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## Book Reviews - Spiritus 6.1 (Spring 2021)

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## Book Reviews - Spiritus 6.1 (Spring 2021)

### Authors

Daniel King; Michael A. Donaldson; Robert McBain; Christopher J. King; Cletus L. Hull, III; and Daniel D. Isgrigg

## REVIEWS

***Yesterday, Today, and Forever: The Extraordinary Life and Ministry of Tommy Lee Osborn.*** By Edith Prakash. Lanham, MD: Seymour Press, 2018. v + 196 pp.

Tommy Lee Osborn (1923–2013) is the original exemplar of mass healing crusade evangelism. In *Yesterday, Today, and Forever*, Edith Prakash examines Osborn’s life and theology and his impact on India. The book is adapted from her Ph.D. dissertation, “A Critical Investigation of Tommy Lee Osborn’s Work in India: Its Impact and Implications,” completed at Regent University under Vinson Synan’s direction in 2013.

Prakash is the daughter of Indian evangelists, the late Nataraj Mudaliar and Padma Mudaliar, so she has a particular interest in the rise of Christianity in India. Her first chapter covers the history of Christianity in India, and the second chapter details the history of Pentecostalism in India. This information on India’s religion, cultures, and beliefs sets the stage for understanding the context of Osborn’s ministry in India.

Prakash turns to the early life and ministry of Osborn. She describes how he was saved at the age of 14 and at 16 traveled around the United States with a revivalist. At a church in Alamo, California, he met Daisy Washburn. They fell in love with one another and got married on April 5, 1949, at the age of 17 and 18, respectively. For the next couple of years, they traveled around California holding revival meetings and, for a short time, became pastors of a church in Portland, Oregon. They went to India as missionaries in 1945 and were disappointed at the lack of converts. Osborn found it challenging to communicate the gospel to the Hindu and Muslim people. Although the Osborns were supposed to stay in India for several years, they went home disappointed after only ten months.

When they returned to the States, the Osborns began to fast and pray to discover why their ministry in India was ineffective. The Osborns realized that people “need proof that Jesus is alive” and that “without miracles, Christianity is little more than another dead religion” (75–76). Osborn received four visions of Jesus (in person, in the life of a minister, in the pages of the New Testament, and in his own life) that convinced him that preaching about a miracle-working Jesus was

the answer to world evangelism. Soon after, the Osborns left the United States and went to Jamaica for their first crusade. At his crusade, they began performing mass healing prayers for the sick and invited those who were healed to come to the platform to testify.

In 1960, Osborn returned to northern India to do a crusade in Lucknow, and in 1961 he held a crusade in southern India in the city of Madurai. His new mass evangelism techniques were successful, and several leading Indian evangelists, including D. G. S. Dhinakaran and Mohan C. Lazarus, trace the beginnings of their ministries back to that crusade. Osborn could not return to India for thirty-one years because of visa restrictions and did not conduct another crusade in India until Hyderabad in 1992. However, Prakash describes how he continued to influence India during his absence through his innovative methodology, which many Indian evangelists adopted. His financial support of native evangelists and distribution of literature were also influences. She also mentions the impact of Daisy Osborn and how her ministerial partnership with T. L. provided an example for female ministers in India. Another influence was Osborn's documentary film, *Athens of India*, which convinced Christians worldwide to pray for India.

Prakash dedicates one chapter to the healing theology of Osborn and how F. F. Bosworth, William Branham, and Gordon Lindsey influenced him. Another chapter is used to examine Osborn's hermeneutics and its intersection with Indian hermeneutics. The book's best chapter examines Osborn's mission strategy. According to Prakash, Osborn's innovations included holding crusades in outdoor fields, using a translator, performing a mass healing prayer, and the use of extensive publicity. Osborn continued to use these methods for the rest of his ministry as he traveled worldwide, and many Spirit-empowered evangelists have now adopted his methodology. Prakash paraphrases Osborn when she writes, "[T]hese methods of miracle mass evangelism have become the norm globally" (105).

