

education class on Revelation. In fact, I used it this past year as a textbook for my Revelation classes, and it was received better than the previous textbook. I have not found a better commentary for a general audience, including as a textbook for a general education class on the book of Revelation, than this one. I would recommend its use for general readers.

That is not to say that the commentary is without certain weaknesses. I could enumerate many interpretive weaknesses in the commentary, yet that is not the purpose of this review. Every commentary has its interpretive weaknesses, and there is no end of debate regarding the best interpretation of many of the difficult passages in Revelation.

The commentary begins with a brief general introduction to the book, including issues of authorship and date, interpretive approaches to the book, and its organization and structure. Then Stefanovic moves through the book section by section, providing a fairly concise commentary, attempting to illuminate the biblical connections that enlighten the interpretation. He does not proceed verse by verse, but highlights the major passages and deals with major themes and concepts. The reader is provided with biblical and historical backgrounds to support the various interpretations.

The commentary is more unapologetically historicist in its interpretive approach than the earlier commentary. In the first commentary, Stefanovic largely avoided the language and conclusions of traditional historicism and came under criticism by Adventist readers, who expect a historicist interpretation. The second edition (2009) added some of the language of historicism to its interpretations. Finally, this new commentary is more willing to be clearly historicist, in line with standard Adventist interpretations, to a large degree. That is not to say that there are no departures from traditional Adventist interpretations, for there are a number of departures. However, the more normative interpretations are largely present, and Adventist readers should be more comfortable with this commentary than they were with the first one.

All in all, Stefanovic has produced a commentary that should meet the needs of a broad cross-section of readers, particularly those who are interested in a biblical historicist interpretation of the book of Revelation. It is up-to-date in terms of representing recent Adventist scholarship on Revelation. There really is nothing better that I have found currently that I can recommend for Adventist readers wanting to understand the book of Revelation without needing to have an academic background. It can serve also as an introductory textbook or study guide for Bible students.

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EDWIN REYNOLDS

Thiselton, Anthony C. *A Shorter Guide to the Holy Spirit: Bible, Doctrine, Experience*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016. x + 228 pp. Softcover, US\$24.00.

Widely known for his numerous scholarly works in New Testament studies, particularly on 1 Corinthians, and in systematic theology, Anthony Thiselton, professor emeritus of Christian theology at the University of Nottingham,

England, has recently authored two works on the Holy Spirit. In 2013 Eerdmans published *The Holy Spirit—in Biblical Teaching, through the Centuries, and Today*, a major contribution of 565 pages in biblical and historical theology, which was widely acclaimed by the scholarly community and received a book award from *Christianity Today*. Thiselton's latest work, *A Shorter Guide to the Holy Spirit: Bible, Doctrine, Experience*, seeks to be more accessible, as the title implies, but also adds new content not found in the first book, especially a section on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, rather than a historical account of writers on the Holy Spirit. An entire section on the experience of the Holy Spirit is new and engages the origins, global expansion, and contributions of Pentecostalism (vii).

There are three parts to this *Shorter Guide*. Part one includes seven chapters discussing the Spirit in biblical writings, in the Old Testament, the literature of intertestamental Judaism, synoptic Gospels, Pauline Epistles, the book of Acts, Johannine writings, and the rest of the New Testament. Much of the material in this new volume is a summary of the larger work, yet each of the major texts is briefly discussed, and the most relevant information is adequately presented.

Part two examines doctrinal themes, many of which have been the cause of numerous discussions and debates throughout history. The section begins with a discussion of the place of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity and what key writers have said about the Trinity. Given the resurgence of anti-Trinitarianism in evangelical Christianity, this section is particularly good in presenting key biblical texts and historical and theological ideas on the doctrine of the Trinity. The next chapter is a brief excursus on the relationship between the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ, which is followed by a survey of the relationship between the Spirit and the Church. The operations of the Spirit in revelation and inspiration and in the sanctification of believers are treated next. The last doctrinal subject is personal eschatology and the role of the Spirit in the completion of God's work in the life of a believer.

Part three focuses on Pentecostalism and the experiences, historical and global origins, and current issues in this more recent Christian tradition. This section captures some of the important issues of Pentecostal experiential hermeneutics and worship, where the role and presence of the Holy Spirit are crucial. Pentecostal authors are carefully and honestly engaged, compared, and critiqued. This section is one of the best contributions of this book. Chapter fifteen discusses the self-awareness and diversity of Pentecostal thought today and gives a brief summary of some important Pentecostal thinkers: Amos Yong, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, Frank Macchia, and Stephen Land and Simon Chan. The chapter also discusses some Pentecostal issues, such as the baptism of the Spirit, divine healing, the prosperity gospel, and hermeneutics. The topic of hermeneutics is taken up in more details in chapter sixteen and wrestles with the tension between the subjective experience of the Holy Spirit in the interpretation of Scripture and the more objective guidance of tradition and fixed rules of hermeneutics.

Overall, *A Shorter Guide to the Holy Spirit* is a well-written book; and, in spite of its conciseness in some aspects and content, it is nonetheless a valuable

contribution to this Christian teaching. A few observations stand out in my mind. First, the book begins too abruptly without a good introduction, a shortcoming that is recurring in the lack of introduction for some chapters. Likely this is caused by the fact that this book was written in response to the request of the publisher of the first larger volume. The book's premise is the publisher's request for a smaller book and the preface is written in relationship to the larger book. It would be hard for those who have not read the first volume to understand much of the preface. This book needs to be more self-sustaining and self-contained. Thus, naturally, any reader of this *Shorter Guide* who wants to dig deeper into what the author presents is invited to pick up the earlier publication. Nonetheless, a strength of this book is Thiselton's drawing from information already published in many of his prior works. *A Shorter Guide* becomes a capstone to his publishing career.

As already mentioned in my summary of part three, this book offers a good dialogue with Pentecostal authors. This I consider to be one of the best contributions of this book. Frank Macchia, a Pentecostal scholar who is regularly referred to in the book, praised it as a "wonderful book on the Holy Spirit" and esteems it as "concise yet expansive in its range of issues and its choice of dialogue patterns" (back cover).

Theologians, pastors, and lay leaders will appreciate this work for its conciseness and engagement with the most relevant biblical and theological material on the Holy Spirit.

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DENIS FORTIN

Tonstad, Sigve K. *God of Sense and Traditions of Non-Sense*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016. 476 pp. Softcover, US\$43.20.

Not many books are philosophically profound, thoroughly researched, rigorously argued, elegantly written, and personally moving. But Sigve Tonstad's recent offering, *God of Sense and Traditions of Non-Sense*, displays all these qualities. It deals with what has always been a central—if not *the* central—issue in philosophy of religion, namely, the problem of evil. It painstakingly develops a perspective that, while it is not widely shared among contemporary philosophers, rests on sophisticated biblical interpretations and illuminating appeals to a wide range of literature, from the apologetics of Origen, an early Christian thinker, to the novels of Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Mark Twain. In the urgency of its tone and the sweeping landscape it traverses, not to mention the explanation it offers, Tonstad's discussion bears comparison to some of the most admirable treatments of the topic in recent years, such as Eleanore Stump's magisterial tome, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering*.

How are we to make sense of suffering—not just the day-to-day inconveniences we encounter or even the inevitable losses we all experience—but horrific events, such as the Holocaust? To be specific, how can we ever reconcile the occurrence of such events with the idea of a divine reality whose central characteristic is love? These are the questions this book addresses.