

# “Who is My Neighbor?”: Some Thoughts on Racism and Nationalism

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Racism and nationalism remain crucial challenges in our contemporary world. Media coverage, government actions, and academic studies have drawn attention to the persistent evil of racial, ethnic, and nationalistic prejudices in different parts of the world.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, these problems may also affect the church and nullify its privilege of being the salt of the earth. The present essay addresses the problem of racism and nationalism from a biblical perspective, and offers some principles to deal with these challenges.

At the outset, it is convenient to lay out how race and nation are usually defined. Although precise definitions of these terms are fraught with difficulties, some brief comments are in order. One source defines race as a “group or category of persons connected by common origin.”<sup>2</sup> Another concedes that the concept of race might include some physical differences that may distinguish one group of people from another, but clarifies that current scientific knowledge has established “that the diversities recognized in human beings are not founded on a biological definition of race.”<sup>3</sup> In fact, this affirmation finds clear corroboration in the fact that “all human groups share the same type of blood, are inter-fertile and can receive and donate organs across so-called racial boundaries.”<sup>4</sup> As used in this essay, race and ethnicity<sup>5</sup> are virtually synonymous, and the latter, in terms of ancient people, could be minimally defined “as group identity.”<sup>6</sup>

Similarly, the concept of nation has been defined as a “large body of people united by common descent, history, culture, or language, inhabiting a particular state or territory.”<sup>7</sup> From these two concepts derive the terms “racism” and “nationalism.” Racism “actually designates two very different things. On the one hand, it is a matter of behavior, usually a manifestation of hatred or contempt for individuals who have well-defined physical characteristics different from their own; on the other hand, it is a matter of ideology, a doctrine concerning human races.”<sup>8</sup> Nationalism, in turn, can be defined as “a sense of collective solidarity within identified geographical and cultural boundaries,”<sup>9</sup> although oftentimes it may develop into an exclusivist ideology insofar as it postulates the superiority of one nation or people group over others. For our purposes, nationalism, racism, and even tribalism are taken to be elements of a single problem: the difficulty of humans to accept the ethnic or cultural “other.” No attempt is made at absolute precision in the use of these three terms since, in this study, what is predicated of one may apply to all of them.

Our consideration of this topic is divided into four main sections. The first section addresses the concepts of race and nation in the Bible; the second offers a theological reflection on ethnic diversity; the third focuses on biblical responses to racism and nationalism. In the fourth section we will summarize these reflections and offer some suggestions.

## **Race and Nation in the Bible**

One should be careful not to impose contemporary concerns upon the Scriptures. After all, modern notions of racism or nationalism were foreign to biblical writers; nevertheless, nationalism or racism in the sense of some cultures viewing themselves as superior was certainly an issue in biblical times. For Greeks, foreigners unfamiliar with the Greek language and culture were barbarians; for Jews, non-Jews were Gentiles (i.e., pagans).<sup>10</sup> In addition, time and again the Bible indicates the diversity of peoples and nations that populate the earth. A search of an electronic database yielded 1,972 occurrences of ethnic designations in the Old Testament,<sup>11</sup> conveyed by gentilic nouns such as Egyptians, Cushites, Philistines, Assyrians, etc. Similarly, the New Testament also contains a variety of terms indicating ethnic, national, or racial affiliations. The list of

pilgrims present in Jerusalem on Pentecost may be illustrative: Parthians, Medes, Elamites, etc. (Acts 2:9). Thus it becomes apparent that the Bible has much to say about race and nations.

