



By Bread Alone: The Bible through the Eyes of the Hungry

Sheila E. McGinn

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Important ecclesiastical documents have stressed the urgency of world hunger and put in the foreground its natural and historical causes, from famine to global austerity measures and welfare. These concerns have not always affected the way the biblical texts themselves have been read, however. Here, inspired by calls, from Dorothee Sölle and Kathleen O'Connor, biblical scholars apply a “hermeneutics of hunger” to the Bible, taking readings of texts from the Old and New Testaments alike on the premise that human hunger and want are urgent concerns that rightly shape the work of interpretation. Too often, however, as the authors show, biblical texts—like Jesus’ well known words that humans do not live “by bread alone”—have been used to marginalize such concerns within religious communities. Their essays here explore the dynamics of hunger and its causation in ancient Israel and the Greco-Roman world and challenge readers to take seriously the centrality of hunger concerns in the Bible.

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