Book Reviews

Understanding of the Poor in Job: In the context of Biblical Wisdom Literature. *By Rev. Dr. Francis MADANAU, St. John's Regional Seminary, Hyderabad. 500 013, A.P., India, 1997, Pp. xxii, 255, xxvii.*

A Doctoral dissertation presented at St. Peter's Pontifical Institute, Bangalore, the Book is a meticulous study on one of the most vexing problems central to human life, that of social justice, in the context of theme of "the poor" in the book of Job. The author has to be congratulated for the vast field he has covered as preliminary study for the establishment and defence of his theme and also for the sharp focussing on the theme itself. After the General Introduction in which the author lays down the methodology of his research, namely, the semantic approach which studies "the literary sense of the texts of the book in its socio-historical context" (11), he divides his thesis into 9 chapters. Ch 1 surveys the treatment of the poor in the legal, prophetic, deuteronomic and psalmic traditions of the OT, special emphasis being given to the prophets because of the theme of social justice which they portray very powerfully. Ch. 2 analyses the Wisdom tradition (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Sirach) with regard to the reaction of the sages to the oppressive structures of their time. While ch. 3 deals with the background of the book of Job in its social and historical set up, chs. 4 to 6 explain the three different terms which are used to denote "the poor" in the book, namely *"ebyon'"* - powerless (ch.4), *"dal"* - helpless (ch.5) and *"ani"* - needy (ch. 6). In ch. 7 the author treats about the *"reshaim'"* - miscreants or enemies of the oppressed. While ch. 8 is given to an exposition of the inhumanness suffered by the oppressed, namely the Dalits, from the various sectors of the Indian Polity, ch.9 draws together the general conclusions and culminates the thesis pointing out the relevance of the study for the present Indian situation.

One of the important merits of the thesis is that the author is very much at home with all the available as well as the latest materials on

the subject reaching upto 1995. The footnotes reaching upto 504 from all the modern languages is also a credit to the author who has submitted the thesis in an Indian Faculty. The book has the added merit of having a full bibliography of 30 pages (225-255), a subject index (i-vii), an author index (viii-xi) and the biblical index (xii-xxvii), all at the end of the book. The short summary given at the end of each of the chapters and also the sub-chapters is a great help for the reader in a hurry.

This reviewer would like to add a couple of remarks with regard to the reprinting of the book in the future, if any. The quality of the printing could be improved to facilitate easy reading. The Hebrew terms left untransliterated do not make the reading smooth for the ordinary reader (I think of our seminarians, sisters, teachers even at the university level). In pages 4.6.9 etc footnotes 11.20.28 appear also in the text. Footnotes 291-303 appear to be part of the text and are not distinguished from it. While these may be minor mistakes one may not overlook the numerous printing errors which appear all through the book. A few examples could be: V1. l.2 - week for weak ; 10. l.6 - that for than; 11. last but 2 lines-principle for principal ; 63. last but 1 line-possessis for possesses; 102.l. 18-angelogy for angelology; 113.l.13 - speaks for speak; 139. l. 31-pervertion for perversion; 147.l.20 - translate for translate; 166, l.22 - perishe for perish; 185.l.27 - govern for governs; 195.l. 22- opressed for oppressed; 196. l.33-prophit for profit; 199.l.3- miscreatns for miscreants; 202, in Note 450.L.4 - gropu for group; 210.l. 11- corps for corpse, l.27- gentle for gentile, in Note 480.l.3 - annoncers for announcers; 213.l.21 - impurity for impunity; 214.l.18- oppressed for oppressor; 218.l.9 - that for than etc, etc.

Lastly, the reviewer would have liked that the thesis started from a study of the situation of the Dalits in India and continued and concluded with the biblical solution from the study of OT., especially of Job. This would have given the thesis the contextuality it needs and thus sharpen the relevance of the Book.

R.J.Raja, S.J.

Conflict and Conquest : An Exegetico-Theological Study of Revelation 12. 7-12. *By A. Peter Abir; Asian Trading Corporation, 150, Bridgade Road, Bangalore 560 025. 1998. Pp. xxiv, 319.*

This book is the modified edition of the Doctoral thesis under the title "The Cosmic Conflict of the Church" which has been reviewed previously in Vaiharai (Vol 1. No.2 pp. 165-167). The author has slightly adapted his thesis for the sake of the Indian readers and also to meet their pockets. Besides the merits and demerits of the book as mentioned in the previous review, I would add that this edition has a reader-friendly presentation in so far as the Greek terms are transliterated for the sake of the ordinary Indian reader and there is the additional blessing of a Scriptural Index (282-305), the Author Index (306-311) and the Subject Index (312-319). I would recommend this Indian edition to all those interested in a serious study of the Book of Revelation, especially in the context of fundamentalist sects.