Common terms used in the Old Testament to convey the idea of race or ethnicity are *gôy* (555 times) and *‘am* (1866 times). In spite of considerable overlap, *gôy* designates nations and people as political and social entities, whereas *‘am* stresses kinship and more often refers to Israel as God’s people. The word *lê’ôm* (31 times) often occurs in parallel with *gôy* in the prophetic literature and Psalms.<sup>12</sup> Occurring in both Hebrew and Aramaic, the term, *‘ummâ* (7 times) means “nation,” “tribe,” “people.” The words *šebet* (190 times) and *matteh* (252 times) may designate “tribe” while *mišpāhâ* (303 times) indicates the subdivision of a tribe and is mostly translated as “family.” The New Testament, in turn, uses *ethnos* (164 times) and *laos* (143 times) to denote people or nation. In actual usage, however, *ethnos* refers more to the nations, gentiles, unbelievers, and even to non-Israelite Christian gentiles,<sup>13</sup> whereas *laos* tends to designate the people of God,<sup>14</sup> much like *‘am* in the Old Testament. Sometimes the plural *laoi* occurs in parallel to *ethnos* as a reference to “the whole of humanity.”<sup>15</sup> Two other terms may also be noted. One is *phylē* (31 times), which means “race,” “tribe” and may refer to the twelve tribes of Israel (historically, or metaphorically of Christians) or to the tribes of the earth, in the sense of peoples and nations.<sup>16</sup> The other is *genos* (21 times), which conveys the notion of “family,” “country,” among others, and therefore may have ethnic connotations. To conclude, we should note the words *barbaros* (6 times) and *ethnikos* (2 times); the former designates those of non-Greek race<sup>17</sup> and the latter designates Gentiles in contrast to descendants of Abraham.<sup>18</sup>

Having looked at some linguistic data, we turn to the so-called table of nations (Gen 10), which provides an overview of peoples and ethnic groups at the early stages of world history. Close examination of this table indicates that the variety of nations and peoples forms the backdrop for subsequent promises that the nations of the earth would be blessed.<sup>19</sup> The desirability of a diversity of ethnic groups and nations appears to have been implied in the mandate to “fill the earth” (Gen 9:2).<sup>20</sup> This may partially explain why the builders of Babel met with God’s judgment (Gen 11:1–9): They resisted God’s mandate to fill the earth.<sup>21</sup> By confusing their language and scattering them over the face of the earth, God brought about the diversity of families, nations, and ethnic groups that eventually filled the earth. Subsequently, God called Abraham to be a blessing to “all the families of the earth” (Gen 12:3).

An interesting aspect of God’s inclusive and sovereign plan for the entire world should also be mentioned: God apportioned land not only to Israel, but also to other nations. He gave land possessions to Esau (Deut 2:5), the Moabites (Deut 2:9), and the Ammonites (Deut 2:19). A prophetic oracle by Amos claims that the Lord acted in the interest of other nations in ways that resemble the Exodus event: He brought the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir (Amos 9:7). Deuteronomy 32:8 further reiterates, “When the Most High divided their inheritance to the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples, according to the number of the children of Israel.” Classical prophets envisioned a time when the nations would come to Jerusalem to worship the Lord and learn His laws (e.g., Jer 50:5; Zech 8:21–23; 14:16–21).

Admittedly, the Old Testament also contains oracles of judgment against the nations. However, such messages imply no trace of ethnic or racial prejudice.<sup>22</sup> In fact, Israel and Judah often receive the harshest judgments (see, e.g., Amos 7:8, 15; 8:2). Nations are not judged because of their ethnic or racial “otherness,” but on the basis of loyalty to God’s eternal covenant.<sup>23</sup> Nowhere in the Bible do national, racial, or ethnic identities receive a negative evaluation.<sup>24</sup> The election of Abraham and his descendants to become God’s special people does not happen in detriment to the nations, as noted above. Against all odds (Deut 7:7; 26:5), Abraham, and later Israel, received the mission of becoming a blessing to all the families of the earth.

## Theological Reflection on Ethnic Diversity

As noted above, the Bible not only mentions races, nations, and ethnic groups; it also portrays God as actively involved on behalf of nations and families of the earth as the plan of salvation unfolds. In fact, the biblical text offers principles and guidelines for facing the challenges posed by racism and nationalism.

