
EDITORIAL

In the editorial for the inaugural issue of **BINAH** I stated that the motivation to produce a journal came out of our desire to share some of the thinking taking place at our two theological schools. The inaugural issue was the first step in the achievement of this desire and this second issue of **BINAH** represents a significant advance. For this we are thankful to God.

The name of this journal reflects the immediate objective, the pursuit of understanding within the horizon of faith, that we seek to achieve in its pages. **BINAH** is the Hebrew term for *understanding*. But let me emphasize, as I did last year, that this understanding is not an end in itself, but rather we hope that it leads to the obedience of faith.

BINAH seeks to publish articles that are representative of the disciplines emphasized at both the Seminary and Graduate School. In this regard this issue includes articles on biblical studies, theological studies, missions, counselling psychology and Caribbean studies.

Throughout history God, who is rich in wisdom and grace, has made some unusually gifted individuals available to His Church in order to accomplish His purpose. We, in Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean region, are fortunate to have been graced with the presence of Dr. Zenas and Mrs. Esther Gerig. They arrived in Jamaica in 1954 as missionaries under the auspices of the Missionary Church Association in Jamaica. Their 43 years of ministry have been fruitful, and as they depart Jamaica this year we have chosen to dedicate this issue of **BINAH** to them. Wayne W. Allen has written an article which expresses our sentiments towards these beloved colleagues.

The discipline of biblical hermeneutics, as Murrell demonstrates, has traversed an interesting and often rocky pathway. In his article, he reviews the historical development of

the academic discipline and in the process achieves three objectives. He traces the origins, concepts, methods, and proponents of hermeneutics in the Jewish and Christian traditions. He then demonstrates that the discipline primarily developed out of the interpretive interaction between people and their sacred traditions. He concludes by offering suggestions relative to the appropriateness of North American and European hermeneutical models for the Caribbean.

The righteousness of God is a prominent biblical theme and is the focus of intense debate. Anthony Oliver explores the concept in the prophetic literature of the eighth to fifth centuries B.C. He contends that righteousness in the prophets is a multi-faceted theme with inter-related, yet distinguishable elements. These are moral excellence, fidelity in inter-personal relationships, an act of faith, redemptive activity, and a forensic act. Oliver argues that this multi-faceted nature informs the writers of the New Testament.

Noelliste grapples with the critical issues of identity, socio-economic development and unity in the Caribbean region. He delineates historical and social factors which have contributed to the current state of malaise and foreboding which permeates the region. He contends that, despite the deep-seated and daunting nature of the challenges facing the Caribbean, the region need not crumble under the weight of its problems. In so doing he argues for a theology based on the concepts of creation and redemption which he sees as integral to the development of a viable Caribbean for the twenty-first century.

The environment and the ecological crisis has certainly been an universal pre-occupation in recent times. Many persons have given their views as to the sources of the crisis. Religion in its various expressions has frequently been criticised as a main contributory factor. Edmonds challenges the thesis of Lynn White who contends that the historical roots of our ecological problems can be attributed to Christianity and its effects on the attitude of the West towards nature. Edmonds counters that Christianity provides the basis for a positive mandate in which we are to be responsible stewards of God's creation in upholding the integrity of the earth.

Ida Glaser, a visiting lecturer in Islamic studies at the Graduate School and a missionary among inner-city Muslims in Newcastle, UK, analyses the motifs of authority, identity and the establishment of the people of God in a comparative study of Christianity and Islam. She challenges Christians to understand the political perspective of Islam as demonstrated by emergent movements and their challenge to Western socio-political systems. The ultimate challenge is to develop a relationship that will enable us to share the gospel in a context where an

appreciation of what Muslims mean, in their use of the motifs, allows for effective communication.

Gough demonstrates the type of proficiency and technical acumen that we seek to develop in our counselling psychology students. He presents a case study in the area of personality dynamics and psycho-pathology in which he demonstrates a link between alcohol dependency and an underlying personality type or disorder which acts as a pre-disposing factor for the condition. He also delineates some case-related management strategies for the condition but cautions that these must not be allowed to submerge an individual's identity.

BINAH concludes with a review of D. A. Carson's book *The Gagging of God* by Delano Palmer. He sees Carson's book as a significant work because of its insightful analysis of post-modernism.

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