

## Oorsig van navorsingstuk

In hoofstuk 1 van die navorsingstuk: “Om die duisternis te verdrink: Ondersoek na die hantering van die teodisee-vraagstuk in die apologetiek van C.S. Lewis.” is daar bevind dat die teodisee-vraagstuk vandag nog steeds ’n aktuele saak is. Regdeur die eeue is daar met hierdie saak geworstel en daar is telkens probeer om die saak duidelik te stel. Daar was ook pogings gewees om dit buite die Skrif te verklaar (Marxisme, Bevrydingsteologie, ensovoorts,), maar dit het afbreuk aan die leerstuk veroorsaak. Die probleemstelling kan soos volg gestel word: “Deur die verloop van die eeue was daar oor die moeilike en onoplosbare teodisee-vraagstuk deur die kerkvaders en teoloë baie gedink en geskryf. Is daar moontlik ’n unieke bydrae uit die apologetiese werk van C.S. Lewis wat ’n bydrae tot die Suid-Afrikaanse gesprek kan lewer wat tot hiertoe nog nie ontgin is nie?” Met die lig wat op C.S. Lewis, die bekende Christenskrywer en apologet se werke gewerp is, is die volgende hipotese ondersoek: “Die teodisee-vraagstuk word op ’n vars, duidelike en getroue manier deur C.S. Lewis in sy apologetiek hanteer en weergegee en hierdie gedagtes lewer ’n bydrae tot die Suid-Afrikaanse gesprek.”

Die doel van die studie het vyf oogmerke:

- Eerstens, om die bydrae van C.S. Lewis se argumente en denke oor die teodisee-vraagstuk in Afrikaans daar te stel.
- Tweedens, om ’n diepte-ontleding te doen van die spesifieke opbou en aanvoer van argumente van Lewis se werke, *The Problem of Pain* en *A Grief Observed*.
- Derdens, om in besonder die beeldspraak waarvoor Lewis so bekend is in sy argumente te ondersoek.
- Vierdens, om die verband te ondersoek tussen Lewis se teorie en sy latere eksistensiële worsteling.
- Vyfdens, om hierdie vraagstuk in die Suid-Afrikaanse gesprek te bestudeer en Lewis se bydrae tot die gesprek uit te wys.

Die metodiek waarvolgens die navorsingsprojek gedoen is:

- Daar sal 'n ondersoek gedoen word na die agtergrond van C.S. Lewis se lewe en hoe dit sy latere hantering oor die teologiese-vraagstuk beïnvloed het.
- Verder sal 'n ontleding gedoen word van die analitiese opbou en Lewis se aanvoer van argumente in sy werk *The Problem of Pain*. Die gebruik van beeldspraak, waarmee hy sy argumente in dié werk verduidelik, sal bespreek word.
- 'n Ontleding sal gedoen word van die analitiese opbou en Lewis se aanvoer van argumente in sy werk *A Grief Observed*. Die gebruik van beeldspraak, waarmee hy sy argumente in dié werk verduidelik, sal bespreek word en die verband tussen die teorie en eksistensie van Lewis se argumente sal getrek word.
- Van die Suid-Afrikaanse gesprek en Lewis se argumente en bydraes, aangaande die gesprek, sal daar dan 'n evaluering gedoen word.
- Die inligting wat verkry is gedurende die studie, sal uiteengesit word en so sal daar dan tot 'n slotsom gekom word, wat as wegspringplek kan dien vir verdere studie.

Daar is die volgende vanuit die verskillende stappe bevind:

- In hoofstuk 2 van die navorsingstuk is bevind dat Lewis reg deur sy lewe pyn en lyding ervaar het. Daar is verskeie voorbeelde: die afsterwe van sy moeder toe Lewis nog 'n jong seuntjie was; sy verhouding met sy vader wat as gevolg van bogenoemde gebeure verbreek het; Lewis se aaklige ervarings op skool (met die skoolhoof en die ander klasmaats) en so ook Lewis se ervarings gedurende die Eerste Wêreldoorlog. Al hierdie gebeure het 'n groot impak op Lewis se lewe gehad en dit vloei net so in sy latere ervaring met die afsterwe van sy vrou voort (Ward, 2010:276).
- Vanuit die ontleding van *The Problem of Pain* (hoofstuk 3) is daar bevind dat Lewis hierdie werk intellektueel, teologies-filosofies en apologeties aangepak het. Lewis het 'n Christologiese basis aan die werk gegee, waaruit hy dan hierdie vraagstuk verder bestudeer het. So is dit duidelik uit die epigraaf in Lewis se werk, wat uit George MacDonald se werk, *Unspoken Sermons*, voortkom en lui soos volg: "The Son of God suffered

unto death, not that men might not suffer, but that their sufferings might be like this.” (Lewis, [1940] 2009:5).

