

May 19, 2011

Mr. Dudley Delffs
Zondervan
5300 Patterson Avenue SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49530

Dear Mr. Delffs,

What if the vast audience for secular self-help books could learn to use the *Bible* for emotional insight? Even secular adults can mindlessly recite much of the 23rd Psalm or quote lines from Proverbs without considering how those verses could improve their relationships. In his book, *The Writings of the Bible: a Scriptural Prescription for Life*, Rabbi Michael Barclay demonstrates how each section of the *Writings* provides understanding into the breadth of emotions and situations we face in our frantic, technology-driven lives. Distilled from his lectures as a professor of Hebrew Scriptures in the Department of Theology at Loyola Marymount University, Rabbi Barclay explores these ancient and all-too-familiar texts to reveal their wisdom, relevance, and practical application. His 200-page book has approximately 50,000 words. It is both lively theology and spiritual self-help, the product of seven years as a college professor and experience as a pastoral rabbi. In the strictest sense, the book falls within the "Torah," "Bible," or "Sacred Texts" categories; however, it has definite appeal in the areas of theology, religion, spirituality, self-help, and relationships. Rabbi Barclay used his draft as his university text book, a \$4.58 billion market.

Rabbi Barclay illuminates contemporary ideas in these Biblical books (Psalms, Proverbs, the books of Job, Ruth, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Song of Songs, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Chronicles I and II) by taking a landmark approach to their study, liberating the context and standard published order and delving into the text. He translates the Hebrew into simple, understandable thoughts and discovers gems by journeying into the soul of their meaning. His unique pathway into the texts (in Hebrew, the *Ketuvim*) illustrates their connection. Most importantly, his book is an accessible guide to using the *Writings*, teaching readers how to find the Divine in every relationship to have a peaceful, gratifying life. It is suitable for the mass market yet supported by solid Biblical scholarship. This engaging resource helps people of all faiths, levels of study, and religious practice, and demonstrates that the *Bible* truly is the ultimate self-help book.

Rabbi Barclay has published more than 50 articles and was the editor of *Smoke Magazine*, reflecting his diverse background, interests, and scholarship. He is a frequent contributor of Torah commentary and opinion to both the *Jewish Forward* and the *Jewish Journal* of Los Angeles. Fox News quoted him in its story on Mel Gibson's racist slurs. A gifted and admired professor, peak performance coach for the Chicago White Sox, former film producer, committed interfaith community leader, and pulpit rabbi at Temple of the Arts, Rabbi Barclay is a tornado in a Tallit. Watch the one minute, 48 second video of him posted on YouTube http://youtu.be/Kno_mM0yYSU, and you will note that the depth of his knowledge and his passion for liturgy is equally matched by his humanity and charisma.

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On May 18th, the Bnai Zion Foundation honored Rabbi Barclay with its Distinguished Humanitarian Award for his dedication and work as a teacher and interfaith leader, creating venues in which various religious traditions engage in dialogue. Attached is a list of references and quotes supporting Rabbi Barclay's extraordinary work.

The Writings of the Bible: a Scriptural Prescription for Life affirms the wisdom of the Chassidic sage, Rabbi Nachman of Breslav (1772-1810), who taught that we reach out in three directions – up to God, out to other people, and into our own hearts. The secret is that all three directions are truly the same:

When I reach out to another person, I find myself and God.
When I find God, I find others and the true me.
When I find myself, I reach God and other people.

The Writings of the Bible: a Scriptural Prescription for Life demonstrates how to use the *Ketuvim* to create more meaningful relationships through God, and by doing so, reap the rewards.

Thank you considering this query; I have a full proposal to send to you upon request. Similar to Rick Warren's *A Purpose Driven Life*, Rabbi Barclay's book is attractive to the interfaith mass market. It is an excellent fit with Zondervan's publishing interest — religion and spirituality in a modern context. Please feel free to call me at **626-215-6306** or contact me via email at LindaPHorowitz@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Linda Parker Horowitz
Marketing Concepts & Communications
Representative for Rabbi Michael Barclay

Enclosures