As a missionary evangelist, I recommend this book to those who are interested in evangelism and missions. Prakash writes with scholarly precision while maintaining a passion for souls and a love for India's people. There are hundreds of dissertations and books that have researched Billy Graham's life in minute detail, and several have been written about the evangelical evangelist from Argentina, Luis Palau. Yet, there is a lack of research on Pentecostal evangelists. Perhaps the best summary is Vinson Synan's *The Century of the Holy Spirit*, but even this outstanding resource provides only a few paragraphs about individual Pentecostal evangelists. Roberts Liardon covers the healing evangelists in his *God's Generals* series. Many of the best resources available on Pentecostal evangelists are

autobiographies like Reinhard Bonnke's *Living a Life of Fire*, Marilyn Hickey's *It's Not Over Until You Win*, and Roberta Potts' recollections in *My Father, Oral Roberts*. There is a need for more research on Pentecostal evangelists, so it is gratifying to see a well-researched study covering the achievements of Osborn.

At times, the book abandons the study of Osborn's life to examine various aspects of Christianity in India. While well-researched, this material is not germane to the topic implied by the book's title. As such, this book is not a full biography about Osborn. Instead, it is a snapshot of one small part of Osborn's legacy—his impact on India. This book does an excellent job of detailing his ministry in India. Still, more research is needed on Osborn's impact in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, considering that Osborn's ministry spanned seventy years in over 100 nations. I attended T. L. Osborn's Memorial Service at Christ's Chapel on the ORU campus and heard representatives from some of the largest churches from six continents give Osborn credit for their ministry success. Osborn deserves to have his theology and ministry studied in greater depth because of his life's immense impact.

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***Sanctifying Interpretation: Vocation, Holiness, and Scripture.*** 2nd ed. By Chris E. W. Green. Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2020. xvi + 238 pp.

Chris E. W. Green is the Professor of Public Theology at Southeastern University in Lakeland, Florida, and Teaching Pastor at Sanctuary Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He earned his Ph.D. from Bangor University, Wales, UK, and has a DMin from Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, Oklahoma. He has authored numerous books and articles. Green's research interests are in Pentecostal spirituality, racial/ethnic injustice, and the doctrine of God.

This second edition is sixty-two pages longer than the first edition published in 2015 because Green felt he had more to say on the subject. Green writes to those in the Pentecostal community (Classical in particular) who interpret the text in their own unique way while ignoring other interpretations that may have value. The author writes, "I wrote this book, at least in part, because those experiences kept forcing me to work through what I was coming to believe about the Scriptures and how we are to

read them” (6). Green’s central argument is “that God does not intend to save us from interpretation but through it” (xi). As such, he develops a soteriological hermeneutic built upon the premise that the interpretation process itself is part of the Christian’s vocation. This approach is distinct from the traditional Pentecostal approach, which usually reads Scripture from a holiness perspective, emphasizing themes like separatism and sinfulness. Green argues that we will encounter fewer interpretative biases if we shift our perspective away from a traditional Pentecostal reading and onto a reading that is based upon vocation and holiness.

In the Introduction, Green discusses Pentecostals and their approach to Scripture and hermeneutics. Pentecostals have a high view of Scripture and utilized an epistemological methodology to validate doctrine and theory while rejecting those interpretations contrary to dogma. Pentecostals attempt to make all Scripture fit together cohesively, like a neatly solved puzzle, when, in reality, Scripture does not. Green replaces this epistemological approach with a soteriological approach that rejects theories and practices that affirm the text’s infallibility and interpretation. Green “assure[s] us of God’s reliability in our faulty readings of the imperfect biblical texts” (5).

In Part One (Chapters 1–3), Green describes how a believer’s vocation (ministry) is united with their Christian identity by drawing a comparison with Christ’s public ministry and his identity as the Son of God. By uniting vocation and identity in this way, Green attempts to show that Christians are sanctified as they minister to sinners. Therefore, Christians need not separate from sinners because the Christian vocation is among them. God’s soteriological mission involves him equipping Christians to be vocational interpreters who reject easy biblicism and grapple with the more challenging texts. Green proceeds to connect liturgical worship as a priestly function. He argues for Pentecostals to adopt a liturgical worship style (e.g., Anglican) that promotes self-control and denial rather than the self-serving freedom in worship that Pentecostals typically embrace (62).

In Part Two (Chapters 4–5), Green discusses how the definition of holiness Pentecostals inherited was a mixed blessing. Primarily, Pentecostals defined holiness as a process of separation from the world while maintaining moral purity. However, for Green, holiness goes beyond morality, immorality, and judgment; holiness is love focused (88). Green’s definition aims to show that holiness is more than just separation from sin and that it should be understood from the perspective of Christ’s soteriological work (97–122).

