Practical or Theological Considerations?

The first article, *Byang Kato: A Theological Reappraisal* by Tim Palmer, observes that although Kato has been criticized variously as a rejectionist in respect to culture, primary sources would place him as a conversionist like Niebuhr calling for the transformation of culture. He served as a prophetic voice, challenging the prevailing doctrines of his time. His greatest fear for the church were the threats of universalism and syncretism, which would penetrate and destroy the young African Church. If Kato is to be judged, should be based on the historical context in terms of theology and language and ecclesiastical scene in the early 1970's.

The second article, *The Image of God in Leadership: A Contextual Exploration in Theology of Leadership* by Gregg Okesson, seeks to briefly establish the need for a livable theology of leadership within the African context. The author notes that an authentic leader receives his identity from God and his followers. He emphasizes that the image of God is both the intrinsic locus of leadership as well as its goal. He defines leadership in terms of "influence" which emanates from God's image and is directed again to the restoration of that same image of God in humanity.

The third article, *Diffusing Apparent Biblical Contradictions: A logical demonstration* by Joseph B. O. Okello, is an argument that there is no inconsistency in scripture. Differences between biblical statements such as "You shall not commit murder" (Ex. 20:13) and "there is a time to kill" (Eccl. 3: 3) do not contradict "because of the special case of a sub-contrary relation that sentences about "murder" bears to sentences about "kill"(p.50). The author relies quite heavily on logic to determine whether or not the action of murdering is identical to the act of killing. His interpretation of the "two verbs presupposes a use of the historical-grammatical method. He states that "the advantage of this approach is that one can be involved in a meaningful dialogue with a person subscribing to other methods of interpretation without having to be caught up with debates on the correct method of interpretation" (p.55).

The fourth article, *Should curses continue? An Argument for Imprecatory Psalms in Biblical Theology* by Jace Richardson Broadhurst attempts to "wrestle with the issue of the Psalms and especially the imprecatory psalms and their placement in Biblical Theology."(p.63) The author cites "imprecation" as an invocation of judgment, calamity, or curse uttered against one's enemies, or the enemies of God."(p.66) He lists five possible solutions of how imprecatory Psalms have been interpreted. The most popular one is that these curses are simply David's sentiments—the anger and hurt of a human author—and not those of the Holy Spirit. Although many scholars do not accept the poetic genre as fitting readily into their Biblical theology, Psalms must be seen as a part of revelation. He concludes that the singing of imprecations should continue in a desire for the vindication of God's name.

The fifth article, *Contextualized Readings and Translations of the New Testament in Africa* by Ernst R. Wendland notes that valid interpretation of the N.T. must be founded upon and grow out of a thorough, perceptive prior—understanding of the OT canon and related documents. The author raises a number of important interpretive and communication—based issues that need to be raised when investigating the nature, extent, and results of the various formal acts of contextualising the Bible—and/or specific Christian sub—community. The activity of Bible translation itself generates significant indigenous church growth and at the same time greatly encourages various creative, contextualised readings of Scripture. This inevitably leads in turn to the development of African—based theological conceptualization and creative religious verbalization in the vernacular, where it really counts.

The author raises questions as to what can be done "to more actively and successfully encourage valid, contextualised readings and linguistically "domesticated" translations of the NT in Africa"? He gives seven brief and interrelated suggestions vital to this concern. He concludes by giving the challenge that "It is certainly time for the dynamic voice of African Christianity to be heard more loudly and clearly within its own setting—and also in the world at large" (p.111).