

that God brought plagues upon Egypt and parted the Red Sea for Israel to cross, that God delivered His law to Moses on Mount Sinai and His Word to the prophets, and ultimately, that God the Father raised Jesus from the dead. If these things are true, then there is no reason to question the record of other supernatural events.

The Bible is a supernatural book, and it is to be treated as such. Readers of Scripture need guides to help them understand this ancient work, but they need guides who genuinely believe the Bible and the God who carried along its authors by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). There is enough unbelief in the world already, and readers of Scripture do not need any more doubt cast upon it. John Goldingay has written *A Reader's Guide to the Bible*, but those looking for a reliable guide to the Bible ought to look elsewhere.

Zachary Garris (M.Div., Reformed Theological Seminary; JD, Wayne State University Law School) is editor of Dabney on Fire: A Theology of Parenting, Education, Feminism, and Government. He writes at KnowingsScripture.com.

Dreisbach, Daniel L. and Hall, Mark David, eds. *Great Christian Jurists in American History*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 342 pp., hardcover, \$130.00.

Reviewed by Allen Mendenhall

For the Roman Catholic Church, canonized saints represent heroes whose holy and pious example inspires Christians to live a holy and pious existence themselves. Protestants who reject the Roman Catholic understanding of canonized saints nevertheless accept the worldlier concept of role models, which can, of course, be secular or religious.

Role models are precisely what Daniel L. Dreisbach and Mark David Hall supply in their recent edition entitled *Great Christian Jurists in American History*. They have commissioned an interdisciplinary group of notable scholars to profile several recognizably Christian jurists whose contributions to the law in the United States have proven formative or influential. “Most, if not all, of these jurists,” submit Dreisbach and Hall, “worked consciously to apply their Christian faith, theology, biblical interpretations, and ethical framework to their understanding or reform of the laws of the civil state; influential treatises or constitutions, statutes, or canons they drafted; or landmark cases they decided or litigated.”

The subject jurists here are presented chronologically from the early colonial period to today. They include John Cotton, Roger Williams, John Winthrop, William Penn, John Dickinson, Roger Sherman, Oliver Ellsworth, John Jay, James Wilson, Joseph Story, Simon Greenleaf, John Marshall Harlan (the Elder), David J. Brewer, John T. Noonan Jr., Harold J. Berman, Antonin Scalia, Mary Ann Glendon, Michael McConnell, and Robert P. George.

Some of the contributors to this volume arguably merit their own inclusion, but space affords only so much opportunity. One hopes this volume will inspire future, related volumes with additional jurists, perhaps featuring wider geographical scope and historical breadth. Couldn't this book become the first in a broader series? Wouldn't it be great to include British jurists? Or, even more expansively, Western jurists?

Each chapter follows a similar format: present a biographical sketch of the jurist, including commentary regarding his or her particular religious tradition, followed by bibliographical or source material that contextualizes the jurist's scholarly and academic significance, followed by an assessment of the role that Christianity played in shaping the jurist's leading theories, followed by an appraising conclusion that situates the jurist within a particular school or mode of Christian thought.

For instance, Andrew R. Murphy connects Penn with John Locke's “Letter Concerning Toleration,” and Hall links Sherman and Ellsworth with a Reformed tradition that “taught them to be watchful of tyrannical rulers and to be suspicious of concentrated power.” Jane E. Calvert says that Dickinson's “jurisprudence fits squarely into the tradition of peaceful dissent and rights advocacy exemplified by Quakers and their followers throughout American history, including, most notably, that of Martin Luther King, Jr.” Carozza locates Glendon in a distinctly Catholic genealogy, celebrating her “comparative methods” that aided her arrival at “a sound balance between universal ideals of justice, liberty, and dignity, on the one hand, and the value of the diversity and particularity of local communities in which human life takes concrete shape and flourishes, on the other.”

One sad, unintended effect of the book's chronological organization is the impression it gives of gradual decline or diminishing returns. Whereas Christians once flourished as lawyers in this country, they're now less prominent and acclaimed among the bench and bar.

Dreisbach himself states, “Christianity's influence on the culture and law has diminished over time.” He adds, “Laws informed by biblical precepts that were uncontested in the seventeenth century began to be questioned by some rationalists in the eighteenth century and politically and legally challenged in the nineteenth century and thereafter as secular and

separationist perspectives in law and policy gained ascendancy.” According to the Nathan S. Chapman, moreover, only “a handful of evangelical Christians [occupy] the upper echelons of the legal academy.”

Yet there’s no need to despair. The impact of Christianity on the law in the United States is “deep and sustained.” Berman’s example inspires a new generation of Christian scholars to, in Witte’s words, take “the Christian faith directly into ... legal studies ... showing the power of biblical texts, tropes, and traditions for understanding the basics of legal reality.”

The same could be said of this edifying edition, namely that it highlights the power of biblical learning and Christian teaching on both jurisprudence and legal practice. Of course, this book is neither exhaustive nor comprehensive, but it succeeds in showing that “Christianity and the Bible have left a distinct and significant mark on American jurisprudence.” If that is its only accomplishment, it is, by itself, sufficient.

Allen Mendenhall is associate dean at Faulkner University Thomas Goode Jones School of Law and executive director of the Blackstone & Burke Center for Law & Liberty. Visit his website at AllenMendenhall.com.



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