

from all ethnic groups before the end comes, does not have appropriate textual support (585). In fact, the parallel of Col 1:23 seems to undermine this reading. At any rate, his point that God's plan for the mission of the church has always been inclusive of all ethnic groups on earth is well made. Jiri Moskala ("Concepto y noción de la iglesia en el Pentateuco" [The concept and notion of church in the Pentateuch]) provides a brief introduction to the idea of church in the Pentateuch, beginning with an analysis of the vocabulary and including a sketch of the development of this theme throughout the Pentateuch. The article is insightful and provides a good starting point for a fuller study of the topic in the Bible.

*Volviendo a los orígenes* conveys the vibrant voice of the Seventh-day Adventist theological movement in South America, which is full of energy and ambitious to be heard and to weigh in on the theological debates of the Adventist Church. Its appeal and major success resides in its ability to add a variety of perspectives from different fields of thought to the study of the biblical text and its implications. Though eclectic in its approach, the views and convictions of the authors are clearly unified in a high view of Scripture and in their rejection of the Documentary Hypothesis. The book is of uneven quality. It contains articles that stand out for their lucidity and clarity, while the argument of others is more difficult to follow and their contribution more tenuous. The book remains, however, an example of the reward that can be obtained when people from different disciplines think together about the Bible and its meaning for the church today. We can only hope that the South American Biblical-Theological Symposium will continue to prosper, publish, and grow in its ability to convene the voices of people from different parts of the world and from different disciplines.

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Desplan, Fabrice, and Régis Dericquebourg, eds. *Ces protestants que l'on dit Adventistes*, Collection: Théologie et vie politique de la terre. Paris: l'Harmattan, 2008. 250 pp. Paper, €23,27.

Two State institutions dominate higher education in France: The Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (National Center for Scientific Research), and l'Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (School of Higher Studies, a specific department of the famous Sorbonne University in Paris). Since 1995, they have joined their efforts in a research group named *Society, Religions and Laicizations*. The book under present review, *Those Protestants Who are Named Adventists*, is the outcome of the yearly colloquium of this group, held in Paris on 3 May 2007. It is dedicated entirely to the study of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In the French setting, this sudden interest in the Seventh-day Adventist Church is a result of a specific event that occurred on 11 March 2006, when the Adventist Church was accepted as a full member of the Fédération Protestante

de France (French Protestant Conference). Although not a super church, the Fédération Protestante de France is a general organization bringing together historical Protestants (Lutherans and Calvinists) and many other evangelical churches. Its main goals are, according to its Constitution and bylaws: to bear witness to the sovereignty of the living Christ, to bring the different churches into closer relationship and to try to coordinate their respective actions, to be the voice of French Protestantism for the government, and to protect religious liberty. The admission of the Adventist Church in this Conference was a long and rather painful process. Describing why and how it eventually happened is the purpose of this book.

The book is divided into ten different contributions, an introduction, and an appendix. Seven presentations were written by non-Adventist scholars. The logical flow of the book is not obvious and the chapters are independent of each other.

The shortest chapter is by Dominique Kounkou, a lawyer and President of the African Evangelical Churches (137-141). In five unreferenced pages, Kounkou asks and analyzes a political question: What was behind the admission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and other small evangelical churches into the Conference? According to his analysis, Kounkou believes that the Conference was experiencing major difficulties in retaining its influence. The historical churches—the core of the Conference for decades—did not have the influence on French society they had enjoyed in previous years due to declining membership. By way of contrast, the evangelical churches are growing rapidly. Thus for Kounkou, “the center has called for help from the margins, in order to survive” (138). It is the end of elitist Protestantism and the beginning of mass Protestantism. While a rescue measure for the Conference, the admission is an opportunity for the Seventh-day Adventist Church and other small organizations—as members of the Conference, these churches will no longer be considered sects.

Sébastien Fath considers the relationship between Protestants and Adventists (19-27). As with evangelicals, Adventists see a strong correlation between orthodoxy and orthopraxy. They appreciate action more than spiritual quest, conviction more than doubt. More than evangelicals, however, Adventists develop structures of plausibility: schools, youth camps, potlucks, and different means of socialization. Their belief in the soon coming of the Savior creates what Fath calls “the utopia of the kingdom to come” (23). Nevertheless, in French Protestant historiography, Adventism does not feature on the first page for the following reasons: the role of Ellen White, an ongoing suspicion of supposed legalism, and a sheep-stealing mission style (26).

Jean-Paul Willaime (89-97) also considers the admission process, making some parts of his chapter redundant with Fath's. Willaime also returns to the issue of Ellen White. He believes that in order to enter the Conference, Adventists went through a protestantization process, at the end of which they clearly admit that the Bible is their only creed (93). Acceptance of open communion was also important for the Conference, but not a major issue for the Adventists. Not a small surprise, the Conference acknowledged the value

of the Sabbath doctrine. As noted by the President of the French Reformed Church, "Sabbath observance may raise the question of the necessary distance with the consumerist society" (95).

