

Finally, a proposal is made for linking a literary-rhetorical understanding of texts as a way to interpret N.T. epistles. First, the nature and scope of rhetoric in texts is posited, suggesting that all texts have a persuasive element. Second, an interpretive strategy which seeks to analyze and evaluate the rhetorical nature of N.T. epistles is explored based on the communication model of speaker/text/audience. Third, the theological implications of this interpretive approach is explored.

HOW TO AVOID WRITING ABOUT GOD: SOME FRENCH POSTSTRUCTURALIST PHILOSOPHERS AND BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS

KERRY MCKEEVER

In one of his fairly recent essays, Jean-Luc Nancy commented that we live in a world without God – the world after Nietzsche killed off God. Nancy then poses the question, „what do we do now?” The question is an interesting one for many poststructuralist critics relative to biblical hermeneutics. It seems that in the aftermath of Nietzsche, there is almost an embarrassment associated with, and a reluctance to write on, Biblical subjects. However, there is an intriguing tendency among these philosophers/critics to write about the Bible, to literally skirt the Bible or to refer to it only through another text or texts. Certainly, we see this in Derrida’s essay on Edmund Jabes or in his *d’un ton apocalyptique adopte neguere en philosophie*, in Jean Francois Lyotard’s *instruction paiennes*, Phillipe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean Luc Nancy’s „Noli me frangere”, and Julia Kristeva’s *The Powers of Horror*.

In the presentation, these works are examined in terms of their „negative” power, in terms of the manner in which each writer approaches what we might consider a „taboo” subject in philosophy in order to engage in a new type of biblical hermeneutic, a speaking about the Bible through the agency of a mediating „Other” text.

THE CASE FOR GROUNDING BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS UPON THE DIACHRONIC METHOD

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Recent developments within Hebrew Bible scholarship, in particular, the emergence of a new „literary criticism”, promised a renewed concern with key interpretive issues that too frequently have been bypassed by the more conventional diachronic (historical-critical) method. The new approach, because of its emphasis upon a synchronic methodology, treats the biblical text as a coherent product of authorial