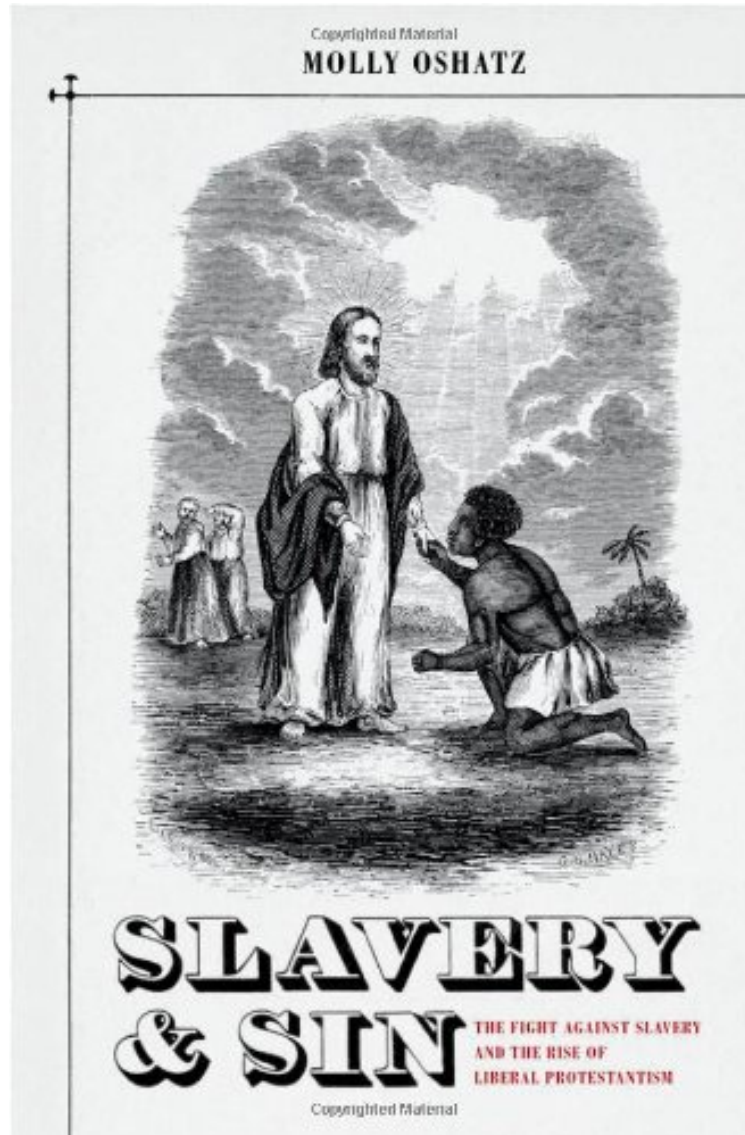


(Free pdf) Slavery and Sin: The Fight against Slavery and the Rise of Liberal Protestantism

Slavery and Sin: The Fight against Slavery and the Rise of Liberal Protestantism

Molly Oshatz

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Molly Oshatz : Slavery and Sin: The Fight against Slavery and the Rise of Liberal Protestantism before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Slavery and Sin: The Fight against Slavery and the Rise of Liberal Protestantism:

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BaxterThis book, *Slavery and Sin*, challenges Christians to take this issue seriously as it presents how believers grappled with the issues while striving to adhere to the authority of the Bible. The life long consequences of rejecting biblical authority in order to denounce slavery and the cultural fallout while doing so is worth investigating.

In this groundbreaking examination of the antislavery origins of liberal Protestantism, Molly Oshatz contends that the antebellum slavery debates forced antislavery Protestants to adopt an historicist understanding of truth and morality. Unlike earlier debates over slavery, in antebellum America the key question was whether slavery was a sin in the abstract. Unable to use the letter of the Bible to answer the claim that slavery was not a sin in and of itself, antislavery Protestants argued that biblical principles required opposition to slavery and that God revealed slavery's sinfulness through the gradual unfolding of these principles. Although they believed that slavery was a sin, antislavery Protestants' sympathy for individual slaveholders and their knowledge of the Bible made them reluctant to denounce all slaveholders as sinners. In order to reconcile slavery's sinfulness with their commitments to the Bible and to the Union, antislavery Protestants defined slavery as a social rather than an individual sin. Oshatz demonstrates that the antislavery notions of progressive revelation and social sin had radical implications for Protestant theology. Oshatz carries her study through the Civil War to reveal how emancipation confirmed for northern Protestants the notion that God revealed His will through history. She reveals how, after the war, a new generation of liberal theologians drew on this experience to respond to evolution and historical biblical criticism. *Slavery and Sin* provides critical insight into how the theological innovations rooted in the slavery debates came to fruition in liberal Protestantism's acceptance of the historical and evolutionary nature of religious truth.

"Political theology is back. In this fresh first book, Molly Oshatz gives us a cogent and original portrayal of the debate among antebellum theologians and ministers over the Bible as a warrant for slavery. She also lucidly demonstrates how the moderate antislavery theologians in this high-stakes battle were forced to originate the contours of liberal Protestantism. In telling a fascinating tale of thinkers making conceptual choices in a new discursive world, Oshatz offers us a genuine life of American minds." ---Charles Capper, author of *Margaret Fuller: An American Romantic Life* "Focusing on how and why northern Protestants developed an antislavery theology before the Civil War, Molly Oshatz offers a brilliant new perspective on the making and shaping of liberal Protestantism in America. This book changes how we think about the birthplaces, biblical approaches, historical worldviews, and legacies of liberal Protestantism. *Slavery and Sin* deserves a spot alongside works by Mark Noll and E. Brooks Holifield. It is a must read for anyone interested in American theology, faith and slavery, or the impact of the Civil War on American religion." ---Edward J. Blum, author of *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898* "Indispensable for understanding the religious debates over slavery and the rise of liberal Christianity in the United States, *Slavery and Sin* is a vital, beautifully written book that illuminates ongoing debates over the relationship between religion, culture, and politics." ---John Stauffer, author of *GIANTS: The Parallel Lives of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln* "In Oshatz's skilled analysis, liberal theology provided an important, if short-lived, haven for those Christians who wished for a biblical rather than a secular morality, but whose evolving moral vision could not countenance the evils of antebellum slavery."--*Religion in American History*"Oshatz deepens our understanding of debates over slavery and their legacy for the emergence of liberal Protestantism."--*New England Quarterly*About the AuthorMolly Oshatz is an assistant professor at San Francisco State University, where she teaches courses in American intellectual and religious history. She earned her Ph.D. at the University of California, Berkeley.