Migration, which is rated as the most significant movement after the emancipation of slaves in the USA. This is a 20th century phenomenon of great import to the growth of black Christianity in the US in the sense that black Christians transformed the religious landscape in Chicago and initiated a new sacred order which produced a coalescence of Southern black faith and modern city life, between urban and rural, and between past and present. It is a revisionist study in the sense that it challenges the assumptions of the earlier sociological research of Cayton, Drake and WEB Dubois.

One might say that poverty was a binding force and source of the inventive spirituality and organisational hierarchy of this distinctively local church community where the prime loyalty was to God and not to any church official. It was a church of migrants and friends and families who were

reconnecting through their Southern identity. Emotionally, it was a church of the South which had translated its values to a new place and institution, and which transformed its adopted spatial and social context. Here we have an account of lives and church changed by migration and urbanisation. African-American history, in particular the slave experience, is to a great degree religious history which is based in Old Testament themes. It is the history of a diaspora.

Chapter 1 adopts a novel perspective on the migration of black Southerners beyond the traditional “push-pull” interpretation. This movement towards Chicago had a deep impact on all aspects of life, not least its religious institutions. The former concentration on sociological analysis is replaced to a significant degree by religious and cultural approaches. The second chapter shows how these migrants impacted on worship and ecclesiastical policies, and reduced the influence of African-American middle-class Protestant influence in favour of a Southern “folk” religion. Chapter 3 deals with the influence of the new expanding black migrant class on the development of a more pragmatic approach to faith expression by engaging in business and social service projects. Chapter 4 focuses on the integration of Southern modes of worship and one of its missionary expressions through the medium of radio. The African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) emerges as an ambivalent, conservative expression of religion which was, unlike the black Baptist churches, not willing to adapt to the new circumstances. This led to internal strife and the departure of many ministers to form the Community Church Movement. The final chapter turns its attention to the vocation of two women pastors, Lucy Smith and Mary Evans, who rose to prominence during this period.

The Great Migration heralded the emergence of novel religious practices and traditions among black Protestants. These practices and traditions were a reflection of both black Southern religion and modern city life. They were rooted in Southern folk culture and affected many areas of church life: music, preaching, social outreach and worship.

This context has changed in the course of time. Some church members are now second- and third-generation migrants; some have returned South; congregations are now more middle-class. However, the Southern ethos is still palpable and reciprocal relations with churches in the South have developed. But this is not always the case. Many congregations have gone into decline, some terminally. The reasons are not all spiritual or ecclesiastical. A new brand of black religion has emerged that is more suburban and in which demographic changes have played a part. Developments have taken place in the context of tensions between the social and spiritual intimacy of the South compared with the more impersonal results of urbanisation, and also in the interplay between Southern and urban identity infused with a new sense of the transcendent which is, as the book title suggests, “passionately human, but no less divine”. This religious pragmatism is based in both the material and spiritual needs of the black migrant population and is even able to provide a spiritual refuge for gay people.

This work makes a substantial and insightful contribution to the study of African-American Christianity and culture and, in particular, the role of the poor in the reconceptualisation of black faith.



Burridge, R. 2007. *Imitating Jesus: an inclusive approach to New Testament ethics*. 490 pages. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. ISBN 978-0-8028-4458-3. Price: US\$ 35.00; £19.99.

**Reviewer:** Dr Dion Forster, Research Associate, Department of New Testament, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

There is little doubt that Biblical interpretation, in relation to ethical issues, is one of the most contested and controversial topics in contemporary Christianity. It has given rise to a great deal of research on and study of the subject. Much of this research is insightful and helpful, but the reality is that there are very few fresh insights and creative approaches in this area. Richard Burridge’s book *Imitating Jesus: an inclusive approach to New Testament ethics* is a radical and innovative exception to the norm.

Burridge manages to achieve a feat that few scholars have mastered: he has created a workable interdependence between the biblical text and a historical context, resulting in a scholarly and informative evaluation of the manner in which the New Testament is applied in ethical decision-making. His critical appraisal of the methods that are employed in using the Bible in ethical decision-making shows how sincere and well-intentioned Christians can read the same passages of scripture and arrive at radically divergent, even opposing, positions that each will consider “biblical” (p 2). He uses a vivid historical example to illustrate this reality, namely the manner in which Christians in South Africa used the Bible to formulate and defend their opposing theological positions on race and segregation during the apartheid era in South Africa. He notes that South Africa is not the only

situation in which this reality manifests itself; rather it serves as a contemporary “example of a recurrent theme throughout the history of the church” (pp 2–3).

Burridge builds on this basic position, illustrating it with historical events, official documents and “insider information” gained through interviews, to show how each side claims to be biblical and pure in their approach while vilifying their opponents as having betrayed the tradition of the faith, selling out to the contemporary world, or simply erring and falling into heresy. Of course he draws upon these insights to show how other contemporary ethical debates, such as those concerning homosexuality or abortion, have led to similar splits where persons take refuge in their respective corners of conviction while attacking those in the “opposing camp”. In response to this sad reality Burridge masterfully crafts the chapters of his book in order to achieve two things. The first is his intention to study and understand the ethical *mores* of the corpus of New Testament writings. Hence he takes

... a step back from contemporary debates and look[s] directly at the New Testament, what ethical material it might contain and how we should read these books today [with the intention of examining] whether the demands to be ‘biblical’ or ‘inclusive’ are really incompatible... (p 3).

However, this book is not merely another survey of New Testament ethics, since Burridge acknowledges that “descriptive” studies of New Testament ethics frequently do nothing more than describe and analyse the ethics OF the New Testament without developing an ethics FROM the New Testament. Thus the second aim of this book is to present an approach to New Testament ethics that allows one to “link” the ethics of the New Testament with contemporary and contextual ethical issues. At the core of Burridge’s approach, as the title of the book suggests, is an “insistence on the priority of the person of Jesus of Nazareth” in one’s study of New Testament ethics, since “the key to understanding the New Testament has to be the person of Jesus” (p 4).

Having presented this central thesis, Burridge goes on to unpack an incredibly well-researched, clearly written example of how one might interpret and understand the ethics of the New Testament by drawing on various genres of New Testament writing. These include the Gospels and the Pauline epistles. Each chapter expands the argument and illustrates Burridge’s approach by adding to a layered approach to New Testament ethics. First, he considers the Christology of each of the authors of particular pieces of the New Testament, for example Paul’s Christology (pp 83–89), Mark’s Christology (pp 160–165) and so on. Then he places the particular corpus of New Testament writing in its original context (such as the Pauline texts, pp 90–97). Next he goes on to discuss the theology of inclusion in relation to each author’s theology and the contextual issues that he was addressing. In doing so Burridge is able to highlight the ethics of the New Testament in relation to the ethical challenges that the author and his intended readers faced. The hermeneutic key for understanding the complex ethics of the New Testament is the person of Jesus (Christology). In each instance he therefore considers the person of Jesus to gain an understanding of the ethical teaching of the New Testament (not only as Jesus is known and understood through his teaching in the Gospels, but also as he is observed through his life and interaction with others) (cf. pp 33–78). One of the most significant insights that I have gained from this book is an understanding of how the Biblical writers recorded the stringent ethical teachings of Jesus (through his discourses), yet how Jesus himself clearly exercised a much more open, affirming, gracious and inclusive ethic in his interaction with those persons he encountered during his ministry. This notion is developed both biblically and theologically in each section. The dialectic between the teaching and the acts of Jesus makes for a great deal of interesting discussion in the book.

The concluding section of the book (pp 347–409) does exactly what Burridge suggests it would do in his introduction: it takes the ethics OF the New Testament and formulates an ethic FROM the New Testament. Throughout the text Burridge draws upon the examples of Christians in South Africa before and during the apartheid era. In this final section he does a superb job of pulling together all these insights in order to leave the reader with a clear understanding of how one can use the New Testament responsibly in considering contemporary ethical issues.

This is one of the very best surveys of New Testament ethics that I have read in a long time. Moreover, it achieves exactly what it aims to do, namely to offer more than just descriptive ethics of the New Testament. In a creative and practical manner Burridge shows how the person of Jesus becomes an interpretive key that unlocks the wealth of ethical guidance that the New Testament contains, and how this can be applied to contemporary contextual issues.

This book is essential reading for Biblical scholars, particularly for those who have an interest in Biblical ethics. It gives a good overview of New Testament ethics and a clear understanding of the

relationship between Christology, the New Testament and contemporary issues. Furthermore it offers a wealth of new insight into the manner in which Christians from various perspectives used the New Testament in formulating their stance on race during the apartheid era in South Africa. I was amazed at how affordable the book is (the price is US\$35.00 for a book of 490 pages). I can see myself using this book a great deal as I introduce students to New Testament ethics, particularly the subtleties and complexities of the differences between ethics OF the New Testament and ethics FROM the New Testament.



Frankfurter, D. 2006. *Evil incarnate: rumours of demonic conspiracy and satanic abuse in history*. xi pages + 286 pages. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press. ISBN 978-0-691-13629-5. Price: US\$19.95; £11.95.

**Reviewer:** Dr Rodney Moss, Department of Theology, St Augustine College of South Africa, Johannesburg, South Africa.

This very worthy publication was the winner of the 2007 Award of Excellence in the Study of Religion, Analytical-Descriptive Studies category of the American Academy of Religion. David Frankfurter is the author of the widely acclaimed *Religion in Roman Egypt* (Princeton), which won the 1999 award for excellence in the historical study of religion from the American Academy of Religion. Currently, David Frankfurter is Professor of Religious Studies at the University of New Hampshire.

