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## IS SATAN AN ALL-POWERFUL GOD?

DOES HE GET TOO MUCH CREDIT  
... OR NOT ENOUGH? 14

### NEWS

HISTORIC SABBATH WILL  
UNITE SOUTH PACIFIC 5

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of the times

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## BACK TO CHURCH

I miss church. This is probably the longest I've experienced not being able to go to church.

Recently my wife and I were playing worship music from YouTube and I found myself longing to be singing in a congregation, worshipping together again. I can't wait. I can't wait to hug my friends and shake hands and worship together while catching up.

So, with a number of our Pacific countries planning or starting to relax lockdown laws, here are some important things I hope we can remember as we start being able to meet with our scattered church family.

During these COVID-19 lockdowns, it has been encouraging to see the creative and innovative ways that people are doing church—like the historic SPD-wide service that's planned for next Sabbath (see page 5 for details). COVID-19 has pushed the church to be creative and innovative. We've been given an opportunity to change the way we "do" church, more quickly than we ever have before. I hope that this spirit of innovation continues after we are meeting together again.

I hope that we come out of this with more empathy—knowing what it's like to be isolated, we must make more of an effort to reach out to the shut-ins, the elderly, our single neighbours, the disabled, those with chronic illness, those who feel isolated when lockdowns aren't in place. I hope we can emphasise opportunities to connect and continue to keep open the channels of communication we've opened as the corporate Church—broadcast, print and online.

While a good sermon is important, it isn't the whole church service. Don't get me wrong, I love a good sermon and when I'm in the right frame of mind I can even watch a sermon on the internet. But just broadcasting a message or sermon online I've found less helpful during this time than a more personal meeting over Zoom—praying together, seeing church family, answering questions. We can take some of these lessons on interactivity into our services, they can benefit by becoming less homiletical and more personable. This shift would certainly benefit our children.

Don't take it for granted. The community we belong

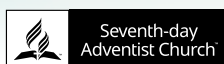
to is wonderful, supportive and varied, and we've had a small taste of what it's like when that is taken away from us. There are two points we can take away from this. Let's not be consumers but be involved. And, let's once again focus on inviting people into these communities, sharing the benefits found in being part of a loving and supportive group of people who miss us when we don't show up. The church should be Jesus' ever-expanding kingdom, but through routine and programming, it can very easily become inward focused. The church shutdown has forced us to be outward looking and accessible. Let's not lose that.

Our health. This whole crisis has highlighted the importance of people's health and it's time we took our own health seriously. We have a message that helps us find optimal health and longevity. Yet many of us (myself included) too often find our physical, mental, spiritual or relational health sacrificed on the altars of busyness and convenience. We still have an opportunity to reach people and serve our communities with our messages on wholistic health and people are ready to focus on their health now more than ever.

Slow down the pace. Appreciate family time, quality time with your spouse, friends, family. Instead of pushing programs and filling our schedules in an effort to catch up on lost time, maybe this shutdown has actually been a good time for us to re-evaluate. For church too, we realise what we've truly missed and how we can make our church service (both the program and our volunteering for the church) more effective and impactful without the danger of burnout.

People in our communities need God's love. This disaster has pushed us out of our comfort zones and woken many people up, especially in the West, to the reality that life is fragile and we are often at the mercy of our environment. What better time, then, to refocus on our message, to renovate our methods and to be the church in a world that is hurting.

**JARROD STACKELROTH**  
SENIOR EDITOR  
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## PUSH-UP CHALLENGE

Dr Sione Vaka, a senior lecturer at Auckland University Technology, New Zealand, promoted a 25 push-up challenge to raise awareness for all those who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

The rules are simple: Once you are nominated, your 25 days start the following day. Every day you record yourself doing 25 push-ups and must nominate a new person. You post this video on Facebook.

Facebook is flooded with the videos. Many of our people from TPUM are participating and I love how they are sharing Bible promises on their posts. As I watch these videos, I'm learning some important lessons. Let me share some with you:

1. Perspective. Many are creative with the camera angle so that they look fit and strong. How do you view yourself? View yourself from God's angle and you will know that you are special, created in His image.

2. On your knees. Only a few can do a full-length push-up, but all can do it on their knees. The best position to handle problems is on your knees. Much prayer, much power.

3. Together is better than being alone. Things are better done with others. A lot of us are taking the challenge with our family and colleagues. God never meant us to live life alone; He created us as social beings. He wants us to help one another.

4. In helping others, you help yourself. The project is to help those who are struggling with PTSD, but you also get good exercise.

If you are looking for something to do during this lockdown and want to join, let me know and I will nominate you. You get to have some challenging exercise and an opportunity to share Jesus with others.

**MAVENI KAUFONONGA**  
TPUM PRESIDENT



## OUTGOING CEO CHANGED BY TIME AT ADRA

BRADEN BLYDE

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia CEO has announced that he will be leaving the agency in August.

In announcing this change, Paul Rubessa, who has led ADRA Australia for three years, highlighted how the agency's people—particularly its supporters, volunteers and staff—have changed him.

"In visiting ADRA projects I got to meet lots of volunteers. The stories of how they helped people and the expansiveness of their work blew my mind," he said.

During his leadership, ADRA Australia incorporated the values of a new vision and purpose statement into its corporate culture, saw a renewed commitment to serving Australians through a closer relationship with the Adventist Church and launched a new, five-year strategic plan. Agency finances have been reshaped to support long-term impact for communities.



**PAUL RUBESSA.**

"Paul has been a great leader who has brought a clear direction to ADRA," said Pastor Jorge Munoz, chair of the ADRA Australia Board and president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia.

"Paul has made a very good contribution to the ministry of ADRA and will be missed."

After finishing with ADRA, Mr Rubessa will serve as the Investment and Financial Services manager for the South Pacific Division.

## ADRA OFFICE BURNS DOWN

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

An ADRA office in Kimbe, Papua New Guinea, was destroyed in a building fire on April 24.

The fire started in a ground floor office and quickly spread. Seven companies rented offices in the building and lost everything.

An ADRA worker was in the building when the fire broke out. When he noticed smoke he was able to get out and run to safety before the fire reached the office. All other ADRA staff had left the office.

ADRA lost a number of assets including printers, six tablet phones, a

projector and whiteboards.

"[All the tenants] are shocked and deeply regret what happened, but thanks to God no lives were lost," the ADRA worker said.

An investigation will be held into the cause of the fire.



**THE ADRA FIELD OFFICE WAS AMONG SEVEN OFFICES DESTROYED IN THE FIRE.**

# HISTORIC SABBATH WILL UNITE SOUTH PACIFIC

TRACEY BRIDGUTT

A special Sabbath is being planned—like no other Sabbath in the history of the South Pacific Division (SPD) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

On this special Sabbath, thousands of Adventists from around the Division will be united in a way they have never been before. Whether you are in Kiribati or Tonga, Port Moresby or Wellington, you will have an opportunity to be part of this historic initiative.

Scheduled for May 22–23, the event will comprise a Friday evening program, Sabbath school and worship service, and afternoon program—all online and featuring inspiring stories and footage from around the South Pacific. There will be devotionals, worship music, and content for children, youth and families. Messages will be shared by the presidents of the four Unions and SPD institutional leaders.

With the theme of #WeRtheChurch, the focus will be on how the Church is continuing its mission in new and

interesting ways despite the lockdown measures driven by the COVID-19 pandemic.

SPD president Pastor Glenn Townend will be presenting the Sabbath sermon as well as co-hosting the event with children's ministries leader Litiana Turner.

"I'm really looking forward to this special Sabbath event," Pastor Townend said. "We may be geographically dispersed around the Division and many of us are in isolation, but we are blessed to have digital technology to make this initiative possible.

"This special Sabbath is unprecedented in SPD history, but these are unprecedented times and we are being challenged to come up with new and creative

ways of being disciples for Jesus. And the theme is particularly relevant for this time—church is not a building or even a program, we are the church and we are united in finishing its mission.

