

that the use of the oral register in writing should not lead us into simple repetitions, but we should simultaneously seek creative repetition with variation, so as to drive the reflection forward, as is frequently seen in the biblical text.

Further, while the significance of the Gutenberg printing press is obvious, I also feel they “blame” the shift too much on the poor man (pp. xviii, 11). The general move towards our current textual mindset was gradual and took place over centuries.

It seems evident that oral teaching is a good way to communicate the Bible stories to children, and engage them with the biblical characters. However, I did not see reflections on how oral hermeneutics should be adapted for children. More reflection around this would be helpful, and *The Return of Oral Hermeneutics* will be a valuable resource for those willing to do so.

I found *The Return of Oral Hermeneutics* to be a refreshing read that challenged me as a biblical reader and teacher of the Bible. Steffen and Bjoraker call their book an introduction, and it requires more thinking around how we can incorporate oral hermeneutics in our studies and teaching of the Bible. They have given us a good starting point for such a reflection.

Kenneth Bergland

Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, PHILIPPINES

Mueller, Ekkehardt, and Elias Brasil de Souza, eds. *Sexuality: Contemporary Issues from a Biblical Perspective*. Silver Spring, MD: Review and Herald, 2022. xvii + 608 pp. ISBN 978-0925675-34-7. Paperback, \$25.00.

Ekkehardt Mueller, ThD, DMin, a retired associate director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, holds a doctorate from Andrews University and has authored numerous scholarly articles and books in English and German. Elias Brasil de Souza, PhD, serves as the institute’s current director. With a PhD in Old Testament Studies from Andrews University, he has held roles as a pastor, professor, and dean, contributing extensively to academic publications in English and Portuguese.

Sexuality: Contemporary Issues from a Biblical Perspective, edited by Ekkehardt Mueller and Elias Brasil de Souza, offers a thorough examination of sexuality through a Seventh-day Adventist biblical framework. As the second volume following *Marriage: Biblical and Theological Aspects*, this

608-page work features contributions from multiple scholars across 20 chapters. It explores a wide range of topics, including marriage, cohabitation, polygamy, sexual addiction, rape, and queer theology, providing a robust foundation for understanding contemporary sexual ethics. This review is structured in paragraphs, each covering three chapters, except for the final paragraph, which addresses two chapters.

"Chapter 1: Humans as Sexual Beings" Laurentiu Ionescu employs a linguistic-cognitive approach to argue that biblical sexuality is rooted in the binary of "male and female" (zakhar uneqevah), emphasizing non-interchangeable Hebrew gender terms. His rigorous exegesis provides a compelling foundation for the biblical binary framework. However, the conservative tone may alienate readers who view gender as socially constructed, limiting engagement with broader gender discourses. *"Chapter 2: Porneia: Sexual Immorality"* Ekkehardt Mueller examines porneia (sexual immorality) in the Septuagint and New Testament, defining it as sexual sins outside heterosexual monogamous marriage and advocating repentance. The study's textual depth is notable, but its focus on prohibition could be balanced with scripture's affirmative views on intimacy. Engaging contemporary ethical debates would enhance its relevance. *"Chapter 3: Does Sexual Intercourse Constitute Marriage?"* Richard M. Davidson and Mueller argue that sexual intercourse does not constitute marriage, which requires covenantal commitment, deeming premarital sex sinful. Their emphasis on covenantal ethics aligns with biblical principles, but the analysis lacks guidance for cultures without formal marriage ceremonies. Practical strategies to promote commitment across diverse contexts would strengthen the chapter.

"Chapter 4: Uncommitted Relationships: Cohabitation" Johannes Kovar traces the historical and biblical disapproval of cohabitation, offering pastoral guidance. His historical context is insightful, and practical suggestions are valuable. However, addressing socioeconomic drivers of cohabitation and balancing biblical principles with empathy for cohabiting couples' realities would enhance the argument. *"Chapter 5: Singleness and Sexuality"* Gerhard Pfandl, Demóstenes de Silva, and Luiz Carlos Gondim present singleness as a biblical blessing, offering strategies for managing sexuality. The positive portrayal is refreshing, but actionable church-based support for singles navigating sexual desires requires further development. *"Chapter 6: Having a Wife and a Mistress"* Boubakar Sanou explores marital infidelity's global prevalence, proposing prevention and restoration strategies from an Adventist perspective. The focus on consequences and practical approaches is compelling, but greater cultural sensitivity to norms that normalize infidelity would deepen the analysis.

"Chapter 7: Polygamy, Scripture, and Marriage" Ron du Preez argues that scripture favors monogamy over polygamy, providing guidelines for addressing plural marriage. His biblical analysis is thorough, but navigating polygamous cultures without cultural imposition requires more nuance. *"Chapter 8: Reclaiming the Gift of Sexuality"* Deena A. Pitchford defines sexual addiction, particularly internet-based, and outlines recovery paths. Her empathetic suggestions are practical, but addressing social stigma and creating safe church spaces for those struggling with shame would strengthen the approach. *"Chapter 9: Prostitution and Human Trafficking"* Vanderlei Domeles and T. P. Kurian evaluate human trafficking biblically, emphasizing God's image in victims and Christian responsibility to oppose it. The theological grounding is powerful, but specific local advocacy strategies for churches are underdeveloped.

"Chapter 10: On Rape" Dragoslava Santrac and Aleksandar Santrac analyze rape's prevalence and biblical references, offering trauma alleviation suggestions. Their comprehensive approach is commendable, but long-term support strategies for survivors need elaboration. *"Chapter 11: Female Genital Mutilation"* Martha D. Duah argues that female genital mutilation contradicts biblical sexuality, proposing steps to curb it. Her human rights perspective is compelling, but exploring church partnerships with secular organizations would enhance practical applicability.

