

# ANZATS 2021 *Theological Ethics*

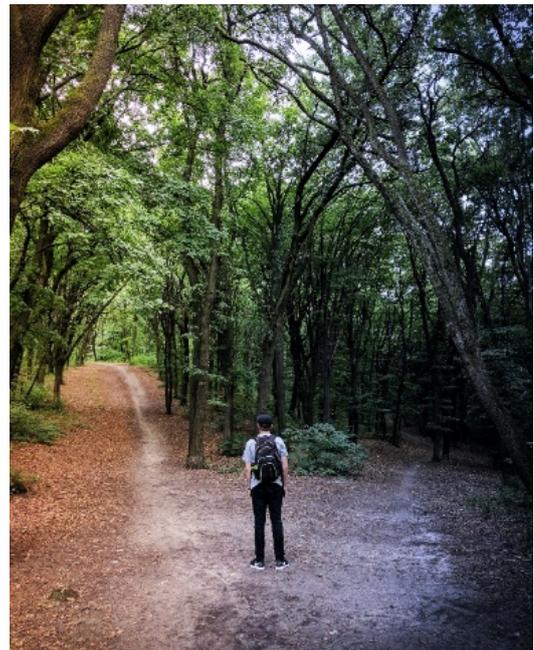
## Elective Session Proposals – New & Emerging Scholars

	Presenter 1	Presenter 2	Presenter 3
Session 1a	Emma Nicholls	Jonathon Robinson	Susan Smith
Session 1b	Marshall Scott	Deborah Hurn	Paul Asnicar
Session 2	Bruce Riding	Nixon de Vera	
Session 3	Ryan Buesnel	James Snare	Cathie Lambert
Session 4	Malcolm Gordon	Helenka Mannering	Sebastian Salaske

- Presenter** Emma Nicholls  
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### **Towards Full Inclusion: A Queer Revisionist Hermeneutic**

The following essay explores the commitments of a Queer Revisionist hermeneutic as a particular reader-response approach to Scripture. Drawing on the voices of prominent Queer Revisionist authors, as well as the wider base of Traditionalist biblical scholarship, I offer an exegesis of the most cited passage in Christian discussion regarding LGBTQ inclusion, Romans 1:18-32. Throughout the exegesis I make reference to the contrasting points that Traditionalist interpreters add, but demonstrate the clear value that Queer Revisionist interpretations bring. Finally, I offer some insights for the current LGBTQ discussion in the church and beyond, as well as some general observations of trajectories of growth which have already begun for Queer Revisionist scholarship.



- Presenter** Jonathan Robinson  
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### **Paul's Unconventional and Trinitarian Sexual Ethic in 1 Corinthians 6:12-20**

It has been argued that Paul's sexual ethic in 1 Cor 6:12-20 is simply a restatement of conventional Jewish or Greco-Roman sexual ethics overlaid with a Christian theological motivation. In this essay I attempt to refute this: negatively, by comparing it to contemporaneous examples of ethical reasoning; and positively, by outlining the inherently Trinitarian and thoroughly theological construction of Paul's ethical argument therein. Finally, I will suggest some ways in which 1 Cor 6:12-20 provides a model for present-day Christian ethical reasoning within a Trinitarian frame.

3. **Presenter** Susan Smith  
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#### **From a Place of Fragility: Female Servant Leadership in Muslim-Majority Pakistan**

This paper explores ethical issues that emerge from the study of female leadership in the Muslim-majority context of Pakistan, with special reference to servant leadership. It investigates the constraints placed on women by culture and tradition as they operate from a place of perceived fragility. It also explores resistance to their leadership because of the weakness attributed to their gender. It draws on the voices of individual female leaders as they comment on their leadership experiences. The paper concludes by highlighting the challenges facing women who might consider adopting a servant leadership approach, together with the challenges to those who wish to provide training for female leaders.

4. **Presenter** Marshall Scott  
**Institution** Sydney Miss and Bible College  
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#### **A Comparison between the Elihu Creation Hymn and Yahweh's First Speech in the Theophany in the Book of Job**

Much ink has been spilled over the role of Elihu in the book of Job. Relatively little attention has been given, however, to Elihu's Creation Hymn (CH) from 36:22- 37:24. In this paper I will argue that in the CH Elihu seeks to establish himself as a sage, echoing the language of Proverbs 8. At the same time, in claiming to speak with a god-like authority, possessing God's Spirit and claiming privileged knowledge of God's purposes, Elihu also takes on for himself the role of prophet. I will tentatively suggest that the author of the Elihu speeches uses irony to subtly undermine the legitimacy of Elihu's claims and that he is portrayed as someone who cannot see the contradiction inherent in his words. Within the CH there is a tension between these two offices of sage and prophet that gives rise to self-contradiction. Elihu's prophetic qualifications are based on his claim in 36:4, that he is one "perfect in knowledge".