"I have heard some wonderful stories from around the South Pacific about how Adventists are reaching out to their communities despite the lockdown, and I would like to share a few of these initiatives with you during this special Sabbath."

Adventist Media is coordinating all the various aspects of the #WeRtheChurch event. For more information go to <adventistchurch.com>.



# EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN ROLLS OUT ONLINE

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX

The Victorian Conference—in partnership with Hope Channel and the South Pacific Division—has attempted to create an integrated, online evangelistic campaign that can reach and funnel secular audiences into local church communities.

"Predictions of Hope: Beyond Corona", the first four-day installment of programs from May 8, was presented by Pastor Gary Webster and Pastor Robbie Berghan—and designed

as a "bridge" to help secular audiences connect with relevant global events from a perspective of faith. Contacts were encouraged to sign up for the four-week "Revelation Today" series with Pastor John Bradshaw, director of It Is Written, which commenced yesterday (May 15).

"You know with COVID-19 things have just been sidelined . . . we had a major public evangelistic series planned—17 churches and 11 sites—and of course it was shut down. We knew that God had given us the wherewithal to be able to do this online, so we quickly pulled together a team," explained Pastor Bradshaw.

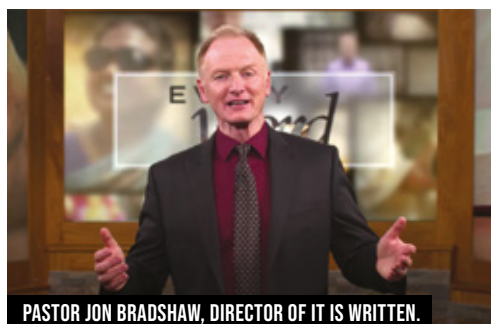
Revelation Today will consist of 20 presentations over four weeks that explore Bible prophecy and take participants through the Bible's major themes. The

presentations will be made available in multiple timezones across Australia, New Zealand and Canada to appeal to an international audience. Contacts are then encouraged to sign up for Zoom masterclasses run by local churches and conferences.

"We have an incredible opportunity," explained Hope Channel South Pacific director Pastor Wayne Boehm. "Through social media [we can connect with] 2.6 billion people on their personal computers and mobile phones, creating further opportunities to link them to the local church."

The Zoom conferences will be run by local churches and conferences from June to August with multiple sessions per week on the Secrets of Prophecy program and other courses.

For more information visit <hope-channel.com> and click the "Predictions of Hope" banner.





## IF YOUR FRENCH-SPEAKING CHURCH IS CLOSED . . .

NATHAN BROWN

*If Your Church is Closed . . . Be the Church* by Dr Peter Roennfeldt was recently translated into French, as *Ton Église est Fermée? Sois l'Église!*

The translation was released two weeks after the original e-Book—a guide for pastors seeking to lead and grow their churches amid COVID-19 closures—was launched on April 3.

"We have begun to disseminate it to our pastors," reported Pastor Samuel Dinsienmeyer, director of Mission and Evangelism for the South France Conference, who has overseen the translation project. "Thank you for this document that is so useful in these circumstances."

According to Pastor Dinsienmeyer, this book fits with the strategy that the Adventist Church in France and Belgium is implementing to promote church-planting and household churches using translations of Dr Roennfeldt's books. *Following Jesus*

and *If You Can Eat . . . You Can Make Disciples* have already been translated into French.

Dr Roennfeldt has been invited to speak at the South France Conference camp meeting in August, which will likely take place via Zoom.

"Society is rapidly changing and we have been compelled to return to Jesus' and the apostles' vision of church. So now we are fostering churches that really reflect New Testament churches," Dr Roennfeldt said. "I think this approach will appeal to believers in South France and prove effective for the mission of God and His church."

A condensed edition of *If Your Church is Closed* has also been adapted in the past week for distribution to Adventist pastors and leaders in developing countries in Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. The new French edition has also been made



available to French-speaking regions in Africa and the South Pacific's own French-speaking territories of New Caledonia and French Polynesia.

*If Your Church is Closed . . . Be the Church* is available for free download at <following-jesus.com>.



## Help others **connect to Jesus**

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## ENGLAND REACHES OUT TO COBARGO

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX/LYNNE SESINYE-SAMWINGA

Cobargo Seventh-day Adventist Church company (NSW) has received messages of encouragement and financial support from the British Union Conference (BUC) and Newcastle Seventh-day Adventist Church (United Kingdom), following the devastation they experienced as a result of bushfires in early January.

The initiative began when the children's ministries director for Newcastle

church, Lynne Sesinye-Samwinga, read about Cobargo's circumstances on *Adventist Record's* website in early January.

Mrs Sesinye-Samwinga promptly contacted Pastor Dragan Kanazir and elder Wendy Hergenhan from Cobargo church, who provided more details and photos of the burnt buildings.

Mrs Sesinye-Samwinga decided to record a video to encourage the survivors. It includes footage of children in Sabbath school praying for their Cobargo church family and writing letters of support.

BUC president Pastor Ian Sweeney was approached to add a recorded message to the video, and not only did so, but also provided Cobargo a financial donation on behalf of the Union.



CHILDREN'S SABBATH SCHOOL IN NEWCASTLE (UK) LEARNING ABOUT THE COBARGO BUSHFIRES.

## WA CHURCH SHARES HOPE WITH NEIGHBOURS

JARROD STACKELROTH

Broome church in Western Australia shared the message that "hope lives" with their neighbours this Easter. Gift packs were dropped on the doorsteps of all houses in the neighbourhood of their church building. The pack included a letter, an Easter reading guide and a Woolworths gift card.

The Eddy family, who live next door to the church, also put the "Hope Lives" message up in lights on their fence.

"Our church made the decision last year to really focus on connecting with our physical neighbours," explained Jody Eddy, pastor of the Broome and Derby churches. "We have run some events in the local park where we provide a BBQ meal and games for the kids. We were planning on running an Easter event in the park and obviously couldn't due to

restrictions, but still wanted to do something to show we care.

"I had neighbours contact me on our local Facebook page to thank the church for the gift, when we've been in our yard other neighbours have called out thanks, and one person sent me a text thanking us for the thoughtful gesture and sharing how they appreciate our continual efforts to bring unity to our community."



THE COLOURFUL GIFT PACKS, WHICH WERE SENT OUT TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

## NEWS GRABS



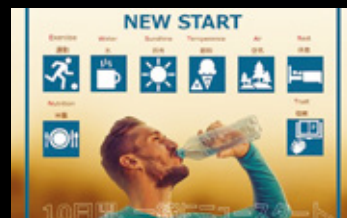
### MINISTRY ON WHEELS

Adventist Uber drivers Alex and Janeth Partyka from Maryland (USA) have created a literature "rack" in their car to minister to people in a non-invasive way. It is filled with GLOW tracts on the Sabbath, the Ten Commandments and health, and also features books, including *The Faith of Desmond Doss* and *The Great Hope*. —NAD



### FARM-FRESH DONATIONS

Adventists across north Colombia have donated their crops and resources to hundreds of needy families in Cucuta, a low-income city near the Venezuela border. Many donations came from church members who own plantation farms throughout the country, while others were from ADRA Colombia funds. —IAD

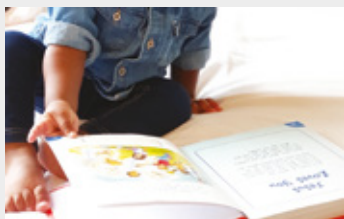


### BE HEALTHY LIKE DANIEL

After COVID-19 forced them to cancel their "Youth Rush" program, youth in Japan quickly created "Daniel Rush", an online initiative encouraging all 125 participants to seek God and introduce healthy lifestyle habits into their lives for 10 days. Attracting both youth and adults, the program helped build intergenerational bonds. —NAP



