

Thompson acknowledges that there are many difficult questions that the Arabs have about Christians: A struggle to understand the doctrine of the Trinity; the two natures of Christ; along with the lifestyle in the West that is far removed from the original message of Jesus. On the other hand, Muslims and Christians are united in the belief that the birth of Jesus was a special act of God. Thus, in the Qur'an, Jesus is called "son of Mary" but not the son of Joseph (*Ibn Yusuf*). Yet, the Qur'an is quick to deny that Jesus's birth was the result of a sexual union.

There are many things that I appreciated when reading Thompson's book, yet, due to the scope of this review, I can only mention a few: First, Jesus can be a good bridge across the divide between Christians and Muslims. Second, it is important to understand the shame and honor culture so commonly found in the Bible and among the Arabs. Third, there can be no productive dialogue without mutual respect. The author states that his book is *not* a narrative of the Jesus of orthodox Christian faith and history. Nor is it an apologetic work intended to "convert" people. Thompson says that he intended this book to "spark a conversation or a dialogue" about what Jesus means to both Christians and Arab Muslims (xxxii).

I also would like to submit a few constructive suggestions for consideration. Thompson rightly says that Jesus is the best point of contact between Christians and Muslims, but he could have added the topic of prayer as another good way of rapprochement between the two faiths. I like what the author says about the Arab love for their camels (especially the mention of "camel beauty contests"), yet the reader may want to learn more about life in the desert. After all, three of the world's great monotheistic religions originated in the desert. I also expected to read more about Abraham, who lived in tents, the father of all the faithful people of the book. Finally, it would be good to include Barbara M. Bowen's book *Strange Scriptures that Perplex the Western Mind* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger, 2010) in the Bibliography and perhaps in the Introduction to the section "Biblical Culture and Arabian Culture" (xxxii-xxxiii). Moreover, regarding the Jewish customs in the time of Jesus, the author could mention popular works by Brad H. Young.

In concluding this review, I would like to propose that Thomson's work is a stimulating reflection available to those readers who are interested in interfaith dialogues between the monotheistic religions. Moreover, the book is highly recommended to all who are interested in religious topics.

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Thompson, Jonathan A., ed. *The Enduring Legacy of Ellen G. White and Social Justice*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2017. 168 pp. Softcover. USD 24.99.

Publication of this volume marks a watershed in Seventh-day Adventism's stance toward the theme of social justice. For most of the twentieth century, Adventist publications treated church-based activism for social justice with suspicion—at best. Especially from the 1920s to 1970s, in an approximate

parallel with the Fundamentalist movement, social justice was seen as the agenda of a liberal, politicized Christianity that had abandoned biblical authority and the rallying point for ecumenical unity to leverage the power of the state against dissenters. Furthermore, the very idealism of social justice seemed to give it a seductive power that threatened to distract the church from its eschatological mission of winning individual souls for eternal salvation and lead to preoccupation with futile efforts to transform human society into the kingdom of God. Passages from Ellen White's writings were relentlessly invoked to reinforce the point that Christ never tried to reform the social-political order of his day and neither should his church.

But now, entirely against that long dominant grain, this new volume, which assembles presentations made at a symposium held at Oakwood University in October 2015, not only affirms social justice as central to the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but claims the legacy of Ellen White in doing so. It presents an Ellen White, who, as Vanderbilt University religious studies professor Lewis V. Baldwin puts it in the foreword, "never separated personal salvation from social salvation" (12).

With the possible exception of E. E. Cleveland, *The Middle Wall* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1969), *The Enduring Legacy of Ellen G. White and Social Justice* is, to this reviewer's knowledge, the first full volume from a denominational publishing house in America to embrace Adventist action for social justice as its explicit and central theme. (In 2014, the Signs Publishing Company in Australia published *Do Justice: Our Call to Faithful Living*, edited by Nathan Brown and Joanna Durby).

