

**Jonker, Louis C 1996 — Exclusivity and Variety: Perspectives on Multidimensional Exegesis**

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**Reviewer: Prof P M Venter**

This book is a reworked version of the author's dissertation. In style and form it keeps close to the typical academic form of a doctoral thesis. The reader can, therefore, expect long quotations and elaborate technical discussions in this book.

The main theme of this work is exegetical method. According to Jonker, the exegetical discipline is characterized at present by a variety of methods being used and an inclination towards exclusively choosing one method or a set of methods, absolutising that specific method. Avoiding the use of an uncontrolled variety of methods and thus falling prey to exclusivity, the author proposes a multidimensional and/or integrational method of doing exegesis.

Each of the many exegetical methods actually illuminates one specific dimension of a text. A methodology should therefore be developed which describes more than one dimension simultaneously and which would allow an interplay among the different dimensions of the text. Following Crossan's field criticism of interreacting disciplines, he aims at developing an integrational and/or multidimensional exegetical model which pays attention to both the pre- and the post-history of the text (diachronical axis) as well as its para-history (synchronical axis). This is, simultaneously, done from the perspective of a dynamic interaction between theory and practice.

Having presented his aims in the first part of the book, the author develops methodological frames of reference in the second and third part for doing diachronic as well as synchronic exegesis. In each section the specific method is applied to a practical analysis of the Samson Cycle in Judges 13-16. The work of Fohrer is used for the diachronic section and the works of Alter, Berlin Sternberg and Ska for the synchronic section. In the final section three models are presented: an adapted diachronic model, an adapted synchronic model, and a multidimensional model of interacting historical-critical and narrative methodologies.

This book is highly recommended for professional exegetes wrestling with the problem of finding appropriate methods for reading and understanding the Biblical text. It presents a summary of research done in South Africa and abroad on the theory of exegesis. It offers an attractive agenda for future debate in academic circles.

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