

examples found in Almond's *Antichrist* illuminate with historical parallels, many Adventist eschatological scenarios, like the interpretations on Dan 11 mainly divided between the seminal ideas of James White (Spiritual), and Uriah Smith (Papacy and Ottomans-Islam). From the examples in Almond's book, one can evaluate hermeneutically the origins of current Adventist proposals, an exercise I found valuable.

The examples of history can also illuminate the eschatology of dispensationalist evangelicals, and its ambiguous view about Jerusalem in prophecy. Unfortunately, Almond has nothing to say about Seventh-day Adventist eschatology, and just a brief mention of evangelical dispensationalism (270, 274, 278). This I found to be a major gap in a great historical work. Not only because I am a Seventh-day Adventist, but because these two views of prophecy are highly influential today and were forged in the nineteenth century, the period covered by Almond. Instead, one can find a quite extensive description of Russian philosopher Vladimir Solovyev's eschatology, which sounds a lot like the famous series of the theological fiction *Left Behind*, by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins, which he labels as "Nietzsche's 'superman' (*Übermensch*) gone Adsonian apocalyptic" (280). Well stated.

I also missed a summary conclusion with trends. Almond could have briefly built a timeline of the two views (inside – Fiore, outside – Adso), similar to Edwin Froom's charts in *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* that would add to its usefulness. But instead, he decided to write an ethical appeal, leaning to the immanent and spiritual reading of the antichrist, which is okay. At last, in the spirit of a teacher and researcher, I was disappointed to not find a Scriptural index to help me find what particular passages were used by which interpreters. One could argue that the book is a historical biography, not one on biblical studies. However, I still think, based on the biblical nature of the subject that it deserved an index since the interpretation of particular passages is central in the development of this story, which is masterfully told, as readers expect from Philip Almond's books. He has written great stories on demonic possessions and witchcraft (2004, 2011, 2012), *The Devil* (Cornell University Press, 2014), and *God* (Tauris, 2018), setting a high standard to any future history on these subjects. Some are good researchers, others, great storytellers. I found him to be both. Therefore, I congratulate Philip Almond for another helpful account of an important religious subject.

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Avis, Paul, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Ecclesiology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. 672 pp. Hardcover. USD 150.00.

Now well-recognized and appreciated, the *Oxford Handbook* series stands out for its authoritative and critical examination of a vast range of topics

and perspectives. Leading an international team of highly knowledgeable and recognized scholars, Paul Avis, editor-in-chief of the journal *Ecclesiology*, presents in this handbook an exceptional scholarly resource on the biblical foundation, history, and modern developments of the Christian church. At the heart of the ecumenical movement, the doctrine of the church and its manifold themes (origin, structure, authority, governance, sacraments, unity and diversity, and mission), has been the focus of numerous studies and dialogues. While significant areas of consensus and convergence have been achieved in the last century, much remains unresolved. Yet, the conversations and dialogues continue. This book covers four areas of interest in this long tradition of ecclesiological and ecumenical studies, adding an outstanding contribution to these studies.

In his introduction to the volume, Paul Avis provides a helpful “overview of the theological discipline of ecclesiology and a basic orientation to its questions and methods” (1). Beyond introducing the broad aspects of the study of ecclesiology, Avis also introduces the perennial questions in ecclesiology: Did Jesus found the church?; Can God’s church be imperfect?; What do we make of divisions in the church?; and, How is the local church related to the universal church?

The first major part of the *Handbook* addresses questions and difficulties related to the biblical foundations to ecclesiology, and this is the scholarly area that readers of *AUSS* may be most interested in. Since the publication of Raymond Brown’s *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind* (Paulist Press, 1984) there has been little hesitation over the apparent diversity of ecclesial models and patterns of leadership in the New Testament. Different biblical authors appear to understand the church in different ways. The long-held belief that the New Testament teaches a single ecclesial model as taught by Jesus to his apostles now holds little sway. Five chapters in this first section offer a survey and explanation of the issues related to these various ecclesiologies. R. W. L. Moberly begins this biblical foundation section by discussing the ecclesiology of the people of God as presented in the Hebrew Bible. Setting aside the traditional discussion of continuity versus replacement theology, he maintains more fittingly that “a Christian refusal to see God’s covenant with the Jews as revoked, whatever their failures, gives grounds for the churches also to hope that, whatever their failures,” God will “yet have a future for them in his service” (53).

