



*The Future of Biblical Interpretation: Responsible Plurality in Biblical Hermeneutics*

Available December 2013

\$18, 176 pages, paperback  
978-0-8308-4041-0

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## Where Is Biblical Interpretation Headed?

*The twenty-first century is an age in which religious conviction is sometimes considered a matter of private opinion, and sometimes considered a most public matter of life and death. Religious texts lead some to war, and others to peace. In such an environment, reflection on interpretation of religious texts is a crucially pressing issue. The Christian Bible, as the most published religious book in history, demands particular attention.*

*Beyond this, the Bible itself provocatively calls for the engagement of serious listeners. The New Testament book of Hebrews claims that “in these last days, [God] has spoken . . . by a Son” (Heb 1:2). Millions across the centuries have taken this claim seriously, and millions continue to today.*

*Yet these millions come from a variety of settings and make use of the Bible in a variety of ways. They find in the Bible a plurality of voices and reach a plurality of interpretations. Even within the Bible itself, one can discern a variety of interpretive approaches and results. If one were to ask the various writers of the New Testament what Psalm 8 means, or who is identified by the Servant of Isaiah, one would hear a variety of answers – not necessarily dissonant answers, but plural in number. . . .*

*This volume thus speaks with multiple voices from a plurality of subjects, each proposing a particular parameter of responsibility for productive interpretation of the Bible. The collection resists simple univocity, and yet, when viewed as a distinct volume as above, can be seen to exemplify the concordant polyphonic approach that it advocates. As such, it is our hope that it will prompt continuing discussion of these crucial issues.*

– Taken from the Introduction

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In their new volume, *The Future of Biblical Interpretation*, editors Stanley E. Porter and Matthew R. Malcolm look at a perennial issue in biblical studies: the Bible's plurality of voices, which often yields a plurality of interpretations. Explaining how readers can acknowledge this diversity while being responsible interpreters of Scripture, the contributors in this volume open up an engaging conversation that will encourage productive new horizons for biblical hermeneutics. The essays in this volume originated in a conference held in honor of Anthony C. Thiselton who is well known for his important work in hermeneutics and New Testament interpretation.

Illustrating how various fields relate to biblical hermeneutics, the esteemed writers include:

- Stanley E. Porter on theological responsibility
- Richard S. Briggs on scriptural responsibility
- Matthew R. Malcolm on kerygmatic responsibility
- James D. G. Dunn on historical responsibility
- Robert C. Morgan on critical responsibility
- Tom Greggs on relational responsibility
- R. Walter L. Moberly on ecclesial responsibility

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