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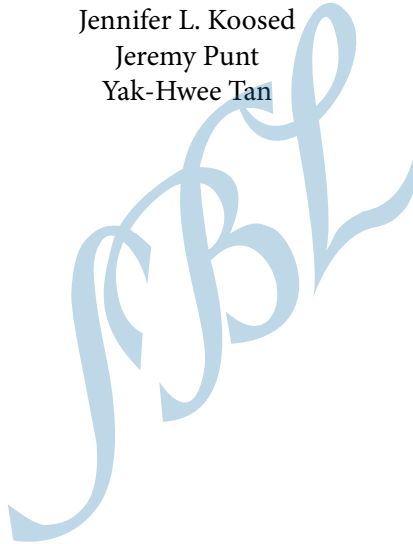
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BIBLE, BORDERS, BELONGING(S)

ENGAGING READINGS FROM OCEANIA

Edited by

Jione Havea, David J. Neville, and Elaine M. Wainwright



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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Ag. Ap.</i>	Josephus, <i>Against Apion</i>
<i>Ant.</i>	Josephus, <i>Jewish Antiquities</i>
BDAG	Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.
BDB	Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1907.
BDF	Blass, F., A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk. <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.
<i>Comm. Jo.</i>	Origen, <i>Commentary on John</i>
<i>Embassy</i>	Philo, <i>On the Embassy to Gaius</i>
FIR	First Information Report
<i>Haer.</i>	Irenaeus, <i>Adversus haereses (Against Heresies)</i>
JB	Jerusalem Bible
<i>J.W.</i>	Josephus, <i>Jewish War</i>
KNLA	Karen National Liberation Army
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NJPS	<i>Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures: The New JPS Translation according to the Traditional Hebrew Text</i>
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NSW	New South Wales
<i>Ps.-Clem. Hom.</i>	Pseudo-Clement, <i>Homilies</i>
RSV	Revised Standard Version

SBZ

PREFACE

Biblical studies are not conducted in a vacuum and are necessarily influenced by sociocultural contexts and concerns. The studies in this collection focus on various interpretive issues relating to current big-picture concerns in Oceania. The contributors are located around the edges of the Tasman Sea, but the issues, views, arguments, blind spots, and concerns that they address extend over the currents of Oceania onto the shores of Asia, and further. The chapters reflect the competencies and concerns of their respective authors—biblical scholars of diverse backgrounds who currently read, live, play, work, and worship in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia—but the collection as a whole illustrates the potential contribution of the Bible and biblical studies to public discourse on matters of general concern.

The collection came together as follows: Ten of the thirteen contributors met over three days (April 19–21, 2012), thanks in part to a grant from the Public and Contextual Theology Research Centre of Charles Sturt University, to present and discuss some “drafty drafts” of our thoughts, with two contributors presenting by video conference. This seminar was at United Theological College, North Parramatta (NSW, Australia), and though we did not consult the traditional custodians of the land, we each learned what the others were doing, and we helped one another sharpen and deepen our thoughts on our texts, topics, and concerns. The three respondents did not participate in the seminar, but they have been invited to respond because of their rootedness in Oceania and expertise on the subjects of *Bible*, *borders*, and *belongings*.

Each of the contributors engages biblical text(s) and/or character(s) that crop up in the intersection of the *Bible* with *borders* and *belongings*. The *Bible* is of course vast, complex and slippery, and the meanings of *borders* and *belongings* are fluid: from *belonging* in a place (home, land), a group (identity, nation), or a movement (disciples, cultures), to *belongings* as material and cultural possessions (property); and from the *borders* of a

text, discipline, or thought to the edges of a nation, community, or body. As a collection, this book pokes at conversations on location, context, and identity, nudging those toward *belongings*. The senses of *belongings* in this collection are rooted, reciprocal, and homely rather than individualistic and segregating. *Belongings* call attention to *borders*, which *are* (borders) when they are crossed. The *Bible* sits uneasily at this juncture, for there are times when the Bible roots and protects *belongings*, and times when the Bible *borders* (bars, prevents) *belongings*.

The contributors and respondents write from positions where different borders cross: the crossing of textual limits, race and ethnic lines, disciplinary and theological barriers, and religious and cultural strings, as well as the crossing of traditional views about biblical texts and characters. In their crossing of *borders*, with *Bible* in hand, the chapters of this book point back to the various shades of *belongings*.

Several events in our region—such as earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, shipwrecks and oil spills, movement of political and ecological refugees, resettlement of displaced peoples, and the changing political structures—challenge us to reflect on the practices of biblical interpretation and how consequently to read biblical texts. Loss of homelands and the withering of resources due to climate change make attention to *Bible*, *borders*, and *belongings* urgent. This collection does not represent all that our region offers, but herein is the start of a routing for *engaging readings from Oceania*. The chapters of this book are engaging, and they invite readers from the region and beyond to be more engaging.

