

Episode 31: *The Third Man*

November 6, 2017



The Third Man (1949)

On this week's Technicolor Jesus, Adam and Matt welcome Brennan Breed, assistant professor of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary, to talk about the perils of modernism, post-war Europe, Amos's day of the Lord and the 1950s classic *The Third Man*. Set in post-war Vienna, *The Third Man* follows the naive and earnest Holly Martins as he tries to unravel the mysterious death of his friend Harry Lime. Written by Graham Greene, directed by Carol Reed, and scored with Anton Karas's famous Austrian zither, *The Third Man* feels as fresh as ever. Its ideas about diplomacy, international collusion, American exceptionalism, and the curse of the past are still relevant. In our first segment, Brennan leads a discussion about how American tropes and grand narratives fail to make sense of post-war Vienna and how tempted the church is to impose pre-built narratives onto foreign stories. In the second segment, Adam and Matt talk with Brennan about the week's lectionary passages. The discussion touches on Amos's understanding of the day of the Lord, the craven moral justifications of Harry Lime, and Joshua's covenant as a paradigm for communal living in the wake of fractured optimism. Finally, Adam looks to some

Hasidic brothers for guidance, and Matt learns a history lesson from *Thor: Ragnarok*. So this week, we invite you out of the shadows to proclaim your love for the cuckoo clock: it's time for another Technicolor Jesus.

[Brennan Breed](#) is assistant professor of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary, author of [Nomadic Text: A Theory of Biblical Reception History](#) and, alongside Carol Newsom, co-author of a [commentary on the book of Daniel](#).

[Interview with Pico Iyer about Graham Greene](#).

For more stories of Rebbe Zushe and Rebbe Elimelek, see Elie Weisel, [Souls on Fire: Portraits and Legends of Hasidic Masters](#)