Chapters by Jonathan Thompson and Calvin Rock make the overall case for flipping the script on Ellen White from individualistic, other-worldly pietist to visionary social reformer. For Thompson, who served as the Oakwood University Branch Office of the Ellen G. White Estate, *The Enduring Legacy of Ellen G. White and Social Justice* ended up being a personal final legacy. He passed away in March 2017, before, unhappily, the book came off the press, but not before organizing the 2015 symposium on Ellen White and Social Justice, and then moving the book toward publication as editor.

Thompson argued that at certain historical "tipping points," when injustice reached such a level that God intervened on the side of the oppressed, Ellen White, in line with the biblical prophets, gave emphatic voice to the divine mandate for social justice. For Ellen White, the most notable tipping points came during the abolitionist movement in the run-up to the Civil War, and the socio-economic oppression of Blacks under White supremacist rule in the South after Reconstruction. In "the drama of unarmed blacks killed on just about a weekly basis," Thompson saw a similar "tipping point" (103) developing in 2015, and with it a challenge for Adventists to take up their prophet's legacy.

Rock, a former president of Oakwood and vice-president of the General Conference, boldly argues for a large measure of congruity between Ellen White's work and the themes of the Black theology movement that took shape in the late 1960s. A look at the themes that Rock highlights will, at the

same time, afford opportunity to note relevant perspectives brought by other contributors to the volume.

Rock contends that Ellen White's writings reflect Black theology's insistence that theology must be done from the perspective of the "concrete human situation" of the oppressed. He sees in her writings a "prevailing concern for human welfare in the concrete, everyday caldron of real-life existence," evidenced by her "disdain for social caste . . . and social inequality" (41). He cites the "broad array" of specific social ills that she addressed, including "slavery, Jim Crow, intemperance, child labor, gender discrimination, economic disadvantage, family dissolution, [and] the abuses of organized capital and labor," and points out that she urged Christians to use the power of the vote against such evils (41).

Ciro Sepulveda, who served as chair of Oakwood's History Department for thirteen years, shows how Ellen White's prophetic ministry identified with the interests of another sector on the margins of society—immigrants. He argues that Ellen White shaped Adventist culture in a way that "made it a magnet for migrants" (114).

"Civil disobedience" is another theme Rock cites as placing Ellen White in kinship with Black theology. Her admonition against obeying the draconian federal Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 is her most remarkable call to place loyalty to God's law above even the highest human law, though Rock identifies several other instances in which her writings affirm the principle. The chapter by Norman Miles, adapted from a chapel presentation to Oakwood students, paints a vivid picture of the historical context of Ellen White's response to the Fugitive Slave Act. Miles, a historian who taught at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary for seventeen years before returning to full-time ministry and conference administration, clarifies that Ellen White was urging upon Adventists the necessity of "conscientious objection" against complicity with an unjust law, in comparison to a Gandhi-style campaign to bring social change through non-violent civil disobedience. Yet, the two concepts seem to bridge naturally, so that it does not require a great stretch to see the compatibility here with Black theology that Rock suggests.

Rock finds further resonance with Black theology in Ellen White's insistence, especially in the *Southern Work*, that reparations—programmatic efforts to redress the effects of centuries of enslavement and degrading exploitation in order to level the socio-economic playing field—are due African Americans. Moreover, says Rock, Ellen White shares with Black theology an emphasis on "God's special regard for the poor" (44). This regard takes the form not only of particular care for their struggles, but also personal identification with them in Jesus of Nazareth, a humble, lower-class Galilean.

Finally, Rock points out that both Ellen White and Black theology see a typological connection between Israel's exodus from bondage in Egypt and Black enslavement and emancipation in America. In both instances, God not only identifies with, but intervenes to free, the oppressed. Ellen White makes the connection explicit in *Southern Work*, 42. (Rock is also careful to distance Ellen White from excesses he sees in some expressions of Black theology that

would tend to make the non-Black and non-poor somehow lesser on God's scale of human worth).