First, we start with the most foundational principle on which the entire enterprise of biblical theology stands or falls: the theological premise that out of one couple God made humanity. As Paul reminded the Athenians, God “has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings” (Acts 17:26). In avowing the unity of the human race, Paul likely alludes to the Creation account (Gen 1, 2) and possibly to the Table of the Nations (Gen 10).<sup>25</sup> On the grounds of Creation, there is no place for superiority of one group over another since the “doctrine of creation affirms the unity as well as the dignity of all humanity.”<sup>26</sup> Over and above the variety and diversity of human cultures, societies, races, and nationalities stands the fact that all are created in the image of God. Ultimately, “there are not multiple human races, but just one human race.”<sup>27</sup>

Second, as the Scriptures make clear, the fall has not only affected the relationship between humans and God; it has also driven a wedge between humans and their fellow human beings (Rom 3:23). As different people groups become more and more alienated from God, they develop worldviews that result in racism, nationalism, and ethnocentrism—natural consequences of which are oppression and destruction of the “other.” Instead of admiring the beautiful tapestry of cultural and ethnic diversity, some place themselves and their culture as the standard according to which others are to be measured. Claims such as this underlie the racism, ethnocentrism, and nationalism that have so badly damaged God’s people at distinct moments in history.

Third, God’s eschatological promises include the nations. In a lofty depiction of classical eschatology, Isaiah and Amos picture the nations (*gôy*) and peoples (*‘ammîm*) flowing to Jerusalem to learn God’s ways (Isa 2:1–4; Amos 2:1, 2). Isaiah also envisions a day when an altar will be erected in the land of Egypt and the Egyptians will serve the Lord (Isa 19:19–22). Next, Isaiah announces that Egypt, Assyria, and Israel will be one, and applies to both Egypt and Assyria covenantal language previously restricted to Israel.<sup>28</sup> Egypt is called “my people” (*‘amî*),<sup>29</sup> and Assyria, the “work of my hand” (*ma’seh yaday*).<sup>30</sup> Isaiah 56:6 promises incorporation of the foreigner (*nekar*) into the covenant community. The New Testament likewise presents the gospel being preached to all nations (*ethnos*) of the earth (Matt 13:10; 24:14; 28:19; Luke 24:47). Although the nations may also become hostile and reject the message of salvation (Rev 11:18; 14:8; 17:15; 18:3), nevertheless out of them come people for God’s kingdom. In the eschatological consummation, all the nations are represented among the saints (Rom 1:5, 6; Rev 15:4; 21:24) and walk in the light emanating from God and the Lamb (Rev 21:24).

Fourth, the Bible recognizes and affirms the diversity of races and nations that populate the earth (Gen 10:1–32; Deut 32:8), and the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost reaffirms God’s plan for all peoples, languages, and cultures (Acts 2). Individual ethnic, national, or tribal identities give a sense of kinship and community, helping humans meet their need for security and belonging. This kind of diversity also fosters human creativity and stimulates human enrichment.<sup>31</sup> It has also been observed that the “multiplicity of peoples serves providentially to contain human pride and evil on a global scale and has done so throughout history. Overpowerful, totalising regimes are restrained and brought down by other peoples, either alone or in combination, who are threatened by and stand up to them. Ethnicity thus serves as a brake on certain forms of human sin and their potential to cause limitless evil.”<sup>32</sup>

Fifth, nations and ethnic groups are not absolute entities. Important and useful as they may be in the current state of the world, the aforementioned entities “are historical communities and not part of the original

created order. They are therefore provisional and contingent communities that can lay no claim to any ultimate human loyalty.”<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, racial and national entities—as meaningful and indispensable as they appear to be—bear the consequences of sin. Awareness of this reality should move one to challenge nationalism, tribalism, racism, and all kinds of ethnic idolatry.<sup>34</sup> The Bible clearly subordinates any status based on race or nationality to the absolute Lordship of Jesus. In Christ, all barriers erected by sin are demolished. As Paul stated: “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:28).”<sup>35</sup>