R.J. Raja, S.J.

The Agitated Mind of God : The Theology of Kosuke Koyama. *Ed. by Dale T. IRVIN and Akintunde E. AKINADE. Maryknoll : Orbis Books, 1996.Pp. xvi- 239.*

The Agitated Mind of God is quite an interesting title which reflects the various experiences of Kosuke Koyama . He could discover in his life the agitated mind of God who expresses himself in Jesus Christ. Kosuke Koyama, a highly reputed missiologist and theologian, is a Japanese thinker who, by his profound contextualized theological reflection, responded to the various advancements and changes, particularly in the field of Missiology and Ecumenical theology. This book is published in his honour on the occasion of his retirement.

The book contains fourteen essays in three sections which are very important and timely. The life, mission, and vision of Kosuke Koyama are summarised in these three sections: "Global Community",

"The Crucified Mind", and "Neighborology". The final essay is an *Afterword,* where a personal tribute is given to Kosuke Koyama followed by a bibliography of books and articles. Fifteen writers have contributed to this book and they are from different countries. This is the real strength of this book that different nationalities look at Kosuke Koyama in their own environment and have contributed to this book. The writers include Roman Catholics persons of other denominations such as American Baptist Churches, Church of Sweden, Church of God, and Lutheran Church.

Globalization is a popular idea today. But the destruction caused by globalization is seen in the destruction unleashed by faster economic growth. Life is endangered due to nuclear threat and ecological crisis and so cautions are given in three levels: *Inevitability* (travel for trade and entry of political powers), *Ambiguity* (exchange of ideas and customs between people of different nations which is beneficial yet of ambiguous character), and *Urgency* (need for preserving the earth from nuclear threat and ecological crisis). In the search for alternatives, M.M. Thomas argues for "Post modern humanism which recognizes the integration of traditions battling against fundamentalist traditionalism and actualizes the potential modernity to create a dynamic fraternity of responsible persons and people".(p.11)

Speaking of Modern Asian theology under the title "Let God Be God", Tissa Balasuriya says, "Asian problems are global; hence solutions too have to be global, while being rooted in the local realities" (p.18). It explains the relationship which theology has with cultures and civilizations of the world over the time. Today, we are living in the world of religious pluralism and therefore, a narrow understanding of God ends in chaos. It calls for an understanding and dialogue among the religions and ideologies.

Starting from Kosuke Koyama's reference to the problem of syncretism, Michael Amaladoss in his essay on "Syncretism and Kenosis", speaks of *interpenetration of religions* and shows the importance of inculturation and interreligious dialogue in relation to syncretism. In the words of M. Amaladoss, "Syncretism is not something

to be afraid of if we set it in the context of the eschatological movement of people, with their cultures and religions, towards fulness in the Reign of God" (p.67).

Using the incarnation paradigm, Francis of Assisi, a compassionate personality and Father of ecology, related himself to God and others. Experiencing in his own body the pain of crucifixion, his relationship with all people, birds and animals, and nature are noteworthy. Mary Motte presents the familiarity of Francis with nature by quoting the canticle: "Sir Brother Sun, Sister Moon and the Stars, Brother Wind, Sister Water, Brother Fire, Mother Earth". (p.74). This shows that Francis read the Gospel from the perspective of the oppressed people and he is pictured in a hermeneutic focus.

The article on "Mount Fuji, Mount Baekdu and Mount Sinai" by David Kwang-Sun Suh speaks of the Japanese' Shinto Shrine which was considered to be idol worship and here, the Japanese Emperor is considered "divine emperor". Kosuke Koyama is highly critical about the divinity of the emperor which in his opinion is not "through God". Koyama says, "Japan made the divine emperor quite openly without 'guilt feeling" (p. 177).

It is by listening to his neighbours, Kosuke Koyama accomplished his theology and mission. Victoria Lee Erickson writes, "maintaining ideal neighbourhood is a cross cultural occupation" (p. 158). Dale T.Irvin deals about the tradition and practice of staying at home and showing christian hospitality to strangers about which Kosuke Koyama spoke in depth.

The essays found in this book are excellent in context, language, clarity and comprehensivenss. Dale T. Irvin and Akintunde E. Akinade deserve high appreciation for editing and presenting this praiseworthy book to the world. In fine, *The Agitated Mind of God* can serve as a guide to all those who think in the light of the experience of the eminent theologian Kosuke Koyama and travel in the mission of Jesus towards the reign of God.

