

# In this number

OLLI VIITANIEMI

## “One Thing You Lack and With It Everything – An Inward Knowledge of Christ”: Rethinking the Sources and Origins of the Blacksmith’s Phrase.

The life-changing pastoral meeting between the young peasant Paavo Ruotsalainen (1777–1852) and blacksmith Jacob Högman (1750–1806) in 1799 led Paavo to become a lay preacher and leader of a revivalist movement. The meeting is famous especially for one enigmatic phrase uttered by Högman: “One thing you lack and with it everything – an inward knowledge of Christ.” This phrase is traditionally considered to have been inspired by a devotional booklet entitled *A Choice Drop of Honey* (1779) by Thomas Wilcox. However, a more verbatim parallel for the phrase can be found in another devotional book, *The Order of Evangelical Grace in the Economy of Salvation* (1745) by David Hollatz. The present article analyses this new source and concludes that the blacksmith’s phrase can be seen as a creative summary of the first chapters of Hollatz’s book. The phrase also shows a lexical and thematic confluence with other popular Pietist books. Paavo was highly unusual among the peasants of eastern Finland in that he owned several books, including the one by Hollatz. The blacksmith’s phrase as recorded for posterity may even have been formulated by Paavo himself, who seems to have been an intensive reader and a creative religious thinker.

KALLE HILTUNEN

## Paavo Ruotsalainen as a Teacher of Contemplation

Yearning (‘ikävöiminen’) is one of the main themes in the teaching of Paavo Ruotsalainen (1777–1852). A peasant lay preacher and leader of a revivalist movement, he taught sinners to yearn and wait for God without hastening to depart from the state of damnation and sorrow to which God has brought him/her. This article studies the parallelism between this teaching and contemplative prayer familiar from the Catholic mystic tradition. The concept of contemplation found in the texts of John of the Cross in particular is in many ways similar to the yearning of Paavo Ruotsalainen.

TUUKKA KAUKHANEN

## Paavo Ruotsalainen’s Use of the Bible

It is possible to study through reception history and history of effect how Paavo Ruotsalainen used the Bible. Paavo’s interpretations were influenced by the Bible translation he used, the social situation in the early 19th century and the tradition of Bible interpretation at the time. What is typical of his reading of the Bible is finding universal principles behind specific Bible quotes, as is apparent particularly clearly in his attitude to genuflection. The Bible verses he cited in support of his arguments were found through association. Although the end result seems like a haphazard collection of Bible quotes, a scarlet thread running through them may be identified through reception study.

ESKO M. LAINE

**The Rise of the Love of Reading:  
The Literacy and Christianity of the Young  
Paavo Ruotsalainen and his Immediate Circle**

The article discusses how literate Paavo Ruotsalainen actually was, as indicated by church sources. The discussion concerns his literacy both in absolute terms and in comparison with that of other children and adolescents of his age in his home village. The discussion also extends to his parents, Vilppu [Philip] Ruotsalainen and Anna Helena Svan, and to the uncle who gave him the aforementioned Bible. The literacy of Paavo's siblings and his own children is also considered. The conclusion is that Paavo's intellectual faculties have been somewhat exaggerated. To be sure, the young Paavo Ruotsalainen was a good reader compared with other boys of his age, but many of the girls in his home village matched his skill level without effort. In questions of knowledge, he was found wanting on many occasions in his childhood. Nevertheless, he lived at a time when literacy was gradually replacing learning by rote under fear of punishment and becoming a gateway to a new world of knowledge.

MIIKKA ANTTILA

**Luther's Aesthetics**

It may seem unusual to mention aesthetics and Luther in the same sentence. The received wisdom is that there is little room for aesthetic contemplation in Luther's theology. On closer examination, however, we find that the experience of beauty played a significant part in the Reformer's thinking. Faith opens the mind of the believer to perceive the beauty of Creation. The doctrine of justification can be construed as an aesthetic theory: God is the most beautiful, while humans are disfigured by sin. In His grace, God gives us His beauty and takes our ugliness away. Against the Medieval background, it is also interesting to note that Luther's conception of beauty belongs to the tradition of 'aesthetics of light'. Indeed, the meta-

phor of light may prove more useful for describing the doctrine of justification and the traditional legal imagery.

KARI LATVUS

**Who Will Listen to the Poor? About Methods  
for Studying Biblical Poverty Texts**

The purpose of the article is to analyse the meaning of various contexts for the methods used in exegesis of poverty texts in the Bible. First, two case studies focusing on Alfred Rahlfs and liberation theology are presented. Based on these cases, the author introduces an inter-contextual method. It addresses especially the poor behind the text (context 1), the text and its writer (context 2), the researcher (context 3) and the poor in the modern world (context 4).

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