- Lewis lewer bydraes deur sy argumente wat opbou tot en met menslike pyn en hoe hierdie aspek dan voortvloei na die gedagtes oor die hemel en die hel. Verder gebruik Lewis verskeie beelde om die aspek van pyn in verskillende verbande te beskryf: “The freedom of God consists in the fact that no cause other than Himself produces His acts and no external obstacle impedes them- that His own goodness is the root from which they all grow and His own omnipotence the air in which they all flower.” (Lewis, [1940] 2009:25); “We want, in fact, not so much a Father in Heaven as a Grandfather in heaven.” (Lewis, [1940] 2009:29) en “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” (vgl. Lewis, [1940] 2009:66). Laastens kan gestel word dat Lewis hierdie werk op ’n ander vlak benader het. In hierdie werk gebruik Lewis kontemplasie as modus om in die menslike bewustheid in te delf. Hierdie modus fokus veral om ’n aspek van ver af te bestudeer en sodoende is daar ’n objektiwiteit in die studie.
- Verder is daar in hoofstuk 4 bevind dat Lewis hierdie werk, *A Grief Observed*, ook op ’n ander vlak benader het. In hierdie werk benader Lewis die aspek van pyn in die ander modus van bewustheid, naamlik genieting. In hierdie modus bevind Lewis homself midde pyn en lyding. Hierdie ervaring van hom is nie iets nuuts nie, maar hier stel Lewis hierdie ervaring op ’n ander vlak en sodoende kan die leser met Lewis se ervarings identifiseer. Deur hierdie ervaring dryf Lewis sy leser na Christus toe, wat reeds bevryding en verlossing aan God se kinders gegee het. Hy is dus die gelowige se enigste vreugde en hoop.
- Verder gebruik Lewis ook beelde om hierdie ervarings vir die leser tasbaar te maak. Eerstens beskryf Lewis ([1961] 2012:21) dat pyn met ’n tandartsafspraak vergelyk kan word. Die persoon kan die armreëlings van die stoel vasgryp of die persoon kan sy hande in sy skoot laat rus. Ongeag wat gedoen word, die pynvlakke bly dieselfde. Nog twee ander beelde: “Grief is like a bomber circling round and dropping its bombs each time the circle brings it overhead; physical pain is like the steady barrage on a trench

in World War One, hours of it with no let-up for a moment.” (Lewis, [1961] 2012:26) en “Grief is like a long valley, a winding valley where every bend may reveal a totally new landscape.” (Lewis, [1961] 2012:36).

- Uit die gesprek van Suid-Afrikaanse teoloë (hoofstuk 5), is dit duidelik dat daar twee voorsienigheidsleerstellings na vore getree het, naamlik die klassieke- en die relatiewe voorsienigheidsleer. Die klassieke voorsienigheidsleer stel dat die mens en so die hele skepping in God Drie-enig se hand is. Daar sal niks gebeur wat die gelowige uit God se hand kan ruk nie. Die rede waarom die gelowige vas en veilig is, is omdat 'n kind van God deur die verlossende en versoenende werk van die Here Jesus Christus gereinig is en so word die gelowige deur die Heilige Gees, die Trooster, tot die finale verlossingsdag bewaar. Die relatiewe voorsienigheidsleer stel die demone teenoor God, God se liefde teenoor sy geregtigheid en almag, geloof teenoor rede en die menslike verantwoordelikheid teenoor die Here se soewereiniteit.
- Wanneer daar na Lewis se benadering gekyk word, kan dit in die Christosentriese teodisee geplaas word. Lewis maak wel oortuigende bydraes met die twee vlakke (kontemplasie en genieting) waaruit hy hierdie vraagstuk benader. Verder gee hy beelde aan die leser om sodoende die vraagstuk op 'n tasbare manier aan ander te verduidelik. Lewis stel in sy werk Christus as basis van waar af hy werk en hierdie lyn beweeg regdeur sy werk. Die Christologiese lyn is met ander woorde duidelik daar en so kan hierdie benadering ingedagte gehou word, wanneer daar oor die vraagstuk nagedink word.
- Daarom kan die hipotese: “Die teodisee-vraagstuk word op 'n vars, duidelike en getroue manier deur C.S. Lewis in sy apologetiek hanteer en weergegee en hierdie gedagtes lewer 'n bydrae tot die Suid-Afrikaanse gesprek.”, as waar verklaar word

## ***Summary of research project***

In chapter 1 of this research project “To drown the darkness: a study of C.S. Lewis’s managing of the theodicy problem in his apologetics.” there was found that the question about theodicy is still an aspect of actuality. From early on people had a struggle with the presence of pain and suffering in the world. People went as far as searching for answers outside of Scripture (Marxism, social gospel, etc.) which only lead to the shattering of the theodicy doctrine. The research problem of this project states the following: “From early on, right through the centuries, there was pondering and writing about the complex theodicy problem by the Church Fathers and theologians. Does C.S. Lewis bring a unique contribution to the table of the South African debate, concerning the theodicy problem, that was not perceived before?”. Now that the scope is focused on C.S. Lewis, the famous Christian writer and apologist, the following hypothesis can be stated: “The theodicy problem is handled and reproduced in a fresh, trustworthy and clear manner in C.S. Lewis’ apologetics; and these thoughts do deliver a contribution to the South African debate.”.