The background to this study lies in America in the 1980s when various conspiracy theories abounded concerning happenings, collectively known as satanic ritual abuse, involving the abusing of children in childcare centres, impregnating girls for infant sacrifice and other sinister criminal events. Frankfurter notes certain parallels between these more contemporary panics and those that hit the early Christian world, the witch-hunts, rumours of Jewish ritual murder, and reports of cannibalism in medieval and modern Europe, and contemporary African witch panics. Evil, as it were, occurs in predictably familiar forms and the various demonic conspiracies and satanic ritual abuse are incarnations of moral panics from antiquity to the present moment. Ironically, the attempts to purge evil do not succeed in “bringing about public renewal and stability”, but rather succeed in motivating “participants – in moods of determination and ebullience – to unspeakable violence, evil” (p 224). Frankfurter concludes that the dynamics of this “cleansing” process is “hardwired” into human culture. Moreover, these discourses of evil gain greater efficacy when they are organised, totalised and globalised through literature and the various traditions of demonology. Frankfurter argues convincingly that in each case an actual evil conspiracy never existed, but was a myth constructed about the evil or demonic. In his analysis “the real atrocities of history seem to take place not in the perverse ceremonies of some evil cult but rather in the course of purging such cults from the world”(p 12). In the final chapter he re-iterates that the true evil arises from the myths of demonic conspiracy and the consequent attempts to purge the supposed participants.

The value of this study lies in exploring a social phenomenon – the myth of evil conspiracy – that has functioned in different historical circumstances in order to produce a certain social cohesion on the one hand and, on the other hand, to provide a forum for facing various dangers, the excitement of the inversion of cultural norms and the imaginative fantasy of the savage Other, an ever-present challenge to orderly culture. Inversion and Otherness are linked for inversion as a voyeuristic participation in perversions and atrocities. According to Frankfurter, “imaginative inversion offers the experience of transgression from the vantage point of taboo, the projection of desires within a framework of censure” (p 154).

These psychoanalytical insights are at the core of this study. The book is not primarily historical: rather, it is interdisciplinary in drawing on psychology, religion, sociology and anthropology to show how various social evils are “explained” by demonic conspiracies.

This is indeed a thought-provoking study and is strongly recommended for students of religion, culture and society. The discourses of evil are real in all our lives, and understanding the dynamics that propagate them and turn them into unspeakable violence can liberate people and assist humanity in the journey towards peace and integration.



Greenawalt, K. 2006. *Religion and the constitution: free exercise and fairness*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press. ISBN 0-691-12582-1. Price: US\$39.50; £26.95.

**Reviewer:** Prof Christina Landman, Research Institute for Theology and Religion, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa.

“Americans should freely practice their religions, and government should not establish any religion: these are crucial principles of our liberal democracy.” With these words Kent Greenawalt introduces his superb study of the ways in which the American constitution deals with religious issues. Having pointed to free exercise and non-establishment as the two major values of the constitution, Greenawalt describes thorny legal situations that arise when secular laws and religious practices meet. Some of the questions he asks and tries to answer in terms of the constitution are: What counts as religious? May religious people use dangerous drugs? How should a legislature regard the value of religious sacrifice? How can religion be practised in prison and in the military? What happens when government wants to develop land that is sacred to people? How can secular laws settle disputes over church property?

These, and many more, are questions with which South Africans too are confronted. However, the South African constitution deals very briefly with religion. Chapter 2, section 15.1 simply states that “Everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion.” At the same time, more and more cases are brought before courts locally where religious and secular laws are in conflict with one another.

Although the American and South African constitutions differ in many respects, this book by Greenawalt is an important source for church law as well as secular law specialists dealing with religious issues in South Africa. It touches upon crucial issues of religious freedom and can give guidance, even here in South Africa, on how to deal with religion within the framework of a secular constitution. This knowledge and these skills will become of major importance in the years to come.

The book is highly recommended for libraries and (church) law specialists.



Kramer, G. 2008. *A history of Palestine: from the Ottoman conquest to the founding of the state of Israel*. 357 pages. Princeton: Princeton University Press. ISBN 978-691-11897-0. Price: US\$35.00; £19.95.

**Reviewer:** Dr Erna Oliver. Department Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa.

This is a revised and updated edition of the 2002 *History of Palestine* by Kramer, Professor of Islamic studies at the Free University of Berlin. She is also the author of *The Jews in modern Egypt* that was published in 1989.

“It is a long way from scholarly research to public awareness – especially in cases when politics intervene at every level” (p 39). This remark by Kramer about the diverse and often distorted public viewpoints on the Ottoman history is also true of the subject of her book – Palestine. When writing about this controversial country, public awareness and perceptions of the truth are not only dictated by politics but also by religion and history itself. Although this book is a product of academic research, Kramer presents it through tinted glasses. Reactions by Jewish scholars, has already shown that not everyone will agree with Kramer’s views on and interpretations of history.

The first two chapters provide a brief look at Palestine as the “holy land” for Jews, Christians and Muslims. Although Palestine is a symbol and an emotional reference point when it comes to religion (p 36), she should have omitted the first two chapters and allowed the subtitle to determine the period covered by the book.

Chapter 3 gives a detailed description of the history of Palestine from 1750 to 1840. Chapter 4 explains the changes and reforms that took place between 1840 and 1914. In the following chapters, namely “The evolving nationalisms of the Jews and Arabs (1880-1914)”, “The population, settlement and cultivation of the land”, “World War 1” and “The British mandate”, her bias and the selective way she uses history are again evident.

Halfway through the work (chapters 8–13), Kramer turns to a detailed description of the social and economic issues of the troubled period between 1919 and 1948.

Fourteen black and white photographs dating from about 1900, eight maps and five tables containing statistics and information not widely published before, add value and depth to the work. The bibliography and index at the back ensure that this book will find a place on the bookshelves of academics as a reference work, although not all of them will endorse the way in which the contents are presented.



Nkomazana, F & Lanner, L (eds.). 2007. *Aspects of the history of the church in Botswana*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster. viii pages + 376 pages. ISBN 978-18750-53-643. Price: Unknown.

**Reviewer:** Prof Graham Duncan, Department of Church History and Church Polity, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

This book is not an attempt to provide a comprehensive history of Christianity in Botswana, but only of particular aspects of it. Some parts of the book elaborate on the author's earlier work while other parts focus on the impact of Christianity upon ordinary people. It includes contributions on ecumenical issues; the role of education, Christianity and culture; the role of medical services in church planting and society; Catholicism and ethics, African Initiated Churches (AICs); the church and land; the role of women; and language and demographics. The background theme is provided by a reflection on the transportation of Christianity to Africa to save it from demise in Europe. Botswana has provided fertile ground for the writing of the history of Christianity and this particular volume marks a change in tone in writings about church history: it is not a study of the church as institution, but a study of the impact of Christianity on the powerless in society.

The authors of the second and third chapters, Amanze and Nkomazana, introduce the subject matter through a discussion of the history of Christianity in Botswana and a survey of ecumenical developments (chapter 2), and a study of the role of the LMS, particularly in the encounter between missionaries and the Batswana, which was an encounter between traditional and Western Christian values and their manifestations (chapter 3). They alert us to two significant lessons: Christianity is more successful when it develops its peculiar indigenous expression. The corollary is that its development was hindered when people were forced to choose between it and their traditional cultural heritage. In the following chapter, Kgalemang (chapter 4) points out the indivisibility of Bangwato religion and culture. She highlights the considerable tensions between the LMS and Khama the Great as each strove for control and power. This was an ideological struggle between the concept of the coalescence of state and religion, and the opposing concept of separation of powers. Mgadla's contribution (chapter 5) on the provision of medical services extends our understanding of this struggle by indicating that there were other protagonists in this struggle, hence the Batswana were not passive recipients of the mission and colonialism. Gaie (chapter 6) attempts a moral evaluation of the missionaries by raising a question about the right of anyone to impose their religion on others, especially in the face of ignorance, cultural insensitivity and an unwillingness to inculcate their faith, a process which blacks had to initiate themselves. Amanze (chapter 2) discusses the earlier inferior perception of AICs which has undergone some rehabilitation. Dube (chapter 8) considers the informal role of women in leadership compared with their earlier (pre-colonial) official role in religion, and how some men attempt to subvert them while others revere their office. Dube states that the greater the influence of Western culture, the lower the acceptance of women in leadership. Ruele (chapter 7) demonstrates the use of power against the disadvantaged in society and the co-option of the ZCC to regain lost power. Chebanne (chapter 10) concerns himself with the use of language in a Christian AIC context and questions its enduring influence. Kealotswe (chapter 9) answers this question in the affirmative, although it appears that the Christian value system is under threat from encroaching secularisation. Bewaji (chapter 12) deals with the troubled issue of the sometimes ambivalent response of the church to government policy on land redistribution. Motswapong (chapter 11) addresses the issue of the relationship between the Batswana, Christianity and other faiths in the context of a declining Christianity and a resurgence of traditional religion. Haron (chapter 13) relates the demographic distribution of Christianity in Botswana and gives a comparative analysis of Christianity and the other faith traditions.

The editors, Lanner (Introduction) and Nkomazana (chapter 14) set the parameters of this study, the latter by offering a new research agenda for the history of Christianity in Botswana. They have performed a valuable service to the study of the history of Christianity, one which might be profitably followed in other African countries.



Palmore, EB, Branch, L & Harris, DK (eds.) 2005. *Encyclopedia of ageism*. 376 pages. Birmingham: Haworth. ISBN 0-7890-1890-X. Price: US\$39.95.

**Reviewer:** Dr Jan du Preez, pastor, Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, Silverton, Pretoria, South Africa.