In chapter 3, Loveday Alexander studies the church in the Synoptic Gospels and the book of Acts and maintains that although these books “contain very few explicit statements on the nature of the *ekklesia* ... their underlying narrative shape both reflects and creates a profoundly ecclesiological sub-structure” (55). After a careful reflection on these synoptic narratives about Jesus and the early community of believers, he concludes that “we can say with a degree of historical confidence that the foundation of the

church lies in the messianic community founded by Jesus as ‘sign, instrument and foretaste’ of the kingdom of God” (95). Most helpful in this chapter is Alexander’s analysis of one of the most contentious passages in the gospel of Matthew (16:18–19) and its relationship to various interpretations of the foundation of the Christian church (75–78). Andrew Lincoln presents in chapter 4 the Johannine vision of the church in its dialectic between the identity and mission of Jesus the Messiah and the community of believers. This community is recognized by its discipleship of following the Messiah and remaining in him, and by the solidarity of its family relationships, with its embodying witness of love, service, and unity.

In chapter 5, Edward Adams discusses the difficult and intensely researched subject of the shape of the Pauline churches and seeks to present the consensus of contemporary scholarship on several questions related to their social formation (How were they formed?), composition (Of what kind of people were they composed?), identity (How does Paul define the identity of his communities?), governance (How were they governed?), rituals (What do we know about their rituals and meetings?), and meeting places (In what kinds of places did they meet?). The discussion of these questions is remarkably well done, guiding the reader through the diversity of scholarly approaches and conclusions. Adams’s critique, through the chapter, of the dominant household church model is appropriate and offers some possibilities for other “modes of ecclesial formation and other physical settings for gatherings” (141).

In the last chapter of this first part, Gerald O’Collins surveys the diversity of church life in the General Epistles. This diversity, however, is not without a few common themes: a concern with the healthy and unified life of individual Christian communities facing suffering, maintaining community, and an ecclesiology based on Scripture (159). O’Collins sums up the significant elements of these epistles by saying that “the church should be wise (James), priestly (1 Peter), worshipping (Hebrews), faithful (Jude), and both Petrine and Pauline (2 Peter)” (159).

Part 2 addresses resources from the Christian traditions after the New Testament and looks at the various ecclesiologies that have arisen through the centuries. In chapter 7, Mark Edwards summarizes the major steps in the development of early ecclesiology in the West from the time of the apostles to the time of Charlemagne, while Andrew Louth surveys the contribution of the Eastern Orthodox tradition in the following chapter. In chapter 9, Norman Tanner reviews developments during the Middle Ages with a particular focus on the conciliar movement, while the ecclesiology of the Magisterial Reformers is reviewed by Dorothea Wendebourg in chapter 10, where she focuses first on Martin Luther to whom she then compares points of agreement and differences with Melanchthon and Calvin’s views. The next chapters in this section cover the ecclesiologies of denominational families:

Anglican ecclesiology (Paul Avis), Roman Catholic ecclesiology from Trent to Vatican II (Ormond Rush), Baptist ecclesiology (Paul Fiddes), Methodism (David Chapman), and finally, Pentecostal ecclesiologies (Amos Yong). Each of these chapters attempts to share insights into their major themes, sources, and heritage, as well as current challenges. While other Protestant denominational traditions could have been presented, these cover very well the essential diversity within Protestantism.