Jean Baubérot, honorary president of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, considers the story of the *International Association for the Defense of Religious Liberty (AIDLR)* (121-136). Independent from the well-known *International Religious Liberty Association (IRLA)*, but closely linked to it, the *AIDLR* has published its journal *Conscience and Liberty* since 1946. Baubérot lists the many VIPs who were members of the Association, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt being not the least. Studying the topics considered in the review from a political perspective, Baubérot states that, compared to the *Liberty* magazine of the *IRLA*, *Conscience and Liberty* is more toward the left of the political spectrum and more pluralist than its American counterpart (125). Among the many significant actions undertaken by the *AIDLR*, a letter was sent by its founder Jean Nussbaum, in January 1965, to General Franco, pleading for a new law in favor of religious liberty in Spain (126).

Régis Dericquebourg focuses on the role of Ellen White in Adventism (143-166). Despite some unwarranted statements (she had no visions after 1855!), his chapter deserves great consideration. Dericquebourg begins with a negative definition of White's ministry, stating that "She is not a reformer, nor a mystagogue, nor a moral master (*gourou*). . . . She does not conform to a typical prophetic image, as God's channel, announcing a new vision of the world" (163). White's mission is twofold: to give a supernatural validity to the theological choices made by her fellow pioneers, and to integrate extrabiblical truths (e.g., the health message) into a coherent and unified religion of salvation and health (165). Dericquebourg's conclusion will certainly please many Adventists. He states: "Ellen White belongs to the core nucleus of the Adventist representation. To touch her would destabilize the representation" (165).

Fabrice Desplan deals with the conversion process (167-219): How does one become a Seventh-day Adventist? However, this interesting study does not really fit into the general project of the book. Desplan interviewed 125 new Adventist believers in five-hour-long sessions. He creates five different genres of new believers from his interviews: continuous heirs, prodigal heirs, pilgrims, rational neophytes, and conquered neophytes. These differences demonstrate a significant diversity among Adventist believers, but in order to be totally relevant, this study should have included a comparative side. How does the conversion process in the Adventist Church differ from or resemble the conversion process in the evangelical churches?

Olivier Régis compares the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the French Caribbean islands (La Martinique and La Guadeloupe) with Jehovah Witnesses (219-232). However, his chapter is too short and does not go further than general considerations.

The longest Adventist contribution to this publication is Jean-Luc Rolland's chapter (29-88). Rolland, the director of the Ellen White Research Center for Western Europe, provides a well-documented but verbose study. More care should have been given to the outline of this chapter to avoid

useless repetitions with other chapters. Rolland offers a sound and sensitive scholarly apology of the Adventist Church, but it is more a general overview of the church in the world than a French-focused presentation. For example, Bert Beach, John Harvey Kellogg, and Ben Carson, all outstanding American figures, feature with but a few French Adventist characters. A good deal of Rolland's study deals with the concept of present truth. With (too many and too long) quotations, sometimes coming from unpublished manuscripts of Ellen White, Rolland asserts that the Seventh-day Adventist Church supports a dynamic understanding of the concept of truth. His historical presentation is quite helpful, however, showing how reluctant the pioneers were to the idea of a creed. However, again, what is the link between this description and the Adventist Church in France? Generally speaking, one wonders if this idyllic description of an open church, willing to discover new truth, corresponds to the current reality in the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Last, but not least in the book, is Richard Lehmann's chapter (101-119). Lehmann published a general presentation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1987 that is still considered a valuable reference guide. In addition, he served as President of the Adventist Church in France during the admission period into the Conference. His chapter is a useful testimony from inside, written by a theologian. At the end of the admission process, Lehmann asks pertinent questions: What, in the end, is the mission of the Adventist Church? Should the church further develop its relationships with other Christian entities, sharing common doctrines and practices? Or should the church maintain a constant confrontation/opposition with others (119)? In dealing with these questions, Lehmann contends, the church in France showed its capacity to remain alive.

*Ces protestants que l'on dit adventistes* is a unique contribution not only to the history and sociology of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in France, but it is also relevant for a wider understanding of the church in general. As mentioned in its foreword by the non-Adventist editors, it is an innovative publication, a major contribution no serious sociologist or historian of religion will ignore.

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Du Preez, Ron. *Judging the Sabbath: Discovering What Can't Be Found in Colossians 2:16*. Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 2008. xv + 190 pp. Paper, \$19.99.

Colossians 2:16 has been interpreted by the vast majority of scholars as evidence that the seventh-day Sabbath has been abolished and is no longer a day Christians need to observe. Sabbatarians, however, see this text as referring not to the seventh-day Sabbath, but to the OT ceremonial sabbaths that Christians are no longer obliged to keep. Du Preez, in *Judging the Sabbath*, critically analyzes the "anti-Sabbatarian apologetics" (viii). He supports his conclusions through an extensive analysis of the terms "festival," "new moon," and "sabbath" with helpful diagrams. Four extensive appendices