

more awareness of the Jewish-Christian dialogue of the past five decades. Some passages in these essays seem to merely restate for the new millennium what most evangelicals always knew and believed without taking due recognition of the changed issues and the wider discussion of today. One misses a survey of the *various* mission agencies devoted to Jewish evangelism and also an article on the situation of the Messianic churches and their situation and ministry in the land of Israel, perhaps even elsewhere.

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*Partakers of the Divine Nature: The History
and Development of Deification in the Christian
Traditions*

Michael J. Christensen and Jeffery A. Wittung

Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007, 325 pp., \$29.99, pb;
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SUMMARY

As a collection of essays about deification / *theosis*, this work exhibits strong representation from Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions. While the essays are generally not ground-breaking, having them in one place will help readers engage a variety of conversations. This collection serves as an excellent introduction to discussions about *theosis* but also provides requisite depth and breadth for those already initiated.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Als Artikelsammlung über Vergöttlichung oder *theosis* legt dieses Werk eine starke Repräsentation aus orthodoxen, römisch-katholischen und protestantischen Traditionen vor. Obwohl die Artikel im Allgemeinen nicht bahnbrechend sind, wird die Sammlung an einem Ort dem Leser doch helfen, an einer Vielfalt von Gesprächen Anteil zu nehmen. Diese Sammlung dient als exzellente Einführung in die neueren Diskussionen um *theosis*, stellt aber auch die notwendige Tiefe und Breite für die bereits Initiierten bereit.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage collectif contient un ensemble de contributions sur le sujet de la déification ou *theosis*. Les traditions orthodoxe, catholique romaine et protestante y sont bien représentées. L'ouvrage n'apporte pas grand chose de nouveau, mais l'ensemble permet au lecteur d'aborder une bonne variété de thèmes. Il constitue une excellente introduction pour les lecteurs qui découvrent le sujet, mais il intéressera aussi le lecteur informé par la profondeur de la réflexion et le large champ couvert.

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This work is a compilation of essays spawning from a

conference on the history of *theosis* / deification at Drew University in 2004. The collection is an ecumenical exercise with strong representation from Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions. While the essays are generally not ground breaking, their collection in one place will help readers to engage a variety of conversations. This variety, with respect to authors and time periods covered, makes the book an excellent contribution as it helps the reader see the forest (e.g., Louth and Hallonsten) and the trees (e.g., Behr, Billings, Finch).

The book is divided into five parts. Part I provides a general introduction to the topic (Michael J. Christensen) and also an essay by Andrew Louth on the place of *theosis* in Orthodox Theology. Part II discusses *theosis* in antiquity, with essays on classical Greece (John R. Lenz), the apostle Paul (Stephen Finlan) and 2 Peter 1.4 (James Starr). Essays on the Cappadocians (J. A. McGuckin), patristic rhetoric with an emphasis on Athanasius (Vladimir Kharlamov), Maximus the Confessor (Elena Vishnevskaya) and Ephrem the Syrian (Thomas Buchan) form Part III as a discussion on patristic thought. Part IV offers essays on medieval and reformation thought: Būlu al-Būshī (Stephen J. Davis), Anselm (Nathan R. Kerr), Martin Luther (Jonathan Linman), John Calvin (J. Todd Billings) and John Wesley (Michael J. Christensen). The book concludes with essays on *theosis* in modern thought: Neo-Palamism (Jeffrey D. Finch), Sergius Bulgakov (Boris Jakim), Karl Rahner (Francis J. Caponi) and recent research (Gösta Hallonsten).

As one can see, this collection covers quite a broad range of authors and traditions. Other works have traced ideas of deification in history, though most focus specifically on patristic writers in the Greek tradition. Although none of the articles directly addresses the important developments from the first century to the fourth century, John Behr's essay provides a short but helpful discussion of that period before discussing the Cappadocians. Another refreshing addition to this work is the discussion of Syrian and Copto-Arabic writers. The essays are interesting but the use of endnotes is unfortunate.

While many of the essays have much to commend them, Gösta Hallonsten's concluding essay presents a strong and cogent critique of some recent studies which seem to blur the boundaries between different theological writers and systems. He argues that the *doctrine* of deification must be distinguished from *themes* of deification. Theologians may have shared various themes which are central to deification (e.g. union with God, image restoration), but this should not be confused with sharing a doctrine of deification. A doctrine of deification is one that holds deification as central to one's theological system. For instance, Augustine employs deification terminology and themes but not when he develops areas central to his theology such as nature and grace. Thus, he does not have a *doctrine* of deification but just makes use of the *themes* of deification. Hallonsten concludes by

stating: 'Promoting mutual Christian understanding is a good thing. We do not reach that goal, however, simply through interpreting similarities as identities' (287). His challenge is one that should be heeded.