## HOT TOPICS



### FREE BIBLES FOR BUBS

The Bible Society's "Bibles for Bubs" project is looking to enrol 2000 babies born in 2019 to receive a free toddler Bible. They will also be sent a birthday card up until age five, at which time they'll receive a "Big Rescue Bible" to support them through primary school. Currently, 4500 children are enrolled in the initiative. —*Bible Society*



### THEFT OF BIBLICAL PROPORTIONS

Dirk Obbink, professor of papyrology and Greek literature at Oxford, has been arrested for stealing 11 ancient Bible fragments—including a section of Mark thought to be the oldest New Testament text—and selling them to the Green family who own the arts-and-crafts giant Hobby Lobby and the Museum of the Bible in Washington DC. —*Relevant*



### DECLINING POPULATION

Australia's Acting Minister for Immigration has confirmed that COVID-19 has caused the biggest population decline in the country's history. Almost two years of population growth has been lost in just three months, largely due to the lack of tourists, immigrants and international students, which will continue to impact national GDP until numbers return to normal. —*ABC News*

## NNSW YOUNG ADULTS HOST 'BIG CAMP ONLINE'

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX

Youth and young adults from the North New South Wales (NNSW) Conference recently teamed up to host "Big Camp Online", a week-long virtual Big Camp that was livestreamed across Facebook, YouTube and online from April 20 to 25.

The programs were made possible by a small team of hard-working volunteers—including cinematographer brothers Nick and Karl Lindsay, creative business coach Emma Lemke, and Brazilian husband and wife team Juliana and Henrique Felix from Adventist Volunteer Services, among others—who collaborated to create a professional product.

"Our team had been super excited to run what we'd planned, [so] when Big Camp got cancelled, we couldn't not do anything," explained Youth and Young Adult Ministries director Blair Lemke. "We let other teams know but no-one else was really in a position where they could put in the effort. It's a lot of work. So we just hosted Big Camp Online with a young adults tent."

Throughout the week, nightly sermons presented by NNSW conference youth members Tom Kent, Morgan Vincent and Mark Sutherland were livestreamed, each centred around the theme of the week, "A most precious message", inspired by a passage by Ellen White on righteousness by faith.

In addition, 2pm workshops were hosted by Justin Torossian, entitled "People of the Book", which explored Adventist identity and Ellen White's writings within a biblical narrative framework. During one session, Mr Torossian interviewed Dr Allan Lindsay to answer more than 40 questions that were submitted by people during the week.

"During the live [session] we had a ton more questions sent in, and only had time to get through about



THE "COUCH CHOIR" PERFORMING "WHEN WE ALL GET TO HEAVEN".

two-thirds of them. The engagement was so high," said Mr Lemke.

Morning prayer groups were held and workout sessions were run by Mr Sutherland—who also presented Friday night's message—and Youth and Young Adult Ministries departmental assistant Caitlin Cloete.

On Saturday, all of the churches across NNSW tuned into the livestream to raise funds for the annual mission projects appeal. This year, a focus was on establishing Adventist Society On Campus (ASOC) groups in all universities across the Conference. In addition, attendees celebrated the baptism of James Pontil, and enjoyed a performance by the "couch choir", which has received more than 240 Facebook shares.

In total, the videos—which were scattered across various platforms—accumulated more than 40,000 views during the entire week.

"Nightly attendance was also between 150 and 350 depending on the night. Our biggest audience on Facebook was the 25-35 age group, followed closely by the 18-25 group," explained Mr Lemke.

When asked whether Big Camp Online will change how future Big Camps are run, Mr Lemke explained that there will be a larger focus on livestreaming and online promotion.

"Usually we just tag on a dodgy livestream, but we've discovered that it's not that hard to do a really good livestream and have an intentional online marketing campaign around it, so we'll definitely do that next year," he said.





## CYCLONE HAROLD RESPONSE

In response to the danger and devastation of Cyclone Harold, 45 young people in Luganville (Vanuatu) helped more than 200 people move to safe places before the cyclone hit. The young people—who are members of ADRA Vanuatu's Disaster Ready Churches (DRC) program—visited areas in Luganville allocated to ADRA to do damage and needs assessments. They went on foot from house to house, spoke to people and made sure individuals received food supplies provided and other necessities available through cyclone relief distribution.

—Vanuatu Mission Facebook



## RUNNING FOR A CAUSE

More than 30 Hilliard students, staff and church members participated in the Hobart "Run the Bridge" fun run (Tasmania) on Sunday, February 23. Hilliard's "Running for a Cause" team is an initiative designed to provide opportunities for students to get involved in community service. The chosen cause for this run was ADRA's Bushfire Disaster Relief Appeal. Students also ran a snow cone stall the Friday before the run. The team raised several hundred dollars for the cause, thanks to support from Glenorchy and Rosny churches. The students look forward to running for more causes in the future. —TASDA



## BANDMASTER AWARDED OAM

The Australian Government has awarded third-generation Adventist brass bandmaster Reynold Gilson an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for his outstanding contribution to music. Mr Gilson has led the Advent Brass Band in Victoria since 1987, following his father, Bruce Gilson, who founded the band in 1925. Remarkably, 95 years later, the original purpose of the band remains, an achievement recognised by the government. The Advent Brass Band has performed in high-level competitions across Australia and openly admits that they primarily exist to present a picture of Jesus through music. —Record staff



## ORDINATION TESTIMONY

Pastor Robbie Berghan was ordained at this year's Tasmania Conference Big Camp in January. South Pacific Division president Pastor Glenn Townend, Australian Union Conference (AUC) president Pastor Jorge Munoz and AUC Ministerial Association Secretary, Pastor Brendan Pratt, attended the ordination. Pastor Berghan—alongside his wife Rebecca and son Aris, pastors the Glenorchy and Margate churches in Hobart. Robbie converted from atheism to Christianity after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2011 through an incredible connection between prophecy and a vision recorded in Ellen White's writings. He has since preached in 40 countries around the world, sharing his incredible testimony. —Gary Webster



## MIDLAND MEALS

Swan Valley church (Perth, WA) and youth and adults from the Western Australian Conference are serving food to the homeless through their "Midland Meals" initiative. Each night from 6–8pm, an average of 110 disadvantaged men and women are fed thanks to a team of volunteers who prepare food from 3–5:30pm every afternoon. Volunteers then also serve food during the evening, due to COVID-19 restrictions, only take-away meals are currently being served. —WA SDA Youth Facebook



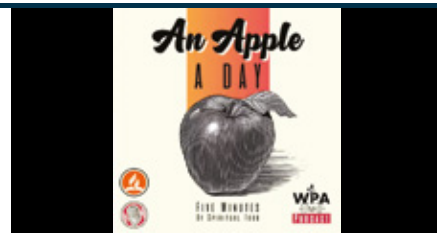
## TEACHER TRAINING

Adventist identity and community participation were topics covered in teacher training workshops held in Solomon Islands from April 10 to 14. The teachers were from Nalei Primary, Tenakoga Primary, Luluga Primary and Community High. The overall goal was to provide education on COVID-19 and emergency-related engagement activities that schools, churches and communities can participate in. —Record Staff



## SHAVING FOR STUDENTS

Darlene Mene, a teacher from Macarthur Adventist School (Sydney), shaved her head on March 20 to raise money for both her students and the community. Raising more than \$A3000 so far, the money will go towards a Year 10 service trip, bushfire and flood relief for the community at Narramine, and to help pay the way for a student to attend the Youth Parliamentary program. —Macarthur Adventist School Facebook



## AN APPLE A DAY

Youth from Wetherill Park Spanish Church (Sydney) have created a new daily podcast, "An Apple A Day". Hosted by youth member Jaris Valls Heramosilla, the five-minute podcast focuses on providing "five minutes of spiritual food" and aims to inspire listeners to make their faith practical each day. You can listen to the English language podcast via the Wetherill Park Adventist Youth Facebook page. —WPA Facebook

# Nursing in the time of COVID-19

At a time when people are looking to our frontline workers for care and reassurance, I want to acknowledge all hospital staff who are turning up during this time—from cleaners, hospitality staff to physicians and nurses. This is my story as a nurse on the front line.