Sixth, God does not condone or tolerate racial or ethnic prejudices. Two interesting cases may illustrate this point. An episode that seems to reflect ethnic prejudice appears in the case of Aaron and Miriam against Moses “because of the Cushite woman whom he had married; for he had married a Cushite woman” (Num 12:1, ESV). The double use of the expression “Cushite woman” in this short verse shows that the ethnic identity of Moses’ wife had become a problem for Miriam and Aaron. It may have been only a pretext to raise the real issue, which was their ambition to share Moses’ leadership (not an unusual situation: an interested party raises an ethnic excuse in order to achieve a dubious goal). As a response, God struck Miriam with leprosy and she became “as white as snow” (Num 12:10). Assuming that the term “Cushite” indicates the dark complexion of Moses’ wife, the whitening of Miriam’s skin would be an ironic response to her complaint. In a similar vein, the experience of Jonah also reveals some ethnic or nationalistic prejudices. After preaching to Nineveh, the prophet emerges displeased with the success of his mission and prays for God to take his life. He soon finds shade under a plant the Lord had prepared; but when the plant is struck by a worm and withers, the prophet again wishes for death. God Himself draws out the lesson: Jonah had pity on a plant for which he did not labor; should not the Lord have had pity on Nineveh, a city with more than 120,000 persons and also many animals? (Jonah 4:1–10) The point is clear. God is no respecter of persons, nationalities, or ethnic identities. Even Israel’s worst enemies—the Assyrians— had a share in God’s love.

Seventh, as just indicated, God shows no partiality. Such an obvious statement may not have been so obvious then, nor was it fully understood by the early church. Peter had to receive a vision in order to understand that God does not discriminate against people on the basis of ethnicity. Peter’s opening words to Cornelius’ household were: “In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality” (Acts 10:34). Interestingly, the verb “perceive” in this verse denotes a process; that is, Peter appears to admit that he had not come to a full and absolute understanding, but he was still in the process of grasping such a deep and foundational truth.<sup>36</sup> Subsequently in Acts, Christian leaders had to convene a council to discuss the situation of converted Gentiles. After Bible study and prayer they embraced the Gentile converts without forcing them to be circumcised and keep the whole ceremonial law (Acts 15). We notice that—in spite of the vision given to Peter and the decision of the Jerusalem Council—the problems did not disappear. Paul had to deal constantly with factions and divisions inside the church, some of which may have been prompted by ethnic or nationalistic prejudices. Even Peter appears later on to fall back into his previous prejudices (Gal 2:11, 12).<sup>37</sup> Some New Testament letters such as Galatians, Ephesians, and Colossians<sup>38</sup> go to some length to underscore that Jews and Gentiles are equal members of the body of Christ, indicating that issues of ethnicity remained a challenge for the early church.

### **Biblical Responses to Racism and Nationalism**

In light of the above, we should note that serious distortions of the biblical perception of race and nationality occur when identification with one’s own nation, country, tribe, or ethnic group results in hostility toward other groups.<sup>39</sup> In an insightful study, Miroslav Volf names such hostility as “exclusion” and

categorizes three main ways in which this exclusion occurs: by elimination, domination, or abandonment.<sup>40</sup> This is what happens when humans get infected with racism, nationalism, or any kind of ethnic idolatry.

**Benevolence.** The Scriptures replace elimination with benevolence. The command to “love your neighbor” (Lev 19:18; Mark 12:31) certainly transcends tribal and national boundaries and includes the tribal, ethnic, or national other. Elisha comes to mind at this point since he did not consider the Syrian commander an enemy to be eliminated, but a neighbor that needed healing (2 Kgs 5:9–19). Proverbs makes a similar point: “If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; for *so* you will heap coals of fire on his head, and the Lord will reward you.” (Prov 25:21, 22). Paul takes up this passage and adds, “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom 12:20, 21). Benevolence “eliminates” the enemy by turning him or her into a friend.