Part Three (Chapters 6–8) explores how reading Scripture draws believers into holiness, transforming them so that they can operate in their vocation as “Christ’s

co-sanctified co-sanctifiers” (125). Green argues that reading Scripture from an evangelical theological perspective with the telos of revelation needs to be superseded by a new methodology. The soteriological approach he presents does not see interpretation as a quest for revelation but as the means of fulfilling one’s vocation. Christians do not have to negate their views on inspiration or inerrancy to adopt this method; Green’s argument is more of an attempt to change the emphasis from what the Bible is to what the Bible is supposed to do. It is a transition from an epistemological reading to a soteriological one.

Green argues for the rediscovery of an early Pentecostal hermeneutic that goes beyond a literal reading towards a Spirit-guided spiritual reading. He proposes that believers adopt the theological viewpoint that Scripture is sacrament and interpretation of Scripture is a sanctifying encounter. This involves five practical steps: (re) reading in the Spirit, (re) reading with the community, (re) reading for Christ, (re) reading from the heart, and (re) reading toward faithful performance. In practical application, Romans 9–11 is utilized as a guide for navigation (185–206). This soteriological paradigm sanctifies textual interpretations and means that those texts that are typically difficult to interpret have a sanctifying quality.

This manuscript has many strengths. It is well written with a consistent, methodical flow. The arguments presented are compelling, well-supported, and convincing for the most part. I appreciate the author’s recommendation for Pentecostals to consider the Anglican liturgical tradition (58). However, given the broad global contexts of Spirit-empowered movements, all liturgical genres should be embraced. I would recommend this book in the academic setting to be read in theology and hermeneutics courses on the graduate level. It would be advantageous in the ecclesiastical context for qualified clergy to utilize this text as a guide to adapt and explain the concepts of vocation, holiness, and Scripture to church parishioners for large or small group Bible Study.

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***Pneumatic Hermeneutics: The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Theological Interpretation of Scripture.*** By Leulseged Philemon. Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2019. xv + 228 pp.

Leulseged Philemon is a lecturer in Biblical and Theological Studies at the Ethiopian Graduate School of Theology, Addis Ababa. This monograph is the publication of his Ph.D. dissertation at Fuller Seminary under the supervision of Joel B. Green. It provides a comprehensive investigation into the Holy Spirit's role in interpreting Scripture, while describing the remarkable contribution that Pentecostalism has made to the discussion within the broader ecumenical context. By presenting Pentecostalism as an ecumenical dialogue partner, Philemon extends the Pentecostal trialectic of Spirit, Scripture, and community to include the broader Christian community. In so doing, this book seeks to point a way forward for understanding the Spirit's role in theological interpretation within the broader Christian community.

Chapter one serves as the introduction to the study. Philemon summarizes theological interpretation's key scholarly voices and identifies essential themes running through their work (28–31). His findings serve as a starting point for the development of a constructive approach to understanding the Spirit's interpretative role in reading Scripture theologically. In chapter two, Philemon discusses Pentecostalism's interpretative tradition and how it engages with community, experience, and the Spirit's primary role in understanding the text (73). Within this dynamic, Philemon emphasizes a high view of Scripture through which God addresses humans above their reason and intellect (73). In the third chapter, Philemon provides some essential theological perspectives of the Eastern Orthodox and Catholic Churches on the interplay between the Bible and Spirit. Philemon argues that church community and tradition are the proper contexts in which the Spirit guides the interpretation process because the community provides the location where biblical interpretation is practically demonstrated (97).

Chapter four assesses pneumatic hermeneutics within the Reformed Protestant tradition by exploring the ideas of John Calvin, John Owen, and John Wesley. Philemon argues that the Reformed tradition believes that the Scripture does not require the church to interpret it. Instead, the Bible is self-interpretative (99) through the process of divine illumination and the internal testimony of Scripture (32–33). The Spirit works through Scripture to address fallen humanity's spiritual blindness because the Scripture is God's supreme authority and revelation (128).

