

This day helps us to find time for others—another almost forgotten art. Yet, the day of rest also takes man beyond the past and present, for it invites one to have “an audience with the future” (p. 119).

This book offers profound insights, but it is written in a deceptively simple style. It is enhanced by its felicity of expression and sobriety of judgment and will be a wholesome complement to the more technical and occasionally less skillfully executed polemical treatments regarding the day of rest. *The Christian Use of Time* is sprinkled with refreshing aphorisms and metaphors (e.g., the Sabbath “comes like an unexpected surprise, like a bouquet of flowers when there is no anniversary, birthday, or Mother’s Day” [p. 28], or again, “It is like a traffic island in the rush of time” [p. 39]).

The work appears to be free from errors in typography and content and comes complete with endnotes and a bibliographical list for further reading. I recommend these reflections to laymen and [especially?] scholars.

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Damsteegt, P. Gerard. *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1977. xv + 348 pp. Paperback, \$7.95.

This book was P. Gerard Damsteegt’s dissertation for the Doctor of Theology degree at the Free University of Amsterdam. It traces the development of a Seventh-day Adventist theology of mission from the movement’s Millerite origins in the 1840s until the sending of its first overseas missionary in 1874. After the Great Disappointment had shattered Millerism and left the bewildered Adventists strewn about the northern United States, a Sabbatarian Adventist minority rallied itself around two affirmations: first, that the Adventist experience in 1844, including the fateful day in October, had been spiritually valid and meaningful; and second, that certain neglected doctrines—especially the seventh-day Sabbath—required restoration in order for the Lord to come.

For Sabbatarian Adventists October 22, 1844, had not been miscalculated, as most Millerites believed in retrospect, but *misinterpreted*. With a typological use of the biblical sanctuary, these Adventists found an explanation for the delayed Parousia which shut the door of salvation on the “wicked world” that had rejected Millerism. Assuming this anti-mission posture, Sabbatarian Adventists only hoped to keep their own “garments spotless” as Christ performed the high priestly functions in an anti-typical heavenly sanctuary. The post-Disappointment years ended in the 1850s when Adventists acknowledged the “shut-door” of salvation was open after all, allowing missionary efforts to begin. Damsteegt finds that the Adventist prophetess, Ellen G. White, inspired missionary activity, and he differs with two recent historians (Ingemar Lindén and Ronald Numbers) who see her earliest role in this regard as equivocal. In the period that Damsteegt covers, the missionary outreach of Adventists was at first limited to the United States and later included no more than European “Christendom.”

For those familiar with the work of LeRoy Froom, Francis D. Nichol, and Everett Dick, this young Adventist historian of theology offers nothing substantially new. What he might have contributed, but did not, was an interpretive thesis which accounts for the development of Seventh-day Adventism from an anti-mission to a missionary movement. Lacking a thesis, Damsteegt does “scissors-and-paste” history based on an exhaustive survey of early Adventist tracts, pamphlets, and books, which amounts to the summary of an historical period rather than the analysis of a problem. In the spirit of interconfessional dialogue, he asks the early Adventists to speak for themselves (if that is really possible) through extensive quotations and paraphrases of the docu-

ments. Unfortunately, he never cross-examines his sources, or establishes any critical distance from them. Damsteegt does well to depart from Froom's providentialist history but argues no alternative historical explanations. He deems virtually anything in early Adventist thought germane to his topic—apocalypticism and soteriology, ecclesiology and ecumenism, revelation and hermeneutics—until the mission motif at times almost drops from view. The hermeneutics of an arcane biblical apocalypticism becomes entirely too much of a preoccupation in the volume. It raises the question for me of whether early Adventists can be attributed a "method" of interpreting Scripture when their biblical literalism seemed to preclude, for the most part, the need for a hermeneutic.

The volume is well organized, and a careful reading of it, though tedious, does not go unrewarded. I think, e.g., of the point (on p. 37) that a Millerite emphasis on the definite time for Christ's return was defended on the grounds that it produced evangelistic results. Thus, if the book is short on analysis, it will provide valuable grist for the mill of a more imaginative interpreter.

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Erb, Paul. *Bible Prophecy: Questions and Answers*. Scottdale, Pa., and Kitchener, Ont.: Herald Press, 1978. 208 pp. \$5.55/\$4.95.

This handy volume endeavors to answer some 90 basic questions on the general topic of "Bible Prophecy" under the following main categories: "The Meaning of Prophecy," "The Place of Christ in Prophecy," "Promise and Assurance in Salvation History," "The Church in God's Plan," "The Kingdom of Christ," "The Coming of Christ," "The Hope of the Resurrection," and "The Ultimate Judgment." The answers are necessarily quite brief, but usually represent well-thought-out solutions. They vary considerably as to the amount of biblical or other support they provide for the positions taken.

As an illustration of the kinds of questions asked, the following may be mentioned: "Is prophecy the foretelling of future events?," "Why are there so many differences among the students of prophecy?," "What is eschatology?," "What is apocalyptic literature?," "What is the chief focus of Old Testament prophecy?," "Why does prophecy center in the person and work of Jesus Christ?," "Is salvation past, present, or future?," "Was Pentecost a second coming of Christ?," "What is the kingdom of Christ?," "Are there valid reasons for believing in a future millennium?," "What is the goal of history?," "Why was the resurrection of Christ a crucial event?," "Which is it: immortality or resurrection?," "What is the purpose of the final judgment?"

In spite of my misgivings about certain aspects of this publication (some of these will be noted below), I must express deep appreciation for the balance that is generally characteristic throughout the work. Although the author recognizes that "prophecy includes a large element of prediction," he also indicates that "the prophet is primarily a spokesman for God," and that the "goal of prophecy is the holiness of God, experienced in and beyond history" (see p. 22). Indeed, later in the volume he states, "We are not looking for *something to happen*. We are looking for *Someone to come* who already has been here, and who must come again to bring God's plan of redemption to its completion" (p. 70). And he goes on to say that eschatology "is not only about last things, but about first things also. In Christ there is a unity of past, present, and future. What He will do when He comes again is not so much new things, as to bring beginnings to their purposed ends" (ibid.).