**Service.** Instead of domination, the Scriptures recommend service. Legislation in favor of the foreigner reads: “You shall neither mistreat a stranger [*gēr*] nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Exod 22:21). We should note that God invokes Israel’s experience in Egypt as motivation for keeping the law. Since the oppressed may become the oppressor, God reminds His people of their former status so that they would exercise solidarity toward the foreigner. In this connection we should remember that among the nations of the ancient Near East, Israel was unique in having laws that demanded the protection of foreigners (*gērîm*).<sup>41</sup> In a time when the Jewish people groaned under Roman oppression, Jesus preached that “if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also” (Matt 5:38). To make the issue even clearer, Jesus added, “if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles” (Matt 5:41). The latter statement, as some commentators have pointed out, likely alludes to a Roman self-asserted “privilege” imposed upon dominated citizens, according to which “Roman soldiers had the legal right to impress the labor, work animal or substance of local residents (cf. Mk 15:21).”<sup>42</sup> This saying raises some hermeneutical questions that cannot be treated within the confines of this short essay. It should be stressed, however, that Jesus’ words—uttered as they were in a context of tyranny and oppression by a foreign enemy—underscore the core principle of service to the ethnic other.

**Solidarity.** The abandonment of the ethnic other must be replaced with solidarity. At the dedication of the temple, Solomon prays that God would hear the prayer of the foreigner (1 Kgs 8:41, 43), which indicates that the Temple cult would include foreigners—not exclude them, as happened later when the temple service became a symbol of exclusion for Gentiles.<sup>43</sup> In this connection, the parable of the Good Samaritan may be instructive since it portrays a “classic example of racism.”<sup>44</sup> As the story unfolds, the Jewish victim abandoned by the road is denied help first by a priest and then by a Levite. In the end it is the Samaritan—the ethnic other—that, contrary to the expectations of the original audience, brings healing to the suffering victim. This parable has been categorized as an “example story”<sup>45</sup> because, in contrast to some other parables, it portrays an example, a model, either to be rejected or emulated. Ironically, the positive model is not given by the priest nor the Levite—functionaries of the Temple—but by the foreigner. It was the Samaritan who embodied God’s way of dealing with the ethnic other (Luke 10:29–37).

As we relate to our ethnic neighbor, the Scriptures compel us to exemplify an attitude of acceptance, service, and solidarity. This, of course, is easier said than done. Ethnic cleansing and race-related conflicts have left a stain of blood on the twentieth century (and on human history, for that matter).<sup>46</sup> Horrendous acts perpetrated by one ethnic entity against another may still hurt, as the loss of people, cultures, and properties may still linger in the collective memory of nations or tribes; we should not minimize the depth of such suffering. We should remember, however, that grace and forgiveness remain the only viable options for permanent healing and restoration.

Through baptism, believers join a worldwide community of brothers and sisters that relativizes ethnic and national loyalties. As relevant and important as these earthly ties may be, they should not be allowed to break the ties that bind us to Christ and our fellow believers. As Christ's words well express: "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first" (Mark 10:29–31).

### **Final Considerations**

As noted above, the Bible affirms the diversity of races and nations along with the conviction that all races, ethnic groups, and nations are one and the same human family. Upon this theological foundation the Bible erects its perception of nations and ethnic groups. This theological principle relativizes tribal and national distinctions. Above these human loyalties stands the absolute loyalty we owe to the Creator God, who demands that we love our foreign sister or brother. Therefore, any manifestation of racism, ethnocentrism, nationalism, or tribalism is unacceptable not only from a humanitarian point of view, but also from a biblical or theological perspective. Admittedly, Christians sometimes have been unable to resist the allure of ethnic and nationalistic idolatry.

