

Mark R. Glanville and Luke Glanville, *Refuge Reimagined: Biblical Kinship in Global Politics* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2021). 272 pp. RRP \$39.99 paperback.

Christians in Australia have been far from unanimous about what their response should be to the ongoing global refugee crisis and Australia's role as a destination country. Despite this many congregations, however, have become involved in providing hospitality for refugees and advocating on their behalf justifying their involvement by reference to the teachings of Jesus. While this intuitive appeal to Scripture is not inappropriate as a starting point, the complexity of the issues that have emerged over time have raised questions that require a more substantial theological response.

The theological resources laid out in *Refuge Reimagined* draw on interdisciplinary conversation between biblical scholarship and empirical accounts of refugee experience, and hospitality in refuge countries. The two authors advancing this interdisciplinary venture are brothers. Mark Glanville is an Old Testament scholar who has published on historical and ethical issues regarding displacement in the Pentateuch. Luke Glanville is a scholar of international relations who has spent the past decade researching past and present understandings of the responsibilities of states to care for the well-being of people both within, and beyond, their borders. Mark has also on the ground experience in providing hospitality for refugees that earths the theology in practice. Kinbrace Community Society in Vancouver, British Columbia has been providing housing and support for refugee claimants for over twenty years. Kinbrace was birthed in 1998 by Grandview Church which Mark pastored for seven years.

At the heart of *Refuge Reimagined* is an account of a biblical ethic of kinship, an ethic in which the people of God are called to embrace and enfold refugees and other displaced people as kin, welcoming into the protective centre of the community those who are without clan, without family, and without home. The authors begin by retrieving this ethic of kinship from Scripture. They explore how such an ethic might be embodied today within church, national, and global communities respectively. Given the centrality of kinship to the social worlds of both Testaments, the authors emphasise that it is important to take a context-sensitive approach to reading the text that brings to light a response to the plight of the marginalized throughout Scripture that might otherwise remain invisible to those of us in modernity, who give little thought to kinship.

The authors commence this task by devoting a chapter to development of these themes in Deuteronomy. Here the stranger is someone who is vulnerable and seeking a home. As an outsider they no longer know the protection that family and patrimony with its inheritance of land would provide. In Deuteronomy the stranger is brought into sharing as kin through provisions for social solidarity, judicial protection, and feasting. The authors emphasise how

rich Deuteronomy is in imagining responses to refugees as strangers who become kin. In their justification for using the provisions the authors point out that in ... *ancient Israelite society of the reality that kinship is not static but is constantly being renegotiated for new circumstances. Deuteronomy displays tremendous creativity in ritual, in law, and in covenantal texts in order to make possible the incorporation of the stranger.*¹ Two further chapters are devoted to unpacking the theme of kinship in Scripture. Chapter Two is devoted to shorter readings that bear on kinships that we find across eight other Old Testament books, from Exodus through to Job. Chapter Three is devoted to Jesus' teaching and practice of kinship in Luke's Gospel.

In reflecting on the way they have sought guidance from Scripture in shaping a response to the refugee crisis, the authors suggest that we compare reading Scripture to jazz performance. *In learning to play jazz, we each spent thousands of hours immersed in the sounds, harmonies, and rhythms of jazz music. We learned the tradition, felt it in our bones, hummed it, and tapped it everywhere we went. Now, each time we come to play, we draw deeply from the tradition, and yet each time we play we also create something new.*² The authors offer in this image an approach to reading Scripture that is intrinsically open to the guidance of the Spirit in discerning responses to social and political issues.

The authors then take up the theme of kinship in the church, discussing practices for nourishing worshipping communities toward creative kinship and laying out a biblical foundation for church-based advocacy for refugees. They finish the chapter with stories of people and churches that have lived and acted in solidarity with refugees in the hope that these examples will inspire fresh imaginings for worshipping communities. This chapter provides a transition point for the book, building upon the ethic of kinship retrieved from Scripture to show how the church's mission includes a responsibility to both model in its own life, and to advocate for compassionate and mutually transformative responses to forced displacement.

In Part Three the authors move beyond the church to explore policy issues at a national level and articulate a stance that rejects identification of Christianity with nationalism. They argue that nations should seek to regulate their borders and preserve their identities only insofar as this serves Scripture's call to human flourishing, which includes the flourishing of vulnerable foreigners in need of a home. They argue that while sovereign states have a responsibility to care for their own citizens, states also have a responsibility to care for displaced people. They conclude Part Three with an exploration of ways in which national communities can reimagine themselves, letting go of entrenched fears and nurturing

¹ Mark Glanville and Luke Glanville, *Refuge Reimagined: Biblical Kinship in Global Politics* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2021), 47

² Glanville & Glanville, 49

compassion for vulnerable strangers. Some of the stories of Christian engagement with refugees in the book draw on the Australian experience.

The authors conclude by identifying opportunities for a collaborative global response to forced displacement of people through rejecting a fear-based ethic, and offering instead a renewed vision for international relations, grounded in a biblical ethic of global kinship with the vulnerable. In drawing attention to the global dimensions of displacement the authors have laid out a comprehensive approach to a theological ethic and practice of refuge shaped by both an imaginative reading of Scripture and analysis of public policy issues at multiple levels. *Refuge Reimagined* is a valuable and substantive resource for those teaching Christian ethics in an academic context and for congregational study groups interested in responding to the refugee crisis.

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