Philemon argues in chapter five that Pentecostal hermeneutics contributes to pneumatic hermeneutics. It does this by informing and challenging the Spirit's absence in traditional Evangelical methodologies. Pentecostal hermeneutics also recovers the practice of theological interpretation by stimulating meaningful discourse concerning the Spirit's role (162). Philemon describes a Pentecostal hermeneutic as dynamic, experiential, and existential. It does not restrict the Spirit's role solely to biblical inspiration; instead, it invites the Spirit's presence in the interpretation process as an ongoing activity (163). Chapter six summarizes how Pentecostal hermeneutics contributes to the broader ecumenical discussion through its emphasis on the experience of the Spirit within the interpretative community. Philemon presents an interpretative strategy that integrates the Spirit and the community's role in understanding the sacred texts.

This book shows how Pentecostalism can contribute to non-Pentecostal processes of interpretation through its focus on the experience of the Spirit within the community. To this end, the author interacted with leading scholars in the field and presents a clear, well developed, and highly readable thesis that makes for an engaging blend of scholarly thoroughness and easy reading. Within his discussion, Philemon includes literature reviews in almost every chapter, which are engaging and relevant. His dialogue with scholarship past and present from Eastern Orthodox, Catholic, Reformed, and Pentecostal traditions, would be valuable to new students of hermeneutics to help orientate them within the subject. An important voice missing from this engagement was the voice of majority world scholars. Their inclusion would have enriched this monograph.

A broad pneumatological ecclesiology lies behind *Pneumatic Hermeneutics*. As Philemon understands it, the church community is the mediating agent through whom the Spirit's interpretative work is experienced and expressed within the broader Christian context. The church, therefore, operates as a pneumatological fellowship, relying entirely on the Holy Spirit. Organization and tradition play a crucial role in this dynamic. Yet, the focus is more on the unifying nature of the Spirit as he operates within the church's distinct social units, helping them learn from each other. As such, *Pneumatic Hermeneutics* situates Pentecostal hermeneutics and its trialectic within the broader ecumenical community. The book does this remarkably well and will undoubtedly help those who seek to link Pentecostalism into the broader Christian tradition. Besides this, the study also extends Pentecostalism's understanding of the church as an interpretative community and contributes to recent debates about Pentecostal hermeneutical distinctives and their relationship to Evangelical

hermeneutical principles. Overall, *Pneumatic Hermeneutics* is an excellent read and will be a useful addition to the library of those interested in the topic.

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***The Spirit and the Common Good: Shared Flourishing in the Image of God.*** By Daniela C. Augustine. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2019. xii + 257 pp.

Daniela Augustine's *The Spirit and the Common Good* presents a theological ethic grounded in the events of the Incarnation and Pentecost, proceeding from the Eastern Orthodox and Pentecostal traditions. Augustine argues that human flourishing does not come simply from obedience to God's commandments but from an ontological transformation that involves an ever-greater imaging of the divine presence. Augustine advances her thesis in various ways, from dense academic prose to intimate and moving stories. The questions about Augustine's proposal that I will raise after introducing its content are questions for clarification rather than criticisms.

Augustine sets the book's material and thematic context against the Third Balkan War and the Pentecostal churches' peacebuilding efforts within war-torn Yugoslavia between 1991 to 2002. These events frame this work, presenting the problem of human violence and offering hagiographies of saintly in-Spirit-ed responses to the suffering caused by this violence. These stories present an existential call to follow a way of life that embodies our sacramental vocation as "the visible means of invisible grace toward peacebuilding and reconciliation, economic justice, sociopolitical inclusion, and ecological renewal" (228).

Chapter 1 lays the groundwork for Augustine's ethical proposals, beginning with the image of God that is common to all of humanity. As Christ is the visible image of the invisible God, bearing this image is to undergo "continual Christic transfiguring" (18). To bear the image of God is to *see* Christ in those created in God's image while also acting in *a* Christlike manner towards them. Appealing to the Orthodox icon of creation, Augustine describes God's image as an event in which God, creation, and humans face each other juxtaposed. Because sin and violence have fractured the world, the Spirit works within the church through

prayer and redemptive hospitality to transform the entire cosmos into what God created it to be: a sanctuary for divine presence and community.

Chapters 2 and 3 diagnose human violence and self-centeredness in a world of limited goods. The chapters offer a set of counter-formative practices to show how social and economic institutions function to disciple our desires and values. Augustine argues that no social contract will rid us of this self-centeredness. A heart transformed into Christ's heart through repentance by the work of the Spirit alone enables us to extend God's presence and *shalom* to our neighbor. Members of the Spirit-filled community fulfill their priestly vocation as worshiping beings who counter the world's greed through an economics of the Sabbath and an economics of the household. Practicing the Eucharist and the accompanying fast reorients our vision from self-centered consumption to identification with the hungry and the oppressed. Living within the Spirit-filled community should make us see the contrast between the indulgent consumerism our privileged first-world society offers and our responsibility for others.