**W**e have a suspected COVID-19 patient on the ward."

It wasn't the first time in the past month these words had been uttered by my manager, but this time seemed different, more serious. She looked over all our faces, having to look out the door where some nurses stood so that we could keep social distancing within the staff tea room as she spoke the next words:

"I'm asking for volunteers for this patient and for others who may come in the next week."

Before she could even finish the sentence my hand was raised. The Holy Spirit had prompted me in a way I had never felt so strongly before. *I volunteer as tribute. No, just, I'm happy to volunteer to look after her.*

The words of the psalmist flowed over me as I walked towards the designated isolation room:

*"He will cover you with his feathers,  
and under his wings you will find refuge;  
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You  
will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that  
flies by day,  
nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor  
the plague that destroys at midday.  
A thousand may fall at your side,  
ten thousand at your right hand,  
but it will not come near you."*

—Psalm 91:4-7

The words gave me such peace as I walked into a potentially dangerous situation. Putting on my gown, goggles, mask and gloves to go into the room for the first time, I was so grateful that I had enough personal protective equipment (PPE) for my shift and that God had provided extra for our hospital. With God's protective hand over me I stepped into the battle zone without fear. And there I met and cared for the loveliest lady who—even though she only saw a girl in a gown, mask and goggles—I hoped saw a glimpse of Jesus that day.

This year has been set aside by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the Year of the Nurse and Midwife. I don't think anyone expected what 2020 would actually hold for nurses, but it seems this year will definitely show the world what a special group they are.

Here in Australia, nurses—along with the rest of the hospital staff—play a crucial role across the patient-care journey. Nurses are working in COVID-19-dedicated wards, providing support, comfort and guidance to people in emergency rooms who are worried they have contracted the disease. They are putting in place vital infection control processes to protect patients and themselves.

They are holding hands (with gloves on), they are providing reassurance, they are skilled in or upskilling in working with respiratory machines, critical care medications and with critically ill patients. Nurses are adjusting to constant new information, policies and guidelines. They are tired, anxious and scared of bringing anything home to their families, yet they are showing up. So many nurses are putting their hands up to be a part of the frontline fight against COVID-19. That's just what nurses do, almost like it's in our DNA.

Nursing began in the crisis of a world war. Today, we are in a coronavirus crisis and we fight this war with similar principles of good hygiene, particularly hand hygiene. We are going back to the basics, the heart of nursing, and it's working just as it did in the war decades ago.

Every day, thousands of nurses and healthcare professionals—including hundreds at Sydney Adventist Hospital (the San)—will turn up and fulfil their duties to serve our communities and implement evidence-based practice and protective and preventative health measures for the safety of every patient.

I am so grateful for my experiences these past few weeks at the San. It has been so stressful and hard at times, but to see a group of people come together to work each day, knowing they may come into contact with the virus, but choosing to care for people anyway, is a beautiful thing to watch and be part of. I am constantly in awe of the people I work with—who the San is blessed to have. They are amazing, resourceful, intelligent, brave and kind people.

Ellen White writes in *Counsels on Health*, "The Lord wants wise men and women, who can act in the capacity of nurses, to comfort and help the sick and suffering. O' that all who are afflicted might be ministered to by Christian physicians and nurses who could help them to place their weary, pain-racked bodies in the care of the Great Healer in faith looking to Him for restoration" (388.2).

God has put on my heart this verse, "Never grow weary in doing good" (2 Thessalonians 3:13). It's never rung more true to me than during this time. I pray for our Church and encourage everyone to continue to do good where you can, even if it is just a message to a healthcare worker saying you're thinking of them and praying for them today.

Thank you for your continued prayers for our healthcare workers and our hospital and I praise God that He is our Protector and Provider.

**GEENA-ROSE BURTON**

**NURSE, SYDNEY ADVENTIST HOSPITAL.**

# My ministry: Gatton church food pantry

**M**embers of Gatton and Laidley Seventh-day Adventist churches (Queensland) have teamed up to facilitate the distribution of more than 11 pallets of fresh produce donated by supermarket giant Coles in response to COVID-19—on top of food hampers they regularly hand out at their “ADRA Lockyer Food Pantry”.

Having heard about their dedicated food pantry ministry, food distribution service Second Bite asked Gatton church to hand out a large donation of fresh fruit and vegetables from Coles.

“We said yes, filled out an application form and then they sent us about six pallets of grocery items,” said Pastor Darryl Groves, minister for Gatton, Laidley and Esk churches.

Impressed by their organisation, Second Bite then sent another shipment of 11 pallets.

“Some of it is produce off the shelf that they can’t sell, but most of it is brand new. We’re talking tons of food—everything from grapes to tomatoes to bread, capsicums, mandarins . . . it’s incredible,” said Pastor Groves.

Food pantry volunteers have found that word spreads most effectively through Facebook.

“Word gets out so quickly,” explained Pastor Groves. “Pallets are dropped off in the morning and by three that afternoon it’s all gone.”



**PASTOR DARRYL GROVES IN THE FOOD PACKING WAREHOUSE.**

Pastor Groves expressed his amazement at the team of dedicated volun-

teers—some of whom serve up to six days per week—to help more than a thousand individuals and families who collect food each week.

“We have altogether about 25 to 30 people involved. About 70 per cent are not church members, just community people wanting to help out,” he said.

Community volunteer Patrick “Paddy” Ashton—who was recently appointed “fresh produce coordinator”—is a vital member of the team.

“What I personally get out of this is just being able to give and see the looks on the people’s faces of receiving top quality produce for nothing,” said Mr Ashton. “Just then I had two ladies come in and thank us personally. It’s giving in abundance. Very uplifting, very rewarding.”

He has also begun taking Bible studies with Pastor Groves.

Although the ministry has grown in response to COVID-19, it actually began in September 2019, following a “crazy idea” by Gatton church to host a free community feast.

“We organised 30 community groups to come together and the council closed off the street for the 2000 people who turned up,” explained Pastor Groves. “We didn’t know if we’d have enough food, but God provided. And this kicked off our idea to start the food pantry.”

In September 2019, operations began from Gatton church hall and Laidley op shop, which distributed 20 and 10 food hampers, respectively. Despite current Food Bank supply shortages due to COVID-19, church members are continuing to pray and this number is growing. Now, more than 170 hampers are distributed each week—about 60 at Laidley and 110 to 120 at Gatton. With produce

purchased from Food Bank Brisbane, each hamper is sold for \$A20, but

is filled with produce worth \$150 to \$200.

In addition to the food bank and hamper ministry, for the past five years Gatton has also been running a weekly soup kitchen.



**VOLUNTEER PADDY ASHTON HELPING TO PACK NEW BOXES OF PRODUCE.**

With so many service initiatives operating simultaneously, one would assume strict rosters are necessary.

“We don’t work on a roster; it just works like a well-oiled machine,” Pastor Groves said. “We just allow those who want to turn up come for as long as they want, and to do what they want. It just happens. And there’s always enough people and food. I say, don’t fix something that isn’t broken! God always provides enough volunteers, enough visitors and enough food.”

The outreach initiatives of Gatton and Laidley churches have helped bring the congregations together.

“When you see things come together you go, ‘Wow God is definitely behind it.’ It’s definitely divine intervention and it’s definitely strengthened our community.”

Pastor Groves and Mr Ashton encourage readers who would like to be involved to simply “just turn up” to Gatton church during the week.

**MARYELLEN FAIRFAX**  
ASSISTANT EDITOR, ADVENTIST RECORD.



# Sabbatical

For whatever suspect reason  
Earth has earned its quiet Sabbatical;  
Whether weekly Sabbath days or  
Months, political or biblical:

Suddenly! Everything has crawled to a stop!  
The streets are empty; the cars hand-braked;  
The sky unscarred by high contrails, or  
Lower, dirty, jet-scorched tracks;  
And chainsaws' chattering jaws of teeth  
Rest on stumps of fallen trees.