5. **Presenter** Deborah Hurn  
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#### **Biblical Regions of the Exodus and Wanderings Era: A New Methodology**

The geographical data of the exodus and wanderings narratives have never been reconciled to produce a coherent and consistent itinerary. One reason is uncertainty over the location of Mount Sinai- Horeb as the destination of the exodus journey and the starting point for the ongoing journey to Kadesh. Another reason is that most of the wildernesses and national territories have not been clearly located and delineated. There is no methodology for determining the extent and boundaries of the biblical regions other than to deduce their general positions from mentions in the narrative. Thus, Bible atlases differ in their placement of the wildernesses of the Sinai and Negev and of the national territories and geographical regions of the Transjordan.

This paper explores a new and promising methodology based on the hydrology of the Southern Levant by which the wildernesses are delineated by watersheds according to pastoral concerns and the national territories are bounded by riverbeds according to agricultural concerns. By this system, it is possible to discern previously unknown regions like Ar, Jazer, and Argob, and to explain how Kadesh can be associated with both the Zin and Paran wildernesses. Custom-made

colour maps provide locations and boundaries for all regions of the exodus and wanderings era according to biblical and historical indications. By application of this new hydrological principle, the troubled wilderness itineraries of the Israelite journeys come within reach of geographical resolution.

6. **Presenter** Paul Asnicar  
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### **The Problem of Participation in Paul: A Theological Study**

E.P. Sanders, in his influential book *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, said that ‘participation’ was the heart of Paul’s thought. He also said that, as moderns, we do not understand the concept of participation. Thus, Sanders posed a challenge that has been an ongoing debate in biblical and theological studies. In this paper I formulate a response to Sanders’ challenge. I argue that participation requires (a) an objective soteriology that calls forth an existential response, and (b) that this is done through the second-personal intersubjective fellowship of the Holy Spirit. I also attempt to explain why participation has been such an elusive concept in modern theology.

7. **Presenter** Bruce Riding  
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### **Scientific Revolutions, Paradigm Shifts, and Religious Conversions: Thomas Kuhn’s Insights Applied to Religion and the Humanities**

In the popular mind, science is widely believed to be inexorably forging forward, building on facts, careful observations, and rigorous experiments. While this is what happens most of the time, it is not the complete truth.

Occasionally, some basic scientific assumptions or beliefs are found to be wrong, which necessitate scientists changing paradigms to new theories. Thomas Kuhn is the one who first investigated and systematically described such paradigm shifts. There is continuing debate over whether Kuhn’s observations of the physical sciences apply to the social sciences as well.

This paper will analyse the similarities and differences between scientific and religious paradigm shifts, and offer reasons for the close correlation of these relationships and also the differences, namely that this is because both empirical science and religions are founded on both facts and faith. They are subsets of the same human enterprise—the quest to understand and systematize the world as much as possible, whether the world of inanimate objects and forces (in the natural sciences), or the world of human beings, their thoughts, motives, interactions (in the social sciences), and questions of ultimate meaning (in religion).

8. **Presenter** Nixon de Vera  
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### **Revisiting the Concept of the Fall of Humanity**

This paper seeks to critically analyse the Edenic knowledge of good and evil vis-à-vis theological ethics. The underlying argument challenges the traditional conception of the fall of humanity upon having this knowledge. What is proposed rather is the foreordination of the “twin knowledge” to

effect maturity of character. In this respect, the intersection of the doctrine of God with the doctrine of creation is crucial in examining human participation in the sin problem. Such discussion also covers the pathways in theodicy.

9. **Presenter** Ryan Buesnel  
**Institution** Charles Sturt University  
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**The Sermon on the Mount and Christian Ethics in the Nazi Bible**

In 1939, scholars associated with the pro- Nazi German Christian movements founded a research institute dedicated to the task of removing the legacy of Judaism from Christianity. The mission of the Institute for the Study and Elimination of Jewish Influence on German Church Life was to render Christianity acceptable within the anti-Semitic and militarized climate of National Socialism. This task required purging Christian theology of Jewish influence—a feature evident in the Institute’s version of the New Testament titled *The Message of God*. This publication aimed to transform the religious experience of ordinary German believers, and would eventually sell over 200,000 copies throughout Germany. This paper examines material in this text as it relates to the Sermon on the Mount and concludes that despite the seeming incongruity between Nazi ideology and New Testament ethics, the editors of the so-called “Nazi Bible” believed their task to be guided by Christian ethical principles.

