

## ARTICLES AND BOOKS RELEVANT TO MELANESIA

**“Pursuit of a Lutheran *raison d’être* in Asia”**, by Won Yong Ji, *Concordia Journal* 28 (April 2002), pp. 126-141. “Lutherans are the minority of minorities in the Asian context, with the possible exception of Papua New Guinea, in the midst of most of the leading historical world religions, and among relatively-large constituencies of Roman Catholics, and other Protestant denominations. . . . In such circumstances, is there a future for Lutherans, and thus a hope for their presence?”

**“Indigenous Worship”**, by Richard Shawyer, *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 38-3 (July 2002), pp. 326-334. “Each culture (and often each generation) needs to devise its own version of biblical forms to express its heart, in adoration to our God. Such forms will free the worshipper to truly worship God in spirit and truth. This worship will also ultimately be very attractive to non-believers, who can begin to see that following Christ does not mean belonging to a foreign, Western religion.”

**“Marks of a Healthy Church”**, by Kenneth O. Gangel, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 158 (October-December 2001), pp. 467-477. “Though the gospel has always been transcultural, believers have frequently been tempted to adapt it so dramatically to their own cultural surroundings that Christianity loses its distinctiveness. This often arises from sincere motives: a desire to contextualise the gospel, or to be ‘relevant to the times’.”

***The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis-Malachi***, by David A. Dorsey, Grand Rapids MI: Baker Books, 1999, 330 pp. “[N]umerous linguistic studies of various unwritten, tribal languages suggest that aurally-oriented compositions generally feature sophisticated structural patterns, indeed, often more sophisticated than our modern Western counterparts. [Ancient] texts were normally intended to be read aloud, whether one was reading alone, or to an audience. Accordingly, an ancient writer was compelled to use structural signals that would be perceptible to the listening audience.”

**“Melanesian Spirituality of Land”**, by Henry Paroi, in *Land and Churches in Melanesia: Issues and Context*, Point 25 (2001), Goroka PNG: Melanesian Institute, pp. 168-192. “For us Melanesians, ancestral spirits are the protectors of living relatives, thus, protectors of life, manifested in the land. Land has a transcendental character; land links us with the ancestral spirits, and thus with power. Land represents, in a tangible way, relationships that exist between people and the spirit world.”

**“Decolonising Theology: Doing Theology in A Melanesian Context”**, by Henry Paroi, in *Catalyst* 31-1 (2001), Goroka PNG: Melanesian Institute, pp. 19-38. “I cannot suggest that Melanesian theology should be founded on black theology, because, in part, black theology has its basis in slavery. Melanesians have not had that experience, although they have had the experience of being colonised. Melanesian theology is essentially a Melanesian experience that is very closely related to land. . . . The relationships between people, and land, and spirit beings are closely interwoven, and Melanesian theology is, among other things, a reflection of these relationships.”

**“A Theology of the Pentateuch”**, by Eugene H. Merrill, in *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, Roy B. Zuck, ed., Chicago IL: Moody Press, 1991, 446 pp. “Canaan thus became the focus of God’s redemptive and reigning activity on the earth. This explains why the patriarchs, and their Israelite descendants, hallowed the land, and valued it as a theological *sine qua non*. Testimony to this is the erection of altars at significant sites, places that Yahweh particularly invested with His presence (Gen 12:7; 13:18; 26:25; 33:20; 35:1, 7).”

**“Translating the ‘gods’”**, by Norman A. Mundhenk, in *The Bible Translator: Practical Papers* 53-2 (April 2002), New York NY: United Bible Societies, 2002, pp. 218-225. “There has been a lot of discussion lately about how we should translate words meaning ‘God’, or the name of God. However, relatively little has been said about how to translate what we might call ‘non-god’, that is, the various ideas, which are covered by the English term ‘god’, written with a small letter ‘g’.”