

text citations are brief, in accordance with the "aim of brevity" (13), an abundance of detailed information is given on a broad range of debated topics. Thus, while presenting a brief outline of Adventist theological development, Knight provides a veritable catalog of issues that have been discussed by Adventists during their brief history. He covers these topics in his readable style, so that what can be seen in one sense as a reference work is digested almost as easily as a story. We look forward to the envisioned four-volume expansion (11).

The central message of the book is clear—the typical Adventist way of doing theology has led to needless polarization: "Any religious group is in trouble if and when it formulates its theology primarily in opposition to a real or perceived polar position" (200). Knight's suggestion for the opposite kind of study, in which we arrive at theological positions "inductively from the inside of Scripture" (193), is inviting. Such counsel is needed not only by Adventist theologians, pastors, administrators, and laymen, but by all who hold Scripture to be the determining authority.

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Morgan, Douglas. *Adventism and the American Republic: The Public Involvement of a Major Apocalyptic Movement*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001. xvi + 269 pp. Hardcover, \$32.00.

*Adventism and the American Republic* is based upon Morgan's Ph.D. dissertation, completed at the University of Chicago under the guidance of Martin E. Marty. Morgan, an assistant professor of history at Columbia Union College in Maryland, has entered relatively untouched territory. While there have been several books and articles related to sectors of his subject matter, the only work that has even remotely sought to cover the field is Eric Syme's *History of SDA Church-State Relations in the United States* (1973).

Syme's work (also based on a Ph.D. dissertation), however, tends to be more of a chronicle of the history of Seventh-day Adventism's relation to the state. Morgan covers much of the same territory, but moves beyond it both in subject matter and the period of time covered. But more significant is the fact that Morgan forcefully argues a very definite thesis. In particular, he demonstrates that it is Adventism's apocalyptic reading of history that has shaped the denomination's involvement with both religious liberty and public issues in general.

The book presents its thesis through six chapters as Morgan shows how the evolving denomination has taken varying stands on public issues across the 150 years of its history. The first chapter (1844-1861) pictures Adventism as an isolated "remnant." The second (1861-1886) shows Adventism taking a more active part in public affairs, while the third (1886-1914) demonstrates that Adventism's activity could at times be a protest against what it considered governmental abuses of power.

The fourth chapter, covering the period from 1914 to 1955, finds a much more sedate Adventism, which, upon gaining a measure of respectability, largely lost its protesting voice while it became much more cooperative with the government. Chapter 5 (1955-1976) witnesses the denomination becoming less firm on the "dividing wall" between church and state, while the final chapter (1976-2000) sees the development of genuine tensions in Adventism as various subsets of

the church have taken different views both on public involvement and on the church's apocalyptic understanding.

Perhaps the best description of Morgan's book is *wide ranging*. He covers an immense amount of territory, generally with accuracy and perception. But like any comprehensive study, this one has its blind spots. Perhaps the most obvious is his characterization of Adventists during the Civil War as pacifists (92) rather than the conscientious cooperators that they were. Related to that issue is the claim that Adventism for the first time faced military conscription in World War I. It is a misreading of Adventist history to claim that "Adventist leaders changed course entirely" (90) in the twentieth century on the issue of military service. Their position was actually a continuation of the cooperative one established in the face of conscription in 1864. Beyond misunderstandings on Adventism's relationship to the military, Morgan's treatment of the latter half of the twentieth century would have benefitted from a more sophisticated grasp of the major developments in Adventism's theological history since the mid 1950s.

Beyond those historical problems, the first footnote about which I got excited enough to check in the primary sources was inaccurate. But the remarkably few weaknesses in *Adventism and the American Republic* do not detract from the book's overall soundness. Even the two historical flaws indicated above do not invalidate Morgan's thesis. He not only proves his point, but does so with a great deal of literary skill and understanding of complex interactions. The book represents a massive achievement in helping us understand the public face of Adventism and how it has been shaped by apocalyptic understanding.

This book is important reading for anyone with an interest in the history of America's church-state relationships and/or Adventism.

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GEORGE R. KNIGHT

Poythress, Vern S., and Wayne A. Grudem. *The Gender-neutral Bible Controversy: Muting the Masculinity of God's Words*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2000. xxix + 377 pp. Paper, \$19.99.

Whatever the viewpoint of the reader in regard to inerrancy of the biblical text and the modern feminist movement, this book deserves careful and respectful study. The authors have exhaustively compared translations ranging from the more literal to those with more change in form (a chart of the continuum is on p. 79).

After the foreword by Vallerie Becker Makkai, associate professor of Linguistics at the University of Illinois in Chicago, and a brief preface by the two authors, the list of abbreviations refers to the gender-specific versions approved by the authors and the gender-neutral ones that are not acceptable to them. In the first group, "Gender-specific Bible versions," are the KJV (1611), ASV (1901), RSV (1946, 1952, 1971), NASB (1963, 1995), NEB (1970), GNB (1976), NKJV (1982), NIV (1984), REB (1989), NIrV (1998).

In the unapproved list, "Gender-neutral Bible versions," are NRSV (1989), NCV (1987, 1991), GNB, 2d ed. (1992), CEV (1995), GW (1995), NIrV (1995), NIVI (1995, 1996), NLT (1996), NLT, rev. ed. (1996). Under "Culturally adapted imaginative renderings of the Bible" are listed Kenneth N. Taylor's *The Living Bible—Paraphrased*