Reading Ecclesiastes from Asia and Pasifika

Jione Havea and Peter H. W. Lau, editors

An invitation to read biblical texts as responses and conversations

This follow-up to Reading Ruth in Asia (2015) extends Qoheleth’s question in Ecclesiastes 3:9 to the toils of biblical critics: Is there gain in reading? Contributors from Asia and Pasifika approach Ecclesiastes through oral (e.g., stories, legends, customs, ways) and written (e.g., Tamil and Chinese scriptures) texts as they ponder this question. Voices from Palestine, Pakistan, and Pasifika add to those from India, Malaysia, China, Sri Lanka, and Australia and expand the conversation in new directions through sources not usually encountered in biblical scholarship. Topics of wisdom, gender, justice, vanity, bitterness, life, death, labor, exile, pain, and philosophy invite readers to reconsider their own interpretations of this ancient text. Reading Ecclesiastes from Asia and Pasifika is a call for more contextual, intertextual, interscriptural, and postcolonial readings from within and beyond Asia and Pasifika.

Features:
• An introductory essay on contextual biblical interpretation
• Readings of Ecclesiastes cross-textually with Asian scriptures and philosophies
• A conversation around critiques of contextual biblical interpretation

Jione Havea is a native pastor (Methodist Church in Tonga) and research fellow with Trinity Theological College (Aotearoa New Zealand) and with Charles Sturt University’s Public and Contextual Theology Research Centre in Australia. He is the author of Jonah: An Earth Bible Commentary (2020) and the editor of Vulnerability and Resilience: Body and Liberating Theologies (2020) and Sea of Readings: The Bible in the South Pacific (2018).

Peter H. W. Lau is an honorary research associate at the University of Sydney and a visiting lecturer at Sydney Missionary and Bible College. He taught at Seminari Teoloji Malaysia 2010–2018. He is the coauthor of Unceasing Kindness: A Biblical Theology of Ruth (with Greg Goswell, 2016), author of Esther in the Asia Bible Commentary series (2018), and coeditor of Reading Ruth in Asia (with Jione Havea, 2015).