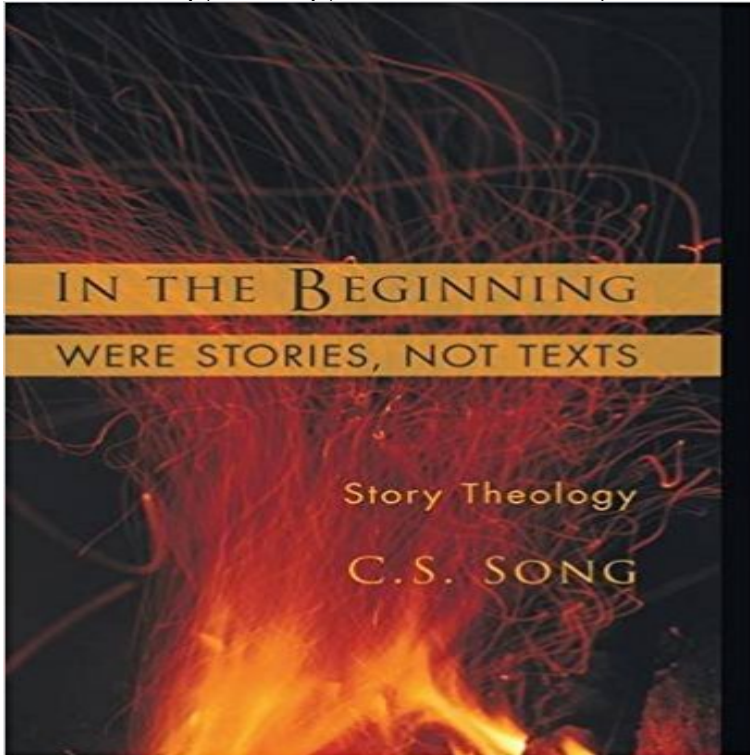


In the Beginning Were Stories, Not Texts



Description: The Christian Bible is fundamentally a story. Writers, painters, sculptors, artists, and indeed, people of all walks of life live by the telling of their stories. Stories are the most basic mode of human communication. Thus it is vital to ask why Christians and above all Christian theologians so often fail to express their faith in terms of story. The vast majority of the Hebrew Scriptures, for example, consist of stories. Jesus proclaimed and taught about the Reign of God through stories and parables. At the heart of the Christian faith are stories, not concepts, propositions, or ideas. Given the deep rootedness of the Christian faith in storytelling, this book seeks to address the fact that Christian theology has too often taken the form of concepts, ideas, and systems. This book is an attempt to speak of Christian faith and theology in stories rather than systems. Through stories, both biblical and non-biblical, this book shows how we might reimagine the task of Christian theology in the life of faith today. At its heart is the conviction that in the beginning there were stories and that, in the end and indeed, beyond the end, are stories, not texts, ideas, and concepts.

Endorsements: A consummate storyteller, C. S. Song has been at the leading edge of contemporary Christian theology for several decades now. This latest work is essential reading for anyone who has grown weary of systematic formulations. Songs faithful narrative is a story well told. -James Treat University of Illinois C. S. Song has been a consistent and prolific writer of story theology. He has given us rich material over the years. Here is more. His work is brilliant, imaginative, metaphorical, instructive, and faithful. -Archie Smith Jr. Pacific School of Religion and Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley C. S. Song the Griot chants with the entrancing cadence of an old-hand peddler of tales. Story-telling is a human

practice of meaning-making, he reminds us, and through webs of stories we catch potent expressions of divine mystery and human struggle. Uninvested in cultural-linguistic expositions for narrative classification and hermeneutic regulation, Song simply invites readers/listeners into story worlds across time and cultures so that we may live into the fantastical nature of God-talk and human-talk. -Mai-Anh Le Tran Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis

About the Contributor(s): C. S. Song is Chair Professor of Theology at Yu Shan Theological Seminary and Chang Jong Christian University in Taiwan.

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