The study has the following five purposes:

- Firstly, to state the arguments and thoughts of C.S. Lewis, concerning the theodicy problem, in Afrikaans.
- Secondly, to do an in-depth analysis of the specific build-up and flow of Lewis’ arguments in the following publications: *The Problem of Pain* and *A Grief Observed*.
- Thirdly, to make a study of Lewis’ use of metaphorical language in his arguments, for which he is so renowned for.
- Fourthly, to study the connection between Lewis’ theory and his later existential struggle with pain and suffering.
- Lastly, to make a study of the South African debate concerning this problem of pain and to state Lewis’ contribution to this debate.

The method by which the study will be conducted:

- A biographical study will be done on C.S. Lewis to determine which effect suffering had on him and his theory concerning suffering.

- Next an analysis will be conducted on the build-up and flow of Lewis' arguments in his publication *The Problem of Pain* and his use of metaphors will be described.
- Further an analysis will be done on the build-up and flow of Lewis' arguments in *A Grief Observed* and his use of metaphors will be described. Also, the connection between Lewis' theory and existential experience will be stated as well.
- The South African debate, Lewis' arguments and contributions towards the debate will be evaluated.
- The information that was produced during this study, will be stated, conclusions and certain recommendations will be made.

The following findings were made during the study:

- In Chapter 2 of research project it was found that Lewis experienced pain right through his life. For example: the passing of his mother when he was only a young boy, his relationship with his father which unravelled later, Lewis' awful experience as a school boy (with the headmaster and other pupils) and those experienced during the First World War. These experiences had a significant impact on Lewis' life and this impact is visible in his experience during the suffering and the death of his wife (Ward, 2010:276).
- From the analysis of *The Problem of Pain*, in chapter 3 of the research project, it was concluded that his work was intellectual, theological-philosophical and apologetic. Lewis also based his arguments on the theodicy problem Christologically. This basis is initially seen in the epigraph of Lewis' publication, which are words from George MacDonald's work *Unspoken Sermons* and are as follow: "The Son of God suffered unto death, not that men might not suffer, but that their sufferings might be like this." (Lewis, [1940] 2009:5).
- Lewis provides contributions by stating his arguments which reaches its climax at the chapter concerning human pain. From this aspect of human pain, the chapters regarding hell and heaven flow. Lewis also uses metaphorical language, in his work, to describe pain, namely: "The freedom of God consists in the fact that no cause other than Himself produces His

acts and no external obstacle impedes them- that His own goodness is the root from which they all grow and His own omnipotence the air in which they all flower.” (Lewis, [1940] 2009:25); “We want, in fact, not so much a Father in Heaven as a Grandfather in heaven.” (Lewis, [1940] 2009:29) and “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” (Lewis, [1940] 2009:66). Lastly Lewis approached this work on a different level. In this work Lewis used contemplation as mode to dig into the consciousness of man. This specific mode focus on the study of an object which is far away and also leads to an objective study.

- Further chapter 4 provided findings that Lewis also studied *A Grief Observed* by using the second mode of consciousness, namely enjoyment, to describe pain and suffering. The experiences described in this work is not something new to Lewis, but he uses this mode to draw in the readers, so that they can identify with him and his pain. Lewis uses this experience to move his readers towards Christ, who already brought and gave freedom and redemption to the Lord’s children. Christ is the Christian’s only hope and joy.
- Lewis also used metaphorical language here to make his experiences sensible for the readers. Firstly Lewis ([1961] 2012:21) described pain by comparing it to a dentist’s consultation. The patient can hold on tight to the arm rests of the chair or he can place his hands in his lap. Regardless of what he does, the pain levels stay the same. There are two other examples: “Grief is like a bomber circling round and dropping its bombs each time the circle brings it overhead; physical pain is like the steady barrage on a trench in World War One, hours of it with no let-up for a moment.” (Lewis, [1961] 2012:26) and “Grief is like a long valley, a winding valley where every bend may reveal a totally new landscape.” (Lewis, [1961] 2012:36).
- From the debate among the South African theologians, in chapter 5, it is obvious that there are two doctrines present regarding the providence of God: the classical and relative doctrine. The classical doctrine states that man and the whole of creation are safely in the hands of the Lord. The reason for this security is situated in the redemptive work and atonement of

the Lord Jesus Christ, which purifies children of God and so through the work of the Holy Spirit they are kept safe for the second coming of the Lord. The relative doctrine regarding the providence of God, places demons against God, God's love against His justice and omnipotence, faith against reason and human responsibility against the Lord's sovereignty.

- When one looks at Lewis' approach, one places him in the group named: Christocentric theodicy. Lewis provides great contributions by his use of the two modes: contemplation and enjoyment, to describe pain and suffering. He also uses many metaphors to make this aspect more understandable for the readers. The Christological line is visible right through his work and it is also important to remember when one is contemplating the theodicy problem.
- Therefore, the hypothesis: "The theodicy problem is handled and reproduced in a fresh, trustworthy and clear manner in C.S. Lewis' apologetics; and these thoughts do deliver a contribution to the South African debate." is found to be true.