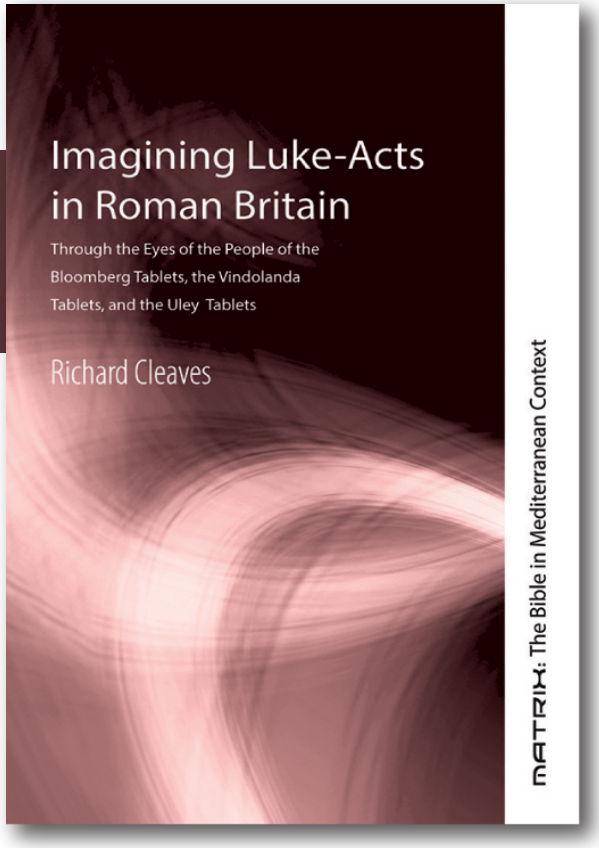
In Conversation

Highbury Congregational Church

Thursday 19 November 7-00

Imagining Luke-Acts in Roman Britain

Through the Eyes of the People of the Bloomberg Tablets, the Vindolanda Tablets, and the Uley Tablets



Richard Cleaves

The discovery of handwritten documents dating to New Testament times is a rare event. Three such exciting discoveries have recently been made in Britain. In the Bloomberg tablets (2016) we meet some of the Apostle Paul's contemporaries as they arranged loans and drew up contracts. In the professional and personal correspondence of the Vindolanda tablets (1983–2019) we get to know the women and men of a frontier fort. In the prayer requests of the Uley tablets (2024) we meet people from a rural community who turned to their local temple in times of trouble. Telling the story of the discovery of those three sets of tablets, this book introduces us to the kind of people who appear in Luke-Acts and who were its first readers. We are invited to imagine how people such as these—merchants and traders; centurions and women of standing; ordinary farmers—might have understood Luke-Acts had they become followers of the Way of Jesus. Serving as a guide to the world of the New Testament in Roman Britain, this book brings Luke-Acts to life in unexpected ways and throws new light on the way the first followers of Jesus negotiated the Empire.

RICHARD CLEAVES, a Minister of Congregational Federation churches latterly in Cheltenham, taught New Testament in the Congregational Institute for Practical Theology. Since Gloucester's 1997 celebration of its foundation as a colonia he has researched the world of the New Testament in Roman Britain and caught the imagination of adults and children in his preaching and teaching. He hopes this book will inspire others to read the New Testament in the context of early Roman Britain. Discover more at www.lukeactsinromanbritain.co.uk

In Conversation with Jason Boyd

www.lukeactsinromanbritain.co.uk

"This book offers a stimulating and original way to explore the Roman world of Luke-Acts by way of recent archaeological finds in Roman Britain."
—Loveday Alexander, Emeritus Professor of Biblical Studies, University of Sheffield

"In this remarkable book, Richard Cleaves shows—more clearly than anyone has before—the broad interconnections and parallels between the literacies of Roman Britain and those of the contemporaneous eastern Mediterranean."
—Greg Woolf, Leon Levy Director of the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University

"It only rarely happens that an interpreter conceives of a totally new and highly significant approach to a biblical text. Yet this is what Richard Cleaves has done. The result is not just a scholarly triumph, but a major contribution to bringing the British people into startling conjunction with the dawn of Christianity.."
—Philip F. Esler, Portland Chair in New Testament Studies, The University of Gloucestershire

HIGHBURY Congregational Church

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