"Chapter 12: Reproduction, Population Control, and Abortion" Richard M. Davidson asserts that the fetus is human biblically, opposing abortion and life-terminating population control. His sanctity-of-life stance is robust, but addressing maternal health risks or rape-related pregnancies and engaging ethical complexities, such as declining population rates in Western countries, would add depth.

"Chapter 13: Abortion: Terminating Pregnancy" Ekkehardt Mueller opposes abortion as contrary to biblical principles, urging church support for women facing such decisions. His call for support is commendable, but practical mechanisms for ministering with compassion need further detail. *"Chapter 14: Child Sexual Abuse"* Antonio Estrada, Nisim Estrada, and Stephen Bauer condemn child sexual abuse as incompatible with God's character, urging church protection of children. Their moral stance is clear, but specific prevention policies to address social challenges are limited. *"Chapter 15: Queer Theology and Sexuality"* Stephen Bauer critiques queer theology's redefinition of biblical marriage and sexuality. His analysis is thorough, but pastoral approaches informed by medical and mental health perspectives would better engage marginalized communities while upholding biblical principles.

"Chapter 16: Homosexuality and Scripture" Ekkehardt Mueller argues that scripture opposes homosexuality, urging adherence to biblical sexual ethics. His scriptural focus is strong, but pastoral sensitivity to minister to homosexual individuals without alienation requires enhancement. *"Chapter 17: Transgenderism"* Elias Brasil de Souza and Larry L. Lichtenwalter critique transgenderism as a social construct, emphasizing biblical sexual complementarity. Their theological stance is clear, but practical pastoral care for transgender individuals needs more attention. *"Chapter 18: Towards an Adventist Approach to Transgenderism"* Kwabena Donkor proposes an Adventist response to transgenderism through biblical anthropology. His framework is insightful, but practical engagement strategies balancing doctrine and empathy are limited.

"Chapter 19: Cybersex and Robotic Sex" Vanderlei Domeles critiques cybersex and robotic sex as artificial, advocating for sexuality within marriage. His biblical critique is clear, but addressing technology's allure among youth would enhance relevance. *"Chapter 20: The Seduction of Forbidden Intimacy"* Alberto R. Timm argues that scripture restricts sex to monogamous heterosexual marriage, offering ethical counsel. His practical guidance is valuable, but addressing emotional drivers of temptation without shame would add depth.

Sexuality: Contemporary Issues from a Biblical Perspective is a significant contribution to Christian sexual ethics within the Seventh-day Adventist framework. Its strengths include: (1) Biblical Fidelity: Each chapter grounds its argument in Scripture, with detailed exegesis (e.g., Ionescu's linguistic analysis, Mueller's porneia study); (2) Comprehensive Scope: The volume addresses a wide range of issues, from marriage to societal challenges like trafficking and transgenderism; and (3) Practical Orientation: Many chapters (e.g., Kovar, Pitchford) offer actionable guidance for pastors and churches. However, the book has limitations: (1) Conservative Bias: The consistent conservative stance may limit dialogue with readers holding progressive views on gender and sexuality (e.g., Bauer's critique of queer theology); (2) Limited Cultural Engagement: Some chapters (e.g., du Preez on polygamy) lack nuance in navigating cultural diversity; and (3) Pastoral Sensitivity: Discussions of controversial topics (e.g., homosexuality, transgenderism) could better balance doctrine with empathy to avoid alienating affected individuals.

This volume is a valuable resource for pastors, scholars, and church members seeking a biblical perspective on contemporary sexual issues. Its scholarly rigor and practical focus make it a significant contribution, though its conservative lens and limited engagement with progressive views may

narrow its audience. The appendix of Adventist statements enhances its utility for church leaders. I recommend it for those navigating these complex topics within a biblical framework, with the caveat that supplementary resources may be needed for broader cultural and pastoral engagement.

Hector Martin

Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, PHILIPPINES

Ngwa, Kenneth N. *Let My People Live: An Africana Reading of Exodus*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2022. Pp. x + 218. Paperback \$35.

Kenneth N. Ngwa, PhD, is Professor of Hebrew Bible at Drew Theological School and the Director of the Religion and Global Health Forum.

This book has been written to add clarity to the modern topic of liberation by raising consciousness to the three major tools of imperialism: erasure, alienation, and singularity. Ngwa argues that this consciousness is an antidote to imperialism. This book offers a new dimension of a reader-centered approach to the Exodus narrative. By replacing go” with “live,” this book proposes an Africana reading of the Exodus narrative that charges the African to stand against rather than run away to escape the imperial grip. The book is poetic. It is not a theory of disembodied fantasy without historical and geographical specifics. Ngwa has used technical terms sparingly. He uses the persuasive and expository methods to get his points across.

The present book includes the following sections: (1) Prologue: When Your Children Ask You, (2) Introduction: Hermeneutics after Erasure, Alienation, and Singularity, (3) Tears of Redesign: Birthing Exodus and Badass Womanism, (4) Triple Consciousness and the Exodus Narrative, (5) A Post-colonial Africana Reading of Exodus 2, (6) Afroecology and Exodus, (7) Miriam: The Water-Woman and Exodus Ecology, (8) Facing and Backsiding the Mountain and, (9) Conclusion: Let My People Live.

In the prologue, Ngwa describes this volume as a monologue representing the stirring and toiling of his interpretative spirit. Ngwa describes Africana as encompassing the various intersecting ways of understanding, theories, and practices related to collective meaning-making and identity development among individuals of African descent throughout history and across different regions. He constructs a comprehensive theoretical framework incorporating diverse Afro-diasporic conversations, merging them be-