

ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL: ESSENTIAL WRITINGS. Edited by Susannah Heschel. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2011. Pp. 189. \$20.

Since 1998, Orbis Books has published 50 volumes in its “Modern Spiritual Masters” series. Each volume contains writings by a particular author whose spiritual journey was influenced and shaped by such modern concerns as secularism, religious pluralism, modern science, and the search for social justice. It also includes a critical, comprehensive introduction by the volume’s editor, whose academic interests make him or her particularly well suited to explore the life and work of the author on whom the volume is focused. The collection reviewed here is an important addition to this series. By focusing on a major 20th-century Jewish theologian and social activist, the book not only adds an important Jewish voice to a series that focuses on Christian thinkers, but also includes someone who, unlike a few of the authors included in the series, was very much a spiritual master. As general editor, Robert Ellsberg has found in Susannah Heschel an ideal person to edit this particular volume. Herself a scholar of 19th- and 20th-century Jewish history and thought, she is well acquainted with the religious, historical, and literary contexts out of which Abraham Heschel’s writings and interests emerged. Moreover, as H.’s daughter, she reveals anecdotes that shed light on many of his personal, theological, and political concerns before and after 1940, when, with his mother and three of his sisters still in Europe, he moved to the United States.

These anecdotes, along with many astute observations, help bring H. and his teachings alive. Drawing on stories her father told her, Susannah notes, for example, that the religious atmosphere of his home in Poland helped transcend the poverty of his youth. Descended on both sides from a long line of distinguished Hasidic rebbes, he continually felt the presence of his ancestors, whose faith taught him empathy, generosity, the importance of creating and rejoicing in moments that were holy, and the necessity of critiquing the failings of government and of one’s fellow human beings. From his great-grandfather, the Apter Rav, he learned that God was not an “object of human contemplation” (20) but an anthropopathic being who is constantly in search of us, needing us as much as we need God. Consequently, as the introduction wonderfully shows, H. tried to make his deep sense of religious commitment constructive and transformative, viewing religiosity not only as a “private, inward affair” (18) but also as something to be expressed in public action.

The volume’s six sections are thematic. Each begins with insightful comments by Susannah Heschel and contains carefully selected pages from her father’s books, unpublished manuscripts, and lectures. Section 1 focuses on H.’s language of the holy: words such as awe, wonder, and radical amazement, while section 2, emphasizing the dual nature of religiosity as private

and public, includes texts that reveal the prophetic consciousness that led H. to take a strong moral stance on many of the major social and political issues of his day. Section 3 focuses on theodicy, questions concerning God's goodness and compassion in the face of evil. Included here are texts in which H. raises not only the traditional question, "Where is God in the midst of such horrors?" but also, "Why are we, as human beings, so often blind to God's presence?" A section on Jewish faith, observance, and prayer follow, in which H. makes it clear that authentic faith does not mean living off "an inherited estate of doctrines and dogmas" (105) but rather experiencing moments of revelation and remembering both their occurrence and our response. Following this discussion is a lecture delivered in 1965 that explores how Jews, Christians, and Muslims, though committed to contradictory claims, can remain loyal to their tradition while maintaining a sense of reverence for other traditions.

Section 5 contains some of H.'s most beautiful writings on prayer and religious observance. It features selections from several of his best-loved works, including *The Sabbath* (1966) and *God in Search of Man* (1955), as well as two works addressed—at times critically—to rabbis and cantors. Finally, section 6 includes semi-autobiographical writings that brought H. to what he describes as a "theology of pathos" (187), a theology of the Jewish people and of human beings generally as of perpetual concern to God.

From beginning to end, the volume is illuminating and compelling. Those familiar with H.'s works will appreciate the fine organizational thread through which Susannah Heschel connects and clarifies many of her father's writings, while those unfamiliar with H. may well want to read more.

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CHRIST OUR HOPE: AN INTRODUCTION TO ESCHATOLOGY. By Paul O'Callaghan. Washington: Catholic University of America, 2011. Pp. 358. \$34.95.

This is one of the best synthetic and comprehensive studies of eschatology to date in any of the major languages. Reminiscent of Thomas Aquinas's *Summa theologiae*, O'Callaghan's tour de force lucidly explains a host of counterpositions before delineating the "safe doctrine" concerning eschatology's major and minor themes. O'C.'s use of Scripture, the Fathers, the councils, and the liturgy, along with a vast array of titans and lesser figures in the theological and philosophical tradition, evince a secure theological mind that has mastered the best of pagan, Catholic, Protestant, and secular thought. Copious footnotes and the helpful indexes of concepts and names underscore this wealth of sources.

O'C. focuses on the Second Coming of Christ as the definitive, public, universal, victorious, incontrovertible object of Christian hope—a hope