

INTRODUCTION FROM THE EDITORS

It is a privilege to bring this collection of articles together to honour Tim Meadowcroft on his retirement from Laidlaw College. Before pursuing theological studies and ordination in the Anglican Church, Tim was an English high school teacher and had completed an MA in English literature. He combined his literary interests with theological studies as he undertook his PhD in the early 1990s at the University of Edinburgh, comparing the narrative techniques of the Aramaic and Greek texts of Daniel 2–7. His thesis was published as a widely respected monograph, *Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel: A Literary Comparison*. Immediately after completing his PhD, Tim was employed by Laidlaw College (then Bible College of NZ) in 1994, where he has taught until his retirement at the end of 2018. As well as being a popular teacher of Old and New Testament courses, Greek and Hebrew, and hermeneutics, Tim has supervised a number of doctoral and masters theses. He has developed his own research interests, particularly Hermeneutics, Theological Interpretation of Scripture, Contextualisation, Wisdom literature, Apocalyptic literature, Literary readings of the text of Scripture, and Scripture and Science.

The articles below presented in honour of Tim reflect something of the variety of his interests and demonstrate his academic engagement with and support of colleagues, former students, and friends. The first two particularly engage with issues of contemporary contextualisation. Phil Church, a long-time colleague of Tim's at Laidlaw, was encouraged by him to attend a conference in Bethlehem a few years ago. This gave the impetus for his piece on Hebrews and the Christian meaning of pilgrimage to Zion ("You [Jewish Christ-Followers in Rome] Have Come to Mount Zion...'" (Heb 12:22): Pilgrimage to Zion and the Book of Hebrews"), in contrast to views (based on Isa 2:2–4 and similar), which frame such pilgrimage in the context of Jews returning to the land of Israel. Mark Brett, a colleague from Whitley College, Melbourne, produces a piece arising out of Tim's and his mutual interest and conversations relating to their regional contexts ("Whakawhiti kōrero: Theology and Social Vocation"). He addresses the social-theological implications of the Treaty of Waitangi and sees in it an expression of social vocation in which multiple groups can covenant with each other while retaining their own identity. The next article links in with Tim's interest in theological interpretations of Scripture and with his work on apocalyptic, especially Daniel. James Harding, another colleague at the University of Otago, enters into a discussion of Luke 24:44–49 ("Scripture on the Road to Emmaus"), a well-known text in the theological interpretation of Scripture, which relate the opening of the disciples' eyes/heart as they walk with the resurrected Jesus. James reflects on what it means to do faithful theological exegesis and traces the thought patterns in the text to Jewish apocalyptic and prayer. The last three articles address a variety of hermeneutical considerations on reception history, translation work, and interpreting rituals, respectively. Don Moffat, a former PhD student and now colleague of Tim's at the College of St John the Evangelist, reflects on recent trends in biblical interpretation, particularly, reception history ("Reception History: Signalling Change in Biblical Studies"). He discusses the contextual nature of interpretation and the multivalence of texts as evidenced by reception history, which highlight some of

the cracks in the basic assumptions of historical-criticism in seeking to locate one original text and one original meaning. John de Jong, a former PhD student and now colleague of Tim's at Laidlaw, who lived for twelve years in Yangon, Myanmar, compares two editions of Adoniram Judson's Burmese translation of the NT and their relationship with the Textus Receptus ("Textual Criticism, the Textus Receptus, and Adoniram Judson's Burmese New Testaments"). He particularly comments on how Judson's context (his scholarship and Christian faith) affects his translation decisions and interpretations. Csilla Saysell, a more recent colleague from Carey Baptist College, discusses the function and meaning of the sin offering ("The Blood Manipulation of the Sin Offering and the Logic of Defilement"), a piece which partly arose out of an informal discussion among OT scholars headed up by Tim earlier this year. She reflects on issues relating to the hermeneutics of ritual and argues that daubing blood on the horns of the altar is an appeal for God's mercy that echoes altar asylum. All of these articles are, in one way or another, a tribute to Tim's wide array of interests and involvement in his field.

Tim is a founding member of the Aotearoa-New Zealand Association for Biblical Studies (ANZABS), has been a regular contributor at the Society of Biblical Literature's Annual Meeting, and has a large portfolio of published monographs, edited books, book chapters, and journal articles, along with many popular publications. As well as his scholarly work, Tim has always maintained a commitment to the church—his local Anglican church, the church of Aotearoa-New Zealand, and the global church. As he retires from Laidlaw College, Tim is one of New Zealand's senior biblical scholars and we are pleased that he has every intention of continuing his research and contribution to the field after he finishes full time teaching.

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