Only a worldview shaped by the Scriptures can provide the solid foundation to approach race, ethnicity, and nationality on a practical basis. As the Bible makes clear from the "beginning," Creation provides the foundation to base our relationship with the foreign neighbor. In addition, the Scriptures reveal that sin has distorted our perception of the other. Racism and related forms of prejudice have infected human nature and can only be eradicated by the blood of Jesus. As we lead our congregations and institutions to live and proclaim the gospel, we should always remind others and ourselves that "there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all" (Col 3:11).

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<sup>1</sup>See, e.g., Les Back and John Solomos, eds. *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*, Routledge Student Readers (London: Routledge, 2000); Wendy Kline, *Building a Better Race: Gender, Sexuality, and Eugenics from the Turn of the Century to the Baby Boom* (Berkeley, NY: University of California Press, 2001); James W. Perkinson, *White Theology: Outing Supremacy in Modernity, Black Religion, Womanist Thought, Social Justice* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); John Downing and Charles Husband, *Representing Race: Racisms, Ethnicities and Media* (London: SAGE, 2005); Glenda MacNaughton and Karina Davis, eds. *"Race" and Early Childhood Education: An International Approach to Identity, Politics, and Pedagogy, Critical Cultural Studies of Childhood* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Steven Leonard Jacobs, ed., *Confronting Genocide: Judaism, Christianity, Islam* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009).

<sup>2</sup>Ernest Cashmore, Michael Banton, and Heribert Adam, *Dictionary of Race and Ethnic Relations*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 1994), 294.

<sup>3</sup>Robert Miles, "Nationalism" in Guido Bolaffi, Raffaele Bracalenti, Peter Braham and Sandro Gindro, eds. *Dictionary of Race, Ethnicity and Culture* (London: SAGE Publications, 2003), 240.

<sup>4</sup>J. Andrew Kirk, "Race, Class, Caste and the Bible," *Themelios* 10:2 (1985):7.

<sup>5</sup>Due to the use of the word "race" with a biological sense in eugenics and in racist ideologies, scholars have tended to abandon this word in favor of the term "ethnicity," in which culture, not biology, was the primary category to distinguish groups of people. Eric D. Barreto, "Ethnic Negotiations: The Function of Race and Ethnicity in Acts 16" (Ph.D. dissertation, Emory University, 2010), 38–41.

<sup>6</sup>Ann E. Killebrew, *Biblical Peoples and Ethnicity: An Archaeological Study of Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines, and Early Israel, 1300-1100 B.C.E.* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 8.