B. Russel Raj

Pastoral Theology From a Global Perspective: A Case Method Approach: *H.S. WILSON, Judo POERWOWIDAGDO, Takatso MOFOKENG, Robert EVANS, Alice EVANS (Eds), Orbis Books, Maryknoll, N.Y 10545, 1996: Pp. viii+236.*

The circumstances of life today have undergone such profound changes in the social and cultural level that one is entitled to speak of a new age of human history. As a result of the tremendous expansion of the natural and human sciences a new mass-culture has been created. There are no simple, single answers to universal and systematic pastoral problems (p.2). Our approach to the complicated pastoral problems need quite wider outlook. ***Pastoral Theology from a Global Perspective: A Case Method Approach*** by H.S Wilson, Judo Poerwowidagdo, Takatso Mofokeng, Robert Evans and Alice Evans deepen our analytical approach to the pastoral problems.

The book under review is divided into five parts with five authors and thirteen contributors. The first part is named as ***"Empowering Marginalized Peoples"*** which contains three case studies with teaching note and commentary. The three cases in this section deal with communities of people who have been marginalized in their own societies: Aborigines in Australia, Dalits in India and Hispanic-Americans in North America. Only one case in this section ***"By the Sword"*** deals directly with the role of the church, religion and spirirtuality. Two of the cases ***"Green Pastures"*** and ***"Pipeline to the Future"*** involve the role of the state and state officials.

The second part of this book is titled as ***"The Role of Women in Church and Society"***. It also contains three case studies with teaching note and commentary. While the case ***"Support for Rosa"*** is presented through the perspective of a social worker in Peru, it asks the question to what extent, if any, is the global church responsible - through its action or lack of action - for the destructive effects of globalized market economies, particularly on women and children in economically poor countries. The second one ***"We are also God's People"*** is set in the African village of Kimeso in Angola. This case and commentary invite

the readers to ponder not only the biblical basis for New Testament support for monogamy but to consider the role and importance of contextual theology, particularly in non-western societies. The third one ***"Nothing Really Happened, Did it?"*** raises questions about the consequences of male power in most societies as well as in most christian churches and about the psychological and theological implications of sexual impropriety or misconduct by church professionals.

The third part of this book is titled as ***"Economic Justice And Ecological Harmony".*** The world economy is characterized by inequality and domination (p.102). The shrimp farm consisting of 5000 acres of ponds in Honduras intended to supply shrimp for the American market ***("Visit to a Shrimp Farm")*** and hotels erected on Philippine beaches near prime fishing waters and intended to attract tourists from wealthy nations of the world ***("Another Face of Tourism")*** clearly show the impact of global trade relations. Weaker governments adopt land policies that would be opposed by local populations and are detrimental to food production. Many peasants lost their land and are forced to join the ever expanding reservoir of unemployed people or are pushed onto barren hillsides as were the people of TeBouke ***("The Fate of TeBuoke")*** (p. 104).

The fourth part is titled as ***"Reconciliation and Peacemaking".*** The three case studies here are about women. A Ugandan Pastor ***("Who are the Victims?")*** struggles with how to listen with his heart as well as his head to a woman who has robbed his parishioners and the German medical sisters whose hospital serves the whole community. The Reverend Monica ***("Should a Woman Lead the Church?")*** faces great resistance to her ministry of word and sacrament in her assigned parish in India, as do many women in ministry around the world. Lastly koinonia is seriously threatened when difference between cultural and religious values clash. In the midst of grief over a young woman's death in childbirth ("Lobola for a Dead Woman") a confrontation between members of a family and a congregation in Zimbabwe threatens to destroy the unity of the community and the church.

The last part is titled as ***"Caring for Human Needs".*** This part deals with specific situations in three countries on three different continents. ***"They Still Call Me Stinky"*** is the first of the three cases in this section that addresses the issue of caring for human needs. Tony Herrera a second year theology student meets the first Waverly resident Alicia Jones a fullblown AIDS patient. The commentary on this case sheds light on how to deal with persons who have AIDS or who are HIV positive, their families and their churches or communities. A need for spiritual healing is at the heart of the second of the three cases in this section, ***"We want to be Baptized".*** In this case the church leaders face a possible conflict between "law and grace" both of which involve caring for human needs. The third case in this section deals with the power of tradition. The commentary suggests that the real issue offers an opportunity for a review and rethinking of the appropriate approach of a missionary in his or her mission work in foreign culture (p. 198).

In general some central themes for pastoral ministry in the twenty first century were identified by the authors. Pastoral theology has often been limited to or dominated by an approach to the discipline that focuses on contextual pastoral care and counseling but this book goes further saying that it is linked to the human community and the church universal.

Although this book goes through many concrete pastoral problems it is not suggesting any concrete solutions or steps to be taken for solving the problems. It will be better if the authors were able to suggest some solutions and the result after that. But this does not make the worth of the book anything less.

Since all the authors are internationally accepted theologians they can very well guide us how to be practical theologians. This is a very good book which provides good observations which can be used for teaching pastoral theology in classes, seminars and workshops.

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