

Editorial foreword

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It has been an exceptional privilege for us, as guest editors, to offer this *Festschrift* to our esteemed colleague, Professor Jan A. du Rand. When we sent out the invitations to colleagues, asking them to make a contribution, we immediately received a positive response in that they all wished to write an article to acknowledge Du Rand's significant contribution to the academic study of the New Testament in South Africa and abroad. The scope of Du Rand's contribution in this regard can be gleaned from the first article in this volume, in which *Fika Janse van Rensburg* relates Du Rand's lifelong endeavour to understand the Johannine writings, thereby highlighting his contribution as academic and theologian of the church. It is the intention of every study in this volume to acknowledge and express appreciation for the many years of valuable contributions Du Rand has made and is still making.

A fair number of articles in this volume address the field to which Du Rand devoted most of his time, namely the Johannine literature. With regard to the Gospel of John, *Johannes Beutler* investigates the interpretation of the word 'Ιουδαῖος in John 3:25 and then proposes a new interpretation, namely that it should be understood as 'Judaean'. *Gert (Jorrie) Jordaan* focuses on the important notion of 'the joy of seeing Christ' in the same Gospel, showing how it functions within a typical Johannine spiral-like pattern and reaches a climax in the joy of seeing the resurrected Christ. *Kobus Kok* draws attention to the important role that the plenipotentiary notion plays in the Gospel of John: That Jesus is empowered by God is used as a *Leitmotiv* in this Gospel, integrating Christology and soteriology. *Gert Steyn* investigates the quotation from Genesis 28:12 (LXX) in John 1:51 from a new angle, namely in terms of the issue of the *Vorlage* of the text. He compares the text in John 1:51 and three versions thereof in the *Corpus Philonicum*. In two articles, *Jan van der Watt* offers the first comprehensive survey of research on the Gospel of John in Africa. The first article gives an analytical overview of Johannine research in Africa, whereas the second one offers an annotated bibliography in this regard. In a contribution to the Johannine Letters, *Dirk van der Merwe* shows how certain linguistic effects in 1 John 2:28–3:10 constitute certain spiritualities.

This volume also includes several contributions on Revelations. *Pieter Venter* draws our attention to another writing, namely 4Q-Instruction, in which apocalypticism also played an important role. He shows how wisdom and apocalyptic thought converge in this writing, as well as the central role of the term *raz nihyeh* in this regard. *Pieter de Villiers* critically investigates the view that Revelations has a non-violent message – a view that is widely held in research on Revelations. He argues that the issue is much more complex than is generally accepted, and that one should not settle for easy answers in this regard. *Martin Pohlmann* investigates the vision of the New Jerusalem in Revelations 21:1–22:25, maintaining that it is more than simply a dream for the hereafter; if it is understood correctly, it can directly impact on one's life and on society. The preaching of Revelations 21:1–6 is discussed in *Gerhard Bothma's* study. He argues that a literary-aesthetic approach to preaching in a changing culture enables one to make a sermon from this text that makes sense in our contemporary context.

The Synoptic Gospels are also discussed in this volume. *Marius Nel* (North-West University) investigates the torn temple curtain in the *Gospel of Mark*. According to him, this has a twofold message. It is an indication of God's judgement and it illustrates how the way between heaven and earth opened when Christ died. Three studies are devoted to the Gospel of Matthew. In his study, *Alan Culpepper* shows how the Gospel of Matthew guides its Jewish-Christian readers, during the process of separating early believers from the synagogue, to accept Jesus' teachings as a new teaching on righteousness and a new *Torah*. *Francois Viljoen* also investigates the *Torah* in the Gospel of Matthew. In his study, he discusses the socio-historical context that led to the huge emphasis on the keeping of the *Torah*. In his contribution, *Marius Nel* (Stellenbosch University) considers David Konstan's views on interpersonal forgiveness in Matthew 18:15–35. According to Nel, this text does not refer to the remission of financial debt (as Konstan argues), but rather to the forgiveness of moral guilt.

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Several articles are also devoted to themes from the Pauline literature – a field of research in which Du Rand also made a solid contribution. *Hermie van Zyl* investigates the *crux interpretum* of the identity of the 'I' in Romans 7:14–25, arguing that Paul refers to his life before he became a Christian. He also discusses the implications of this choice for the preaching of this text. In antiquity one's gait was regarded as an important visual indicator of moral character and status. *Stephan Joubert* discusses the way in which Paul deconstructs such stereotypes in 2 Corinthians by means of a new form of spirituality linked to Christ's physical suffering on the cross. *Pieter Maré* analyses the way in which the metaphor 'you are the temple of God' in 1 Corinthians 3:16 may function as an ethical core moment in a postmodern world. In his study, *Francois Tolmie* discusses the way in which Ambrosiaster's exposition of the Letter to Philemon may be of benefit to the modern rhetorical analysis of the letter.

The last three contributions consider the broader implications of the Christian message – an issue that is also very important to Du Rand. *Amie van Wyk* considers the theological place and meaning of the Kingdom of God in theology and the church. He argues that this notion was either ignored or neglected in the past and proposes a

separate *locus* dealing with basileiology. *Koos Vorster* raises the question as to whether the Christian marriage is a social construct or a covenantal reality. According to him, the church should seriously consider the latter option; this could lead to the establishment of Christian marriages qualified by human dignity, love, faithfulness and the development of the spiritual gifts of both husband and wife. In his study of biblical spirituality and transformation, *Christo Lombaard* considers the term 'transformation' within Biblical Spirituality as an academic discipline and then offers a useful overview of the occurrence of this concept in the Bible.

By means of their contributions in this volume, the authors want to show their gratefulness to Du Rand. The great variety in the contributions reflects not only the many ways in which he has influenced and still continues to influence the study of the New Testament in South Africa and abroad, but also the many ways in which he touched our lives – as academic, mentor, leader and friend!

This foreword is followed by an Afrikaans poem specifically written for this *Festschrift* by *Cas Vos* – one of Du Rand's colleagues. It is titled *Jou Ithaka* [Your Ithaca]. The poet uses one of Du Rand's beloved Classical Greek authors, Homer, to reflect on his friend's life.