The topic of deification should provide Protestants much material for discussion, not only with ecumenical partners but also as they continue to reinvestigate the Bible and their theological forefathers. This book helps further that discussion. Accordingly, it serves as an excellent introduction to those who are new to discussions about *theosis* but also provides requisite depth and breadth for those already initiated.

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Christian Prophecy: The Post-Biblical Tradition
Niels Christian Hvidt

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, xviii + 418 pp., £21.99, hb; ISBN 978-0-19-531447-2

SUMMARY

Contrary to the scholarly consensus that the charisma of prophecy has ceased, Hvidt argues that prophetic revelations have been a continuous feature of the Christian church, though they have undergone transformation in order to meet new challenges under different historical conditions. These prophetic revelations are not predictions of the future but revelations aimed at the present circumstances of the church, designed to bring restructuring where needed and to provide edification to its people.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Entgegen einem verbreiteten gelehrten Konsens, dass das Charisma der Prophetie eingestellt wurde, argumentiert Hvidt, dass prophetische Offenbarungen ein fortlaufendes Merkmal der christlichen Kirche waren, auch wenn sie Veränderungen durchgemacht haben um neuen Herausforderungen unter neuen historischen Bedingungen zu begegnen. Diese prophetischen Offenbarungen sind keine Vorhersagen der Zukunft, sondern sind Offenbarungen, die auf die gegenwärtigen Verhältnisse der Kirche abzielen und dazu gedacht sind, dort Neustrukturierungen zu bringen, wo sie gebraucht werden um das Kirchenvolk zu erbauen.

RÉSUMÉ

Prénant le contre-pied d'un large consensus académique selon lequel le charisme de prophétie aurait cessé, Hvidt s'efforce de montrer que les révélations prophétiques ont été un facteur continu dans l'Église chrétienne, même si elles ont pris des formes différentes pour répondre à des besoins différents en diverses circonstances historiques. Ces révélations prophétiques ne sont pas des prédictions du futur, mais des révélations concernant les circonstances présentes de l'Église. Elles visent la restructuration là où c'est nécessaire et l'édification du peuple de Dieu.

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This book is a slightly re-worked version of Niels Christian Hvidt's doctoral dissertation presented to the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. Written from a Catholic perspective, it is an important volume for Protestant traditions to engage, especially those within charismatic segments. It represents an in-depth study of an often neglected topic, the gift of prophecy in the modern church.

In the first two chapters, Hvidt draws attention to the prevailing view among systematic theologians that the charisma of prophecy ceased after the rise of Monism at the latest. Through a very thorough survey of secondary literature he discusses the different categories of 'revelation', private, particular, special, dependent and prophetic, and critically analyses how systematic branches in the Catholic tradition treat the issue very differently. Thus, Hvidt moves toward a synthetic approach and seeks to demonstrate the fallacy of the present understanding of prophecy.

The third chapter is especially illuminating in that Hvidt examines the historical development of prophecy from Ancient Israel into the 21st century, providing the modern day example of Vassula Rydén, while still encompassing the Second Temple period, the earliest church and the Middle Ages. The author argues that prophecy has never ceased in being an active feature of the church though it has undergone a transformation from what we see in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple traditions in order to meet the challenges of new historical conditions. While some understand that the organization of the church and development of the canon were detrimental to the charisma of prophecy, Hvidt notes that prophecy and the need to control it were in fact formative in the development of both.

Interestingly, he includes personal visions, Marian apparitions and private locutions within the context of 'prophetic revelations', though he uses these phenomena primarily to argue for a continuous link in the prophetic gift within the church. Though Protestants are not likely to be persuaded of the importance of these mystical accounts, they are nonetheless an important addition to the lacuna in scholarly treatments of the prophetic gift and reflect the detail with which the writer has approached the subject.

Over the next three chapters Hvidt carefully reviews the subject of 'revelation', its relationship to prophecy and the role it plays within the church. Rather than viewing Christ as the 'end' of revelation, he argues that this was the highpoint, or the ultimate fulfilment of revelation, though God continues to reveal himself in ways that draw attention to previous revelation for the edification of the church. Like the OT prophets that pointed to Christ, the post-biblical revelation points back to the Christ event and God's revelation in him. Thus, the author argues that previous revelation in the Scriptures and in Christ has not yet been fully realized by the church in history and that God continues to reveal them