

seems unwise to place so much emphasis on this trial—especially since it was necessary to essentially ignore about 70 years of Ellen White’s life and visions in order to do so.

Chapter 3 suffers from the same weakness. This section is dedicated to the “testimonies” of Ellen G. White—a term that relates to various writings of reproof in general and a series of publications that appeared between 1855 and 1909 specifically. Rather than provide a representative sampling, this section is limited to letters and manuscripts “from 1845 to approximately the start of the Civil War” (71). Again, one wonders if this chapter accurately portrays Ellen White and her use of testimonies throughout her entire life, especially since the Civil War is considered a major turning point in American history. Did the war (or changes brought on from a war-torn society) affect White and her use of testimonies? Since it is evident that a major shift regarding the Testimonies occurred in 1868 the question is legitimately raised. Prior to this time White published very few personal testimonies. Beginning with *Testimony for the Church, No. 14* (1868), however, she concluded that “personal testimonies should be published, as they all contain more or less reproofs and instructions which may apply to hundreds or thousands of others in [a] similar condition” (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church, No. 14* [Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press, 1868], 1–4). Did moral and spiritual degeneracy brought about by the war influence White to present her testimonies in a different manner? Since the latter 50 years of her use of testimonies are not discussed, this chapter is unable to provide any answers. Also, it cannot explore any other developments that undoubtedly took place in her life in relation to this topic.

In his foreword, Wacker indicates that *Ellen Harmon White* “represents the tip of the historiographical arrow in Ellen White studies” (xii). Due to several issues, however, it seems that the “tip” of this “arrow” could have been sharper. In spite of this, it remains sharp enough to leave an indelible mark on American religious studies in general and Ellen G. White studies in particular. It is a work that demands serious attention, and the authors and editors are to be commended for their diligence and effort.

Berrien Springs, Michigan

KEVIN BURTON

Ball, Bryan. *The English Connection: The Puritan Roots of Seventh-day Adventist Belief*, 2nd ed. Cambridge: James & Clarke & Company, 2014. 290 pp. Paperback, £22.50.

The values and ideas of Puritanism form an important part of the American theological heritage. Many of them were also important in establishing the nation. But these values and ideas have receded into the background and sub-consciousness of ordinary Americans. Years from now people may ask, “Who were the Puritans?” But the legacy of their written work will continue to bear witness to the profundity of their theological insights and the breadth of their moral understanding. Dr. Bryan Ball reminds us of this through his exploration of twelve major theological issues of Puritanism, namely: The Sufficiency of Scripture, The Incomparable Jesus, The Lord our Righteousness, The New

Man, Believer's Baptism, A High Priest in Heaven, Gospel Obedience, the Seventh-day Sabbath, The Whole Man, The Return of Christ, and The Great Almanac of Prophecy. This book is a second edition without any revision of the author's earlier work published in 1981, but it now includes a foreword and a conclusion that strengthens the book. Dr. Ball's purpose for writing this book is to draw a connection between Puritan theological ideas and those of Seventh-day Adventists, one of the most important denominations that arose out of the Second Great Awakening in 19th century America. In his own words he says, "It is clear that in its essentials, Seventh-day Adventist beliefs had been preached and practiced in England during the Puritan era."

Like a master theological excavator, Dr. Ball has unearthed long forgotten theological ideas of our Puritan forbearers. What an incredible treasure he has unearthed for us! What we see revealed is a faithfulness to the Word of God that is rarely practiced in our days. Those Puritan theologians faithfully exegeted and expounded the profound truths of Scripture with balance and dexterity. What makes their achievements even more remarkable is that they did this during times of great vicissitude and persecution. Perhaps, because their theology was forged in the furnace of trial and testing, it has a peculiarly profound and balanced quality.

Ball analyzes and explains English Puritan theological thought, mainly in the seventeenth century, through an abundant use of a variety of Puritan writers. He shows a great command of his sources and weaves a very compelling case for a Puritan theology deeply rooted in Scripture. Puritan theology is shown to be biblically based, theologically profound, exegetically sound, practically relevant, and beautifully balanced. An example of this can be seen in Ball's analysis of the Puritan's understanding of the Gospel which reveals how they sought to balance justification and sanctification as well as faith and works: "By our justification we are entitled to God's kingdom that is, saved in hope. By our sanctification we are fitted and prepared for God's kingdom in which no unclean thing can enter" (63). They distinguished sanctification and justification without separating them. The same goes for faith and works. There is a clear distinction but no separation: "True faith is not a faith without works, but a faith that results in works. An idle faith can never be a saving faith" (60). Their understanding of sin, human depravity, and perfection reveals a sound biblical view of hamartiology and profound insights in the human nature that prevents them from falling into the morass of perfectionism.

As Ball attempts to show the Puritan theological connection to Adventist theology, he makes a good point with the following observation: "It is only fair to point out that many Puritans did not hold any doctrines which would later become distinctive tenets of Adventism, with the exception perhaps of belief in the literal Second Coming of Christ at the end of the age." So how did he come up with the twelve theological issues mentioned above? It seems that he partially projected Adventist theological ideas back into Puritan theological thought, in an attempt to make a connection. Some of these ideas, for example the seventh-day Sabbath were certainly not part of mainstream

Puritan thought. While a few Puritan scholars recognized the seventh day as the Sabbath, the majority of them were ardent Sunday keepers. They clearly believed in the principle of Sabbath keeping, but unfortunately they continued to cling tenaciously to the traditional reasons given for Sunday keeping.

Part of the problem in dealing with Puritanism is that it was not a united movement. There were factions on the left, in the middle and on the right. The question must be asked of Ball, which of these theological views is he reflecting in the numerous sources he is using? While the Sabbath was debated by many Puritan scholars, only a very small number of Puritans, outside of the mainstream, accepted the seventh-day Sabbath. Perhaps in his analysis, he should point out that some of the particular ideas that he was putting forth as “Puritan Ideas” were held by very few Puritans at that time.

While Ball has done an excellent job in analyzing some of the great theological issues of Puritan theology, I am not sure how successful he was in connecting their theology to Adventist theology, which was his main purpose for writing this book. At the beginning of each chapter he gives a brief paragraph of an Adventist theologian’s view of the particular topic under study for that chapter. However, he doesn’t interface these Adventist theological views throughout the chapter with the particular Puritan theological idea. I wanted to see how these two views interconnect and intersect at the various theological points. Perhaps the author assumed that in his analysis of Puritan theology, his readers could easily make the connections themselves. For those who are aware of Adventist theology, the task is easier, but for those who have limited understanding of Adventist theology, the task becomes much more difficult. This is the fundamental weakness of the book, which was also recognized by a previous reviewer (Richard Kenneth Emmerson, *AUSS*, 22.3 [1984]). In other words, this book seems to be more about understanding and analyzing Puritan theological issues rather than about making connections with Adventist theology. The Puritan connections to Adventist theology may be due primarily to the similarity of their hermeneutical method and their continuation of the reformers’ focus on sola scriptura. Adventist theologians see themselves as continuing and completing what the reformers started and the Puritans also saw themselves as part of this same tradition.

Nevertheless, Bell’s significant contributions should not be overlooked. He presents a very profound analysis of Puritan theological issues, situating Puritan theology within the mainstream of Christian theological thought. He exposes the reader to the richness and vitality of Puritan theology through the variety of sources used and confirms that Puritan theology is biblically sound and practically relevant. Ball’s research affirms the seriousness with which these Puritan scholars approached the study of Scripture and shows the remarkable balance of Puritan theology. Thus, in spite of some weaknesses, this book is valuable and well worth the read.

Andrews University

TREVOR O’REGGIO