Who will blow the trumpet?: a Christian ethical evaluation of the Jubilee as a hermeneutical tool for reconciliation, healing, and transformation in post-apartheid South Africa

Abstract
The central theoretical argument of this thesis is that the Old Testament concept of the Year of Jubilee is neither an anachronistic nor a peripheral detail of the Canon of Scripture, but an integral part of, indeed a hermeneutical tool for interpreting the whole. The Jubilee can therefore serve as a hermeneutical tool for reconciliation, healing, and transformation for post-apartheid South Africa. The thesis seeks to demonstrate the ideal of the Jubilee as a continuous and coordinating theme, in both the Old and the New Testament, by reference to: the Pentateuch, the Historical Writers and the Prophets, the apocryphal Book of 1 Maccabees, the intertestamental Book of Jubilees, the so-called Nazareth Manifesto, Pentecost, and the Book of Revelation. In the Pentateuch, Israel liberated from slavery and returning to God, became a paradigm for the liberated slave to return to his or her inheritance in the year of Jubilee celebrated every 50th year. Seen to be divinely ordained, the Jubilee reminded God's people that they were called to act towards others as God had acted towards them, for this is part of what it means to be both just and holy. It was seen primarily as a restitutio in integrum, a restoration to an original state. It made provision for the redemption of the poor and disenfranchised, as well as provision and protection of the poor, the aliens, and release of slaves and their families, and indentured labourers. Its underlying concerns are with justice, freedom, human dignity, and rights. Human dignity and rights are intrinsically related to God's saving acts on behalf of his people, the assertion of divine justice in the face of every human abuse of power and injustice. Among the Historical Writers and the Prophets the Babylonian Exile came to be interpreted as divine judgment for the neglect of an institution meant to embody justice, mercy, and grace, characteristics of both a holy God and a holy people. Isaiah 61 casts a vision for the future in which the Jubilee becomes an inclusive promise of God's covenantal blessings to Israel and the nations. Following the return from Exile there is evidence of a return to abuse resulting in Nehemiah calling for a national day of prayer, fasting, and confession, and a renewal of the covenant to honour the ethical implications of the year of grace. In the intertestamental period, possibly as a reaction to hellenising influences, the idea of the Jubilee may have become somewhat exclusive and nationalistic. Against this background Jesus would give it a new, radical and universal interpretation, and implication, namely that of Israel's mission to the nations. Jesus clearly understood his mission in terms of the proclamation of 'the year of the Lord's favour' (Luke 4: 14-21), or, of the announcement of God's Kingdom, and demonstrated this by preaching good news to the poor, freeing the prisoners, restoring sight to the blind, and releasing the oppressed. In the New Testament this is presented as a dialectic between the already and the not yet or, as being present yet still to come. Jesus linked his mission with that of his followers and their partnership in mission with the promise and gift of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost can, therefore, be seen as both fulfilment and announcement of God's promise. It announces that the Kingdom of God is already here, whereas the Book of Revelation holds out the promise that it is still to come. The concluding book of the Bible, therefore, gathers together a theme which runs throughout the Canon of Scripture, and presents the Jubilee as good news both for now and the future. Indeed, God's future is presented as the ultimate Jubilee. Obviously this institution, probably more ideal than real, more intentional than functional even in ancient Israel, cannot be imposed on a secular, constitutional, democracy. Nevertheless, there are implications here for holistic evangelism and mission that not only transcend, but can transform culture, politics, and economics. In presenting the Jubilee as a hermeneutical tool for reconciliation, healing, and transformation in post-apartheid South Africa, the specific foci of this thesis is on: • The contribution of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission's contribution to dealing with the past, reconciling, and building the nation in order to build upon that legacy; • The Restorative Justice vision in order to construct a Christian ethical response to thinking about and doing justice differently; • Restoring moral values, and this by offering a spirituality of reconciliation, healing, and transformation; and • Taking responsibility for reconciliation, healing, and transformation by presenting some practical, Christian, ethical responses and initiatives that could place the Christian community in the forefront of this process.

URI
http://hdl.handle.net/10394/3702

Collections
Theology [619]
Contextual Hermeneutical Circle: the dialectical relation between part and whole of a text. October 1933: Minister of Education of Nazi regime appoints the Rector as Führer of the University, according to new university constitution instituted by Heidegger himself. University senate has no say in appointment. Speech to students, beginning of 33/34 term: reflects how Heidegger's thought and the rhetoric of National Socialist ideology come together in this period (cited in Ott, 164-5): May you ceaselessly grow in the courage to sacrifice yourselves for the salvation of our nation's essential being and the increase of its innermost strength in its polity. Christians who relate to God nomistically will not be vital examples of the Spirit-filled life. They will misrepresent the gift God wants to give them through Jesus Christ. Their churches will be more like miniature Israels under the Mosaic Covenant than like the vibrant churches of the New Testament which attracted people to the grace of God and a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Applying Biblical Ethics to Today. One problem for all Christian ethical approaches is how to apply the biblical ethics to a society that is two thousand to thirty-five hundred years removed the b hermeneutical-approaches Isaiah prophecy Jeremiah messianic-prophecy. share | improve this question |. If this is true then the 70 years is symbolic, in round numbers, for the duration of the 68 years of the Babylonian empire, after which, the city of Tyre recovered. 70 Years of Jeremiah. There are two prophecies of Jeremiah which are possibly the same prophecy. Both Jer 25:11, 12 and Jer 29:10 predict that Judah would serve the king of Babylon for 70 years, during which the land would become waste. This was fulfilled beginning in 605 BC when Nebuchadnezzar took about 10,000 people captive in the first Judean campaign. Two more campaigns followed in 597 BC, and the final in 586 BC.