

“seedbed” in which theological candidates were kept away from the contagion of false doctrines. The other was the Protestant in which leaders were taught to engage with ideas, and through vigorous Bible study learn to judge wisely (although there is some slippage among Protestants, particularly of the Fundamentalist variety to drift back to the Catholic notion of a seedbed). One thing that I especially appreciated was that the authority of Scripture, throughout the history of theological education, was closely connected to the importance paid to studying the original languages of the Bible (p. 125).

Altogether, if theological education is to remain relevant and useful, it is essential to reflect upon the history of theological education. Theological training can either be an abstract and obtuse process, in which the trainee for ministry is coddled and a gulf exists, and at times encouraged, between clergy and those in the pew. Protestants need to carefully reflect upon and reform theological education, while at the same time recognizing that theological education is a means to an end, and not an end in itself.

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The English Connection: The Puritan Roots of Seventh-day Adventist Belief, by Bryan W. Ball. 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK: James Clarke, 2014. 279 pp. ISBN 978-0-227-17445-6. Softcover, US\$45.00.

Bryan W. Ball is an experienced professor and administrator in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Previously, he served as the president of Avondale College and South Pacific Division. He is an expert in English history, especially with regard to Puritanism. Some of his books include: *The Soul Sleepers: Christian Mortalism from Wycliffe to Priestley*, *The Seventh-day Men: Sabbatarians and Sabbatarianism in England and Wales, 1600-1800* and *A Great Expectation: Eschatological Thought in English Protestantism to 1660*. *The English Connection* is a Puritan study by Ball, which continues his lifelong expertise on the topic.

This book is the second edition of the 1981 edition. There are essentially no changes in the main body of chapters with the exception of a new “forward” (pp. vii-ix) and “Conclusion” (pp. 229-34). The reason for this second edition is due to the growing members of the Seventh-day

Adventist Church, which creates “more potential readers” as “there are now millions more who need to understand the historical/theological roots from [which] Adventism arose, particularly those roots which in this book have been traced back to seventeenth-century England” (p. vii).

The twelve chapters in this book cover doctrines and include a few chapters that are related not only to Seventh-day Adventist theology, but also to broader themes including the Radical Reformation. The first four chapters titled “The Sufficiency of Scripture,” “This Incomparable Jesus,” “The Lord Our Righteousness,” and “The New Man” and the other two chapters, “Gospel Obedience” (ch. 7) and “The Return of Christ” (ch. 10) highlight the common understanding among Protestantism to acknowledge that “these chapters was foundational to Protestantism as a whole” (p. 229). Chapter 5, titled “Believer’s Baptism,” is strictly connected to the Anabaptist understanding. It means that the purpose of the book is “to show that major beliefs of Adventism were widely understood and practised in England during the seventeenth century” (p. vii). The author shows how Adventist beliefs were not only connected with Protestantism, especially within the Anabaptist tradition, but that this means that this group’s doctrines are not strictly sectarian.

The interesting thing about this book is that the earliest doctrines held by Sabbatarian Adventists had their roots, to a large extent, with Puritanism. The doctrine of the sanctuary (ch. 6) includes a belief in the heavenly sanctuary, seventh-day Sabbath (ch. 8), state of the dead or conditional immortality (ch. 9), and the second coming (ch. 10). In addition to that, the Adventist understanding about prophecy, the historicist interpretative framework (ch. 11), the concept of the millennium and eternal punishment (ch. 12) are closely related to Puritan theological concepts.

The author recognizes that the topic of “the seventh-day Sabbath and conditional immortality” (p. 229) is especially important. However, although a few believed in the seventh-day Sabbath, this was not a major teaching among Puritans overall. Ball realizes that even among Puritans, those who believed in the seventh-day Sabbath were categorized as heretical and those who wrote about the seventh-day Sabbath did not always keep the seventh-day Sabbath (pp. 138, 139). The same thing is true about the state of the dead. Whereas conditional immortality was believed by some Puritans, nevertheless, this was not the major understanding within Puritanism. They mostly believed “that at death the souls of the righteous went to heaven” (p. 159) and the wicked went to eternal punishment which means that the immortality of the soul was a dominant understanding among the Puritans. Thus, when the author comments about the new earth that “it would be totally wrong to conclude that the English Church in the seventeenth century was

obsessed by hell, or that believers were motivated to godly living either by a fear of eternal torment or eternal extinction" (p. 223), this is somewhat an exaggeration especially when he states that this is "totally wrong" since it was the consequence of those who believed in eternal punishment that made them be "obsessed by hell." Perhaps a more precise way to put it would be to say that the main Puritan idea about the world to come was a "future reward of the saints" (as shown in p. 224) instead of stating that being "obsessed by hell" was "totally wrong." Altogether, Ball connects Puritan doctrines with Adventism. I highly recommend this book to libraries of Adventist colleges and universities and those who want to know further about the connections between Puritan and Adventist theology.

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A Message from the Great King: Reading Malachi in Light of Ancient Persian Royal Messenger Texts from the Time of Xerxes, by R. Michael Fox. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015. 170 pp. + 10 pp. index. ISBN 978-1-57506-394-2. Hardcover, US\$49.50.

R. Michael Fox teaches Old Testament courses at Ecclesia College and edits *Reverberation of the Exodus in Scripture*. His book, *A Message from the Great King: Reading Malachi in Light of Ancient Persian Royal Messenger Texts from the Time of Xerxes*, offers a new way of reading Malachi using the "messenger lens" as an interpretative framework in his book. He argues that Malachi contains messenger language that has its root metaphor that accompanies each periscope. Some messenger metaphors are "brilliant," obvious in texts like Mal 1:1; 2:7; 3:1; 1:14; 3:16, 17; however, some are only "bright," which for him means that they are hardly dull, for instance (בְּיַד), "by the hand of" in Mal 1:1; (פְּקֻדָּה) "governor" in Mal 1:8; and other words from Mal 1:11, 14; 3:1; and 4:5 and some are decorated "subtly" like in Mal 1:2-5 concerning the announcement of Edom's destruction, the father and king metaphors, and others. In those passages, the messenger language is not clear. He therefore emphasizes the need to use the messenger lens to recognize them.

When he uses the messenger lens, he refers to the historical context from which Malachi was written. He offered examples such as the use of