

FEAR, RATIONALITY, . . . : WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

An AJET Editorial

Human beings all over the world are bombarded by the fear of the unknown, especially death. No one wants to discuss the issue of death yet at the back of their minds wonder where they will go when they die. Others in solving matters of faith fluctuate between reason and naturalistic elements of the universe. Where is the place of the supernatural in their everyday lives? While salvation is guaranteed for believers, in what way should they worship the heavenly father they so love? What is the mark of their love? And/or why are they driven to seek extra protection?

The lead article in this issue is a book chapter printed with permission from the publisher. In this article the author, Dr. Richard J. Gehman, discusses from *an evangelical perspective the problem of the fear of death*, a research work in which nearly a hundred participants from different church backgrounds were interviewed. The evidence from the findings points out that “the problem of death and the living dead is very real” (p. 98) requiring a biblical solution. The author discusses salvation in three tenses: past, present and future with reasons why it is crucial and rightly states, “a personal knowledge and experience of salvation is the only solution to the problem of fear of death.

The second article *Naturalism and Reason* by Joseph B.O. Okello examines from a philosophical point of view whether the possibility of reason (thought) can be justified on naturalistic grounds. In this discussion, there is a contrast between what philosophers argue to be the case and what naturalists believe on this matter. The article raises in the readers’ mind questions like, ‘what is the difference between rationality and naturalism? Is reason part of the natural order of what exists in the universe? What is the function of supernaturalism? After looking at various arguments, the author concludes that naturalism does not provide proper epistemic justification for the possibility of reason. As a science, naturalism enables the discovery of new facts in the world. However, “truths about the world are ultimately accessible only by the correct employment of our

rational faculties; for without reason science cannot take off the ground.” (p. 130)

In *Music in Worship in Service*, Dr. Esther J. Kibor provides a solid and comprehensive survey of music as an essential element of Christian worship with the hope that churches will reconsider the type of music that is sung in their congregations. She challenges worship leaders and all those concerned with church ministry to seriously consider the significance and categories of music, and the effect that music has in worship services. By providing key factors to congregational singing, she concludes that music in worship is vital as it draws people to God; it must therefore be characterized by the filling of the Holy Spirit.

In the fourth article, Kenyatta University Professor, Watson Omulokoli follows his series on the *Portuguese presence and Endeavours in East Africa, 1498-1698*. In these two parts, the author looks at the political occupation and presence of the Portuguese and their Christian attempts and efforts during the same period. He provides background information and points out the struggles the Portuguese faced as they tried to conquer and control. He categorically concludes, “when new Christian efforts were embarked upon towards the middle of the 19th century, there was no evidence . . . of Christian presence from these earlier attempts. This state of collapse and . . . vacuum was the prevailing situation when the trio of German Lutherans (Krapf, Rebmann and Erhardt), under CMS, proved pioneers of Christianity in East Africa (p.141).

The final article discusses *witchcraft and sorcery from a biblical perspective with implications for church ministry*. After defining the terms witchcraft and sorcery, Dr. Esther J. Kibor describes the effects and extent of these issues stating that fear of illness and death and disobedience have caused people to seek protection in the wrong place. Further she points out that witchcraft and sorcery are real in the Bible and Scripture warns against these vices, which are forms of self-deception brought by Satan. Scripture forbids the use of mystical powers because they are associated with demonic activities. Lack of Christian teaching is the cause of these syncretistic elements among church members.