

Mick Pope. *From Creation to Canaan: Biblical Hermeneutics for the Anthropocene*. Eugene: Pickwick, 2024. 126 pages. \$36.

In *From Creation to Canaan: Biblical Hermeneutics for the Anthropocene*, Mick Pope guides readers through a classical analysis of Genesis and Leviticus with a distinctly ecological hermeneutic. More specifically, he offers a reading shaped by the Anthropocene—our current geological epoch, defined primarily by human activity and its impact on Earth systems.

Pope's aim in this slim volume is to delve deeply into the Primeval History and Holiness Codes of Genesis 1–2 and Leviticus 17–26, exploring how ancient understandings of land, holiness, and human vocation can inform faithful responses to today's ecological crisis. While the Anthropocene is an unprecedented chapter in human and geological history, the destruction of land, the sin of humanity against creation, and the ending of worlds are not unfamiliar themes for the writers of the Priestly traditions and the Holiness material in the Pentateuch. Helpfully, Pope begins with a definition and interrogation of the Anthropocene. He both welcomes the term as a helpful framework for grasping this planetary moment and critiques its generality, turning to alternative concepts like the Capitalocene, which more precisely trace responsibility to the systems—and people—who have profited from the Earth's unraveling.

Taking all this as the soil from which his work grows, Pope poses two guiding questions: “First, what was Israel's responsibility for the land in these texts, and how was this linked to their understanding of divine sovereignty and to the nature of the land itself?” and “Secondly, how might an understanding of this responsibility impact religious communities who continue to acknowledge this text as scripture?” (xii).

Pope stands on an ecotone. Meant literally, an ecotone is a transitional area between two bioregions, such as an estuary between saltwater and freshwater zones. Here, as metaphor, ecotone signifies an intersection between two ecosystems of thought. While his text is primarily concerned with close exegetical readings of Hebrew scripture, his broader intent is to inform Christian theology and ethics in the Anthropocene. Like most ecotones, this intersection proves fertile and generative. While much scholarly work has been done in agrarian theology, land-based biblical studies, ecotheology, and environmental ethics, Pope's deep engagement with the Holiness traditions—filtered through an Anthropocene lens—offers a welcome contribution to the ongoing work of reimagining scriptural engagement for a planet in peril.

This is a book for anyone interested in deeper questions of theology and human flourishing in the midst of a world turned upside down. While rooted in the tools of biblical scholarship and theological reflection, *From Creation to Canaan* is not limited to those already working within the field of ecotheology. Pope writes with clarity and accessibility, making this book a valuable resource for scholars, clergy, students, and lay readers alike—anyone seeking to understand how scripture speaks into the ecological crises of our time. It offers not just interpretation, but invitation: to read the Bible as if the Earth matters, because it does.

Pope's unique vocational perspective is essential to his interpretive approach. As both a theologian and a meteorologist, he brings together disciplines rarely in dialogue. While the scientific study of meteorology may seem far removed from the agrarian worldview of the Priestly and Holiness writers, Pope's attentiveness to atmospheric patterns and climate systems becomes a hermeneutical lens in its own right, shaping how he reads scripture in a time of environmental disruption. His capacity to discern the signs of a changing climate reflects a deeper sensitivity to the ecological undercurrents of biblical texts. It is this kind of interdisciplinary entanglement that is needed to weather the storms of the Anthropocene.

This is a book not simply about how to read the Bible in the Anthropocene, but about how the Anthropocene reshapes our reading of the Bible—and how the act of reading these texts might, in turn, disrupt the destructive ways of thinking that brought us here. In *The Great Derangement* (2016), novelist Amitav Ghosh has written that in the Anthropocene, “we recognize something we had turned away from ... the presence and proximity of nonhuman interlocutors” (30). The crises of our epoch invite us to remember that humanity is not separate from the rest of the created world. Nor can our biblical interpretation be. Reading scripture through the land invites us into hermeneutical questions we may have forgotten. It may even help us remember what the agrarian, Indigenous authors of these texts knew: “the land cannot be finally dominated. Against appearances, it is quietly stronger than the humans” (Pope, *From Creation to Canaan*, 55).

Avery Davis Lamb, Executive Director, Creation Justice Ministries, Durham, NC