*Encyclopedia of Ageism* is a comprehensive source on ageism which lists 127 entries written by 60 experts from the different disciplines involving older people. The term "ageism" was coined by Dr Robert Butler in 1986 to identify the stereotypes to which people are subjected when they grow old. In

the *Encyclopedia* a variety of alphabetically arranged subjects on ageism is cross-referenced at the end of each entry in order to link the themes. By following this method, the editors focus the reader's attention on related themes. Although the *Encyclopedia* is based mostly on American research spanning three decades, the publication lays bare the origins and manifestations of ageism and presents ways to combat it.

The *Encyclopedia* is primarily directed at the American society. Ageism is a universal phenomenon with many facets that permeates all aspects of human society. This becomes clear from the vast number of topics included and discussed in the *Encyclopedia*. Despite its editors' and contributors' predominantly American approach to ageism, the publication is valuable for and relevant to South African society.

The *Encyclopedia* demonstrates that both the positive and negative aspects of ageism are found throughout society. Contributors to the *Encyclopedia* scrutinise ageism in all spheres of life. Public policy, health care, the social sciences as well as the different aspects of life at individual and societal levels are investigated. The *Encyclopedia* strikes a balance between academic research and practical everyday living, as is revealed by a quick glance at the list of entries. Entries include mundane topics like cards, humour, language, literature, slogans and songs. The topics are mostly vehicles of negative ageism, yet there are changes to foster positive ageism.

*Encyclopedia of Ageism* aims to reduce all forms of age discrimination and to promote positive attitudes towards older adults. The theories and facts about ageism are supported by a wealth of information in the publication. This makes the *Encyclopedia* a handy tool for those who wish to increase individual awareness of ageism. Yet the real value of this publication is that it can serve as a single source of information for people working with senior citizens. It contains numerous practical suggestions to counter age discrimination. It is also an invaluable source for those in positions of authority who are responsible for reducing ageism in government and private institutions and bringing about change in attitudes towards older people.

According to Dr Erdman Palmore many of the principles of racism also apply to sexism and ageism. He believes that ageism is "a kind of psychological and social disease of epidemic proportions in our society and around the world". In South Africa much has been done since 1994 to redress the wrongs of racism and sexism, but I believe we still have far to go before ageism in all its forms will be eradicated from our society. The *Encyclopedia* could be an aid to educate us in new ways of thinking about ageing and the aged in our endeavour to rid ourselves of ageism.



Peterson, DC. 2007. *Muhammed: Prophet of God*. xi pages +186 pages. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. ISBN 978-0-8028-0754-0. Price: US\$8.99.

**Reviewer:** Prof Graham Duncan, Department of Church History and Church Polity, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

This is a relatively new and fresh addition to scholarship surrounding the life and work of the prophet Muhammed written from without the fold of Islam. It comes at a time when there is a renewed interest in Islam. What I found particularly helpful was the Overture, which places the rest of the study in its historical and geographical context which is linked to the variegated situation of early Christianity. The author emphasises the socioeconomic distinction between rural and urban inhabitants, the influence of Hellenistic thought and the consequent deterioration in traditional values.

The following chapter on the Arabian *Jahiliyya* or "Age of Innocence" describes the interim period prior to the birth of Muhammed and the rise of Islam. It relates how only Bedouin life (based in group solidarity and focused on survival) was possible in the Arabian environment with migrant Arabs mixing in settled civilisations influencing Roman and Greek cultures. Arab life, which was significant for the development of Islam, was characterised by authoritarian political organisation, authority exercised through generosity and hospitality, honour, a high degree of freedom of action, the professional custody of shrines and a lack of class stratification. What emerges is a situation where there was a significant degree of continuity between pre-Islamic and Islamic society.

The religious prestige of the Meccan Ka'ba extended to the economic domain as caravans operated under its patronage. In the period immediately preceding Muhammed's call, the increase in Mecca's wealth precipitated a secular crisis as a result of the emergence of new class divisions and the increasing moral turpitude of Arabian paganism despite contact with early Christianity and Judaism. It was in this context of spiritual anticipation that a belief arose that an Arabian prophet would emerge.

The author considers the sources available on Muhammed's life and weaves them into an engaging narrative. He highlights Muhammed's apparent strength of character, will and resource-

fulness. He proceeds to describe the prophet's life and work, considering his visions and revelations, and the beginnings of the world faith he brought to birth and which continues to influence the world today in remarkable ways. The chapter on Muhammed's calling contains an interesting section on the definition of a prophet (pp 56–59). Here the Prophet is located in the broader Near Eastern prophetic tradition. The recognition of Muhammed as a prophet was tantamount to acceptance of his political supremacy. Sadly, unwanted and unwarranted violence arose in the early days of Islam. As Muhammed's mission advanced towards the city of Mecca, the prophet aimed at *rapprochement* with Mecca through conversion and the co-option of the Ka'ba as an Islamic religious symbol. Peace with Mecca facilitated the spread of Islam. Having witnessed the submission of Mecca, Muhammed was spurred on to further advances and Islam developed as the result of its religious appeal as well as the secular aims of those who sought to be accommodated by this political state of the future.

In a concluding reflection, Peterson assesses the value of Islam as a faith which catapulted Arabs onto the world scene through a combination of appealing simplicity and power as a means of social advancement. Its charismatic authority became traditional authority through the formation of the Q'uranic canon. Apart from this, Muhammed's life came to be regarded as a source of revelation of the divine will. The Islamic community and its sacred traditions form a dynamic religion that reinforces each partner. Muhammed himself emerges as someone who commanded absolute loyalty and deference; a paradigm of pure spirituality, an intercessor, a human prophet open to the charge of violence (?), but someone who loved his family and children (as any Mafia godfather might); someone possessed of a clear charisma who exercised considerable compassion; someone who was basically honest and sincere.

This book moves beyond mere storytelling to contextual analysis and this is its value to contemporary scholarship. It certainly helps us to understand Islam in a rational way at a time when there is often a lack of rationality. It is also a good read!



Sawyer, JFA. 2006. *The Blackwell companion to the Bible and culture*. 533 pages. Oxford: Malden, MA: Blackwell. Cloth and dust jacket. ISBN 1-4051-0136-9. Price: US\$150.00.

**Reviewer:** Prof Dr Christoph Stenschke, Missionshaus Bibelschule Wiedenest, Bergneustadt, Germany and Department of New Testament, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa.

The present volume addresses the fascinating relationship between the Bible and culture, as “there are few aspects of culture, ancient, medieval and modern, European and non-European, religious and secular, that have not interacted in some way with the Bible” (p 1). The authors address the Christian Bible in the sense that the texts discussed are in the vernacular (mainly English). The relationship between the terms Bible and culture can be described as both tension-filled and mutually generative. The focus throughout is the interaction between the text, the specific context of the Bible's readers, and the weight of the historical past and tradition(s) that impact upon the readers' present. The aim is to provide a series of assessments of the ways in which the various “practices” of cultures – aesthetic, political, religious – inform and are informed by Scripture. It offers a coherent challenge to assumptions that the Bible is a static and univocal phenomenon. Just as the text and its readers have challenged dominant cultural assumptions in every age or period, so too changing cultural forms constantly question the validity of the biblical text and its interpretations (p 2).

The 30 essays by 27 international (mainly British) authors seek to explore the impact of the Bible or particular biblical texts on various periods of history (such as the Reformation), politics in general, ecology and other topics, or on specific communities in different parts of the world.

JFA Sawyer's “Introduction” (pp 1–7) stresses the “multi-faceted nature of the Bible and its after-lives. ... The evidence of this volume is that, far from undermining the political power of the Bible, its many meanings seem to have provided its readers with all the inspiration and authority they need, whether to justify a theological doctrine or to create a work of art or to rebel against an oppressive regime” (p 2). Sawyer further discusses the relationship between the original meaning of the text (which is *not* the focus of this volume) and the value and validity of the old and new quest for nonliteral meanings in the Bible, be they rabbinical, patristic, medieval, modern or postmodern. He raises the question whether there is any legitimate control over how the Bible can be interpreted (“... is there anything to prevent the wholesale rape and dismemberment of the biblical text?” (p 3) and notes that “(t)hose who would have liked to control the process and protect the Bible from ill-treatment – with whatever authority, ecclesiastical, academic or political – have been singularly unsuccessful” (p 4). After discussing the validity of Christian readings of the Old Testament, Sawyer argues that as the text without a reader has no meaning, “the readers and interpreters must be scrutinized, their

presuppositions, their aims, and their methods, not only their hearings and interpretations” (p 5). The aim of this collection is “to listen to some of the much louder and clearer voices of the millions of readers and interpreters of the Bible, who down the centuries have looked for guidance, authority and inspiration, and ensured that it is not isolated from the world in which they live, but remains alive” (p 5). The articles close with bibliographies of varying length.

*Part one* is concerned with *Revealing the past*, considering “the Bible’s journey through time from the Ancient World, from which it emerged and in which it barely existed, to the modern world where it was challenged, dismembered and rewritten by scientists, historical critics, theologians and others” (p 5). PR Davies surveys “The Ancient World” (pp 11–27). K Cooper writes about “The Patristic Period” (pp 28–38) and M Dove about “The Middle Ages” (pp 39–53) with the emphasis on Wycliffe and the translation of the Bible into English. IN Rashkow writes about “The Renaissance” (pp 54–68) and focuses mainly on the impact of the translation of the Bible into the vernacular, which marked a major turning point in the history of European culture; some aspects of the Bible in the Middle Ages appear in other entries, while others are lacking all together. P Matheson discusses “The Reformation” (pp 69–83). Matheson concludes:

In the end, there were many Bibles, Erasmus found the unity of Scripture in the Gospels, Luther focused on the covenantal theme of grace, as recapitulated by Jesus and Paul. A radical theologian, such as Müntzer, blended together texts from Genesis and the Gospel of John, from Jeremiah and Paul in his mystical and apocalyptic reading of divine and human reality. And we may end with Argula von Grumbach, for whom the prophets and apostles became contemporaries, loving companions on her own journey. No aspect of her life remained untouched by Scripture yet she remained quintessentially herself, a child of her day and age (p 83).

