

# Biblical Perspectives on Social Justice and Equality (TMM1721)

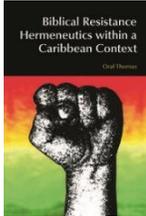
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## Books



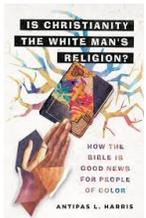
**Thomas, Oral A. W. (2016) *Biblical Resistance Hermeneutics within a Caribbean Context*. Abingdon: Routledge.**

### **Content:**

This book outlines a resistant method to reading the Bible from a Caribbean context that seeks to privilege the lived experiences of the Caribbean people. In the Introduction Thomas gives an overview of this method and in Chapter 5: 'Towards a Biblical Resistant Hermeneutic within a Caribbean Context' provides students with a more in-depth exploration of this biblical resistance hermeneutic, including a flow chart to clearly show all of its components.

### **Author:**

Oral A. W. Thomas is President/Dean of the United Theological College of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica.



**Harris, Antipas L. (2020) *Is Christianity the White Man's Religion?: How the Bible is Good News for People of Color*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.**

### **Content:**

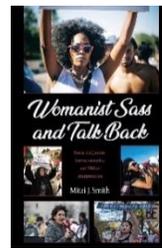
Rooted in a theology of identity that recognises that "we're all children of God made in his image" and so "injustice upon one of us is an injustice upon all of us" (132), in Chapter 9: 'Social Justice and the Bible', Harris outlines the biblical basis for why social justice should play an integral part in the life of all Christians.

This chapter also concludes with a 'living it out' section that gives students an opportunity to reflect on what

they have learnt, and think about how they can practically apply these biblical truths to their every day lives and future ministries.

### **Author:**

Antipas L. Harris is an African American theologian based in the US.



**Smith, Mitzi J. (2018) *Womanist Sass and Talk Back: Social (In)Justice, Intersectionality, and Biblical Interpretation*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers.**

### **Content:**

In this book Smith addresses the contemporary injustices faced by African American men and women ("unjust systems/structures, police brutality and profiling in poor communities of color, oppressive pedagogy and sexual violence" (5-6)) from a Womanist biblical perspective. She specifically offers Womanist readings of multiple texts from the Old and New Testament including: John 4:1-42, Mark 7:24-30, Acts 18:26-40; 18:24-28, Matthew 25:1-13 and 2 Kings 23-25. With a specific passion for the Bible and justice, Smith's book is a great resource for students to read.

### **Authors**

Mitzi J. Smith is an African American biblical scholar based in the US.

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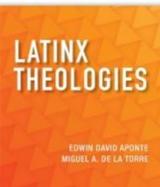
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INTRODUCING



**Aponte, Edwin D. and De La Torre, Miguel A. (2020) *Introducing Latinx Theologies*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.**

### Content:

Although this book is predominately about Latinx Theology (and not biblical studies), there is a very small section (1 page) in Chapter 3 called 'The Centrality of Justice' that explores the Latinx biblical response to injustice. By using the Spanish translation of 'justice' (*justo* and *justicia*) which emphasize a communal approach, this section sheds new light on biblical verses such as "to know God is to do justice" (Jeremiah 22:15-16), which in a Latinx context is a communal and not an individual endeavor.

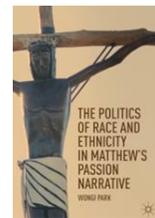
### Authors

Edwin David Aponte is a Puerto Rican-American cultural historian, religious studies scholar and Professor of Religion & Culture at the Theological School of Drew University. Miguel A. De La Torre is a Cuban scholar and Professor of Latino Studies and Social Ethics at Iliff School of Theology.

Isaiah 10:1-4 speak into the injustice of poverty, and in Chapter 4: 'Poverty in the Context of the New Testament' (71) explores Matthew 6:19-34 and 1 Timothy 6:6-10. Of particular note is Chapter 6: 'A Contextual Approach for Poverty Reduction in Africa' (71) in which a biblical response to poverty is curated.

### Author:

Isaac Boaheng is a Ghanaian ordained minister of the Methodist Church and a part-time lecturer at the South African Theological Seminary.