10. **Presenter** James Snare  
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**God, the Decree and Creation: A Reformed Argument for the Eternality of Creation**

This paper has come out of the research done for my PhD thesis on the question of whether an eternal union exists between God and all of creation. While most studies into the decree of God relate to considerations regarding human free will and the mounting of a defence of the sovereignty and goodness of God, this paper seeks to examine what we can know about creation based on a Reformed understanding of God's decree. Through a consideration of the nature of God's decree, and the relationship of the decree to creation and God himself, this paper argues that creation has an eternal existence of a kind. While we can say that there was a time when creation was not, there is also a sense of creation existing in eternity.

11. **Presenter** Cathie Lambert  
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**“Putting Flesh on the Bones”: Contemporary Women’s Relationship with the Beguine Mystics through their Texts**

When the contemporary women who are participating in my project about the significance of beguine mystics reflect on their experience of engaging with texts produced by the thirteenth century women, they often comment that they would like to “have more flesh on the bones”. This desire to know more of the details of the lives of Mechthild of Magdeburg, Hadewijch of Antwerp, and Marguerite Porete flows from a longing to deepen their experience beyond a mere introduction through their texts. This essay will outline my initial research intentions to create a dynamic of reciprocity between contemporary women and the beguines of the thirteenth century. Informed by historical scholarship, my research methodology seeks to take seriously the

geographical and time-bound context of the beguines, while also testing the ongoing relevance of their writing.

12. **Presenter** Malcolm Gordon  
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### **Paul's Appropriation of the Gethsemane Story in Romans 8:14-39**

In recent decades there has been a surge of interest around the biblical practice of lament, that form of prayer which wrestles between faith and the experience of suffering. This can be traced back to the work of Hebrew Bible scholars like Claus Westermann, Walter Brueggemann, and many others. More recently it has emerged as a new field of study within New Testament studies, as scholars have sought to establish whether a distinctly Christian basis for the practice can be established. Among the many approaches, the most compelling areas in such a study are the episodes of Gethsemane and Golgotha in Mark's passion story, where imagery from lament Psalms is embedded within the narrative, as well as their language being found on the lips of Jesus. In this essay, I am going to consider whether Mark's account is, in fact, the earliest encounter we have with the Gethsemane story. While it is not uncommon for scholars to note connections between Romans 8:14-39 and the lament of Israel, (because of the language of "groaning" and the use of Psalm 44:22 in Romans 8:36), I want to make a more specific claim: that in Romans 8:14-39 Paul is referencing and reinterpreting the story of Jesus' lament in the Garden of Gethsemane. In this essay I will seek to establish this theory and then discuss how Paul uses the Gethsemane episode towards a different end than what we find in Mark 14:26-42. I will pay particular attention to the aspects of protest and complaint within the lament tradition in both Mark and Paul's renderings of Gethsemane.

13. **Presenter** Helenka Mannering  
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### **Maurice Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenological Anthropology: Crafting a Framework for Analysing Christian Ethical Living in a Digital World**

Although Maurice-Merleau Ponty (1908-1961), an influential French phenomenologist who wrote in the mid twentieth century, was not a Christian in his adult life, his insights are becoming increasingly influential in contemporary Christian theology, including in the thought scholars such as James K. A. Smith and Charles Taylor. In this paper, some of Merleau-Ponty's insights in the field of phenomenological anthropology will be presented, with a particular focus on his theory of perception and of 'operative intentionality.' These insights will then be analysed theologically in the light of the thoughts of Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, David C. Schindler, and Hans Urs von Balthasar. Finally, the thought of Jean Baudrillard will be incorporated into this theoretical framework, culminating in an analysis of space and cyberspace in postmodernity. This will lead to a preliminary consideration for the way Christians should engage with the digital world.

14. **Presenter** Sebastian Salaske  
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### **Liberating Limits**

The fantasies of limitless economic growth and the unbounded intensity with which humanity is exploiting and destroying Earth's natural systems are putting the lives of today's most vulnerable members of humankind and future generations in peril. The mainstream of current economic, political, and public debates around sustainable development and climate policy focus on the idea of addressing climate change and other environmental challenges by means of ecologically friendly technologies and 'green growth'. The latter is supposed to be a form of economic growth that is successfully 'decoupled' from any harmful impacts on the environment through efficiency gains without necessitating arduous changes to societies, economic systems, and lifestyles. It is becoming increasingly apparent that such an approach is unrealistic, because efficiency gains tend to fall victim to an overcompensation through so-called rebound effects. Therefore, a discussion about limits to our affluent lifestyles seems inevitable. This paper engages with scholarly approaches by Niko Paech, Doris Fuchs and Antonietta Di Giulio, who make strong cases for such limits and the necessity of absolute reductions in material and energy use, respectively in industrial production and consumption. They get paired with themes from the works of liberation theologians Ignacio Ellacuría and Jon Sobrino as well as Pope Francis. At the intersection of all four approaches, a common theme emerges: economic reductions and limitations do not necessarily reduce quality of life but rather have the potential to generate liberating effects.