



# **Five Festal Garments: Christian Reflections on the Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther (New Studies in Biblical Theology)**

*Barry G. Webb*

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These five Old Testament books, traditionally known simply as "the Scrolls," are among the most neglected parts of the Christian Bible. In Judaism, the Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther were eventually adopted as lectionary readings for five of the major festivals. In Christian tradition, however, no consensus has emerged about their proper use. Each book presents particular difficulties with regard to how it relates to the rest of Scripture and how it should be understood as the Word of God for us today. In this New Studies in Biblical Theology volume, Barry Webb offers a Christian interpretation of these problematic writings. He allows each book to set its own agenda, and then examines each in relation to the wider Old Testament and to the New Testament gospel with its basic structure of promise and fulfillment. In this way, Webb presents fresh and illuminating perspectives on these five "festal garments" of love, kindness, suffering, vexation and deliverance. Addressing key issues in biblical theology, the works comprising New Studies in Biblical Theology are creative attempts to help Christians better understand their Bibles. The NSBT series is edited by D. A. Carson, aiming to simultaneously instruct and to edify, to interact with current scholarship and to point the way ahead.

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