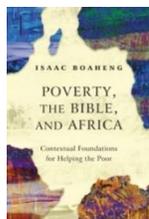
**Park, Wongi (2019) *The Politics of Race and Ethnicity in Matthew's Passion Narrative*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.**

### Content:

This book offers a socio-political reading of Matthew 26-27 that takes seriously the ethno-racial implications of Jesus' identity as the βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων (King of the Jews). In chapters 2 and 3 Wongi explores the 'deracialized' and dominant readings of Matthew 26 and 67, before proposing in Chapter 5: 'Proposing an Alternative Narrative: An ethnoracial Reading of Matthew 26-27' what it might look like to explore these two biblical chapters through the specific themes of race and ethnicity.

### Author:

Wongi Park is Asian Professor of Religion at Belmont University in Nashville, US.



**Boaheng, Isaac (2020) *Poverty, the Bible, and Africa: Contextual Foundations for Helping the Poor*. Carlisle: Langham Publishing.**

### Content:

In this book Boaheng specifically reflects on the injustice of poverty on the African continent. In Chapter 3: 'Poverty in the Context of the Old Testament' (47) Boaheng explores how Deuteronomy 15:1-11 and

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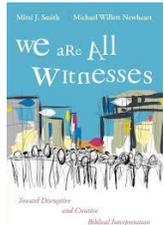
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## Book Chapters



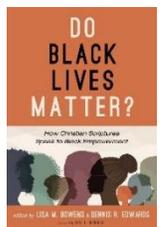
Smith, Mitzi J. (2023) 'Centering Social Justice in Biblical Interpretation: The Woman with a Chronic Illness That Challenged Her Posture (Luke 13:10–17).' In: Smith, Mitzi J. and Newheart, Michael W. (eds.) *We Are All Witnesses: Toward Disruptive and Creative Biblical Interpretation*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books.

### Content:

In this chapter Smith offers a Womanist biblical interpretation of Luke 13:10-17 that is centred on social justice. Smith begins this chapter by dismantling the idea that biblical interpretation can ever be 'objective' or 'scientific'. She explains how the questions we approach the Bible with will determine how the text will be interpreted. Drawing on her own personal experience of growing up with a mother with physical disabilities in the USA (but with inadequate access to healthcare), Smith offers an interpretation of The Woman with a Chronic Illness in Luke 13:10-17 that places social justice at the centre.

### Author:

Mitzi J. Smith is an African American Womanist biblical scholar based in the US.



Daniels, David D. III (2023) 'A Decriminalizing Gospel and Empowering Maneuvers.' In: Bowens, Lisa M. and Edwards, Dennis R. (eds.) *Do Black Lives Matter?: How Christian Scriptures Speak to Black Empowerment*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books.

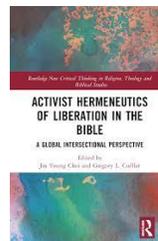
Cascade Books.

### Content:

In this short chapter, Daniels offers an accessible exploration of James 2 through the lens of social justice. Written in the context of police brutality and the 'Black Lives Matter' movement in the US, Daniels highlights the biblical basis, found in the book of James, for why Black people should be treated with dignity, respect and equality.

### Author:

David D. Daniels III was an African American Professor of World Christianity and Church History at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, US.



Rey, Mónica I. (2023) 'Intersectionality in Biblical Studies: A Tool Toward Social Justice Activism?' In: Choi, Jin Y. and Cuéllar, Gregory L. (eds.) *Activist Hermeneutics of Liberation and the Bible: A Global Intersectional Perspective*. Abingdon: Routledge.

### Content:

In this book chapter Rey explores the crucial role that feminist intersectional approaches play in promoting social justice and activism within the field of Biblical studies. Rey begins by acknowledging that intersectionality has been a concern of many Global Majority Heritage Latina and Asian women far before the theory was accredited to Crenshaw in the US in 1989. She then cautions students against false 'institutionalised' intersectional papers that ultimately sideline and erase the very Global Majority Heritage women that it claims to want to support.

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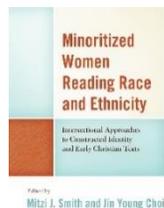
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Finally, she concludes her chapter with a huge celebration of the Global Majority Heritage female biblical scholars that have used this intersectional approach to promote social justice and equality in biblical studies.

## Author:

Mónica Isabel Rey is a Latin-American biblical scholar of Peruvian descent based in the US.



Choi, Jin Y. (2020) 'Weren't You with Jesus the Galilean? An Intersectional Reading of Ethnicity, Diasporic Trauma, and Mourning in the Gospel of Matthew.' In: Smith, Mitzi J. and Choi, Jin Y. (eds.)

