



Date : 03/04/2003

Pages : 380

Format cm : 11 x 18

Prix : 10.2

EAN : 9782710325826

Faithless, Placeless

Cities in the Bible

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Publisher : La Table Ronde

Category : Humanities and Non-Fiction

Genres : Philosophy

Keywords : Accordion book

The city represents the human-made world par excellence, the expression of all civilizations, but also witness to human excess.

In the beginning, cities were an affront to God. Cain, condemned to eternal wandering, became a builder, like his offspring. Their goal? To create a new paradise in the absence of God. That is why all those cities were cursed: Babel, Babylon, Niniveh... The city, meant as a quest for lost unity, becomes a place of miscommunication and the cause of its own downfall. But over the course of Biblical history, God comes to ratify that human project, the city. Jerusalem, ceaselessly destroyed and built anew, becomes the symbol and prophecy of the Holy City. The author's dialectical argument culminates in his reading of garden spaces in the city, and their survival of destruction and annihilation.