

defined the roles of men and women during antebellum America, is likewise also apparently overlooked. Another example is that the volume mentions that Ellen White frequently mentions the term “Glory” at the beginning of her visions (14), a revivalist phrase that was commonly used during the Second Great Awakening. Stronger ties between religious revivalism and its influence upon Ellen White’s life and thought could have been drawn. The volume covers material during the critical period of time leading up to the American Civil War, but the issue of race relations is not mentioned. Why not? If Ellen G. White and other early Sabbatarian Adventists were such ardent abolitionists, then why did this not filter into her unpublished writings? History is more than simply identifying facts (the work of a chronicler); a historian also interprets. While it is very clear from this volume, at least for the White Estate, that her prophetic authority is understandably the central issue, there are many other social, economic, and cultural interests that could enrich this volume. This window into the world outside of Adventism could shed rich interpretative light into her life and thought. The lack of this historical milieu is therefore perhaps the greatest weakness of the volume. Despite such weaknesses, including a handful of typos, this volume will be a rich treasure for scholars of Ellen White. A careful reading of these unpublished writings, especially her 1859 diary, will give rich insight into the more personal aspects of life as a prophet.

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Rice, Richard. *Suffering and the Search for Meaning: Contemporary Responses to the Problem of Pain*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014. 170 pp. Paperback, \$18.

Richard Rice is professor of religion at Loma Linda University in Loma Linda, California. He is the author of several books, including *God’s Foreknowledge and Man’s Free Will* and *Reason and the Contours of Faith*.

Although much has been written on the topic of theodicy, Rice’s contribution is original and stimulating in that it offers a modest yet insightful overview of several of the major theodicies, along with a proposal for a *practical theodicy*. While the cover, length, and style of the book are reader-friendly, this does not by any means reduce Rice’s work to light reading. Instead, the book shows the work of an experienced philosopher and teacher who has well learned the art of simplifying complex matters without subtracting from their depth and meaning. In this sense, Rice is sharing with the reader the result of years of synthesizing.

Further, I find the author to be well balanced in his use of sources, both academic and popular. Against an avalanche of existing theodicy-related resources, he manages to make reference to key sources from philosophy, theology, and contemporary history.

His main argument could be fairly summarized by the following quote: “Even if nothing makes perfect sense of suffering, and our attempts to fit it within a rational package never fully succeed, we can still respond to suffering resourcefully.” (164) This line of thought is successfully developed in the book and is made increasingly clear throughout its nine chapters.

The first chapter consists of an introduction in which he states the universality of suffering and the importance of the task at hand. The introduction is followed by seven chapters, each dealing with a different response to suffering or theodicy: Perfect Plan Theodicy, The Free Will Defense, Soul Making Theodicy, Cosmic Conflict Theodicy, Openness of God Theodicy, Finite God Theodicy, and finally, Protest Theodicies. Every chapter offers a description rich in practical examples and stories, a philosophical-theological background, and an objective evaluation of each theodicy. The last chapter serves simultaneously as a proposal for a *practical theodicy*, the author’s personal account on his response to suffering, and a brief conclusion.

Despite the indubitable value of Rice’s overview of the major theodicies, I believe his *practical theodicy* to be his major contribution. Defined as a theodicy mosaic or *bricolage*, this theodicy allows for tension and diversity, taking into account philosophical, religious, and personal convictions altogether in a combination of ideas and experience. It also allows for consideration of valuable elements pertaining to the various existing theodicies. In addition, Rice soberly admits the implausibility of a *practical theodicy* that takes the form of a one-size-fits-all logically perfect scheme. His proposal for a theodicy does not offer all the answers, yet encourages its adherents to *somehow* position themselves in regards to suffering.

In that sense, there must be a warning to the reader: if looking for spoon-fed or pre-packaged solutions to suffering, this book will not fulfill your expectations. On the contrary, Rice’s work carries within itself a strong call for personal reflection and concrete individual action. It does not *merely* offer ready-made philosophical critiques and ambitious hypothetical scenarios, but it also constantly challenges the reader’s perspective. It demands active analysis and participation, and a willingness to embark in an ever deeper and greater—sometimes tentative and mysterious—search for meaning in the midst of suffering.

Another asset of Rice’s *practical theodicy* is that it does not only focus on the self, but also on the other. He encourages the reader to find a way through suffering, not as a mere introverted intellectual exercise, but in order to *somehow* relate to other sufferers. In this regard, he gives practical advice for engaging in an other sufferer’s experience and thus joining them in a journey of empathy, acceptance, and care.

Because of its all-inclusive nature, this book is appropriate for every reader who can relate to suffering in one way or another. In that sense the author manages to show that intellectual challenges which relate to suffering are not only for intellectuals. Nevertheless, the scholar—whether philosopher

or theologian—and the health professional, who often engages with suffering individuals, will find this reading particularly helpful.

In a fusion between good scholarship and practical usefulness, Rice succeeds to show that while suffering might not always make perfect sense, one can respond to it resourcefully. If only that, I believe his book achieves much.

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Seifrid, Mark A. *The Second Letter to the Corinthians*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014. 535 pp. Hardcover, \$50.00.

This is volume number fifteen of the *The Pillar New Testament Commentary* series. In his new commentary on 2 Corinthians, Mark A. Seifrid, Mildred and Ernest Hogan Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Southern Seminary, presents Paul as the unimpressive minister of an infinitely powerful gospel. In the scholarly world of New Testament, Seifrid is best known for his thorough and judicious treatment of Paul's doctrine of justification by faith, on which he is a competent expert. He brings exceptional erudition, exegetical accuracy, and theological reflection to the interpretation of this commentary on 2 Corinthians, considered by some scholars as one of the most controversial and difficult of Paul's letters.

In their preface to Seifrid's volume, the series editors outline the intent of the series as a project designed for serious pastors and teachers of the Bible. *The Pillar Commentaries* seek above all to make clear the text of Scripture as we have it. The scholars writing these volumes interact with the most significant informed contemporary debate but avoid getting caught up in undue technical detail. In accord with the series format, the commentary proper is preceded by a brief introduction, which is followed by four entries; and the rest of the volume is divided into three main sections that cover the whole letter: I) The opening of the letter: the call to fellowship (1:1–2:17); II) the body of the letter: apostolic mission (3:1–7:16); III) closing of the letter: the call to simplicity (8:1–13:14). The author of this commentary offers a unified reading of 2 Corinthians, which has frequently been regarded as a composite of excerpts and fragments (xxix). The contrast between 2 Cor 1–7 and 2 Cor 10–13 is more apparent than real. The notion that a letter that was instrumental in cementing the bond between the congregation at Corinth and Paul would be subject to a cut-and-paste operation, even at a later time, is difficult to imagine. The burden of proof clearly lies upon any hypothesis of a compilation letter.

The message of 2 Corinthians lies in its paradox: Paul is forced to legitimize his own apostolic ministry as superior to other, "super-apostle" claimants, but instead of drawing on impressive physical presence or rhetorical flair, he appeals to his own hardship and frailty. He is the suffering apostle of the crucified and resurrected Christ. Seifrid interprets Paul's thanksgiving to God, who "in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession" in 2 Cor 2:14, as Paul's participation in the suffering and shame of the crucified Christ. Paul