Cameron surveys “The Counter-Reformation” (pp 85–103) describing how Catholic orthodoxy had to develop new strategies against the Reformation to safeguard the authority of the Councils, the Fathers and Papal authority. JW Rogerson writes “The Modern World” (pp 104–116), which is mainly a sketch of post-enlightenment history of biblical scholarship. Other aspects of the Bible in the modern world appear in other essays of this volume. Rogerson also includes two pages on JW Colenso (p 108 et seq).

*Part two*, “The nomadic text”, traces global appropriations of the Bible and describes how Bible and culture relate to each other in different religions and parts of the world. (Christianity and Europe are sufficiently covered in part one, so they do not need entries of their own.) E Kessler’s chapter on “Judaism” (pp 119–134), includes a brief survey of the Bible in Jewish art, for example from the synagogue at Dura Europos and the mosaics at Beit Alpha. SN Lambden writes about “Islam” (pp 135–157), focusing on the complex relationship between Islam and the Bible in Iran and the Arab world, and includes sections on the resemblances between Bible and the Quran, the accusations of Scriptural falsification and alteration levelled against the Bible, Islamic Bible citations, and so on. Lambden writes: “Modern Muslim engagement with the Bible and biblical scholarship largely awaits balanced and unprejudiced realization” (p 153). C-S Song’s “Asia” (pp 158–175), focuses on the evolution of Asian forms of Christianity and assesses common trends. JA Draper writes “Africa” (pp 176–197) and approaches the topic ethnographically. The author examines the emergence of the relationship between Bible and culture, and its evolution in the microcosm of Zulu culture: “This is partly because of a sense of danger of generalization and partly out of a sense that the general is best understood from the perspective of the local.” Draper discusses the Bible and conversion, the Bible and vernacular translation, the Bible and cultural continuity, the Bible and creative cultural adaptation, the Bible and the land, and the Bible and African women. SM Langston writes about “North America” (pp 198–216) and ES Gerstenberger about “Latin America” (pp 217–31). R Boer and I Abraham write about “Australasia” (pp 232–249), including the Bible in the Australian outback and in suburban Melbourne.

*Part three*, “The Bible and the senses”, focuses on some aesthetic and performative renderings of the Bible. It includes J Carruthers’s “Literature” (pp 253–267), which sketches the history of the Bible’s reception in literature as one of “re-writing, supplementation and defamiliarization”, (cf p 6). A Bach writes the chapter entitled “Film” (pp 268–285), while JW Rogerson surveys “Music” (pp 286–98) with the aim to “show that the interpretation of the Bible in oratorios and operas is often a complicated and instructive exercise, affected by personal beliefs and external political and theological circumstances”. Listeners are encouraged “not only to enjoy and appreciate the music which is devoted to biblical texts and themes, but to realize that the works concerned are also exercises in biblical interpretation, some of which invite deeper reflection upon the biblical material that is employed” (p 297). HJ Hornik and MC Parsons write about “Art” (pp 299–322) and give examples from different epochs.; A Ballantyne surveys “Architecture” (pp 223–237) and examines the biblical descriptions of

Rahab's house in Jericho, the Tower of Babel, the Temple of Solomon, the New Jerusalem and other biblical monuments and buildings.; M Twycross writes about "The Theatre" (pp 338–364) and looks at the origins and development of medieval dramatisations of the Bible, and liturgical drama as interpretation and as a way to strengthen faith. The chapter on theatre also includes a brief section on the South African production *Yimimangaliso The Mysteries* of 2001 (cf p 358; [www.britishtheatreinfo.info/reviews/dvd-mysteries-rev.htm](http://www.britishtheatreinfo.info/reviews/dvd-mysteries-rev.htm)).

BO Long writes about "The Circus" (pp 365–380) being "a socio-economic and political study of a dramatization of *The Fall of Niniveh*, first performed by a travelling circus in Philadelphia in 1892" (p 6). G Loughlin surveys "The Body" (pp 381–395) and discusses the different parts of the body and how biblical texts about the body of Adam, created in the image of God, have been applied to Christian teaching on homosexuality.

*Part four* is entitled "Reading in practice". It includes a chapter by G West on "Contextuality" (pp 399–413), which looks at contextual Bible study, the socio-economic context, and a section called "from reading the Bible to reading reality". West finds increasing socio-economic awareness in African theology and biblical studies, using as a case study the programme of the Ujamaa Centre for Biblical and Theological Community Development and Research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (cf [www.sorat.ukzn.ac.za/ujamaa](http://www.sorat.ukzn.ac.za/ujamaa)). T Gorrige writes about "Politics" (pp 414–431). The author says: "Throughout the twentieth century, from Russia to Africa, from Europe to Asia, the Bible remained a profoundly disturbing political text" (p 429). According to him the view that the polyselmy of Scripture undermined its political power does not seem to be correct. "These texts continue to shape our social imagery, calling rulers to account and inspiring visions of societies in which God's *shalom* may be realised" (p 429). A Primavesi's chapter is entitled on "Ecology" (pp 432–446). IN Rashkow writes about "Psychology" (pp 447–463) and gives a critique of psycho-analytical approaches to biblical interpretation. In "Gender" (pp 464–479) DF Sawyer addresses various issues of feminist hermeneutics, including the maleness of God and the patriarchal nature of biblical literature. J Carruthers surveys "Nationalism" (pp 480–496) from the 16th century to today, arguing that various nationalistic impulses have their origin in the pages of the Old Testament. He says: "Protestantism preaches the gospel of universality and yet its emphasis upon the vernacular and upon individual interpretation and divine revelation has ... encouraged – even created – nationalistic tendencies" (p 494). The chapter includes observations on the role of the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, in Afrikaner self-understanding in the 19th century (p 491). SA Bong writes about "Post-colonialism" (pp 497–514). In Asia, the author says, Eurocentric meanings of the Bible have been questioned and– in some quarters – "Christianity has become a spiritual tradition of the East, an Asian religious tradition that is not only a re-source but also a source of light to the world" (p 512). A Tate surveys "Postmodernism" (pp 515–33) and discusses "the multiple manifestations and interpretations of the Bible in our own complex historical moment" (p 7). The volume closes with an index of biblical references (pp 534–545) and a general index (pp 546–555).

The authors provide an inspiring survey of the complex relationship between the Bible and culture(s). They raise several hermeneutical issues (aptly summarised by Sawyer's introduction, see above) to which scholars from different backgrounds and other readers of the Bible need to find appropriate responses. It indicates many facets of the rich history of reception which the Bible triggered worldwide.

Though many contributions focus particularly on the English context, they include several South African perspectives and chapters written by two South African authors (West and Draper), both of whom have widely and deeply reflected on the impact of the Bible in Africa. The first, history-oriented part of the collection focuses mainly on the history of the Bible in its Mediterranean and European setting. This is fair enough in view of the vast extant material produced in this context. However, one wonders whether the time has come to appreciate the impact of the Bible in other parts of the world in a *historical* perspective. The Bible has been read in Africa for centuries, and in Egypt, North Africa, Ethiopia, and so on for almost two millennia! It is misleading to limit the impact of the Bible on Africa to the present, or to the encounter with the Bible that was brought to Africa by modern Western missionary endeavours south of the Sahara, or to various liberationist readings.

Other Blackwell Companions to religion and theology are listed on [www.blackwellpublishing.com/religion](http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/religion).



Sheehan, J. 2008. *The enlightenment Bible: translation, scholarship, culture*. 273 pages. Princeton: Princeton University Press. ISBN 978-0-691-13069-9. Price: US\$19.95; £11.95.

**Reviewer:** Prof Humphrey Mogashoa, Department of Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa.

This book is an intensive, highly saturated scholarly work. It is an analysis of “moments of translation” (the concepts the author uses) of the Bible since the Protestant Reformation. It presents the time periods and their related factors that influenced the translation of the Bible. It also investigates how the Bible in turn influenced and shaped developments in society. The author says that while the Reformation made the Protestant Bible the “engine” of political, religious and imaginative life, the Bible “powered” the very project of Reformation. The Bible was the force of chaos for many Catholics, while at the same time it was a force of righteousness for Protestants.

The author moves the argument to another level when he speaks of the Bible as the “Word of God”. To say “Scripture alone” was: (a) to deny the efficacy and relevance of the Roman Church concerning divine matters; (b) to invest reform and reformers with the very authority of God; and (c) to set up a tribunal before which the unbelievers would be judged. These issues and the challenges of the time became the load under which the Bible began to quiver. Under this load emerged different translations, for example William Tyndale’s 1524 English translation, Luther’s 1522 German translation and Erasmus’s 1516 Greek New Testament. Through these translations, “two inescapable yet contradictory qualities were joined”. On the one hand it is the argument that the Scriptures are the authentic Word of God. On the other hand it is the argument that the Scriptures are a collection of books, human artefacts whose integrity has long depended on fallible, forgetful people. Both profoundly divine and profoundly human, Scripture has usually joined these two qualities in relatively seamless harmony.

Consequently, the new Bible becomes part of religious life and “virtually indistinguishable from the original version”. However, scriptural translations have historically forced a set of awkward questions into the open. The same translations have hidden the gap between “Word of God” (God’s word) and “human art” (human tongues), so that they might once more seem unified. The author argues that Christ metaphorically translated the Bible away from the Jews in the New Testament and Paul made Christianity into a religion of translation.

*The enlightenment Bible* emerged from the Enlightenment period. The Enlightenment period is the period that immediately followed the Protestant Reformation period. Therefore the process that was to result in *The enlightenment Bible* started during the Protestant period.



