

ICS Calendar Title: Facing the Darkness: the (Human) Nature of Evil

ICS Course Code: ICS I822/2822 F08

Instructor: Nik Ansell

Term and Year: Mondays, 1:30-4:30 pm, Fall 2008

Last updated: September 10, 2008

Facing the Darkness: the (Human) Nature of Evil

Course Description

We shall discuss the origin and nature of evil by engaging various biblical, theological and anthropological resources. Topics will include lament literature (e.g. Job), idolatry and the demonic, original sin and the correlation between victim and agent, and the relationship between justice and mercy.

Course Learning Goals

- a.) a deeper understanding of the nature of evil that does not legitimate evil
- b.) ability to pursue interdisciplinary theology in a critical and creative fashion
- c.) ability to reflect on the nature of evil as a challenge and not simply as a philosophical-theological problem

Course Requirements

- a.) Total reading: 1250 pages total, including research paper, of which approximately 60-70 pages per week is required to prepare for class
- b.) In-seminar leadership: Written overview of two required readings, identifying key issues and questions, to aid class discussion; oral contribution to discussion
- c.) Description of course papers: One paper of 3000-4000 words (Master's students) or 5000-7000 words (Ph.D. students), due by relevant ICS/TST deadline
- d.) Description and weighting of elements to be evaluated:
 - Paper: 60%
 - Class presentations: 20%
 - Oral contributions: 20%

Required readings:

Nik Ansell, "The Call of Wisdom/The Voice of the Serpent: a Canonical Approach to the Tree of Knowledge" in *Christian Scholar's Review* 31/1 (Fall, 2001): 31-57 [ICS Library: Periodical section]
_____, "Commentary: Job 1.1ff & 42. 12-15" in *Third Way* 19/7 (Sept 1996): 20 [ICS Library: Periodical section]
_____, "Commentary: Job 420:1-19; 42:1,6 in *Third Way* 26/9 (Nov 2003): 19 [ICS Library: Periodical section]
The Book of Job. In a biblical translation of your choice.
Stephen T. Davis, ed., *Encountering Evil: Live Options in Theodicy*. Second Revised Edition (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001 [1981]) [ROBA: BT160 .E53 2001]
Fyodor Dostoevsky, "Rebellion" in *The Karamazov Brothers*, trans. Ignat Avsey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), Pt. 2, Bk. 5, 4 (pp. 296-309) [ROBA: PG3326 .B71787 1994]
Alice Miller, "Adolf Hitler's Childhood: From Hidden to Manifest Horror" in *For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Child-rearing and the Roots of Violence*, trans. Hildegarde and Hunter Hannum (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1983), 142-197 [KNOX: HQ769 .M531613 1983]
M. Scott Peck, "Towards a Psychology of Evil" in *People of the Lie: the Hope for Healing Human Evil* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), ch. 2 (pp. 36-84) [KNOX: RC455.4 .R4 P4 1983]
D.Z. Phillips, *The Problem of Evil and the Problem of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BT160 .P485 2005 ; REGIS: BT160 .P485 2005]

Recommended Readings

Marilyn McCord Adams, *Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999) [ROBA: BJ1401 .A435 1999X]
G.C. Berkouwer, *Sin*, trans., Philip C. Holtrop (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971) [this combines the 2 Dutch volumes] [KNOX: BT715 .B413]
Henri Blocher, *Original Sin: Illuminating the Riddle* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997) [STAS: BT720 .B565]

1999]