From space,  
Our revolving opalescent jewel of sky  
Still beams its prised lights,  
And everything is Sabbath day  
And silent nights.

**MALCOLM FORD**  
TEACHER, POET, ARTIST/SCULPTOR  
FROM WHANGEREI, NEW ZEALAND.

## DIGGING IN HIS WORD WITH GARY WEBSTER

### TEAR DOWN THOSE WALLS

In 1987, US president Ronald Reagan urged Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall that had separated Germans for nearly 30 years. You don't have to look far to find cold—and often hostile—walls in our homes and churches. Differences of opinion on women's ordination, music and worship, the nature of Christ, Last Generation Theology, and a host of other issues often lead to cold and caustic attitudes on both sides. We need to revisit God's antidote.

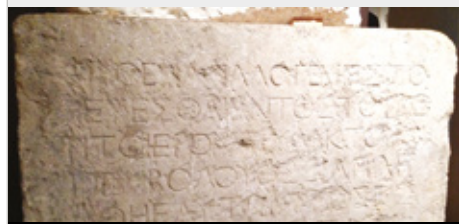
Jews and Gentiles didn't exactly hit it off too well in Bible times. This was illustrated by a literal wall dividing them in the temple. Paul's antidote was the cross. Any person who sincerely puts their trust in the death of Jesus is justified and reconciled—brought near to God.

**READ** Ephesians 2:11,14,13,16; Romans 5:1; Colossians 1:20.

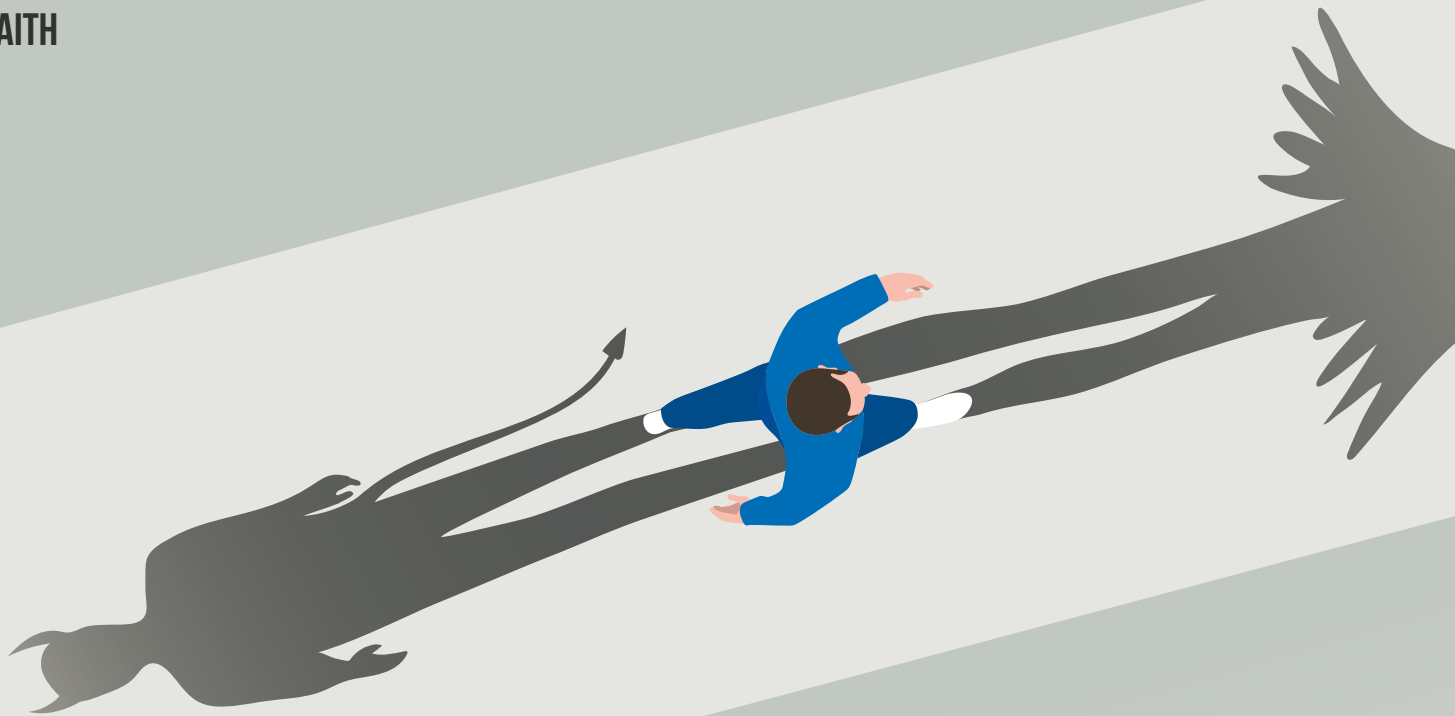
However, that's not all. The person who accepts Jesus' sacrifice is born again by the Spirit and God's law of love is written on their hearts. They now love because He loved them. Their attitude to others changes. They now love their enemies and are drawn to them.

**READ** John 3:3,9,14-17; Romans 5:5; Hebrews 8:10; 13:20; 1 John 4:19; Matthew 5:44; Ephesians 2:14-16.

When we have caustic attitudes towards others, we need to come back to the cross. Perhaps if we did that every day, our attitude toward others would be different.



PART OF THE BARRIER THAT DIVIDED JEWS AND GENTILES IN THE TEMPLE. BELIEVED TO BE "THE MIDDLE WALL OF PARTITION" REFERENCED BY PAUL (EPHESIANS 2:14).



## IS SATAN AN ALL-POWERFUL GOD?

I am sure many of you have heard the tragic story of Hannah Clarke and her three children, Aaliyah, Laianah and Trey, who were all killed by Hannah's estranged rugby-enthusiast husband, Rowan Baxter. On February 19, in a suburban Brisbane street, Baxter trapped his family in their car, doused it with petrol, and set it alight. He actively prevented bystanders from trying to rescue his children from the flames. Baxter then stabbed himself to death.

In a rare show of bipartisanship, politicians on all sides soon called out this true act of evil. The Australian prime minister, Scott Morrison, echoed the voice of a shocked nation when he said, "There are never any excuses—there are none—or justifications for the evil that Hannah and her children experienced—never, not under any circumstances."<sup>1</sup>

Mr Morrison was probably prompted to make this particular emphasis after a Queensland detective had earlier suggested people keep an "open mind", and that Baxter had perhaps been driven "too far by issues that he's suffered".<sup>2</sup> The detective was quickly suspended from duty.

### DID THE DEVIL MAKE HIM DO IT?

After such tragedies many ask themselves, "Where was God?" But, in this instance, the prime minister's words might incline us to a different question, "Where was Satan?"

As Christians, we know the world is locked in a cosmic struggle between Christ and Satan. This idea is commonly expressed as the "great controversy" theme within the

Seventh-day Adventist Church. Of course we didn't invent the idea, as it is an old concept similar to the early church's *Christ Victor* idea (literally Christ is victorious), in turn derived from the Bible's own teachings about cosmic warfare (Revelation 12:7–17).

In defence of the suspended detective, a large part of me agreed with what he was trying—perhaps inarticulately—to say. Baxter did not commit these horrendous actions in a vacuum. We know next-to-nothing about Baxter's life circumstances. What we do know, though, is that Baxter lived in a very sinful world, which affects us all. When I heard this story my first thought was not of God, but actually Satan, the originator of all this mess.


Nevertheless, when I heard the prime minister's speech, I also appreciated why others were offended by what the detective said. As if, we might say, the devil made Baxter do it, somehow justifying or excusing what had occurred.

So does blaming Satan for Baxter's behaviour somehow justify or excuse the choice this husband and father made? More concerning, would it ascribe Satan too much power—too much credit?