Chapter 4 takes on the challenge of pursuing forgiveness in the face of violence. Augustine argues that "authentic forgiveness and reconciliation, wherever found, are manifestations of the Spirit's unceasing, redemptive, socio-transformative work of mending the world and transfiguring humanity into the likeness of its maker" (165). Yet, there are no easy pathways to authentic Christian forgiveness or for achieving reconciliation between the oppressed and the oppressor, particularly at the collective level. Here, the church can serve as a community exemplar who strives to walk in the "ways of peace" and who embodies forgiveness in its members. While forgiveness and world-mending cannot come from a top-down approach, it can be pursued through the Spirit-led community.

This book is a valuable contribution to contemporary theological ethics because it argues that the Spirit leads the church to mirror and participate in the divine work of the world's redemption. Thinking of practices such as "respacing," hospitality, and the Eucharist as reflecting the divine character and taking part in the divine activity is helpful. However, I would like to register two comments or questions. First, while Augustine's foundational concept of the image of God as the divine face, as introduced in the context of the Orthodox icon of creation, has clear symbolic value, Augustine does not fully explain what the divine face communicates or represents to human beings.

Second, while Augustine emphasizes that the cosmos' ontological renewal is enacted through the Incarnation and Pentecost—as an important lacuna in more nominalist or forensic accounts of redemption found in Protestant and Evangelical

traditions—I wonder about the redemptive extent of the cross in her account. I am specifically concerned that incorporation into the life of God through the Incarnation and Pentecost renders the work of the cross as a supplement to redemption rather than its central activity. Perhaps this is an issue of emphasis: Augustine claims that redemption is not *merely* reconciliation or justification but transfiguration into God’s likeness. While Augustine discusses the role of the cross as an act of forgiveness and as the exemplar of self-sacrificial asceticism that Christians take part in, the cross does not appear as the central event of redemption. This line of questioning raises issues that the author could address in a monograph more narrowly focused on soteriology. These observations notwithstanding, I conclude with the following challenge, one among many in Augustine’s fine book: “Changing the world begins with transforming the circumstances of our immediate other—extending to them the hospitality of God, respacing ourselves on their behalf in Godlikeness, seeking to provide what is needed but lacking for their flourishing” (107).

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***When Tears Sing: The Art of Lament in Christian Community.*** By William Blaine-Wallace. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 179 pp.

As a psychiatric hospital chaplain for thirty-two years, I eagerly desired to read *When Tears Sing*, by William Blaine-Wallace. Frequently, we chaplains gather the patients to recite the lament psalms. The recital of these psalms often touches an emotional vein in the patients as they speak aloud the psalmists’ expressions of grief. The lament psalms describe the inner turmoil encountered in mental health work.

*When Tears Sing* is filled with anecdotes from a hospice chaplain who served the spiritual needs of AIDS patients at Grady Hospital in Atlanta, GA. He includes his ministry in churches and educational settings as well. Blaine-Wallace is an Episcopal priest and pastoral counselor. He shares his experience as a chaplain and his discovery of lament theology. Throughout his writing, he explains the lack of introspection Americans have in this matter and notes that our Christian churches do not lament very well. We desire happy feelings, not sadness. His keen insight into Scripture and humanity illustrates both his and the patients’ inner experience with lament.

The division of chapters is two-fold. Part one, named “Coming Together,” examines lament in its theological and psychological domains. He discusses the nature of grief concerning lament. The author describes a movement from wailing, to dirge, to solidarity, to joy, and then to justice. He highlights that the experience of lament remains a communal experience and not a solitary practice. Part two, titled “Going On Together,” spotlights the application of lament. The theme of this section focuses on experiencing lament amid a world that is becoming more chaotic. The concluding chapters describe Emmanuel Church, which he conveys as a progressively theological congregation and a prayerful church. He tells many stories of occasions when the congregation extended themselves to individuals and groups outside their traditional setting.

