

God Of History

by Rebecca Bynum (Dec. 2008)

One of the most confusing aspects of modern Judeo-Christian thought lies in the attempt to reconcile two opposing concepts of God. One is of God as the loving and merciful Father of the individual, who is concerned primarily with individual salvation and survival after death. The other is of God as an actor in history, who controls and shapes the historical drama for his purpose, disregarding the individual, as is often depicted in the Bible. In his book, *After Auschwitz*, Richard L. Rubenstein proposes that theology itself is essentially an attempt to diminish the cognitive dissonance that belief in both these aspects of God causes in the believer. There is a gulf between the Biblical God of history and the God of human individual experience which theologians attempt to bridge. That gulf has grown wider and those theological bridges less tenable in the face of the unprecedented scale of death and destruction wrought by man in the twentieth century.