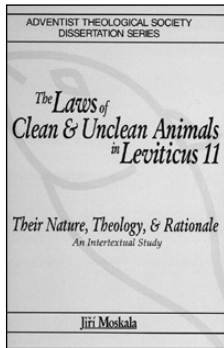


# BOOKSHELF



***The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals in Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology and Rationale, an Intertextual Study.* by Jiri Moskala, associate professor of Old Testament exegesis and theology. Adventist Theological Society Dissertation Series, vol. 4. Berrien Springs, 2000. 484 pp.**

This work provides the most comprehensive study about the issue of clean vs. unclean animals in Leviticus 11 that has been done so far. It provides several diagrams, tables and charts which are very helpful as visual aids to help the reader visualize the issues under discussion. The content is deep, the language is clear, thus making the reading more gratifying and worthwhile.

The first chapter offers a historical-chronological survey of literature of the laws of clean and unclean animals. A comprehensive review of literature is provided spanning from the Pseudepigrapha to modern times. The second chapter offers a thematic review of the literature which complements and clarifies what was at first presented chronologically. The interconnections of the first and second chapters provide a large perspective upon which the author builds his discussion.

The third chapter is devoted to the discussion of the nature of the laws concerning clean and unclean animals/food. The author makes an in-depth examination of the context and literary structure of Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. Key words are carefully identified and analyzed, thereby providing solid exegetical grounds for the research. However, the most illuminating findings of the research done in this chapter are the intertextual connections discovered by the author between Leviticus 11/Deuteronomy 14 and Genesis 1-11. The links established between these laws and Creation, Fall and the New Creation order make them part of universal and natural laws not limited to any historical period nor dependent upon the prescriptions of the Old Covenant.

The fourth deals with the theology and rationale of the laws regarding clean and unclean meat. Moskala successfully demonstrated that these laws are not anthropocentric or health-centered or moralcentric, but theocentric.

They command respect for the Creator. They are "based on the Creation-Fall-New Creation order theological approach. By this dietary legislation God wants to preserve the fundamental elements of His creation—life, order, boundaries, separation, holiness, and worship" (p. 347). The author also makes a

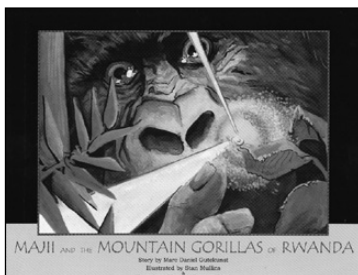
pointed observation when he says that "the distinction between clean and unclean food is in close connection with the holiness of God" (p. 348).

The author made clear, that the laws regarding clean vs. unclean animals are theologically rooted in God. God is the ultimate originator, the creator, the God of order, the ultimate source of life. Besides, God is the provider and sustainer of food, the One who gives these laws to His people and takes sin seriously.

Moskala's work puts the theology of food and eating under new light. It makes clear that as we eat or drink "for the glory of God," we express our loyalty to the Creator. And by our choices in drinking and eating we are also choosing whom we serve.

Besides its evident exegetical strengths, this book offers an outstanding theological contribution because it bridges the gap between exegesis and theology, between theory and praxis. It is an outstanding contribution to the church and to the scholarly world. The elucidation of such a misunderstood and neglected topic as the "the clean vs. unclean animals" provided by Moskala's work will certainly remain as the last word on this subject for a long time.

*Reviewed by Elias Brasil DeSouza, PhD student, Andrews University Theological Seminary*



***Majji and the Mountain Gorillas of Rwanda.* by Marc Daniel Gutekunst (PhD '89), member of Emory's Institute of African Studies, Atlanta, Georg. 2000. 27pp.**

*Majji and the Mountain Gorillas of Rwanda* is the result of Marc Daniel Gutekunst's dedicated research in the area of environmental health in Africa. This book increases awareness of the attempts to conserve and protect the gorilla population in Rwanda. Majji, a drop of water, leads the reader in an adven-

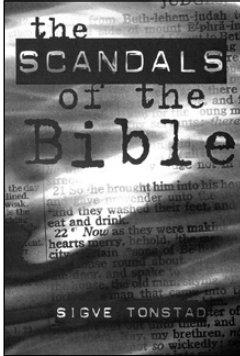
ture to the Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda to meet the last mountain gorillas. As the gorillas tell Majji of their desperate situation and their impending doom, Majji realizes the negative impact of the 1994 genocide on the Rwandan community and environment. Majji then commits to educate all the children of the world about the fragility of our ecosystem and nature.