Blaine-Wallace begins with a spirituality of tears. He writes, “When tears sing, hearts are opened. Open hearts are more susceptible to the pain in, around, and beyond us. Lamentational communities are challenged, as spiritual teacher Ram Dass reminds us, ‘to keep our hearts open during the hurricane.’ How do we keep our hearts alive in a hurting world that breaks through filters that keep us from being overwhelmed? Confession and prayer keep us more vulnerable to and available for the world-the-way-it-really is” (83). This thesis grounds the book and emphasizes the role tears and suffering play in moving people beyond resilience and American self-sufficiency to recognizing that healing comes from within the community context. Yes, it is acceptable to grieve and lament because we discover God through this process. Repeatedly, Blaine-Wallace states that the church experience must be about one’s relationship with God and all people. Continuing with his thoughts, he offers seven dynamics connected to lament. These elements include “silence, listening, alterity, hospitality, repeating a story, absence, and curiosity” (101). The details of each of these are important exercises in the release of lament.

Chapter three is the core theological segment. Sharing stories about Desmond Tutu’s efforts with apartheid in South Africa, genocide in Rwanda, and America’s 9/11 experience, Blaine-Wallace notes the need for solidarity in suffering. As he relates these events, he rightly observes that America is weak in communal lament. We pride ourselves in isolation, demonstrating contempt for involving others in the lament experience. He discerns that our culture prides itself on success, completely ignoring lament.

The spirituality grounding lament is a theology of the cross. Blaine-Wallace’s theology of the cross contends with social actions such as racism, whiteness, ageism, and liberation theology. He repeatedly describes God as the God of suffering. He mentions Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s ministry and interacts with Bonhoeffer’s poetry

while specifically elaborating upon how Christ's spiritual experience in Gethsemane relates to lament and suffering. Essentially, lament is about God meeting humans at the place of their suffering and pain. Yet, even at this point, there is resurrection. He explains that "the true church is bracketed by the historic church's theology of glory. We need to make more music" (78). Certainly, processing grief can provide healing. The process itself is an arduous process to undertake, in which we cannot bypass lament. If we do, it will be to our spiritual detriment.

In Part two, his pastoral piece presents the practicalities of speaking prayers of lament. Prayer in suffering releases oneself to the essence of God. Our rants and wailing create healing from our pain. Blaine-Wallace notes five expressions of this type of prayer, "refract, be still, wait patiently, stay curious, and cloak suffering" (87). With each topic, he provides supplemental thoughts on what these expressions mean regarding lament. Another unique concept unpacked is *witnessing*. Again, this idea is defined within a public community of faith. He writes that "the witnessing process allows the congregation to slow down community to a pace that invites attention to the moment. Each participant jumps into the pool of tears with others" (133). Blaine-Wallace provides a practical worksheet that outlines "how-to" lead a discussion group on the topic of *witnessing*.

Blaine-Wallace's liberal theological leanings are noted in his writing. He is a minister in a mainline church and comes from that perspective. He often engages in womanist theology or same-sex commitments in his ministry experiences. However, these vignettes should not diminish his reflections on lament. I would recommend this book to those in the Charismatic and Spirit-Empowered Movements. The doctrine of triumphalism buries lament and suffering with American success. We need a theology of suffering and the cross. His work on lament's strength is that though we have various theologies, the same human needs that lament employs remain in everyone. These ideas are worth exploring for a pastor, chaplain, or layperson. Indeed, a broader perspective on lament would do our churches good. If we can look past his progressive theology, we can glean gems about the art of lament in the Christian community. Without a doubt, integrating a theology of suffering would provide balance for the success mentality of our churches and ministries.

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***All Things New: Eschatology in the Majority World.*** By Gene L. Green, Stephen T. Pardue, K. K. Yeo, eds. Carlisle, UK: Langham, 2019. 159 pp.

Eschatology has long since left the realm of neglected topics in Christian theology. From the thoughtful works emphasizing the notions of transformational eschatology to the growing critiques of dispensationalism, eschatology as a theological discipline is now a major theological emphasis in the Christian tradition. Yet, in the midst of all the conversations, few volumes have taken into account the impact of eschatology on the majority world. Into that space, *All Things New: Eschatology in the Majority World* has stepped in to give the world a glimpse of the various global contextual expressions of eschatology. As the editors note, eschatology's much needed growth has been paralleled by Christianity's shift to the majority world (5). Today, these two realities dominate reflection in the Christian tradition.