<sup>7</sup>Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

- <sup>8</sup>Tzvetan Todorov, “Race And Racism,” in Les Back and John Solomos, eds. *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader* (London: Routledge, 2000), 64–70
- <sup>9</sup>Cashmore, Banton, and Adam, 254.
- <sup>10</sup>Dennis L. Okholm, *The Gospel in Black and White: Theological Resources for Racial Reconciliation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 118.
- <sup>11</sup>Anderson-Forbes Phrase Marker Analysis, *Logos Bible Software*.
- <sup>12</sup>Duane L. Christensen, “Nations,” ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992), 4:1037.
- <sup>13</sup>William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 276.
- <sup>14</sup>Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, 586.
- <sup>15</sup>H. Bietenhard, “Λαός,” ed. Lothar Coenen, Erich Beyreuther, and Hans Bietenhard, *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986), 799. See, e.g., Luke 2:31; Rom 15:11.
- <sup>16</sup>N. Hillyer, “Tribe,” Colin Brown, ed. *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 871.
- <sup>17</sup>See Hans Windisch, “βάρβαρος,” Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 1:546–553.
- <sup>18</sup>Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, 276.
- <sup>19</sup>J. Daniel Hays, *From Every People and Nation: A Biblical Theology of Race* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 56–60. Cf. Frank Crüsemann, “Human Solidarity and Ethnic Identity: Israel’s Self-Definition in the Genealogical System of Genesis,” in Mark G. Brett, ed. *Ethnicity and the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 197–214.
- <sup>20</sup>Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version.
- <sup>21</sup>See Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1958), 118, 119.
- <sup>22</sup>Contra Christensen, who asserts that, “particularly within the prophetic literature, there are passages which express the narrowest self-interest and even hatred for Israel’s enemies among the nations” (4:1037).
- <sup>23</sup>Jon D. Levenson, “The Universal Horizon of Biblical Particularism,” in Mark G. Brett, ed. *Ethnicity and the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 147. See Reinaldo W. Siqueira, “The Presence of the Covenant Motif in Amos 1:2–2:16” (Ph.D. dissertation, Andrews University, 1996).
- <sup>24</sup>In the case of some negative portrayals of Cushites, it must be noted that these are motivated by particular historical events, not by a “racialist ideology.” See Rodney Steven Sadler Jr., *Can a Cushite Change His Skin?: An Examination of Race, Ethnicity, and Othering in the Hebrew Bible* (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 148.
- <sup>25</sup>See Hays, 56–60. Cf. Frank Crüsemann, “Human Solidarity and Ethnic Identity: Israel’s Self-Definition in the Genealogical System of Genesis,” in Mark G. Brett, ed. *Ethnicity and the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 192, 193.
- <sup>26</sup>Keith Ferdinando, “The Ethnic Enemy—No Greek or Jew ... Barbarian, Scythian: The Gospel and Ethnic Difference,” *Themelios*, No. 2, September 2008 33 (2008):57.
- <sup>27</sup>Ferdinando, 57.
- <sup>28</sup>John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1–39* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), 381.
- <sup>29</sup>See Isa 10:24; 43:6, 7; Hos 1:10; 2:23; Jer. 11:4.
- <sup>30</sup>See Isa 60:21; 64:8; Pss 119:73; 138:8.
- <sup>31</sup>Ferdinando, 58.
- <sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, 59.
- <sup>33</sup>William Storrar, “‘Vertigo’ or ‘Imago’? Nations in the Divine Economy,” *Themelios*, No. 3, April 1996 21 (1996):4.
- <sup>34</sup>Ferdinando, 58.
- <sup>35</sup>This sweeping statement does not obliterate gender functions and distinctions (male and female) established at Creation; rather, it affirms God’s restoration of Creation through the saving work of Jesus. In other words, this passage “does not claim that maleness and femaleness are irrelevant in every respect” (Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010], 259). Cf. Dennis Ronald, *There is no Male and Female: The Fate of a Dominical Saying in Paul and Gnosticism* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1987), 130.
- <sup>36</sup>Indicated by the present tense of the Greek verb *katalambanomai* (“perceive”), as noted by Dennis L. Okholm, *The Gospel in Black and White: Theological Resources for Racial Reconciliation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 139.
- <sup>37</sup>That the incident reported in Galatians 2 is subsequent to Acts 15, the Jerusalem Council, is confirmed by Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 197–198. See Herman N. Ridderbos, *The Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1953), 75–97.

<sup>38</sup>See John M.G. Barclay, “‘Neither Jew Nor Greek’: Multiculturalism and the New Perspective on Paul,” in *Ethnicity and the Bible*, 197–214; Hays, 181–193.

<sup>39</sup>Ferdinando, 59.

<sup>40</sup>Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 75. See the useful summary in Ferdinando, 59.

<sup>41</sup>See R. J. D. Knauth, “Alien, Foreign Resident,” in T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 24–33.

<sup>42</sup>Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 60.

<sup>43</sup>Craig S. Keener, “The Gospel & Racial Reconciliation,” in Dennis L. Okholm, ed. *The Gospel in Black and White: Theological Resources for Racial Reconciliation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 117–130.

<sup>44</sup>David G. Benner and Peter C. Hill, eds. *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology & Counseling*, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 896.

<sup>45</sup>K. R. Snodgrass, “Parable,” ed. Joel B. Green and Scot McKnight, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 593.

<sup>46</sup>See, e.g., Longman, Weitz, Eric D. *A Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and Nation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).

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