Sorkin, D. 2008. *The religious enlightenment. Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna*. 339 pages. Princeton: Princeton University Press. ISBN 978-0-691-13502-1. Price: US\$35.00; £19.95.

**Reviewer:** Dr Erna Oliver, Department of Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa.

Contrary to the popular believe that the Enlightenment was a secular phenomenon, the work of Sorkin shows that religion played a significant part in the unfolding of this 18th century development of philosophy and culture.

The book describes six figures in their respective historical contexts, highlighting intellectual similarities while recognising national differences. The author focuses on four aspects that characterise the religious Enlightenment. The first two are clusters of ideas and the last two are social and political attributes:

First, religious enlighteners searched for the middle way of reasonable belief grounded in the idea of ‘natural religion’ and the exegetical principle of accommodation. Second, they embraced toleration based on the idea of natural law. Third, the public sphere was central: the religious Enlightenment was an important component of it, while religious enlighteners engaged in multiple pursuits in it. Fourth, the religious Enlightenment gained the sponsorship of states, using natural law theory, advocated a state church (p 11).

Sorkin starts with William Warburton’s “heroic moderation” that provided an important re-articulation of Protestant belief in England that included an enduring defence of church-state relations and a historical interpretation of Christianity. Next he moves to Jacob Vernet who represented the second

generation of “enlightened orthodoxy” promoting the “middle way” of “reasonable” belief in Geneva. Sorkin describes how Baumgarten revamped Lutherism by advocating natural law and natural religion, toleration and freedom of conscience while also defending revelation and scripture. He calls it “the true middle way”. Moses Mendelssohn who separated practice from theory in Judaism was a leading figure in the Berlin Enlightenment.

Joseph Eybel who reformed the practice of Catholicism used the printing press to distribute his ideas. Adrien Lamourette devised a theology that combined reasonable religion and Rousseauist sentimentalism on the basis of a moderate fideist scepticism. This Frenchman strove to overcome the polarity between religion and reason in the Catholic Church.

More than half of the contents of the book have previously been published. This is probably the reason why there is no consistency in the outline of the chapters (which should have been attended to by the editor).

David Sorkin is the Frances and Laurence Weinstein Professor of Jewish Studies and Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is a leading scholar on the 18th century. Theologians and historians will both find this book useful.



Starr-LeBeau, GD. 2003. *In the shadow of the Virgin: inquisitors, friars, and conversos in Guadalupe, Spain*. 280 pages. Princeton: Princeton University Press. ISBN: 978-0-691-13938-8. Price: US\$25.95; £14.95.

**Reviewer:** Dr Erna Oliver, Department of Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa

The story of the people living in a town named Guadalupe, the most popular pilgrimage site in 15th century Spain, comes to life in this skilfully written monograph. Starr-LeBeau avoids siding with either of the traditional views of the converso (identity of Jews that converted to Christianity). She emphasises the complexity of attitudes and practices, the distinctness of conversos and the political repercussions of their presence at the shrine. Thorough archival research and the comparison of civil documents with inquisitorial records show that the Inquisition’s investigation of conversos reshaped religious and ethnic identity. This refashioned identity transformed local political conflicts, thus altering the exercise of local and royal authority.

The author’s argument develops in three parts (p 2): It examines in detail the complex range of practices of “New Christians” (conversos) in the context of Old Christian communities. It connects Christians’ contested religious identity with the nascent and malleable power of the Inquisition. It traces exactly how local and royal officials deployed inquisitorial power for their own ends.

Chapter 1 introduces the Virgin of Guadalupe, the friars of the Jeronymite monastery and the town that came into existence around the shrine, revealing the tensions between the groups. Chapter 2 demonstrates how religious identities were constructed. Chapter 3 analyses the conversos as an integrated part of the town’s social, political and religious life. Chapter 4 is a study of the events leading up to the introduction of the Inquisition. Chapter 5 describes how the inquisitor’s vision of those tried changed the status and even the identity of New Christians by basing the definition of heresy on ethnicity. Chapter 6 shows how many of the town’s residents made use of the legal structures of the Holy Office for their own ends. Chapter 7 describes the importance of the Holy Office in ending the internal struggles among the friars who also exhibited a range of Christian and Jewish practices. Chapter 8 reveals the ongoing repercussions of the Inquisition after its departure.

This fresh approach to describing the relationship between religious identity and political authority in late-medieval and early-modern Spain will be of great help to historians and church historians interested in religious orders, the Inquisition, converso identity and Spanish history.



Vorster, JM. 2008. *The challenge of contemporary religious fundamentalism*. Pretoria: Church History Society of Southern Africa. ISBN 978-1-86888-526-8. Price: R120,00; US\$35.00; £20.00; €24.00.

**Reviewer:** Prof Graham Duncan, Department of Church History and Church Polity, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, South Africa.

This volume is the first in the *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* book series in which Prof Vorster has made a significant contribution to what is both a historical and a current debate of great importance. Fundamentalism is determined as having originated in 1927 within Protestant theology as a form of

resistance against modernism in a liberal society, with a tendency towards the violation of human rights even within the Christian faith. It is an ecumenical term which is to be found throughout world Christianity and in other faiths, particularly Islam. Vorster sees fundamentalism as a process of revival, resistance and violence, in other words he sees it as essentially destructive. He offers a reflection on the relationship of fundamentalism to maintaining a cult of human rights in the South African context and considers constitutional models to manage this phenomenon along with the role of religion in the process.

The initial chapter seeks to analyse the concept of fundamentalism as a “pattern of reasoning” in an interlinked sense theologically, psychologically, politically and socially, and it does so in the contemporary context of the events of 9/11. The author offers a broadened meaning of the term as a militant religious movement claiming authority to reinstate the role of religion in the public domain linked to the preservation of identity by the provision of a unifying meaning system, supported by a sacred text elevated to unchallengeable authority and predisposed to adopting an ideological rather than theological stance. It emerges as a way of managing “future shock”, which makes it resistant to transformation. In essence it is reactive rather than proactive.

Chapter 2 discusses the characteristics of contemporary fundamentalism which breed ideologies. These include literalism, traditioning, a casuistic approach to ethics, fear of a perceived enemy, awareness of tension between an “in” group and the Other, charismatic leadership and the use of violence.

There follows a chapter on the causes of fundamentalism. Globalisation looms large as a cause of this phenomenon. It has made everywhere and everyone more accessible to one another and consequently can be viewed as very threatening. Here fundamentalism emerges as a bulwark against globalisation. It has spawned the spread of modernism and its scion, postmodernism, with its denial of absolutes in terms of relative values.

The next chapter considers infringements of human rights as a result of fundamentalism. These impinge on the values of equality and freedom. The author points out a discrepancy between the right to life and the contradictory responses of fundamentalists when dealing with the issues of abortion and capital punishment. A notable attack on human rights concerns the debased treatment of women.

The final chapter acknowledges the durability of religious fundamentalism and the need to understand its roots causes and effects as well as the emergence of the secular state. The positive and holistic role of religion needs to be emphasised. It is imperative that liberal democracies reflect on the value of an active plural option for the future of religious freedom for the promotion of peace and human rights. Religions also have a great responsibility in this regard.

Vorster does not only use Christian terms to help us understand this complex and confusing global phenomenon which is an element of contemporary society. He has distilled and systematised a substantial body of literature and information in a most digestible format to provide a sound contemporary introduction to religious fundamentalism and related it to current issues. His book may help explain the ongoing drift of South Africans to right-wing charismatic churches that promote fundamentalism. In their search for security and membership of a revitalised and renewed group, these South Africans adopt fundamentalism as a coping mechanism.

This book is an excellent primer for understanding an ongoing problem in church and society.



Wuthnow R. 2006. *American mythos: why our best efforts to be a better nation fall short*. viii pages + 288 pages. Princeton: Princeton University Press. ISBN 978-0-691-13855-8. Price: US\$18.95; £11.50.

**Reviewer:** Prof Graham Duncan, Department of Church History and Church Polity, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

This book exposes the dilemma faced by the American populace in trying to build community in a diverse and individualistic society. The author has adopted a narrative approach to issues of moral responsibility, immigration, success, religion and ethnicity to elucidate an understanding of what constitutes American identity. However, the “deep meanings” of these stories may also skew perceptions of the exact nature of the reality they are seeking to interpret. The author’s thesis is that if more serious attention were paid to these stories the more able the nation would be to conform to the ideals they profess. This *mythos* or “deep character of culture” (p 2) both legitimates and limits the achievement of these ideals. The focus is on recent immigrants to the United States, which is essentially a nation of immigrants.

The changes in society brought about through immigration have led to a process of democratic renewal which is vital for the maintenance of democracy. Yet this democratic ideal is threatened both

from without and within by complacency, self-interest and receding participation in community issues. These deep meanings are hardly interrogated though they are fundamental to understanding the morality of ethnicity, religious pluralism, individual success and reasons for immigration. Wuthnow's solution to this dilemma is to engage in "reflective democracy" through reflection on the meaning of the mythic dimensions of culture and the analysis of the assumptions which govern social and political life. This will facilitate the grasping of opportunities to renew national and personal life.

The first chapter offers a historical survey of the democratic renewal process as a response to challenges regarding fundamental cultural assumptions about the whole of society and not particular precipitating circumstances. This is exemplified in the period since 1965 by the civil rights movement, equal opportunities and affirmative action, gender equality and reformed immigration policies. Chapter 2 considers the role of the individual in society and how that relates to the wider community. Various arguments are advanced about which has priority, but Wuthnow demonstrates that particular understandings of the individual are prevalent in American culture. And, of course the individual is central to her narrative approach though her societal experiences shape individuality.

