



*Mariner: A Theological Voyage with Samuel Taylor Coleridge*  
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## Take a Theological Voyage with Poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge

**“Instead of the cross, the Albatross  
 About my neck was hung.”**

Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s famous poem “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” is often regarded as having heralded the beginning of the Romantic era in British literature. The poem narrates the story of a sailor who has returned home from a long voyage having suffered great loss, yet survived.

In this Studies in Theology and the Arts volume, poet and theologian Malcolm Guite leads readers on a journey with Coleridge, whose own life paralleled the experience of the mariner. On this theological voyage, Guite draws out the continuing relevance of this work and the ability of poetry to communicate the truths of humanity’s fallenness, our need for grace, and the possibility of redemption.

“*Mariner* is an examination of Coleridge’s stormy life, his most famous work, and his theological insights about the imagination,” says Philip Tallon, assistant professor of theology at Houston Baptist University and author of *The Poetics of Evil*. “Malcolm Guite navigates these swirling waters with a steady hand, combining a poet’s knack for specificity and a theologian’s concern for the transcendent. Guite’s tethering of minute autobiographical detail and big ideas shores up the ancient mariner’s own advice: ‘He prayeth best, who loveth best / All things both great and small.’”

Guite (PhD, Durham) is the chaplain at Girton College, Cambridge, where he also teaches in the Faculty of Divinity. He is a priest, poet, and songwriter; he travels and speaks regularly throughout the UK and North America. He is the author of *Faith, Hope and Poetry: Theology and the Poetic Imagination* as well as several collections of poems, including *Parable and Paradox: Sonnets on the Sayings of Jesus and Other Poems*; *Waiting on the Word: A Poem a Day for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany*; *The Word in the Wilderness: A Poem a Day for Lent, Holy Week, and Easter*; and *Sounding the Seasons*.

“This book develops and extends the line of thinking I set out in the sixth chapter of *Faith, Hope and Poetry*,” Guite writes. “It is part of a larger effort to redress the present imbalance between reason and imagination in the way we read and understand the world and to root both faculties in the fullness of Christ.”

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