Moving on to part 3, the *Handbook* reviews eight major modern ecclesialogists who have made significant contributions to the doctrine of the church in the twentieth century, and include one Reformed theologian, Karl Barth (by Kimlin Bender); four Roman Catholic theologians, Yves Congar (Gabriel Flynn), Henri de Lubac (Gabriel Flynn), Karl Rahner (Richard Lennan), and Joseph Ratzinger, before becoming Pope Benedict XVI (Theodor Dieter); one Orthodox theologian, John Zizioulas (Paul McPartlan); one Lutheran theologian, Wolfhart Pannenberg (Friederike Nüssel); and finally one Anglican theologian, Rowan Williams (Mike Higton). All eight of these figures made major contributions to the ecumenical conversation on ecclesiology and remain, decades later, prominent thinkers with immensely valuable insights into ecclesiological questions. Perhaps to this impressive list, one could have added two other Catholic voices, Hans Küng and Avery Dulles, and those of Miroslav Volf and Leslie Newbiggin.

The last part of the *Handbook* addresses contemporary movements in ecclesiology. In five brief chapters, the authors survey the feminist critiques, visions, and models of the church (Elaine Graham), the social science and ideological critiques of ecclesiology (Neil Ormerod), liberation ecclesiologies, especially in Latin American (Michelle Gonzalez), Asian ecclesiologies (Simon Chan), and finally, African ecclesiologies (Stan Chu Ilo). As the majority of Christianity moves beyond and away from the developed and Euro-centric western world, marginalized and once-colonized populations are reshaping how the church is conceived and lived. The challenges facing Christianity in the twenty-first century necessitate a careful look at these forms of ecclesiologies and the contributions they make to the larger Christian church. In this section as well, other movements could have been addressed, many of them as sub-movements of liberation theologies, such as the church as a new movement among marginalized or LGBTQ populations. Of interest would also be a reflection on the church in secular and post-Christian societies.

The richness of the articles in this volume adds a tremendous contribution to the current issues in ecclesiological and ecumenical studies. Also to be noted for their scholarly value are the bibliographies and suggested lists of reading at the end of each chapter. Like all *Oxford Handbooks*, this one is no exception in its breadth and scholarly discussion of the subject, and its ability to explore a subject beyond a mere introductory treatment. Any student of the doctrine of the church will greatly benefit from both the summary and

survey of these various aspects of ecclesiology as well as the discussion of the numerous questions and challenges still being raised.

It is difficult to summarize and critique a volume of this kind given the diversity of topics and authors. But one common thread easily emerges out of the summaries and reviews of the various denominational ecclesiologies, major theologians, and contemporary movements of the twentieth century it presents. Modern ecclesiologies have moved away from primarily discussing issues of form, governance, and authority, to emphasize the nature of the church as the people of God and the community of believers in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, commissioned to witness in the power of the Holy Spirit to the world of the gracious and saving love of God. While an ecumenical consensus on the doctrine of the church and its multitude of questions and concerns is far from being reached, this emphasis on the church as a community is perhaps one of its greatest and most helpful achievements.

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Black, David Alan, and Benjamin L. Merkle, eds. *Linguistics and New Testament Greek: Key Issues in the Current Debate*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020. xi + 276 pp. Softcover. USD 29.99.

Scholars working in the field of biblical exegesis have at times struggled to incorporate current linguistic theories into their use of biblical languages. To begin addressing this lacuna, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary held a symposium about it on April 26–27 of 2019. The title of the meeting became the title of the current book, since the papers delivered at the conference have now been collected, with a preface and postscript offered by the editors. The volume is concluded with a glossary, biographies of the contributors, and an index. With this volume, David Black writes, “students of Greek [will] think more linguistically about the language they are studying” (3). Each essay represents a summary of a way in which linguistic theory can affect the teaching and interpretation of New Testament Greek.

In chapter 1 Stanley Porter introduces the reader to various linguistic schools. He divides the schools into “traditional,” “formal,” “cognitive,” and “functional.” The reader will not grasp all of the nuances of each linguistic school based solely on this chapter. The explanation for Systemic Functional Linguistics—perhaps the most important school for future study on Koine Greek—comprises a single paragraph. This dearth of explanation is mitigated somewhat by numerous references to New Testament studies that make use of the various linguistic schools. The next three chapters focus on the Greek verb. In chapter 2, Constantine Campbell discusses advances in understanding the Greek verbal aspect, including the question of whether temporality is encoded in tense morphology. Michael Aubrey follows with a discussion