*All Things New* is a collection of essays from seven majority world scholars charting contextualizations of eschatology across Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Each essay charts a new path toward a better understanding of the global relevance of this important biblical theme. Each author grapples with a number of important issues shaping global expressions of eschatological commitment. First, each essay attempts to explore how Majority World Christians understand eschatology. Most of the essays note that most global eschatologies were adopted through Western missionary activity rather than indigenous perspectives. These essays tackle the pervasiveness of dispensational premillennialism in Latin America, Taiwan, and Korea as a major theme of critique. Because of this, each shows how contextual theologies have served to enrich more indigenous expressions of eschatology. Second, each essay wrestles to some degree with the political and social ramifications of Western eschatology. In each essay, the tension of the present versus future aspects of the Kingdom of God takes center stage in the various responses to political and social engagement.

In the opening essay, "Eschatology, Apocalyptic, Ethics, and Political Theology," D. Stephen Long looks at the legacy of apocalypticism and its influence on Christian eschatology. Long argues that eschatology should capture the apocalyptic imagination as the driving force to empower Christian ethics and social responsibility. Rather than catastrophic, apocalyptic visions, whether global or political, Long sees apocalyptic as "poetic, hyperbolic, comedic," that empowers

prophetic imagination and resists Christian political dominance (30–31). While too brief to delve deep into these issues, this chapter provides a good introduction to some basic issues. However, the essay’s introductory nature and its lack of global perspective may make the reader question its relevance to the whole volume.

There are two essays from an African perspective. James Henry Owino Kombo addresses the critical role of eschatology in Africa’s past and future. He intersects deeply rooted African realities of death, spirits, and the afterlife to related eschatological themes. These insights add depth that Western thinkers should take seriously, particularly in the ideas of ancestors and the thin line between the eternal and temporal world. John D. K. Ekem adds a helpful essay on interpreting Revelation 21:1–4 from a Ghanaian worldview. He argues that through an African worldview, this passage could have both futurist and realized applications (60). Ekem uses two mother-tongue translations from two communities to illustrate how these texts have an end-time character and that its present application offers an alternative to the suffering and oppression often experienced in sub-Saharan Africa. He also points out that this passage enforces the African view of the sacredness of the ecological world and provides a standard for environmental ethics. He says, “God is the One who holds the past, present, and future, bringing them into a relationship of mutual dependence” (67). While his contextual interpretations are helpful, they seem to be not so much dependent upon the language translation as the essay would suggest.

The next two essays focus on Latin American eschatology and seek to show that Evangelical churches in Latin America are influenced by North American dispensationalism while also adapting their own progressive forms of dispensationalism. Alberto F. Roldan focuses on a “theology of hope” and examines three common eschatological hymns for elements of the already/not yet present. He notes that these tensions are not consistent with rapture theology. Instead, he argues that “Latin American theologians emphasize that it is necessary to transform the futuristic eschatology to an eschatology engaged in the here and now” (83). In the end, the critique—while it may be valid—lacks a compelling contextual framework unique to Latin America. Similarly, Nelson R. Morales Fredes argues that Latin American expressions of the Kingdom of God are deeply rooted in the present. For example, he examines the Latin American Theological Fraternity, which emphasizes a holistic, rather than futuristic, view of the Kingdom. Latin American eschatology’s social and liberation aspects show how evangelization should have strongly rooted social elements that address this world’s needs.

The final two essays take an Asian perspective. Aldrin Penamora examines how eschatology shaped the theology of David Yonggi Cho, the Back to Jerusalem Movement, and Watchman Nee in different ways. Each group engaged in the world to reach people effectively, yet with a different emphasis based on their own cultural and political engagement with the world. Like the others, Penamora argues that it requires both to understand rightly the Kingdom. In the final essay, Shirley S. Ho examines Taiwanese Judeophilia through several geopolitical, religious, and cultural lenses, noting how some Taiwanese used eschatology to be highly dispensational and pro-Israel. At the other end of the spectrum, Ho looks at the utopian vision of Kang YuWei and Christian eschatology and observes some helpful contextual similarities and differences with Christian millennialism. This critical essay demonstrates the value of contextual interpretations of eschatology from outside Western traditions.

Overall, this volume will be useful to anyone looking for contextual theology models that can stimulate a wider global discussion of theological topics. As eschatology continues to grow in popularity with both students and scholars, the inclusion of this short volume should be considered for any course on eschatology.

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