

Preface

Writing a commentary has proved to be quite the daunting task, and evidently a most distinct one from all other forms of research I have engaged in. Starting with doing my own translation of the text from Greek, to writing my own independent interpretations before I read any of the other commentaries and finally writing as judiciously as possible in order to stay within the word limit, while trying to be as comprehensive in each section as I possibly could, was a most challenging balancing act. It gave me renewed respect for those who have gone ahead of me in this venture, especially before the age of computers. Yet, it was a most rewarding experience, which I hope brings some measure of contribution to these lesser-indulged in letters of the New Testament.

The freedom granted by the series editors was crucial in providing the space to engage Jude and 2 Peter from the two vantage points that I considered vital in breathing new insight in these short but important writings—communal identity and Greco-Roman associations. A renewed interest in Greco-Roman associations, especially from the works of Philip Harland, provide aspects of comparison that I hope introduce new perspectives on the role of minority group rhetoric from the first century and act as a sounding board to the rhetoric in Jude and 2 Peter. Secondly, the *Fusing of the Horizons* sections provide a useful avenue to reflect on modern implications of reading certain elements of the epistles within contexts of the modern communities with which I am familiar. I sincerely hope that the findings offer some distinctive contribution to the study of these letters.

Without downplaying my indebtedness to the prodigious minds that have gone before me in writing commentaries on Jude and 2 Peter, I quite consciously sought to limit my footnotes so that as much of my own reflections on the texts were not obscured by side comments and discussions. Aware that the readership for the series aims for an academically informed reader, but one who may not have the technical background needed to engage in the Greek text, I have sought to limit overt engagements with technical commentaries and tried as much as possible to present a running commentary as best as I could. The imprint, upon my own work, of such

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great commentaries on Jude and 2 Peter as those by Richard Bauckham, J. D. Charles, Peter Davids, Gene Green, Michael Green, Jerome Neyrey, Bo Reicke, etc., is unquestionable. Thanks also to R. Jackson Painter and Jeremy Hultin for sharing their SBL papers and subsequent thoughts with me.

I must acknowledge the support of Shaw University for their support, especially the former dean of the Divinity School (currently Interim VP for Institutional Advancement) Dr. Bruce Grady. Together with the generosity of the Association of Theological Schools grant (Theological Scholars' Grant, 2012–13), the university approved a semester's sabbatical in Spring 2013, that allowed for the bulk of the initial work in the commentary to be accomplished. My family has played a very helpful role in finding time for me to write, especially my in-laws who have driven six hours each way on numerous occasions to babysit our two very energetic kids so that my wife and I can have some free time to ourselves. To my wife Amanda, thank you for your continued support. For our kids, Elijah and Rachel, may you one day read this book and find in it blessing. A close friend of mine, Rev. Canon Francis Omondi, Director of the The Sheepfold Ministries, in Kenya, read the entire manuscript in its penultimate stage and provided a lot of very helpful comments that resulted in at least two more *Fusing of the Horizons* sections.

When you spend a couple of years doing a writing project like this one, it is bound to be impacted by important events in life. Towards the end of my sabbatical, I was saddened to lose my mother, Mrs. Jane Mutave Musyoka, after what would have been a minor surgical procedure, on June 8, 2013. A pillar of prayer in our family lives, she is sorely missed! Travelling back home for the funeral allowed me to reconnect with family and friends, but also gave me evidence of my mother's legacy of kindness, graciousness, love of God and neighbor, and selflessness. She was the embodiment of the virtues in 2 Peter 1:5–7. If for some freaky anomaly in nature we could choose a mother, I would choose her all over again! It is to her memory that I wish to dedicate this book.

Last, and certainly not the least, I would also like to thank the series editors, Michael Bird and Craig Keener, first for the invitation to contribute in the series, and also for their encouraging support along the way. I hope I have lived up to your expectations for the project! And may the commentary serve the Covenant community.