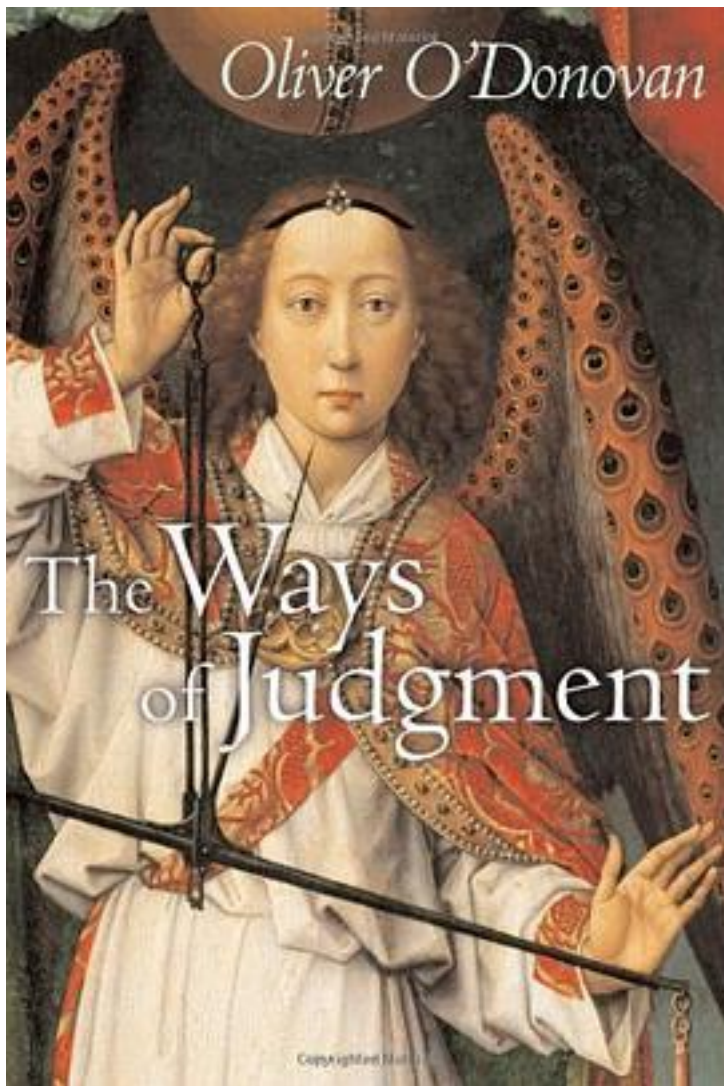


The Ways of Judgment



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In this probing book Oliver O'Donovan extends the exploration into the correspondence between theology and politics that he began in "The Desire of the Nations." While that earlier work took as its starting point the biblical proclamation of God's authority, "The Ways of Judgment" approaches political theology from the political side. Responsive to developments such as the uncertain role of the United Nations after the Cold War and the expansion of the European Union, O'Donovan also draws on the extensive tradition of Christian political thought and a range of contemporary theologians. Rather than supposing, as does some political theology, that the right political orientations are well understood and that theological beliefs should be renegotiated to fit them, O'Donovan considers contemporary social and political realities to be impenetrably obscure and elusive. Finding the gospel proclamation luminous by contrast, O'Donovan sheds light from the Christian faith upon the intricate challenge of seeking the good in late-modern Western society. Pursuing his analysis in three movements, O'Donovan first considers the paradigmatic political act, the act of judgment, and then takes up the question of forming political institutions through representation. Finally, he tackles the opposition between political institutions and the church, provocatively investigating how Christians can be the community instructed by Jesus to "judge not."

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