

Guest Editorial for Theme Issue: “Biblical Interpretation for Caribbean Renewal”

J. Richard Middleton
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The current issue of the *Canadian-American Theological Review* gathers selected papers from a conference on “Biblical Interpretation for Caribbean Renewal,” held at the Jamaica Theological Seminary, in Kingston, Jamaica, September 8–9, 2017.

As a graduate (BTh, 1977) and longtime friend of the Jamaica Theological Seminary (JTS), I was invited by Dr. Garnett Roper, the current President, to help organize and chair the conference.

This was the second conference hosted by JTS in an attempt to stimulate thinking about theology and the church in the Caribbean context.

The first was held in January 2010. Having presented a paper at that event, I subsequently organized and co-edited a volume of essays arising from the conference, supplemented by others solicited for the volume from a variety of Caribbean theologians. The essays were published as *A Kairos Moment for Caribbean Theology: Ecumenical Voices in Dialogue*, ed. Garnett Roper and J. Richard Middleton (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013).

My involvement with the *Canadian-American Theological Review* does not go back as far as my JTS connection. In 1991 I gave a paper at the first annual meeting of the Canadian Evangelical Theological Association (CETA), the predecessor of the Canadian-American Theological Association (CATA), which sponsors the journal.

It was my privilege to serve as President of the Association for three years (2011–14), and I have continued on the executive committee since then, primarily in an advisory role for conference planning.

Based on my history with the Jamaica Theological Seminary and the *Canadian-American Theological Review* I am honored to be able to introduce the contributors to this issue.



Steed Davidson

**“From *Sola Scriptura* to Maroonage: Reflections
on Caribbean Biblical Interpretation.”**

The Zenas Gerig Memorial Lecture for 2017.

Steed Vernyl Davidson is associate professor of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. A native of Trinidad and Tobago, he earned a PhD in Hebrew Bible from Union Theological Seminary in New York, an STM from Boston University and both MA and BA from the University of the West Indies.

His work centers on deploying postcolonial theory as a means of interrogating aspects of power in the Bible, biblical interpretation, and the use of Scriptures in contemporary cultures. He is the author of *Empire and Exile: Postcolonial Readings of the Book of Jeremiah* (2011) and the co-editor of *Islands, Islanders, and the Bible: RumiNations* (2015). Davidson’s current research focuses on the oracles against the nations in the Prophetic Books in light of contemporary challenges of the nation-state.

Davidson was an ordained minister in the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas before becoming an elder in the United Methodist Church (USA). He served churches in St. Vincent, his native Tobago, as well as in the New York Annual Conference of the UMC in Manhattan and Long Island.



Garnett Roper
**“Was *Sola Scriptura* a Causal Factor in European
Imperialism? A Response to Steed Davidson.”**

Garnett Roper is President and Lecturer in Theology at Jamaica Theological Seminary. He is an ordained pastor in the Missionary Church Association, Jamaica, and is well known throughout the Caribbean as a communicator on social, political, and religious issues. He holds a PhD from the University of Exeter, a ThM from Westminster Theological Seminary, and a BTh from Jamaica Theological Seminary. Roper is the author of *Caribbean Theology as Public Theology* (2013) and *This is the Year of Jubilee* (2012). He co-edited with J. Richard Middleton *A Kairos Moment for Caribbean Theology* (2013). His latest book is a collection of radio sermons preached in 2017, entitled *Thus Says the Lord: Responding to the Resurgence of Empire, Readings from the Minor Prophets and the Book of Daniel* (2018).



Erica Campbell

**“The Parable of the Good Samaritan: A Political
Reading from a Caribbean Perspective.”**

*Winner of the Jack and Phyllis Middleton Memorial
Award for Excellence in Bible and Theology.*

Erica Campbell is Head of the Department of Humanities and Lecturer in Humanities, Theology, and Biblical Studies at Jamaica Theological Seminary, where she has taught since 1994. She earned MA and MDiv degrees from the Caribbean Graduate School of Theology. Prior to teaching at JTS, she taught Spanish and French at Convent of Mercy Academy (Alpha Academy) and the Queen’s School. She has been involved with Wycliffe Bible Translators and the Jamaica Bible Translation project and has been active in promoting the value of Jamaican Creole as an issue of social justice. Her essay on language and identity is published in *A Kairos Moment for Caribbean Theology* (2013).



J. Richard Middleton
**“The Inclusive Vision of Isaiah 56 and Contested
Ethical Practices in Scripture and the Church: Toward
a Canonical Hermeneutic of Discernment.”**

J. Richard Middleton, a Jamaican Old Testament scholar living in the Diaspora, is currently Professor of Biblical Worldview and Exegesis at Northeastern Seminary, in Rochester, NY. He has a BTh from Jamaica Theological Seminary, an MA in philosophy from the University of Guelph, Canada, and PhD from the Free University in Amsterdam (in a joint-degree program with the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto).

Middleton is the author of *A New Heaven and a New Earth: Reclaiming Biblical Eschatology* (2014) and *The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1* (2005). He co-edited with Garnett Roper *A Kairos Moment for Caribbean Theology* (2013) and is coauthor (with Brian Walsh) of *The Transforming Vision: Shaping a Christian World View* (1984) and *Truth Is Stranger Than It Used to Be: Biblical Faith in a Postmodern Age* (1995). His research and writing focuses on Old Testament theology, with particular emphasis on creation theology and the dynamics of human and divine power in the Bible.

He is currently working on a book entitled *The Silence of Abraham, the Passion of Job: Explorations in the Theology of Lament* (for Baker Academic), another entitled *Portrait of a Disgruntled Prophet: Samuel's Resistance to God and the Undoing of Saul* (for Eerdmans), and a third entitled *Life and Death in the Garden of Eden* (with Cascade). He gave the first Zenas Gerig Memorial Lecture at JTS in 2012. Richard is married to Marcia, a public health nutritionist, who is also a Jamaican. They have two adult sons.



Eric G. Flett

“‘Him Likkle but Him Tallawah’: Dirt, the Dynamics of Disgust, and the Hospitality of the Spirit in Acts 10.”

Eric Flett is Professor of Theology and Culture at Eastern University, in Philadelphia, where he has taught since 2004. He holds an MA from Fuller Theological Seminary and a PhD from King’s College at the University of London. His interests revolve around the intersection of Trinitarian theology, contextual theology, economic development, and interdisciplinary theological reflection. He is the author of *Persons, Powers, and Pluralities: Toward A Trinitarian Theology of Culture* (2011) and has an essay on a Caribbean theology of culture published in *A Kairos Moment for Caribbean Theology* (2013). He gave the Zenas Gerig Memorial Lecture at JTS in 2015. Eric is married to JoAnn Flett, a Trinidadian, who also teaches at Eastern in the fields of business and social entrepreneurship. They have two adult sons.



Nicholas Astley Smith

“Pastoral Priorities for Biblical Interpretation in the Caribbean.”

Nicholas Smith is a licensed pastor with the Missionary Church Association in Jamaica and is currently Research Assistant to the President, Jamaica Theological Seminary. He has an undergraduate degree in theology from JTS, with a minor in leadership and ministry, and is currently pursuing an MA in Public Theology and Bible at JTS.