### ARE THERE ONE OR TWO DEITIES LOCKED IN COSMIC COMBAT?

There is some irony for those who struggle with the idea of evil in the face of an omnipotent God. The truth is, the Bible perhaps suggests God is not in fact all-powerful, at least not in the way we humans think of power. The greatest manifestation of God in human history was Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh who came to dwell amongst





“people either completely overlook Satan’s role or, as I have done myself many times, perhaps overstate his power.”

us here on earth (John 1:1-14).

However, the two greatest exemplars of power in the life of Jesus, which Christians often turn into major celebrations, are illustrations of God’s powerlessness. In the first instance, God-incarnate became a helpless Baby lying in a manger; in the other, God-incarnate was effectively paralysed while hanging on a cross.

The Bible tells us that the very nature of Jesus is of one who was equal to God, but who emptied Himself of divine power (Philippians 2:6,7). And for those who think Jesus’ own vesting of power somehow does not reflect the Father, we should note there is no greater example of God’s deliberate powerlessness than giving the Son to the cross for the world’s sake (John 3:16).

The second irony for those who blame God for evil in the world is that, while people focus on God’s power, He is not the only deity on this earth. We also have Christ’s adversary: Lucifer, also known as the devil or Satan. I say “deity” deliberately, because the Bible does indeed call Satan “the god” (*ton theon*) of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4). People either completely overlook Satan’s role or, as I have done myself many times, perhaps overstate his power.

However, returning to the original point about Rowan Baxter, Satan is a mere created being, a fallen angel. While Lucifer is of course very powerful, he is not *all-powerful*. Not for want of trying. As many of us know, he was cast out of heaven for wanting to be like the Most High (Isaiah 14:12-17).

### SO ARE THESE TWO COMBATTING DEITIES ALL-POWERFUL?

Therefore, in this cosmic struggle between Christ and Satan, we may not have a battle between two omnipotent beings, at least not in the way we often think of such a contest. On the one hand, Christ is not all-powerful, not because He isn’t inherently omnipotent—He is—but because as a God of love, as a God who is love itself (1 John 4:8, 16), the nature of love is to surrender power in the name of free choice. On the other hand, Satan is not all-powerful either, because, despite his many efforts, he is a mere created being with no inherent omnipotence.

In the battle between these two deities, one chooses

to surrender His power (and succeeds), while the other attempts to gain it (but fails). In a sense this is perhaps what makes it a “fair fight”, or at least a more equal fight.

### WHO IS NOW INVOLVED IN THIS GREAT CONTROVERSY?

Why does any of this matter? As Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Belief #8 rightly says, “All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law and His sovereignty over the universe.” Who is involved in this struggle? All humanity. Every one of us.

In this game of cosmic chess, we are not mere pawns. We are players. God has no hands except our hands (2 Corinthians 5:20). We are responsible for the choices we make. Both Jesus and Satan desperately want us on their side, because the side we choose makes a difference. A tangible, practical difference.

Even though there can be qualifying circumstances behind any tragedy, there can never be any excuses for our actions (John 15:22; Romans 2:1). We cannot wholly blame “the system”, although this is such a messed-up planet. Even in this cosmic battle, we are never tempted beyond what we can bear (1 Corinthians 10:13).

At this point we have to state plainly that violence against women and children—of any kind—is never justified. We are right to be horrified and shocked at events like the killing of the Baxter family, although unfortunately, we often never hear about the silent victims of domestic violence.

While Satan may have indeed been the first rebel, and he will one day pay for his crimes (Revelation 20:3), we cannot simply blame him for all of our actions (Romans 3:10,23). Satan may be a god—of sorts—but he is not all-powerful. God didn’t kill those beautiful children. But neither did Satan. A man did.

1. “Scott Morrison says the system failed murdered Hannah Clarke and her children”, SBS News Australia, updated February 25, 2020.

2. “Brisbane car fire detective taken off the case after suggesting killer Rowan Baxter may have been ‘driven too far’”: ABC News Australia, Updated February 25, 2020.

**STEPHEN FERGUSON**

A LAWYER WHO ATTENDS LIVINGSTONE CHURCH, WA.



## Kurdistan: land of the Medes

The FlyDubai flight to Erbil slowly descended. Below, thick, tousled spring crops patterned the farmed landscape. Overflowing rivers and streams filled by recent abundant rains stretched tentacles across an ancient plateau over which the conquering armies of every empire for the past 2500 years had travelled. After a long journey, I too was approaching the capital of the Kurdish Region of Iraq, land of the Medes of the Bible, whose civilisation is profiled in my first two historical novels.

In the airport arrivals lounge I was greeted by my smiling Kurdish Christian guide and fixer, who learned about Jesus when he was serving as an interpreter in the US army. I was thankful for his Special Forces experience when three military helicopters flew overhead just after we left the airport. "It's OK," he replied calmly to my concern, "they are US forces; they do it regularly."

Biblically, Kurds are the descendants of Noah's son Japheth, across a region that includes parts of modern-day Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey. They are now the world's largest ethnic group without a state.<sup>1</sup> Erbil boasts a 5000-year-old castle on a huge mound, including an ancient village and a disused mosque that was formerly a synagogue, now under restoration.

Kurdistan's religious freedom, protecting Jews, Christians and other minorities, has not prevented persecution by religious and nationalist extremists, as evidenced by the gas shell in the castle museum that was dropped on the Kurdish town of Halabja as part of Saddam Hussein's genocide campaign in the 1980s and '90s.

Erbil has many churches and is the headquarters of the Assyrian Church of the East, which survives in all four parts of Kurdistan. We attended a very solemn Assyrian Easter Friday service in Kurdish, which offered everyone a small cup of "sour water" after the service. Later, I had the privilege of attending a lavish Assyrian wedding, with the Adventist groom leading the exuberant traditional dancing.

But the highlight of that Easter weekend was Sabbath school and church at the small but relatively new Erbil

Adventist Church in Ankawa, the Christian quarter of Erbil.

Inside the church, tiles on the floor and walls created a shiny, mirror-like, almost palatial effect. With only nine registered members it runs a Pathfinder club for refugees and a church plant in a nearby town. Singing familiar hymns and songs in English while others sang in Arabic or Kurdish was a thrill. Afterwards, we were treated to a generous vegetarian Kurdish potluck lunch, not unlike the fare I encountered during most of my stay, featuring rice, beans, chickpeas, olives, nuts, green-laden salad vegetables and local, rich ice-cream for dessert.

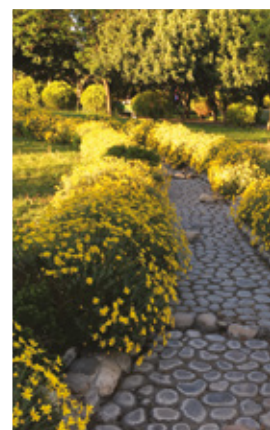
Like most of my hosts, Kurdistan put on her best clothes for my visit. Travelling the scenic back route south-east towards the relatively "new" 200-year-old city of Sulaymaniyah (Sleman in Kurdish), verdant mountain ranges, some still snow-capped, arrayed before us. The most memorable was Pirmagrun Mountain, the "mountain of the Magi".

According to the female leader of the Zoroastrians in Kurdistan, their Magi priests greeted the Baby Jesus who would bring good and light.<sup>2</sup> I wondered if, having studied the stars<sup>3</sup> and believing in the coming of the Messiah, the ancient Zoroastrians had observed a particular star from the mountain and calculated its return date. I wondered if the prophet Daniel had informed Darius the Mede of the angel Gabriel's Messianic prophecy, after which Darius passed the prophecy on to his priestly advisors.

It's possibilities like these that made me think about the deep spiritual heritage of Kurdistan and its people. Kurds claim Abraham as one of their own, since they consider Harran, now Sanliurfa in Turkey, as Kurdish. This supports the notion that Abraham left what is now the Kurdish city of Nusaybin in the "region of Ur of the Chaldeans"<sup>4</sup>, and travelled west along today's Syria-Turkey border to Harran.