In one of the volume's most cogent and provocative chapters, Keith Augustus Burton further probes Ellen White's writings on the theme of justice for the poor. Burton, a New Testament scholar and current director of the Center for Adventist-Muslim Relations at Oakwood University, evaluates the alignment of Ellen White's work, the "lesser light," with the "greater light"—the Bible, but more particularly the scriptural "testimony of Jesus."

Burton locates the "testimony of Jesus" in neither traditional Adventist understandings of apocalyptic prophecy, nor in soteriological abstractions, but in Jesus's own testimony about his mission in Luke 4:16–20—his "liberating manifesto" of social justice (70–71). Burton lays out abundant evidence in support of his contention that Ellen White shared the "sensitivity towards wealth inequality" that Jesus expressed in his inaugural sermon. He highlights the candor of "her indictment against the capitalist barons, who increase their wealth by exploiting others" and her guidance for aiding the poor in a way that empowers them for action and honors their dignity, rather than simply giving charity (73–74).

Burton believes that Ellen White undervalued the historic contribution of labor unions to helping American workers toward fairer wages and protections against exploitation. While recognizing a mixture of good and bad in the historical record of organized labor, he suggests that she "threw out the proverbial baby with the bathwater" in her absolute stricture against joining labor unions. Yet, he notes that even this prohibition comes, ironically, as part of a prophetic lament against the "oppression of the poor that rich men may hoard wealth" (76). Apparently, she saw unions as part of a sinister agenda that would have the consequence of further depriving the poor, even to the point of starvation.

In view of the formidable weight of evidence presented in this volume showing Ellen White's deep and far-ranging social concern, how is it that she has been so pervasively portrayed as an opponent of involvement in social issues? Rock attributes this in part to oft-quoted passages commenting on the fact that neither Jesus nor Paul attempted to reform the social injustices of the Roman Empire through direct confrontation. Ellen White's own course of action, Rock argues, shows recognition that the American democratic political context allows for, even requires, a more activist approach, and puts her in harmony with Black theology's claim that the overriding question "is not what did Jesus and Paul do then, but what would they do now" (42).

Eschatology is the seedbed for another influential root of the misapprehension of Ellen White's societal relevance. Rock does not here address this issue, but it comes up in Oakwood theology professor Russell Seay's analysis of Ellen White's social strategy in comparison with that of African American leaders W.E.B. DuBois, Booker T. Washington, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Seay regards Ellen White as favoring Washington's combination of accommodating an unjust social order while focusing on individual uplift and attributes this leaning, in part, to her premillennial eschatology.

Her “view of Jesus Christ’s imminent return, make[s] sensible the strategy to ‘save as many souls’ as possible without being overly concerned with the structures of oppression,” writes Seay (57).

Martin Luther King, Jr., on the other hand, favored the “self-determinist” assertion of equal rights advocated by W.E.B. DuBois in opposition to Washington in the classic segregation-era debate over Black social strategy. Seay observes that King’s more optimistic, post-millennial eschatology, his belief “that it is possible for humanity to bring about the ‘beloved community’” contributed to an emphasis on “correcting the social structures that perpetuate the cycle of racism, classism, and militarism” (57).

Seay calls for “a better synthesis of Washington and DuBois and Ellen and Martin” that would “combine the pre-millennial urgency with the post-millennial social activism in order to remain essentially Adventist but also relevant in our contemporary context” (57). Two leading exemplars of a younger generation of “woke” Adventist pastors, Charles Wesley Knight of the Oakwood religion faculty and Jaime Kowlessar of City Temple church in Dallas, Texas, similarly challenge the church to a new level in confronting injustice in the structures of society.