The following four chapters are devoted to a case study of the ways in which immigration has impacted or failed to impact upon a renewal of American culture. Immigrants are normally people who are resilient and looking for a challenge, while the indigenous population tends towards complacency. Immigrants are more willing to transcend the past through greater inclusion and upward mobility. In chapter 3 the enormous risks many took in the process of transition are discussed. Chapter 4 is devoted to the immigrant who becomes a self-made person in his or her new country. Religion (chapter 5) provides a further source of diversity and vitality among immigrants. In contrast, native-born Americans tend to view religion as personal and private and a retreat from public responsibility. Chapter 6 highlights aspects of the role of ethnicity and explains a pluralistic model that supplants an assimilation model. Materialism is the subject of chapter 7, in which the author raises the possibility that immigrants bring new cultural values with them. The final chapter highlights the need for balance in our approach to the individual and the community, and examines the delicate balance between inclusion and exclusion. "Reflective democracy" exercised in public fora is presented as one means of achieving a balance. A "hermeneutic of suspicion" could be employed in such fora in order to reach consensus.

This book adds to the discussion of participatory democracy in the USA. It is relevant to the South African situation even though its emphasis on the place and role of the individual will grate in the African context.



Deist, F. *Nagdissipels. Oor kweelrae van die geloof*. 127 bladsye. Wellington: Lux Verbi. ISBN-10: 0-7963-0522-6, ISBN-13: 978-07963-0522-0. Prys: Onbekend.

**Resensent:** Dr Ralph Barnard, Algoa Bybel Akademie, Uitenhage, SA.

Die uitgewers kan gelukkig word met die besluit om 'n reeks heruitgawes van Ferdinand Deist se boeke die lig te laat sien. Sodoende laat hulle die stem herleef van 'n internasionaal bekende teoloog wat daarin kon slaag om geloofswaarhede in eenvoudige taal aan die medemens oor te dra.

*Nagdissipels* se teikenmerk is vir mense wat "moeilik" glo: mense wat nie naïewe npraters is van "Bybelse waarhede" nie, maar nadenkend – selfs twyfelend – met ou geloofstandpunte omgaan.

Naas die Bybelteks, stel Deist ook 'n ander "teks" aan die woord: die groot filosoof en agnostikus Bertrand Russell. *Nagdissipels* is egter nie 'n tipiese apologetiese genre waarin die teenstander se swak argumentatiewe onderbou ondermyn word of met teksarsenale platgeskiet word nie. Deist gaan krities-solidêr om met Russel se denke en dui aan hoe dit verteenwoordigend is van die denke van baie mense wat steeds gelowiges *bly*.

In tien sketse behandel Deist Russell se sterkste besware teen die Christelike geloof, onder andere: geloof is 'n gebrek aan kennis; die wil van God bestaan nie; teoloë belemmer nuwe insigte; en die kerk keer vooruitgang.

Deist koppel die temas aan bekende Bybelfigure: karakters wat uitstaan as geloofshelde, ongeag hul wroegings oor God en geloof; karakters wat dikwels oppervlakkig voorgedou word as "modelgelowiges" sonder dat daar met eerlikheid gelet word op hulle vroe, verset en (uiteindelike) ver-sekering.

*Nagdissipels* wemel van denktreffers soos: "God se wil is 'n eindpunt waarheen ons onderweg is, nie 'n dwingende gebod wat ons van agter stoot nie" (p 73); "God is nie beskikbaar vir nuuskierige oë nie ..." (p 110); "Ons moet oppas dat ons God nie na *ons* beeld en gelykenis skep en dan by ons eie

skepping sweer nie” (p 112). En: “As ons Christene wil wees, moet ons voortdurend krities wees om dinge te weeg en te beoordeel – nie vanuit wat *was* nie, maar vanuit wat behoort te kom” (p 126).

*Nagdissipels* is deurdagte geloof in leesbare taal. Vir die leraar én die leerder, die bekerende én die bakleiende. Dit is jammer dat 'n kwaliteitboek soos hierdie gemartel word met estetiees onvriendelike drukfoute (wat genadiglik nie die gladde lees van die teks belemmer nie). *Nagdissipels* is 'n geloofskat wat die koffietafel én die boekrak verryk.



Fuller, C. 2008. *Gebedsgids vir die besige vrou: hou op skuldig voel, en ontdek die gawe van God*. 206 bladsye. Wellington: Lux Verbi. ISBN-10: 0 7963 0705 9. Prys: R99,95.

**Resensent:** Dr Erna Oliver. Departement Christelike Spiritualiteit, Kerkgeskiedenis en Missiologie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, Pretoria, Suid-Afrika.

Cheri Fuller het reeds meer as 30 topverkopers op haar kerfstok. Sy is 'n gewilde spreker en tree gereeld op as gas in die massamedia van die VSA. Lux Verbi het verskeie van Fuller se gewilde boeke oor gebed in Afrikaans vertaal. Vertaal- en taalfoute wat elke paar bladsye opduik is steurend, maar die inhoud vergoed daarvoor. Deeglike navorsing en volledige bronverwysings maak die boek 'n handige handleiding vir individue wat hierdie boek as die eerste stap in hulle gebedsreis gebruik. Dit maak die boek ook geskik vir gebruik as groepshandleiding wanneer daar op gebed gefokus word en sorg dat die boek ook in teologiese kringe bruikbaar is.

Fuller se eie verhaal wat in die inhoud verweef is, kom soms te sterk deur. 'n Mens kry die gevoel dat sy die storie doelbewus inweef om seker te maak dat die leser kennis neem van waar sy was, wie sy ken en wat sy al gedoen het of hoe besig sy is. Tog kan die feit dat sy haar persoonlike lewe ontbloom help om 'n brug te bou na die leefwêreld van die leser wat met heelwat van haar ondervindings kan identifiseer. Die idees en voorstelle wat Fuller maak om gebed deel van ons gejaagde lewens te maak, is eenvoudig en prakties uitvoerbaar.

Hoewel al die idees beslis nie vir elkeen van ons sal werk nie, is daar basiese waarhede wat ons dikwels vergeet of verwaarloos en waaraan ons weer herinner moet word: Bid die Woord, bid dadelik en op die plek vir die een wat jou vra om vir hom of haar te bid. Bid sodra jy wakker word ongeag die tyd. Bid terwyl jy op pad is. Dit is dinge wat ons weet, maar nie altyd toepas nie. Verder is daar ook kreatiewe idees om meer tyd in gebed deur te bring waarvan minstens een of twee vir elke vrou uitvoerbaar kan wees. Hoeveel vroue maak tyd om na God te luister? Fuller doen oulike voorstelle aan die hand en gee goeie raad oor hierdie aspek van gebed.

Dit lyk dalk of Fuller mense aanmoedig om gebed in hulle vol program in te pas eerder as om hulle program aan te pas om op God te fokus, maar as haar voorstelle in die daaglikse lewe deurgevoer word, sal die gewenste uitwerking wel sigbaar word.

Die boek word aanbeveel vir vroue van alle ouderdomme en veral vir hul Bybelstudie- of gebedsgroepe. Enigiemand wat 'n behoefte het om meer oor gebed te leer of haar persoonlike gebedslewe wil verdiep, sal hierdie boek handig vind.



Gaum, F (ed). 2008. *Christelike kern-ensiklopedie*. 1 212 bladsye. Wellington: Lux Verbi. ISBN 978 07963 07538. Prys: R349,00.

**Resensent:** Dr Erna Oliver, Departement Christelike Spiritualiteit, Kerkgeskiedenis en Missiologie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika. Pretoria, Suid-Afrika.

Die *Christelike kern-ensiklopedie* bevat 3 250 alfabetiese inskrywings oor sake wat vir Suid-Afrikaanse Christene van belang is. Die redaksie het gepoog om gebeure, mense en strominge wat 'n invloed op die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing en Christelike geloof uitoefen, kernagtig te bespreek. Dit sluit algemene, kerkverwante, historiese en kontemporêre onderwerpe in. Sake soos die sondvloed, die Babiloniese ballingskap, die kruisiging, monnikke-orde, kruistogte, die Renaissance, die Hervorming, die Sinode van Dordt, die Anglo-Boereoorlog, wêreldoorloë, die Belydenis van Belhar en die Islam-aanvalle op Amerika word bespreek. Elke leser sal waarskynlik sake en mense kan byvoeg wat volgens hom of haar ook deel van die kernaangeleenthede in die Suid-Afrikaanse Christendom is, maar wat nie in hierdie werk opgeneem is nie. Tog is die redaksie se seleksie oor die algemeen wel wyd genoeg en in die kol.

Teksverwysings word deurgaans gegee wanneer daar na Bybelfigure, Bybelboeke, Bybelse begrippe en plekke waarvan ons in die Bybel lees, melding gemaak word.

Die maklik verstaanbare, Afrikaanse verklarings van ‘n wye verskeidenheid begrippe is beslis een van die boek se sterk punte. Belangrike teologiese strominge, teologiese terme en ‘n lang lys woorde wat op “-isme” eindig, word verklaar en bondig omskryf. Algemene, Afrikaanse terme soos “apartheid” en “regstellende aksie” word vanuit ‘n Christelike perspektief bespreek.

Kerkvaders, hervormers en internasionale teoloë wie se werke ‘n invloed op Suid-Afrika gehad het, asook politici en selfs Voortrekkerleiers word bespreek. Die wyer konteks, naamlik teologiese ontwikkeling in Afrika, word ook gegee. Verder word digters, skrywers, kunstenaars, sportlui, musikante en teoloë ingesluit. Verrassend en vars is die insluiting van ‘n groot aantal Suid-Afrikaanse teoloë wat tans baanbrekerswerk verrig.

