

The book would serve well as a text in upper-level undergraduate courses on the doctrine of God or as a starting point for courses that engage questions of science and religion.

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A Political Theology of Climate Change. By Michael S. Northcott. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013. Pp. x + 335. \$30.

In this wide-ranging tome, Northcott provides just what his title promises. He has a very impressive grasp of the science of climate change, the national and international policies that are related to its human causes, the political maneuverings that underlie such policies and impact their efficacy, and the historical trajectory of climate change in various regions. Drawing on the writings and cultural impact of such disparate thinkers as Augustine, Francis Bacon, and Alasdair MacIntyre, he both acknowledges the role that Christianity may have played in the development of climate change and points out the secular forces that have contributed to this development in the past and continue to do so even now. His reasoning culminates in an examination of “the political as messianic” and the hope of a “new covenantal community” (267) that can prevent a modern exile of humanity from the planet.

As he untangles the myriad influences and factors that led to climate change, N. incorporates thoughtful and compelling exegetical commentary on many Scripture passages (in addition to the creation narratives in Genesis and the lament of the earth in Romans 8 that tend to be the most popular passages in ecotheological scholarship). He insightfully draws parallels between human interaction with creation in biblical times and today and shows how these parallels have both theological and political facets.

At times, N. goes into exhaustive detail and exposition to shore up his scientific observations and historical claims, laying down frameworks so vast in scope and so densely packed with facts and figures that his original point in a section gets lost. He also seems to vacillate in his assessment of the role of the individual in ameliorating the deleterious effects of climate change; he implies that it is up to governments, corporations, and international organizations to bring about any real progress, but elsewhere he seems hopeful that the efforts of small, intentional communities can have a substantial impact on this huge problem.

Many theologians have written books and articles on ecotheology. This one successfully demonstrates the relevance of Christianity in discussions of political responses to a complex ecological issue.

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