- Gregory A. Boyd, *Satan and the Problem of Evil: Constructing a Trinitarian Warfare Theodicy* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BT160 .B665 2001]
- David J.A. Clines, *Job 1-20*. Word Biblical Commentary 17 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1989) [KNOX: BS 491.2 .W67]
- David J.A. Clines, *Job 21-37*. Word Biblical Commentary 18A (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006) [KNOX: BS 491.2 .W67]
- David J.A. Clines, *Job 38-42*. Word Biblical Commentary 18B (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, forthcoming)
- William B. Drees, ed., *Is Nature Ever Evil? : Religion, Science and Value* (London: Routledge, 2003) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BD581 .I595 2002]
- Reta Halteman Finger, "How Can Jesus Save Women? Three Theories on Christ's Atonement" in *Daughters of Sarah* 14 (November-December 1988): 14-18 [KNOX: PER]
- Thomas N. Finger, *Christian Theology: an Eschatological Approach*, vol. 1 (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1985) (especially pp. 303-348 on Atonement models) [ROBA: BT75.2 .F55 1985]
- Terrence E. Fretheim, *The Suffering of God: an Old Testament Perspective* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS1199 .S82 F74]
- Rene Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, trans. James G. Williams (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2001) [SMC: BT736.15 .G57513 2001]
- Bob Goudzwaard, *Idols of Our Time*, trans. Mark Vander Vennen (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1984) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BV4638 .G6813]
- Gustavo Gutierrez, *On Job: God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1987) [ROBA: BS1415.2 .G8713 1987]
- Cornelius G. Hunter, *Darwin's God: Evolution and the Problem of Evil* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2001) [ROBA: B818 .H855 2001]
- Martin Beck Matustik, *Radical Evil and the Scarcity of Hope: Postsecular Meditations* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008) [ROBA: BJ1401 .M27 2008X]
- Stephen F. Noll, *Angels of Light, Powers of Darkness: Thinking Biblically About Angels, Satan & Principalities* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BS680 .A48 N65 2003 ; TRIN: BS680 .A48 N65 1998]
- Sydney H.T. Page, *Powers of Evil: a Biblical Study of Satan and Demons* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), ch. 4 (pp. 137-181) [ROBA: BS680 .D56 P34 1995X]
- Alvin C. Plantinga, *God, Freedom, and Evil* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BT102 .P56 1977]
- Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: a Breviary of Sin* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BT715 .P58 1996]
- Paul Ricoeur, "Evil, a Challenge to Philosophy and Theology" in Paul Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), chap. 14 (pp. 249-261) [reprinted from *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 53/3 (1985): 635-648] [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BL51 .R43225 1995]
- Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, trans. Emerson Buchanan (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BT715 .R5313]
- Amelie Oksenberg Rorty, ed., *The Many Faces of Evil: Historical Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2001) [STAS: BJ1401 .M26 2001]
- John Sanders, ed., *Atonement and Violence: a Theological Conversation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2006) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BT265.3 .A86 2006]
- Flora Rheta Schreiber, *Sybil* (New York: Warner, 1973) [SMC: RC555 .S37 1973]
- Christopher Southgate, "God and Evolutionary Evil: Theodicy in the Light of Darwinism" in *Zygon* 37/4 (December 2002): 803-824 [ICS Library: Periodicals section]
- Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness* (New York: Doubleday, 1999) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BR1450 .T88 1999]
- George Vandevelde, *Original Sin: Two Major Trends in Contemporary Roman Catholic Reinterpretation* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1981 [1975]) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BT720 .V3 (1975)]
- Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: a Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BV4509.5 .V65 1996]
- Miroslav Volf, "The Final Reconciliation: Reflections on a Social Dimension of Eschatological Transition" in *Modern Theology* 16/1 (January 2000): 91-113 [KNOX: PER]
- Simon Wiesenthal, *The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness*, With a symposium edited by Harry James Cargas and Bonny V. Fetterman. Revised and Expanded Edition (New York: Schocken Books, 1998) [TRIN: D810 .J4 W5313 1997]
- Walter Wink, *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium* (New York: Doubleday, 1998) [ROBA:

BS2545 .P663 W562 1998X]

N.T. Wright, *Evil and the Justice of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006) [ICS Library Reserve Shelf: BJ1401 .W72 2006X]

Proposed Schedule:

Week	Date	Readings
1	Sept 8	Introductions
2	Sept 15	Job, Ansell
3	Sept 22	Miller, Peck
4	Sept 29	Dostoevsky, Roth [in Davis]
5	Oct 6	Hick, Davis [in Davis]
6	Oct 13	Griffin, Phillips [in Davis]
7	Oct 20	READING WEEK
8	Oct 27	Phillips 1, 2
9	Nov 3	Phillips 3, 4
10	Nov 10	Phillips 5, 6, 7
11	Nov 17	Phillips 8, 9
12	Nov 24	Phillips 10, 11
13	Dec 1	JM presentations
14	Dec 8	JM presentations