Hoewel die meerderheid van die 163 medewerkers teoloë uit ‘n groot verskeidenheid denominasies is, het filosofe, sielkundiges, letterkundiges, historici en joernaliste ook bydraes tot die boek gelewer. Tog is die algemene perspektief hoofsaaklik Protestants-Gereformeerd. ‘n Groot voordeel is dat die outeur se naam onder aan elke inskrywing verskyn. Hoewel die kwaliteit van al die inskrywings nie ewe goed is nie, is die inligting oor die algemeen behoorlik nagevors. Heelwat van die inskrywings eindig met “vir verder lees” waarin bronne volledig aangegee word. ‘n Indeks sou die bruikbaarheid van die publikasie verder verhoog het. Kruisverwysings, trefwoorde en ‘n duimindeks maak die boek gebruikersvriendelik. Die gebruik van volsinne, maklik verstaanbare taal, min afkortings en byna foutlose teks sorg dat hierdie volkleur-, kompakte ensiklopedie beslis baie gewild sal wees in die mark vir gewilde Christelike boeke – ‘n ideale Kersgeskenk. Die *Christelike kernensiklopedie* sal beslis ook ‘n ereplek op boekrakke van akademici en predikante kry.



Joubert, S. 2008. *Woorde van lewe: 50 inspirerende oordenkings vir jou lewenspad*. 107 bladsye. Vereniging: Christelike Uitgewersmaatskappy (CUM). ISBN 978-1-77000-453-5. Prys: R69,95.

**Resensent:** Dr Erna Oliver, Departement Christelike Spiritualiteit, Kerkgeskiedenis en Missiologie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, Pretoria, Suid-Afrika.

Die mede-outeur van die bekroonde *Die boodskap, My eerste boodskap* en meer as 50 ander Christelike boeke het geen bekendstelling nodig nie. Sy nuutste pennevrug is ‘n praktiese dagboekie met 50 oordenkings wat maklik lees, beslis kort genoeg is om in die strafste dagprogram ingepas te word, en gelowiges sal help om met nuwe oë en ‘n ander houding na hul daaglikse lewe en krisis te kyk. Die boodskappe help gelowiges om met blydschap in vertroue op God te fokus te midde van ‘n gejaagde en neerdrukkende, negatiewe wêreld. Joubert se taal en insig skep nuwe beelde wat help om nuut en vars oor ou bekende sake te dink. So praat hy van “godsdienstiges met vrieskaste vir harte”. En as ek lees dat “my vingerafdrukke op elke sonde” is, verander my houding teenoor sonde want ek besef opnuut die bewyse is daar en dit is onuitwisbaar, verdoemend. Met hierdie publikasie slaag Stefan Joubert opnuut daarin om die leser se gedagtes te rig op die kernsake van die Christelike geloof. Gelowiges behoort herkenbaar te wees in hulle daaglikse lewe. Hierdie boekie spreek ‘n verskeidenheid onderwerpe aan wat ‘n ander uitkyk, ‘n nuwe manier van doen en dink, tot gevolg sal hê. Die direkte en konfronterende styl is nie steurend nie en slaag juis daarin om die leser tot aksie aan te spoor. ‘n Mens is geneig om meer as een dagstukkie op ‘n slag te lees. Die boek kan met vrymoedigheid aanbeveel word vir alle gelowiges, ook predikante en akademici. Dit is ‘n baie oulike idee vir ‘n geskenk, veral vir mense met strawwe dagprogramme.

Stefan Joubert is ‘n buitengewone professor aan die Universiteit van Pretoria en redakteur van die e-kerk op die internet. Hy is ook predikant van die Moreletapark NG Gemeente.



König, A. 2006. *Die groot geloofswordeboek*. 520 bladsye. Vereniging: Christelike Uitgewersmaatskappy. ISBN 1-77000-268-5. Prys: Onbekend.

**Resensent:** Prof Christina Landman, Navorsingsinstituut vir Teologie en Religie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, Pretoria, Suid-Afrika.

Hierdie is ‘n belangrike en nuttige woordeboek om op die rak te hê, ook vir die kerkhistorikus. Dit bevat baie – en gespesialiseerde – historiese inligting.

Adrio König, emeritusprofessor in Sistematiese Teologie aan Unisa, is bekend as ‘n harde werker en ‘n vrugbare skrywer. Op die kruin van sy loopbaan het hy elke jaar ‘n boek oor ‘n dogmatiese tema gepubliseer. Hierdie *Geloofswordeboek* is inderdaad kenmerkend van sy werk, en dit is feitlik ondenkbaar dat een persoon dit tot stand kon bring.

Die woordeboek is omvangryk en ook gebalanseerd. Dit toon die werk van 'n meester wat lewenslank met sy vak besig was. Dit is egter ook toeganklik geskryf en baie leesbaar.

König se teologie is behoudend en dit skemer ook in hierdie woordeboek deur. Tog raak hy temas aan wat nie in ander Afrikaanse werke aangetref word nie, soos “bevrydingsteologie” en “feminisme”. Aan die ander kant is daar duidelike leemtes; daar is byvoorbeeld geen inskrywing vir “homoseksualiteit” nie.

Kortom, *Die groot geloofswordeboek* bevat 'n klomp dogmatiese en historiese inligting en nadenke oor kwessies waarmee lidmate, geestelike leiers en akademici elke dag worstel. Dit word in bruikbare kategorieë en aantreklike taal aangebied, die teologie is verteerbaar en dit bevat handige kruisverwysings.

Die boek word aanbeveel vir akademiese en plaaslike biblioteke, asook vir leke- en akademiese lesers.



Ozroveh, S. 2006. *Die groot boek van illustrasies van die lewe vir die lewe: 'n skat van inspirerende vertellings, wyskede en waarhede*. 764 bladsye. Vereeniging: Christelike Uitgewersmaatskappy. ISBN-10: 77000-290-1. Prys: R159,95.

**Resensent:** Dr Erna Oliver, Departement Christelike Spiritualiteit, Kerkgeskiedenis en Missiologie, Universiteit van Suid Afrika, Pretoria, Suid-Afrika.

Hierdie boek sou van onskatbare waarde gewees het as die verwysings na buite-Bybelse bronne meer volledig bygewerk was. Die lekkerleesboek verloor daardeur ongelukkig sy naslaanwaarde, hoewel dit steeds as hulpmiddel vir sprekers en predikers kan dien. Hierdie soort boek hoort tuis op elke huis se stede omdat elke lid van die gesin dit beslis die een of ander tyd nodig sal hê. Die 93 temas is alfabeties gerangskik en die alfabetiese duimwyser en kruisverwysings maak dit maklik om gedeeltes op te soek. Van die temas is algemeen Christelik en handel oor sake soos engele, getuienis, die wederkoms en sonde. Ander onderwerpe lig ons daaglikse lewe op 'n unieke manier toe wanneer sake soos geld, woede, ambisie, tyd en ouderdom behandel word. Die temas word toegelig deur vertellings, aanhalings, illustrasies en toepaslike skrifgedeeltes. Enkele van die vertellings grens aan hedendaagse mites (*urban legends*) en die bronverwysings hiervoor kon nie nagespoor word nie. Hier en daar kom vertaalfoute, taalfoute en herhalings voor. Oor die algemeen is dit 'n heerlike bron van inspirerende leesstof wat groot aftrek behoort te kry. Die boek word aanbeveel vir nie-akademiese doeleindes en het 'n geskenkbladsy voorin wat dit 'n maklike keuse maak wanneer daar veral 'n geskenk (veral vir 'n man) gesoek moet word.

Die boek is uitgegee ter viering van Solly Ozroveh se verjaarsdag. Hy is 'n bekende teoloog wat hom deesdae voltyds besighou met die skryf van Christelike boeke. Heelwat aanhalings uit sy meer as 130 boeke is in hierdie werk gebruik.



Venter, P, Symington, J & Van Wyk, A. 2007. *Augustinus. Belydenisse: getuienis oor 'n lewe in God*. Afrikaanse omsetting met medewerking van Piet Venter, Johann Symington en Amie van Wyk. Wellington: Lux Verbi. ISBN 0960-231-231. Prys: R139,95.

**Resensent:** Prof Christina Landman, Navorsingsinstituut vir Teologie en Religie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, Pretoria, Suid-Afrika.

Hierdie boek is 'n aanwinst vir sowel die akademikus as die leek wat hom of haar wil verlustig in die diep, vloeiende denke van die kerkvader Augustinus (354–430 nC).

Die boek is 'n vertaling van die “belydenisse” van Augustinus. Dis 'n vertaling wat skynbaar te lande kom tussen Sizoo se Nederlandse en Pine-Coffin se Engelse vertaling, en die oorspronklike Latyn waarmee dit deurgaans vergelyk is. Die samestellers was Piet Venter, Johann Symington and Amie van Wyk, maar die boek gee nie meer inligting oor die vertalers of die samestellers se betrokkenheid by die vertaling nie.

Maar dit is omtrent die enigste tekortkoming van die boek. Die vertaalde teks is 'n plesier om te lees. Dit doen reg aan Augustinus se Latyn en reflekteer die pragtige gestruktureerdheid van sy taalgebruik. 'n Mens hoor vir Augustinus in die taalspel wat ook hier in die Afrikaans voorkom. “Die lewe is 'n geleidelike dood wat tot die lewe lei.” Ja, dit is hoe Augustinus in Afrikaans klink, en dis ook hoe hy hom in Latyn in subtile en verrassende teenstellings uitgedruk het. Die boek is regtig moeilik om neer te sit, wat nie van alle boeke uit die vierde eeu gesê kan word nie.

Die boek is ook besonder goed versorg. Wat veral opval, is hoe die ontvouing van Augustinus se verhaal voortdurend deur die uitgewer histories gesitueer word, op elke bladsy van die vertaling maar ook in die tydlyn wat voorin gegee word.

