

4. Bondage to Freedom: From My Plan B to God's Plan A (Jonathan Smith)
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Glanz, Oliver. *Wenn die Götter auferstehen und die Propheten rebellieren* [When the Gods Resurrect and the Prophets Rebel]. Alsbach-Hähnlein, Germany: Stimme der Hoffnung e. V., 2012. 304 pp. Paper. €24.99.

Oliver Glanz is a newly appointed assistant professor in the Old Testament Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, MI. Prior to that, until April 2014, he worked as a researcher at the Department of Theology at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (The Netherlands). Glanz, who holds two Master's degrees (Theology and Philosophy) and a Ph.D. (Exegetical Methodology and Philosophical Hermeneutics), is not unknown to the readers of *AUSS* due to several articles on biblical-theological methodology published in this journal.

In his monograph “Wenn die Götter auferstehen und die Propheten rebellieren” (“When the Gods Resurrect and the Prophets Rebel”) Glanz offers an integrated approach to the question of reality in a postmodern culture, in dialogue with the biblical prophetic worldview. This prophetic outlook on reality reveals a criticism of religion (in biblical times the religions of the nations/Gentiles), which is similar to the modern religious criticism as revealed in the works of Marx, Feuerbach, Freud, Nietzsche, and others, where religion is rejected as a human projection of desires, hopes, and fears, and thus the faith in god(s) as a merely human invention. The biblical prophets have a very similar standpoint: common religion (as manifested in the nations) is merely an attempt to have a god/several gods at man's bidding, gods who can be manipulated by certain rituals, sacrifices, and other religious activity to give to man what man wants. But—and that is the big difference—they hold that true religion is only to be found with JHWH, the God of Israel, who cannot be manipulated but is an independent being who reveals himself when, where, and to whom he wants. Revelation always starts with God, never with man. There is no ritual mechanism made by man that ensures the reaction and blessings of JHWH, but rather JHWH himself reveals what he wants. The Bible is full of signs of JHWH's independency: “he speaks when he wants—even then, when nobody asks or inquires for it. He gives fertility—even then, when nobody expects it anymore. JHWH is a personality with His own will and own ideas, and this is the reason why he can become a ‘you,’ an *opposite* for man. The prophets declare that JHWH is a real ‘you’ for man and not only a mere reflection [of human desires]” (91. Translation by A. Kaiser). In an easily readable and intellectually inviting way, Glanz takes his reader on a journey through the implications this basic thought has for our understanding of reality: of history, of the future, of creation, of sin and sense, of fear, longing, and anthropology, as well as of death. Always dialoguing with

current (post)modern thoughts on these topics, the author shows that the biblical view of God has immense essential implications for every area of life. Foremost, however, this prophetic understanding of reality infuses those who accept it with a hope and a longing for active and intentional living, because it shows that our life hinges neither on subjectivism (1st person-perspective: “I create the world by the way I see things!”) nor on objectivism (3rd person-perspective: “I have no say, but rather I get created by the biological data, social background, national history and religious context, etc., I grow up with!”). Our life rather hinges on relationships (2nd person perspective): the essential relationship to the ultimate You (JHWH), our creator and redeemer, and—flowing out from that relationship—to our fellow humans whom we see as real partners in our life. Thus, investing oneself by loving others and nurturing valuable relationships with our neighbors, is real living and is a fresh alternative to the widespread current lethargy among people of all ages, but especially among the youth.

The book is divided into four main parts: In Part I the author reflects on general questions and answers of (post)modern men and women in regards to reality. Part II offers an analysis of significant thought buildings which are based on (post)modern foundations. Having offered the perspective of the biblical prophets already from early on, Glanz invites the reader in Part III to get acquainted with the reading of reality according to the prophetic worldview. Part IV provides an analysis of the historical quality of prophetic texts.

Each of these four main parts consists of three to seven chapters (total of 21 chapters), which consist of three main parts each: 1) introduction into the chapter’s topic, 2) discussion of the topic in subsequent short passages, and 3) clarification, or summary, of the chapter and a deepening part with concrete questions for personal reflection on the chapter or as a study guide for discussion groups. At the beginning of each chapter the author lists a selection of helpful readings (books, articles, etc.) that can broaden the reader’s horizon regarding the point Glanz makes in the respective chapter.

The book is targeted at people of all ages, especially those who wrestle intellectually with the complexity of reality. Although the book aims at readers familiar with the most basic philosophical concepts, it does not present itself to this audience alone, since it keeps technical terms to a minimum and is easy to read by everyone who reflects deeper on life in general. The writing style is engaging, the order of topics well replicable, and the multiple graphics very supportive of the stream of thought. The literature suggestions in the beginning of the book and the questions at the end of each chapter recommend the book for discussion groups/readers desiring to continue and deepen their reflection on the topic. Some minor orthographical mistakes do not hinder the reader from encountering an enriching reading experience through a book that is designed to foster experimental thinking and living, as well as dialogue. In its recent yearbook the German *Verein für Freikirchenforschung* (Society of Research on Free Churches) called this monograph “eine anspruchsvolle philosophisch-biblische Auseinandersetzung mit den Denkvoraussetzungen

der modernen Welt" ("a challenging prophetic-biblical examination of the premises of the modern world." *Freikirchenforschung*, 23/2014, Münster/Westf., p. 317. Translation by A. Kaiser). The author of this review highly recommends the translation of Glanz's publication into English, as it holds the potential to fill an essential niche in the Christian and Adventist book market, not only in German-speaking countries of postmodern Europe, but more and more in the increasingly secular nations of the English-speaking world.

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ANGELIKA KAISER

Heinz, Daniel, ed. *Freikirchen und Juden im „Dritten Reich“: Instrumentalisierte Heilsgeschichte, antisemitische Vorurteile und verdrängte Schuld* [Free Churches and Jews in the "Third Reich": Instrumentalized Salvation History, Antisemitic Prejudices, and Repressed Guilt]. Kirche – Konfession – Religion, Vol. 54. Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2011. 343 pp. Hardcover, € 49.99.

The editor of this volume, Daniel Heinz, director of the European Archives of Seventh-day Adventist History at Friedensau Adventist University, Germany, previously authored an article about the self-sacrificing dedication and martyrdom of members of the free churches in the twentieth century. See "Dem Gebot und Gewissen verpflichtet: Freikirchliche Märtyrer," in *Ihr Ende schaut an: Evangelische Märtyrer des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Harald Schultze and Andreas Kurschat (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2006), 83-96. The current volume addresses a surprisingly negative aspect in the history of the free churches in Central Europe, most of which actually have an American origin. The last twenty-some years have witnessed a growing awareness of the problematic relationship between the Christian denominations and the Jewish population in Germany during the time of the Third Reich. Many denominations began a process of coming to terms with their past and their own participation in the horrors of the Shoah. Although this process began quite late in the free churches, it is laudable that, after a number of individual studies and publications on that topic, in this book they present their mutual contribution to the accounting for the past of the free churches in Nazi Germany.

The first chapter provides significant background information to the book by describing views about Jews that many members of free churches held in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (13-33). The subsequent ten chapters are contributions that deal with specific free churches, such as the Quakers (35-64), the Mennonites (65-76), the Brethren Movement (77-102), Methodists (103-126), the Pentecostal Movement (127-149), the Baptists (151-181), the Free Evangelicals (183-214), the independent Evangelical-Lutheran Churches (215-245), the Free Moravian Church (245-280), and the Seventh-day Adventists (281-308). These chapters are followed by an appendix about the relationship between Jews and free churches in Austria,