

her exegetical position had been more fully delineated. Perhaps this task will be undertaken in a subsequent study.

This book is written in the vigorous style that would be expected from one who has been an active participant in many of the stirring events that Phiri is reporting. This text should be required reading in any seminary/theological college course that deals with the subject of the history and development of Christianity in Africa, especially with regard to issues of contemporary interest, concern, and debate.

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Polkinghorne, John C. *Belief in God in an Age of Science*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998. xv + 130 pp. \$18.00.

This book is one of forty-two volumes that have been sponsored by the Dwight Harrington Terry Foundation Lectures on Religion in the Light of Science and Philosophy. The author, John Polkinghorne, writes from a rather unique position in that he is a renowned theoretical physicist, an ordained theologian, and a retired president of Queen's College, Cambridge.

Polkinghorne's primary focus throughout the book is the interface and similarities of science and theology when considering the holistic character of the physical world and how we, as occupants, relate to that world. In the first chapter the concepts of natural theology are developed as an insightful discipline. Theism is offered as a "best explanation" of the multileveled experiences of human encounter with reality.

In chapter 2, Polkinghorne examines the relationships and similarities of methodology used by the scientist and theologian as they pursue truth. Two examples of critical investigation are presented. From the scientific aspect, the study of the nature of light is examined, which resulted in the development of quantum theory; from the theological aspect, the christological controversies are examined, which resulted in the Chalcedonian definition.

Chapter 3 is devoted to a discussion of divine interaction. Various concepts and models of God are explored as to how best to acknowledge divine interaction within a scientific framework. The arguments presented here are not of the same nature as normally presented, but rather take a fresh approach to this subject, using insights gained from chaos theory. The chapter may be best summarized by the following quotation:

Thus a realist reinterpretation of the epistemological unpredictabilities of chaotic systems leads to the hypothesis of an ontological openness within which new causal principles may be held to be operating which determine the pattern of future behavior and which are of an holistic character. Here we see a *glimmer* of how it might be that we execute our willed intentions and how God exercises providential interaction with creation. As embodied beings, humans may be expected to act both energetically and informationally. As pure spirit, God might be expected

to act solely through information. One could summarize the novel aspect of this proposal by saying that it advocates the idea of a top-down causality at work through "active information." (62-63)

Chapter 4 explores the possibilities and needs for future dialogue. Arguments are presented that dialogue between scientists and theologians should become more frequent and that other disciplines must also be included in such dialogue, because we live in this world as "a whole," not in parts. Chapter 5 concludes the main presentation of the book by reexamining the parallel paths taken by the scientific and theological pursuit of knowledge. The commitment of science to critical realism is examined and discussed from six perspectives. The chapter concludes by examining correlations between theological realism and scientific realism. Chapter 6, rather than offering new arguments or support for the main theme of the book, is simply a short discourse on the insights offered to the pursuit of truth from mathematics.

Overall, the time spent in reading *Belief in God in an Age of Science* is a good investment. It should be pointed out that this book assumes a minimal working knowledge of science as well as a good vocabulary. In other words, some may find this book "heavy" reading. However, one should not become discouraged, as the rewards are well worth the effort.

The arguments presented throughout the book are well thought out and flow logically. As one reads the book, one acquires a new awareness of the similarities between science's and theology's methodologies for the discovery of knowledge and truth. Polkinghorne presents both the scientist and the theologian with some new challenges, not only as they work within their individual disciplines, but also as they come down from their ivory towers and seek to communicate with each other and with society in general.

From my perspective, the main weakness of this book is the author's rejection of a literal interpretation of the Genesis Creation story. This position tends to overshadow some of the arguments presented with respect to the development of the physical world and conscious thought in humans. However, this position does not substantially subtract from the overall benefits gained from this treatise.

Any individual actively involved in the pursuit of knowledge and truth would do well to read and understand the arguments and challenges presented within the pages of this book.

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CLYDE L. WEBSTER, JR.

Reid, Stephen Breck. *Listening In: A Multicultural Reading of the Psalms*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1997. 108 pp. Paper, \$19.95.

Stephen Breck Reid offers this multicultural reading of the Psalms as a corrective to the "crippling ethnocentrism" (104) which has long affected interpretation of Israel's ancient book of worship. In Reid's conviction, "theological anthropology" (humanity, according to biblical definition), can now afford "neither a naive nor a self-consciously imperialistic ethnocentrism" (104). Exercised by the limitations of Psalm readings according to the dominant North