Akademici en studente wat nog Afrikaans kan lees, kan hulle gerus deur hierdie boek weer van Augustinus se denke vergewis. Die keurige vertaling laat 'n mens toe om weer die moeilike pad saam met Augustinus te stap, die pad wat hy gestap het voordat hy homself as Christen geposisioneer het. Die boek en sy inhoud laat ons weer die Mediterreense lewe van die vierde eeu beleef, met sy gladiatorspele en sterrewiggelaars, sy Platoniste en Aristoteliane – en hoe Christene van die tyd daarvoor of daarteen moes kies. Dit skets vir ons die uiteenlopende interpretasies van die Christendom waarvoor Christene ook toe te staan moes kom. En die boek laat ons onself weer verwonder aan die lewenswysheid waarmee Augustinus sy pad daardeur geloop het.

Augustinus het natuurlik afskuwelike idees oor 'n paar dinge gehad – soos sy siening van vroue waarmee hy beslis nie die tiperings van sy tyd vooruit was nie. Hy bewonder sy moeder se geloof, maar veral omdat sy met die tenger liggaam van 'n vrou soos 'n man kon glo. Buiten vir hierdie tragiese denkfoute, loop ons dikwels ook met die idee van Augustinus as obsessieel, met 'n fiksasie op sonde. Met 'n deurlees van hierdie teks kom die leser egter onder die indruk van hoe diep Augustinus geworstel het met die kwessies van sy tyd – kwessies soos waar die kwade vandaan kom en wat ons nog steeds vandag besig hou. Dis beslis die moeite werd om onself weer aan die “oorspronklike” Augustinus bloot te stel en ons te verkwik met die wyse waarop hy met probleemsake in die Christendom omgegaan het.

Ter afsluiting dan net weer: Hierdie boek is 'n aanwinst vir die boekrak en verdien goeie leestyd by sowel akademiese as ander nuuskierige lesers.



Van der Watt, J, Joubert, S & Smith, J. (reds). 2008. *Geloof in aksie Bybel* (met aantekeninge deur Jan van der Watt, Stephan Joubert en Johan Smith). Vereeniging: Christelike Uitgewersmaatskappy. ISBN 978-1-7700-776-5. Prys: R299,95.

*Die Eenjaarybybel met oordenkings* (Nuwe Lewende Vertaling). 2008. Vereeniging: Christelike Uitgewersmaatskappy. ISBN 978-1-77000-662-1. Prys: R159,95.

Maxwell, JC. 2007. *Leierskapbybel* (met aantekeninge en artikels deur John C Maxwell). Wellington: Lux Verbi. ISBN 13: 978-07963-0471-1. Prys: R299,95

**Resensent:** Prof Christina Landman, Navorsingsinstituut vir Teologie en Religie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, Pretoria, Suid-Afrika.

Die twee groot uitgewers van Afrikaanse Christelike boeke, CUM en Lux Verbi-BM, het die afgelope vyf jaar ongeveer 20 publikasies wat die Bybelteks in sy geheel bevat die lig laat sien. Hierbinne val daar twee soorte publikasies. Die een tipe publikasie bevat nuwe, nie-amptelike vertalings van die Bybel in Afrikaans, soos *Die Boodskapper* en die *Nuwe Lewende Vertaling* (albei uitgegee deur CUM). 'n Tweede soort “Bybelteks”-publikasie bevat die Bybelteks met oordenkings en/of kommentaar daarby, gewoonlik vanuit 'n spesifieke perspektief, soos die *Leefstylbybel vir vroue* (wat deur Lux Verbi uitgegee is). Die drie “Bybels” onder bespreking is voortsettings van hierdie tradisie om die Bybelteks (amptelik of nuut vertaal) met kommentaar te publiseer. Die rede waarom hierdie drie publikasies in SHE geresenseer word, is omdat die kommentaar en oordenkings wat in die Bybelteks ingevoeg word, gewoonlik historiese interessantheite bevat om die leser nuuskierig oor die Bybelteks te hou.

*Die Eenjaarybybel* is van buite 'n pragtige publikasie in eenvoudige skakerings van bruin leer. Dit is op die *Nuwe Lewende Vertaling* gebaseer. Dit bevat vir elke dag van die jaar 'n stukkie uit die Ou Testament, dan die Psalms, dan die Nuwe Testament en dan Spreuke. Die dele volg mekaar op sodat 'n mens na 'n jaar deur die hele Bybel gelees het. Aan die einde van elke dag se stukkie is daar 'n oordenking. Dit is egter onmoontlik om hierdie publikasie te resenseer, aangesien elke tweede bladsy aan die volgende vassit. Die bladsy is nie deurgesny nie, sodat dit onmoontlik is om hulle van mekaar los te maak. En 'n moontlike vraag sou wees waarom hierdie Bybels in China gedruk word terwyl dit 'n plaaslike gemeenskap dien. Die oordenkings wat wel te sien is, is 'n interessante vermenging van historiese inligting en morele lesse. Of die historiese inligting en die lesse wel integraal met die Bybelteks te doen het, en of dit kunsmatig bygesleep is, is oop vir bespreking.

*Die Geloof in aksie Bybel* is 'n opwindende publikasie. Dit is gebaseer op *Die Boodskap*-teks en is skynbaar op die jeug gemik, want een van die medewerkers is Johan Smith van Moreletapark se Jeugbediening. Elke boek bevat 'n stukkie inleiding wat lig geskryf is en lekker dartel op die oog en in die kop. Dan is daar insetsels oor “Om te gehoorsaam”, “Om te glo”, en “Om te volg” oral in die

Bybelteks ingevoeg. Daar is nie baie nuwe idees en interpretasies in hierdie bydraes nie, maar dis tog goed om die Bybel weer vanuit hierdie perspektiewe te lees.

Wat aantreklik is van hierdie twee publikasies van CUM, is dat dit bydraes van plaaslike teoloë bevat.

Lux Verbi-BM se *Leierskapbybel* is ook 'n aantrekklike en nodige publikasie in ons tyd waarin leiers faal en nie hulle Christelikheid mag of wil gebruik om hulle sterk te maak nie. Dis egter 'n vertaalde werk. 'n Mens wonder of plaaslike geestelike leiers en teoloë dan geen insae in leierskap het nie. Maar hierdie publikasie konsentreer wel op die wysheid waarmee leiers in die Bybel moeilike situasies hanteer het, en dit is nuttig en leersaam vir lesers vandag.

Dit is jammer dat al hierdie publikasies uitgegee word sonder inagneming van die insigte van vroue-teoloë in die lees en verstaan van die Bybel. Om 'n paar vroue in te sluit in 'n lys van medewerkers en adviseurs beteken nie dat die insigte van vroue-teoloë werklik in die bydraes tereg kom nie.

Kortom, die publikasies is nie van groot akademiese belang nie, maar kan tog 'n historiese dimensie aan preke gee.



*Maak kinders met lewende geloof groot: sakgids vir ouers.* 2007. 160 bladsye. Wellington: Lux Verbi. ISBN 978-07963-0571-8. Prys: R89,95

Stoop, D & Stoop, J. 2007. *Die volledige ouerskapboek.* 466 bladsye. Wellington: Lux Verbi. ISBN 978-07963-0407-0. Prys R149,95.

Stoop, D & Stoop, J. 2007. *Die volledige huweliksboek.* 383 bladsye. Wellington: Lux Verbi. ISBN 978-07963-0406-3. Prys: R149,95.

**Resensent:** Prof Christina Landman, Navorsingsinstituut vir Teologie en Religie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika, Pretoria, Suid-Afrika.

Hierdie boeke is aan SHE gestuur vir resensie, maar pas nie eintlik by 'n kerkgeskiedenisjoernaal nie. Dis wel deur spanne kenners met hoë akademiese opleiding geskryf, maar bevat, buiten die ervaring van die skrywers, nie baie historiese materiaal nie.

Al die boeke word egter hoogs aanbeveel, ook vir kerkhistorici wat kinders moet grootmaak en 'n huwelik in stand moet hou.

Drie kenmerke staan uit in die boeke. Die eerste is dat hulle getuig van 'n apytlike en gesonde integrasie van geloof en voorgestelde gedrag tussen huweliksmaats, en tussen ouers en kinders. Daar is nie sprake van vreemdwêreldse gedrag wat vir mense aangeveel word om hulle as Christene van die konteks om hulle te distansieer nie. Intendeel, en dis die tweede kenmerk van die boeke, die raad en leiding wat in die boeke aangebied word, spreek van 'n voor die hand liggende wysheid en insig wat deur geloof versterk word. Die raad en analyses is bruikbaar en toepasbaar, en getuig van 'n *commom sense* wysheid – soos wat ons inderdaad ook in die Bybel vind!

Die derde mooi eienskap van hierdie boeke is dan juis dat hulle baie gebalanseerd is. Dit gaan oor pret hê met mekaar en jou kinders, oor deure oopmaak vir mekaar. Dit gaan oor die aanleer van vaardighede wat kinders sterk maak, soos liefhê, geduldig wees, getrou wees en selfbeheersing hê. Dit gaan oor gesonde onafhanklikheid in verhoudings, oor die bou van goeie vriendskappe en die vasstel van veilige grense. Maar dit wys ook op die slaggate wat verhoudings tussen ouers en kinders, asook tussen huweliksmaats, verwoes: oorbeskerming, te besig wees, vergelykings tref, dreigemente, woede, beheer.

'n Mens is nie heeltemal seker waarom hierdie boeke vertaal moes word nie, aangesien ons almal Engels kan lees. En in 'n laaste opmerking moet daarop gewys word dat sowel die boek oor ouerskap as die een oor die huwelik swak en swaar vertaal is. Dit doen regtig afbreuk aan die inhoud. Verder is die boeke daar om gelees en geniet te word.