Known in the centuries after Christ as Nisbis, Nusaybin hosted the missionary college of the original apostolic Assyrian Church of the East, which moved to Baghdad around 600 BC, served the Islamic caliphate with its learning and expertise—including medicine—and sent missionaries east with the gospel as far as the Philippines, China and Japan.<sup>5</sup>

Some Kurds also believe Jesus visited Kurdistan and I certainly felt the presence of His Spirit there through His people. Such was the kindness and generosity in that Muslim-majority country, I usually forgot I was different. Privileged to be accepted and treated as one of the people, I joined in events such as the Yezidi yearly festival at Lalish. Yezidis claim to practise the oldest religion in the world and believe in Jesus. Recent severe persecution has seen Australia accept thousands as refugees.

A harmonious celebration of simple religious rituals accompanied by happiness, joy, dancing, music, colourful traditional costumes and relaxation with family, friends and guests, the festival day was one of my most memorable. The Yezidis' ancient stone temple with its wide conical spires, whose proportions a cultural expert assured me have astronomical derivations, was nestled among lush, tree-dotted mountains not far from the city of Dohuk.

Kurdistan is an exhilarating mixture of a modern, but mostly developing, region. In the major cities, huge, cavernous malls stocked with designer clothes and other luxury goods are not far from streets where traders hawk manufactured products and food imported from Iran or Turkey to eke out a living in an oil-rich but cash economy. Some have fought terrorists to defend Kurdistan and the region, but cannot return home across state borders

because of their ethnicity.

Due to inherited Median tradition, women have more equality in Kurdistan than other places in the Middle East, but today those not married by a certain age require extra education to learn how to support themselves, while others face culturally embedded human rights abuses and domestic violence in a patriarchal society.

Throughout my stay, apart from the people on the streets, in hotels, restaurants, taxis and bazaars, I met politicians and women's group leaders, religious leaders and army officers, some of whom requested help either from the Australian Government or Christians.

Dr Medya, a German Christian ministering to a 12,000-strong refugee camp of Kurds exiled from Turkey since 1994, gave me her hand-carved necklace and a long list of desperately needed medicines and medical specialists.

As the time came to return home, I drank in one last vista of rushing, aqua-blue waters sparkling in the late spring sunshine, along with a refreshing bowl of zingy yoghurt water. Recalling the hospitality of the rich tables spread for us and the reverent, faithful worshippers walking to the mosque in Ramadan, I packed my very own hand-made, sequined Kurdish dress and thanked God for the many new friends I had made. Soon, through free-flowing tears, I watched the land of the Medes slip away beneath me.

1. NKJV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible, 2017, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, p 28.
2. Conversation between Alison Buckley and Awad Darya, 15/4/2019, Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan.
3. <<http://zoroastrianastrology.blogspot.com/p/astrology.html>>.
4. Holy Bible, New Living Translation, 1996, Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, map "World of the Patriarchs".
5. Wilkinson, Benjamin G, *Truth Triumphant*, 1944, Pacific Press, pp 121, 273, 278 .

#### **ALISON BUCKLEY**

**ATTENDS MACKSVILLE CHURCH. SHE HAS A HEART FOR THE KURDISH PEOPLE AND TRAVELLED TO ERBIL IN 2019.**



## WHY LOSING WEIGHT GETS HARDER WITH AGE

Now that we're spending more time at home, it's even tougher to keep weight in check. Generally eating healthily and exercising regularly (even at home) will do the trick, but as you get older there are other factors that impact your waistline. So, why does losing weight get harder with age?

### MUSCLE LOSS

As you get older you lose muscle. Since muscle actually burns more calories than fat, having less muscle means it's harder to use the calories you're eating. But why do you lose muscle? While hormones can play a role, the old adage "if you don't move it you lose it" rings true. Whether it's a busy family life or out-of-control work hours, finding time to stay active gets tougher and we tend to move less.

### STRESS

Increased stress can contribute to weight gain. Time pressures can relegate exercise to last on the list and, when you're under the pump, it's easy to ditch the diet and reach for a quick snack or sugar fix. Stress also increases your level of the hormone ghrelin, which makes you hungry and increases fat storage.

### SLOWING METABOLISM

Your metabolism runs 24/7, turning the food and drink you eat into energy for your body to function. Even when you're sleeping, it's providing your body with the energy needed to circulate blood, breathe and repair cells. Your metabolism can slow down with age, which means you burn fewer calories and store more fat.

### HORMONAL CHANGES

Hormonal changes can tip the scales too. For women, it's very common to gain weight during menopause, with a drop in oestrogen triggering an increase in weight, especially around the belly. For men, typically from the age of 40, testosterone levels drop. As testosterone is responsible for regulating fat distribution, muscle strength and muscle mass, less testosterone can make it harder to burn calories.

## TIPS TO HELP PREVENT WEIGHT GAIN



### MAKE EACH MOUTHFUL COUNT

Rather than reaching for highly processed foods that lack nutrients, swap these out for mostly whole foods. Focus on nutrient-dense foods full of vitamins and minerals, fibre and protein, like fruit, veggies, legumes, nuts and wholegrains.



### WATCH PORTION SIZES

If you don't burn all the energy from the foods and drinks you consume, your body will store it as fat. As you get older it's important to watch your portion sizes and potentially cut back how much you eat to suit what your body needs.



### STAY HYDRATED

Drink plenty of water and steer clear of fizzy drinks. Mild dehydration can cause symptoms similar to hunger. Don't confuse the two and grab a snack instead of a glass of water. Dehydration has also been linked to increased risk of obesity and a higher BMI.



### Recipe of the Week

### Roasted Chickpea and Cauliflower Salad

This tasty, warm salad is the very definition of feel-good food. It's full of fibre, protein and other nutrient goodness and can easily be made ahead of time.

Find this recipe and hundreds more at:

Australia: [sanitarium.com.au/recipes](http://sanitarium.com.au/recipes)  
New Zealand: [sanitarium.co.nz/recipes](http://sanitarium.co.nz/recipes)





# THE TEN: BIBLE CHARACTERS WHO SPENT SIGNIFICANT TIME ALONE

## 1. ADAM

Before we even get three chapters into the Bible, the concept of isolation rears its head when Adam notices that he's the only being who doesn't have a partner. So God—graciously unoffended that His company isn't enough for Adam—creates a helper for him: Eve. Sure, Adam probably only spent a day or two alone, but when you live in a perfect world and have never experienced pain, that's gotta be significant.

## 2. JOSEPH

A heart-wrenching tale of human trafficking and false imprisonment, Joseph's story takes the Egyptian date-cake when it comes to social isolation. Fourteen years trapped in a dark, dingy hole, his only friends a forgetful wine-bearer and a now-dead baker. And no, I don't imagine it was as glamorous as *Joseph: King of Dreams* portrays it.

## 3. MOSES

Throughout his life, Moses spent a lot of time in social isolation. Some of his early days were spent in a reed basket on the Nile, he fled from Pharaoh to become a reclusive shepherd, and he spent 40 days on the mountain with God (while the small-brained Israelites made a golden calf). To everyone's benefit though, these #iso experiences gave Moses time to write the Torah and the opportunity to see God's back!

## 4. ELIJAH

Jezebel must have been a real scary alpha-female boss lady because her death threats sent Elijah spiralling into panic, fleeing into the wilderness, crying out to God in anguish, and spending 40 days and nights isolated on Mount Horeb. But, unlike the others, Elijah *wanted* to be socially isolated in this situation . . . and for good reason.

## 5. JOHN

Whether it's John the Baptist or John the Beloved, it seems that both spent a fair amount of time in social isolation. While the former was put in prison by Herod—and then promptly killed, the second was banished by Rome to the island of Patmos where he wrote Revelation. Some probably thought he was crazy, but as it turns out, his legacy in isolation lives on.