With their emphasis on social “structures,” the contributors to *The Enduring Legacy of Ellen G. White and Social Justice* have put a critical theological and missiological issue on the table for the spiritual heirs of Ellen White. However, much remains for them, and others who will arise to the challenge, to do. The book does present abundant evidence for Ellen White as a prophet who spoke out against injustice in society, who urged Adventists to social benevolence as part of their involvement in God’s plan for human restoration in preparation for the coming of a redeemed and restored world, and who sometimes called for use of the ballot in support of such efforts. More work needs to be done, however, to clarify the connection between Ellen White and a new engagement with structural social change worked out in the arena of legislation, public policy, and electoral politics.

Seay’s constructive proposal points one way forward. It is premised, though, on the view that, due to her premillennialist outlook and historical context, Ellen White’s writings have little useful guidance for the church on dealing with social structures. Other theological sources would be needed to construct the creative synthesis he envisions for contemporary Adventism. And, in fact, Kowlessar and Knight make their cases for addressing social injustice at the structural level, essentially without reference to Ellen White (though their homiletic presentations make no claim to fully-developed academic analysis and should not be critiqued as such).

Another possibility might involve further exploration of Ellen White’s legacy for resources helpful in developing a broader vision of Adventism’s relevance for social justice. The long-term or indirect societal impact of prioritizing the formation of alternative structures for education and health care might be one avenue worth further exploration. The chapter by Mervyn Warren, who has provided decades of leadership for the school in numerous capacities including Dean of Religion, Provost, and Interim President,

suggests something along this line in characterizing Oakwood itself as “exhibit A for social justice by Seventh-day Adventists as perceived by Ellen White” (36). Is it merely historical irony that the incalculable contribution that Oakwood has made to African American economic and social advancement in its one-hundred-and-twenty years would not have happened without Ellen White’s eschatological urgency? Or, is there a purpose here that Adventists might further clarify and apply today in a way that would more fully meet the prophetic mandate to “do justice and love mercy?”

Already too long, the review cannot close without at least mentioning other riches contained in this relatively slender volume: religion professor Ifeoma I. Kwesi’s searing, yet somehow still hopeful autobiographical reflections on her journey through intersecting oppressions as Black, female, and gifted for ministry in the Adventist church; English professor Ramona L. Hyman’s evocations from Ellen White’s landmark 1891 exhortation, “Our Duty to the Colored People,” through the lens of literary theory; the careful groundwork on the role and function of Ellen White’s prophetic authority laid down by Craig Newborn, the first director of the Ellen G. White Estate branch office at Oakwood; the spirited call to action for social justice in a sermon-based chapter by Carlton P. Byrd, pastor of the Oakwood University Church and speaker-director of the *Breath of Life* telecast; and the general endorsement of the whole project implied by inclusion of a sermon by North American Division president Daniel Jackson—inspiring, if only remotely connected with, the book’s theme.

The Enduring Legacy of Ellen White and Social Justice leaves its own legacy, one that includes a question: Will the new moment and the new possibilities the book represents fade as a temporary blip of interest, or will they find fulfillment through creative, faithful responses of those who believe that the book’s central thrust points us in the right direction?

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Treloar, Geoffrey R. *The Disruption of Evangelicalism: The Age of Torrey, Mott, McPherson and Hammond*. A History of Evangelicalism 4. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017. xiv + 334 pp. Hardcover. USD 35.00.

This monograph is the latest of five volumes in the History of Evangelicalism series from InterVarsity Press. This particular volume is an especially valuable contribution and builds upon the scholarship from other previously published volumes in the series. The author, Geoffrey Treloar, teaches at the Australian College of Theology and brings a rich global perspective which makes this volume the richest of the five volumes in the series in this respect.

Treloar argues that the “disruptive” event that interrupted Evangelicalism from approximately the turn of the nineteenth century (c. 1900) up to the verge of World War II (c. 1940) was World War I (1914–1918). “[T]he Great War was largely if not solely responsible for the disruption of evangelicalism” (285). This book is therefore divided into three parts: the