

Hope

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Ed. by Ingolf U. Dalferth and Marlene A. Block

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Hope is a fundamental but controversial human phenomenon. For some it is Pandora's most mischievous evil, for others it is a divine gift and one of the highest human virtues. It is difficult to pin down but its traces seem to be present everywhere in human life and practice. Christianity as a comprehensive practice of hope cannot be imagined without it: Christians are not believers in dogmas but practitioners of hope. In other religious traditions the topic of hope is virtually absent or even critically rejected and opposed. Some see hope as the most humane expression of a deep-seated human refusal to put up with evil and suffering in this world, while others object to it as a form of delusion and an escapist reluctance to face up to the realities of the world as it is. Half a century ago hope was at the center of attention in philosophy and theology. However, in recent years the discussion has shifted to positive psychology and psychotherapy, utopian studies and cultural anthropology, politics and economics. This has opened up interesting new vistas. It is time to revisit the subject of hope, and to put hope back on the philosophical and theological agenda.

Survey of contents

Ingolf U. Dalferth: From the Grammar of 'hope' to the Practice of Hope – *William J. Abraham*: Hope with a Small 'h' – *Hartmut von Sass*: Hope with a Very Small 'h': A Response to William Abraham – *Nancy Bedford*: With Love, Hope is Reborn – With Hope, Love is Reborn – *Yi Shen Ma*: A Response to Nancy Bedford – *Michael Ulrich Braunschweig*: From Content to Enactment: Towards a Theological Hermeneutics of Hope in Discussion with Contemporary Philosophy – *Aaron D. Cobb*: Hope and Epistemic Virtue – *John Cottingham*: Hope and the Virtues – *Bruce Paolozzi*: Hope, Epistemology, and Passion: A Response to John Cottingham – *Yaniv Feller*: What Hope Remains? Leo Baeck as a Reader of Job – *M. Jamie Ferreira*: Kant and Kierkegaard on Hope – *Raymond E. Perrier*: The Sublation of Hope into Love: A Response to M. Jamie Ferreira – *Arne Grøn*: Future of Hope – History of Hope – *Friederike Rass*: The Temporality of Hope and its Existential Implications: A Response to Arne Grøn – *Deidre Green*: Hopeful Ambiguity: Beauvoir's Existential Ethics and Kierkegaard's Kenotic Theology – *Michael Lamb*: A Passion and Its Virtue: Aquinas on Hope and Magnanimity – *Alan Mittleman*: Hope and Metaphysics – *Richard Livingston*: A Two-Faced Hope: A Response to Alan Mittleman – *Hirokazu Miyazaki*: Job as a Model of Hope – *Kirsten Gerdes*: A Response to Hirokazu Miyazaki – *Jürgen Moltmann*: »Thinking means Transcending«: On the Philosophy and Theology of Hope – *Bernard N. Schumacher*: Is there Still Hope for Hope? – *Ola Sigurdson*: Eschatology of Humour: On Hope and Comedy in Theological Reasoning – *Duncan Gale*: Hope is No Laughing Matter (Unless It's Funny): A Response to Ola Sigurdson – *Tyler Viale*: Gabriel Marcel: Hope and Love in Time of Death – *Claudia Welz*: Healing through Hope? Trauma, Memory, and Mental Imaging – *Daniel Ambord*: Hope, Meaning, and the Perils of Theodicy: A Response to Claudia Welz

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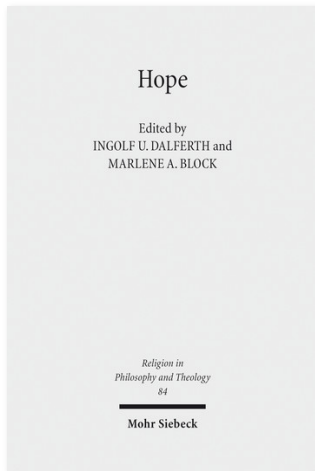
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