## 6. JESUS

Jesus endured the worst in social isolation: alone for 40 days in the desert, with no food, all while being tempted by Satan. Just peachy. But once He overcame temptation and began His ministry, Jesus was seldom alone. The crowds followed Him everywhere, and He often snuck away early in the morning or late at night to spend time alone with His Father. I wonder if He ever longed for those 40 days again (minus the temptation and starvation, of course)?

## 7. MAN WITH LEPROSY

Although we don't know how long he was unclean for, the man with leprosy in Matthew 8 would have been extremely socially isolated. Hated by society, lepers were forbidden from entering towns and were banished to the wilderness. Just imagine the pins-and-needles feeling of someone—the Son of God—touching you for the first time (for a tear-jerking rendition of this encounter, watch *The Chosen* TV show).

## 8. WOMAN WITH BLOOD

She's written in the history books as desperate, but if you were bleeding for 12 years and considered "unclean" by society, you'd be desperate too. Due to Jewish law (Leviticus 15:25-27), excessive blood flow made a woman ceremonially unclean. Any furniture she touched was unclean, and if other people touched anything that she had touched, they would be unclean as well. Just imagine the isolation and loneliness that would cause! Until Jesus healed her.

## 9. JEREMIAH

Ahh, the weeping prophet—but for good reason, really. Jeremiah endured the absence of a spouse or family, being hated by society, removed from all social events, and in a thankless and despised profession. Few individuals in the Bible had greater reasons to feel socially isolated.

## 10. PAUL

This great evangelist probably spent more time in prison than any other Bible character. Although we don't know how many times or years he spent in prison, in just one instance he spent two years under house arrest by Rome. If COVID-19 social isolation restrictions were to last two years, would you cope? Me neither. Paul, you legend!



HI KIDS!

KIDS' SPECIAL

I can't wait to be in heaven with Jesus!



# WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR CHILDREN AT RISK - MAY 23

Use instructions from  
Youtube 'How To Make  
a 3D Cube' if you get  
stuck.

Cut out  
around the  
outside of the  
cube only.



Fold the lines, glue the  
tabs and make a cube.  
Use it as a reminder  
to pray for children at  
risk!

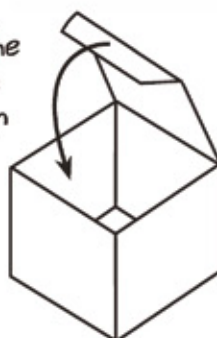
World Day of Prayer for children at risk occurs on the last Sabbath in May. Its aim is to unite thousands of adults and children globally and bring awareness to the thousands of children around the world and at home who are at risk of abuse, neglect, trafficking to other countries, hurt and much more.

Children at risk need to be protected and helped so that they can use their God-given talents to their fullest. They need our prayers. You can have special prayer groups or run a special program to involve your church, young and old, in creating awareness of the need to pray and protect these children.



YOU CAN MAKE  
YOUR OWN  
PRAYER CUBE  
OUT OF LIGHT  
CARDBOARD  
TOO!

Glue the  
tabs  
down





## KUDOS FOR CREATIVITY

To read the April 18 edition of *Adventist Record* was like a breath of fresh air. For people who are creative in every sense of the word it was a pleasure to both read and to see the newly designed magazine.

To see it on the computer with a nice-sized font was a bonus for many people for starters, but your creative writers and articles were so lovely. It's like a great transformation. I hope [the transformation] goes from magazine to reality in people's lives. I hope it brings life and new ways of thinking. You have certainly appealed to creative people who love music, artistry, floristry and ministry in a new and different way. Oh, I am so glad. I liked the points of view that were expressed and all the creativity in the arts. I think you have addressed this very well. More power and strength to you who laid out this magazine, instead of what we usually receive, which mostly I find terribly boring and terribly upsetting.

One small thing I enjoyed was that in the creative section the writing was so excellent that there were great thoughts that could be used in prayers. It would be really nice if the Church gave more thought to the way it prays. I honestly don't think many people think seriously enough about the ways that they pray; they seem to think that anything that comes out of their mouths is acceptable. We have such a long way to go.

Pam Shell, *via email*



## HOW SAD

I am very disappointed with the stand taken by the Seventh-day Adventist Church during this time of the COVID-19 virus. We should not be closing our churches, regardless of the command to do so. To think that we, who aspire to be the saints of Revelation, would let ourselves be silenced in this way. We chose to shut our doors before we were told by the government. We are more worried about our physical health and wellbeing than delivering Christ's message to the world.

We have many members who are at risk, myself included. Why not show some faith in the Father and Jesus, or do we just talk about it without putting it into action? Don't we trust the Lord to keep us safe?

What a chance to come out of our Laodicean state.

We would probably make the news and television, but what a huge audience—many who would be able to hear God's truth for the first time, those who have never heard of the seventh-day Sabbath, the three angels' messages and Jesus' soon advent. We need to stand up, separate ourselves from the world and stand alone for God.

Would the Lord approve or disapprove of our actions? How readily did we give up, how readily will we do the same when the Sunday Law comes? We do no-one, ourselves or God, any good by sitting in solitude with the rest of the world. It's time to draw attention to ourselves, not time to slumber. The Bible says the Watchmen are to

watch and warn—that's us!

Graeme Down, *via email*

## COMPLEXITY

Thank you "Single: on the record" (April 18) for showing the complexity that exists around this topic and being sensitive to the fact that each single person's experience is different.

I also like that you highlighted what Brene Brown says—that we should only ask questions if we've earned the right to ask those questions and hear another person's story. Such a relationally intelligent and wise observation.

Leticia Moreno, *via website*

## SUPPORT EACH OTHER

The authors of "Do we care?" (Have your say, April 18) are correct that "Why are so many leaving the Church?" (February 15),

"places emphasis on the need for people to embrace the gospel", and church attendance doesn't save us.

They consider the lack of caring in the church the reason many are leaving. But understanding and accepting the gospel gives assurance of salvation, makes us part of the body of Christ, the church, and produces loving and caring Christians who want to support each other.

Errol Webster, *Qld*

**NOTE:** Views in "Have your say" do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the denomination. Comments should be less than 250 words, and writers must include their name, address and phone number. All comments are edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author's original meaning will not be changed. Not all comments received are published.

## Obituaries



**COULTER**, Winifred Doris (nee Stewart), born 18.11.1922 in Kaitia, New Zealand; died 18.2.20 in Auckland. In 1942 she married Walter, who predeceased her in 2003. Winnie is survived by daughters, Bev Pram (Auckland) and Colleen Robertson (Stuarts Point, NSW); eight grandchildren; and great-grandchildren. Winnie lived a full, active life. A dedicated wife, mother and grandmother, she had a strong work ethic, having developed, with her husband, a farm near Kaitia. Winnie was involved in community organisations such as St John Ambulance. She loved gardening and making garments. Her hospitality and care for people were legendary. She had a quick wit and a very keen sense of humour. Her strong faith and love for her Lord inspired many in the Kaitia and Tikipunga churches.

*Dennis Brownie*



**THOMSON**, Eunice Margaret (nee Hayes), born 6.11.1941; died 3.1.19 in Waihi Hospital, New Zealand. On 6.4.1967 she married Ian. Eunice was predeceased by her infant son, Martell in 1968. She is survived by her husband (Waihi); and sons, David (Waihi) and Kelly (Brisbane, Qld). Eunice's life was celebrated by family and friends who gathered to remember a loving wife, mother and grandmother. She was known

for her sharing and giving spirit. She is especially remembered for the beautiful cards she made and shared for all occasions. Her family and friends and church have grieved the loss of her bright, cheeky smile and the many contributions she made, not only to the Waihi church but also to women's ministries NNZ.

*Marilyn Pascoe*

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**ADVENTIST RECORD,**  
**JUNE 6**

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**JUNE 6, 2020**

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