Not only is this children's book educational but it is entertaining as well. This book's illustrations by Stan Mullins and the students of Fernbank Elementary School, Atlanta, Ga. are captivating. The brilliant colors and

drawings really make the story come to life and put the reader in touch with the gorilla's world. Though this is a crucial situation in our world, Gutekunst was able to put it in children's story form, while maintaining the significance of the matter and calling young people to take action and be concerned about the gorilla population in Rwanda.

*Reviewed by Gianna Norman, junior journalism/phogotography major and student writer for Andrews University Relations.*

# BOOKSHELF



*Scandals of the Bible.* by Sigve Tonstad (BA '73), physician and pastor in Oslo, Norway. Autumn House, England, 1999. 154pp.

Even an amateur in Bible knowledge could easily name a biblical scandal or two. Yet Sigve Tonstad, author of *Scandals of the Bible*, intentionally ignores the obvious for a less apparent category of scandal: God's silence in the face of evil.

The massacre of native American Indians, slavery, the holocaust, the Oklahoma City bombing, the Columbine High School shooting. Why, in the worst atrocities against humanity, has God chosen inaction despite the active prayers and pleas of the ambushed, tormented and suffering? How could a God of love and mercy withhold divine protection when it is needed most? It seems unfathomable that a compassionate God who *could* intervene would not, even at the expense of His own reputation.

Tonstad writes in the opening pages of his book, "While it is true that God often appears absent from the most heartrending abuses even in Bible times, this does not mean that He was at a loss as to what to do. The New Testament tells the story of what He has done to set things right. Unexpectedly, this is precisely what has come to be seen as the scandal above all others in the Bible."

Sensitive to the fact that some may be offended by the use of the word "scandal" in reference to the Holy Scriptures, the author turns to the New Testament itself where the Greek word "skand-

alon," from which the English word is based, is found. Originally defined as an animal trap in which the unsuspecting prey was snared by deceptive vices, a connotative definition eventually emerged which included the concept of stumbling and the eternal destiny of humans. In light of the Great Controversy, the one causing the scandal has laid a snare that might cause another person to lose his faith and ultimately forfeit eternal life.

Through detailed accounts and insightful exegesis of the gang rape of a concubine (Judges 19), Abraham's inter-

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*Christ's death is seen as the scandal above all other scandals in that the One who was sent to relieve suffering and provide hope of a life free from injustice is the One who was condemned and crucified by those who claimed to serve God.*

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cession for Sodom (Gen. 18), the erring prophet (I Kings 13), and other biblical stories both familiar and unfamiliar, Tonstad gives credence to his thesis that God's seeming inaction does not diminish the gravity of sin, but rather magnifies it and shifts the attention from the expected punishment to the evil itself.

In the chapter titled "The Greatest Scandal," the author explains how the misconception of God's character stemming from the initial breach between God and man (Adam and Eve), a misconception that has been replayed in human hearts and minds throughout

history, left only one recourse against the vexing questions and doubts leveled by evil. Through Christ's death God provided a rebuttal to how a loving God could permit such vicious brutality among those created in His image. "Striking down each potential murderer, rapist and cruel person would give only a temporary reprieve," the author writes. "God was pursuing not only the manifestations of evil, but the evil one. God did not physically annihilate him by Jesus' death, but it refuted his charges and exposed the false claims without compromising a single principle of God's government."

Christ's death is seen as the scandal above all other scandals in that the One who was sent to relieve suffering and provide hope of a life free from injustice is the One who was condemned and crucified by those who claimed to serve God. In the final showdown of good and evil, the author says that those who prevail will require more than a belief in God. They will also need a correct understanding of His character, will and purpose. In the light of Christ's death, "The greatest scandals are what well-meaning people have done, acting with single-minded zeal in God's name."

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*Reviewed by A. Monise Hamilton, assistant director of University Relations.*