

Editor's Preface

I wonder if the Wright brothers ever looked at their earliest airplane efforts and said, “if everything seems to be in place, why is it so hard to get this off the ground?”

The Centre for the Study of Bible and Violence is a rapidly growing research centre, yet still rather young. Many of us are still newer or emerging scholars. And sometimes wonderful ideas, and wonderful projects, can take far longer and be far more difficult to launch than anyone expected. And yet while this issue has been almost three years in the making (and not the several months that we might have initially hoped!), I have had confidence from almost the start that it was a matter of “when,” and not “if,” this project would come to fruition. From the beginning, we have had a wonderful team of supporters, and especially associate editors, who have approached the task with dedication and enthusiasm.

This first issue of the *Journal for the Study of the Bible and Violence* is free—and so will be every issue to follow. While bibliophiles like us would love to hold a copy in our hands and be able to thumb through the articles in a literal sense, as an editorial team we have agreed that it is of far more value to make the journal open-access. The issue as a whole, or individual articles, may be downloaded for free in perpetuity. It is our hope that this will help to provide greater access to high-quality scholarship, especially to majority world scholars and clergy and any who may not have institutional access.

This first issue leans heavily to New Testament topics. One article examines the pericope of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5 and some intertextual relations to Old Testament narratives. Another investigates some of the intertwined themes of Ephesians 2, and its reception history. In addition, we have a timely article that examines the use of war imagery in contemporary Christian music and discourse. In our estimation, these articles show great quality and depth of research. We are sure they could have found a home in any number of established journals, and we sincerely thank Carolyn Whitnall, Stan Helton, and Kristin Caynor for taking a chance on and publishing with us.

Thanks to many others are in order, too many to name, but I will mention a few. Our excellent editors have been involved in a variety of ways – some of them “under the hood,” providing much needed discernment when considering what submissions were publishable. It is a comfort to know that there is almost no article that would be beyond them to handle. Much thanks is due to Maria Power, who has brokered a large number of book reviews that we look forward to releasing in due course. A special thanks is due to Steve Carter, who has really done some heavy lifting, editing two of the three articles in this first issue. And words almost fail to express my appreciation for Abigail Reid, who has done an outstanding job designing and typesetting the journal. In the words of my UK friends: Abi, you're a star!

As I said at the beginning, we want high-quality scholarship, and we warmly welcome such scholarship from people of any faith and of none. And yet also for many of us involved in the research centre, and all of us who are research associates, our interest is not only academics for its own sake, but also in service of the church. As confessional Christians, we believe that the intellectual pursuit of God is a great thing, and especially so when it seeks to create communities of peace and justice. As I write this inaugural editor's preface, we find ourselves in the liturgical season of Advent. It's a time where many of us reflect on how light and truth dispel ignorance and fear, a time to be reminded that the suffering and violence that affect so many can be countered by the most surprising of people and circumstances. It is a time of longing and hope for a better world—something that we all share, regardless of our beliefs. And it is in this spirit that I wish you all a most Merry Christmas.

Ashley Hibbard
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Cambridge, Canada
December 2022