*Minoritized Women Reading Race and Ethnicity: Intersectional Approaches to Constructed Identity and Early Christian Texts*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

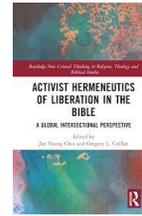
## Content:

Focusing on the intersection of "race/ethnicity, gender and empire" (2), in this chapter Choi offers an intersectional socio-political reading of Matthew's gospel that remembers the untold stories of mothers such as Rahab, Bathsheba, Rachel, Tamar, and "unnamed mothers elsewhere in the globe" (15). Here Choi highlights the contrast between Matthew's focus on Jesus' shifting identity from 'refugee' to 'King of the *Ioudaios*' and the forgotten collective memory of the many women in Matthew who were mourning over the deaths of their baby boys. This chapter raises the question of whose story gets told, and whose story gets forgotten?

## Author

Jin Y. Choi is an Asian biblical scholar based in the US.

## Edited Volumes



Choi, Jin Y. and Cuéllar, Gregory L. (2023) *Activist Hermeneutics of Liberation and the Bible: A Global Intersectional Perspective*. Abingdon: Routledge.

## Content:

This edited volume contains contributions from biblical scholars from around the world with a passion for social justice and activism. Rooted in the wake of George Floyd's brutal murder in 2020, the first section of this volume entitled *Activist Hermeneutics of Liberation*, and the Bible explains how 'activist hermeneutics' seeks to find new ways to use the bible to promote acts of social justice and activism.

## Editors

Jin Young Choi is an Asian Biblical scholar and Gregory L. Cuéllar is Latin-American biblical scholar. Both are based in the US.

## Podcasts

[Beyond the Womanist Classroom - Season 1, Episode 3: Privileging the \(In\)Justice in the World Where We Live](#)



## Content:

In this 40-minute podcast Mitzi Smith discusses how the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v Wade* will increase the healthcare inequality in North America and disproportionately affect Black women in the USA. Particularly focusing on abortion, sexual violence, poverty and injustice, this discussion is placed in

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conversation with Matthew 2. This podcast discusses hard questions such as: who gets to live and who gets to die? What is the role of humans to intervene in such injustice? Whose stories are told and whose are silenced? This podcast will encourage students to take a critical approach when reading scripture.

## Authors:

Mitzi J. Smith is an African American biblical scholar and Michael Willett Newheart is an American biblical scholar. Both are based in the US.

## Videos

[Social Justice and Evangelism with Anton Deik \(01:34:00\)](#)



## Content:

Drawing on his personal experience of growing up as a Palestinian Christian in Bethlehem, this compelling podcast outlines the biblical basis for why social justice should be at the core of the Christian message. By highlighting how the English translation for the word 'righteousness' in the New Testament obscures the multiple occurrences of 'justice', Deik presents a case for why biblical justice and social justice are one and the same. Deik concludes his podcast by arguing that an integral part of the church's mission is to bring Christians back to God's vision of justice.

## Speaker:

Anton Deik is a Palestinian biblical scholar from Bethlehem.

["The Bible and Social Justice" with Esau McCaulley – 'Where Ya From?' Podcast \(43:15\)](#)



## Content:

Drawing on his personal experience of growing up in a Christian African-American context fraught with injustice, McCaulley outlines the biblical basis for why all Christians should prioritise social justice. Having grown up in a church where social justice and the gospel worked hand in hand, McCaulley explores how social justice is inextricably woven through the tapestry of the Bible from the Old Testament all the way through to Revelation. He ends the podcast by encouraging listeners to act on what they have heard, and to do to their own further research on Black ecclesial voices on biblical justice.

## Speaker:

Esau McCaulley is a Professor of New Testament at Wheaton College in Wheaton, US.

## Journal Articles

[West, Gerald O. \(2015\) 'Reading the Bible with the Marginalised: The Value/s of Contextual Bible Reading.' \*Stellenbosch Theological Journal\* 1\(2\): 235-261.](#)



## Content:

In this article West introduces 'Contextual Bible Study' (CBS) as a socio-politically engaged method of reading the Bible with the poor and the marginalised. CBS is a specific collaborative method of reading the bible that in of itself aims to combat social injustice.

## Author:

Gerald O. West is Professor of Biblical at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa.