

The International Paper for Seventh-day Adventists

February 2016

# ADVENTIST WORLD



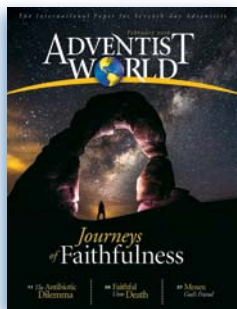
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February 2016



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REACH THE WORLD

**Faithfulness**

Over the next five years, *Adventist World* will offer features related to three worldwide emphases of the Seventh-day Adventist Church: Christ Our Righteousness, Faithfulness, and Total Member Involvement. This logo, which will appear occasionally, indicates one emphasis in our desire to share our message and reach the world for Christ.

 [www.adventistworld.org](http://www.adventistworld.org)  
Available in 12 languages online



## How Long Until Faithful?

As children, we measured everything by days, particularly those things that promised change or brought us joy. We knew the days until a coming birthday; how many days until school started and—months later—how many days until it finished. We even measured righteousness this way: how many days since I argued with my siblings? How long had passed since last I told a lie? How many weeks could I recite my memory verse without stumbling in Sabbath School?

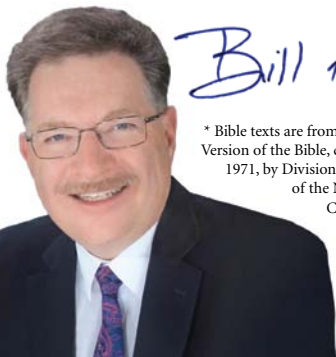
Our definitions of all things, including faithfulness, required the passing of time. And with faithfulness especially, much time would be required. Only promises long kept could be accounted “faithful,” as if there were some secret but unyielding date on which our efforts might finally be counted worthy.

This thinking grew, in part, from what we knew and know of God. Scripture celebrates His unwavering faithfulness, expressed toward us through centuries and millennia. In fact, His faithfulness—steadfast love over time—is one of His qualities most dwelt upon in Scripture. We change; we fail; we break our promises, but God remains. As Paul reminds us: “Let God be true though every man be false” (Rom. 3:4).\*

And yet it is the genius of the gospel that we may share—through grace—in that which is most celebrated in God’s character. God’s covenant-keeping faithfulness, which both holds the universe in place and holds the heart of one who grieves, is ours through faith in Him who never changes. “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness” (Rom. 4:3).

The story of faithfulness always—always—begins with God. But Scripture teaches that it may yet—through grace and faith—become part of our story too.

As you read this special edition of *Adventist World*, organized to emphasize the second of the world church’s great themes for this five-year period, allow the Spirit room to grow you through grace into the standing you have been given by the faithfulness of Jesus.



*Bill Kuntz*

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## WORLD REPORT

By ANDREW MCCHESENEY

# First Adventist Church Opens in North Siberia

*Members prayed 23 years for the building.*



ANSWER TO PRAYER: The new church in Nyagan.

Thrilled believers traveled long distances to attend the opening of the first Seventh-day Adventist church in Siberia’s far north, an inhospitably cold region akin to the Arctic, where church members are few and live far apart.

The church in Nyagan—a city of 56,000 people located 2,500 kilometers (1,550 miles) northeast of Moscow—is an answer to 23 years of prayers by the first Adventists in the city and echoed by others over the years, said Vasily Stefaniv, president of the Adventist Church’s West Siberian Mission. “As they gathered to worship in the homes of various church members, they dreamed about having their own church, a modest place to worship,” Stefaniv said in a statement. “The opening of the church building is clear evidence of the answer to their prayers.”

*Continued on next page ▶*

## WORLD REPORT

The new church is the West Siberian Mission's first in a northern region poorly covered by the Adventist message, according to the Euro-Asia Division, which oversees the mission and released the statement by Stefaniv. "God's children live many kilometers apart from one another, and there are no churches," Stefaniv said. "Therefore, the opening of the church in Nyagan was a long-awaited and welcome event for all."

The West Siberian Mission has 1,156 church members worshipping in 31 congregations, according to the latest statistics from the Adventist world church's Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research. The entire Euro-Asia Division has about 115,000 members and nearly 3,000 congregations.

In Siberia, Adventists traveled from the nearest towns and villages located up to 500 kilometers (300 miles) away from Nyagan to reach

the city on Friday and participate in a choir rehearsal for the dedication service on Sabbath.

The sermon centered on Psalm 37:3, 4, which says: "Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart."

"Indeed," Stefaniv said, "in the dedication of this house of worship, the Lord fulfilled the desire of many hearts!" ■

GC



Delbert Baker

**D**elbert W. Baker, a veteran Seventh-day Adventist administrator and former general vice president of the world church, has assumed leadership of the Adventist University of Africa near Nairobi, Kenya.

Baker said he had accepted an invitation to work as the university's vice

chancellor, a position akin to president, "with the conviction of God's providence."

The Adventist University of Africa, established in 2005 to provide post-graduate education to future Adventist leaders across Africa, has a theological seminary and a school of post-graduate studies that offer degrees in ministerial, leadership, and selected health-care programs. The university also hosts the only Ellen G. White Estate branch office in Africa.

Baker, who served as general vice president of the General Conference from 2010 to 2015, has an extensive background in education, working for

14 years as president of Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama, and as special assistant and director of diversity for the president of Loma Linda University for four years.

The Adventist University of Africa is playing a key role in training Adventist leaders to serve on a continent where membership growth is booming, according to former vice chancellor Brempong Owusu-Antwi (see *Adventist Review's General Conference Bulletin Supplement*, July 2015). The university graduated 348 students from 2010 to 2015 and enrolled 649 students for the 2015 academic year, he said. ■

By ANDREW MCCHESENEY

# Delbert Baker Takes Reins at Adventist University of Africa



**INSPIRED GIFT:** Mildred de Cubilla gives a Bible to Panama's president, Juan Carlos Valera, and his wife, Lorena Castillo de Valera.

*By Inter-American Division staff*

## Adventist Gives Bible to Panama's First Lady

A Seventh-day Adventist presented a special women's study Bible to Panama's first lady during a parade to celebrate the 112th anniversary of the Central American country's independence.

Mildred de Cubilla, a teacher at the Metropolitan Adventist School, gave

the Bible released by the Adventist world church's Women's Ministries Department to First Lady Lorena Castillo de Valera as she watched the parade with her husband, President Juan Carlos Valera.

"This is a Bible that the Adventist Church has prepared for women,"

Cubilla told the presidential couple as students from the Metropolitan Adventist School played their percussion instruments and marched to the beat of the band in front of the presidential palace during Panama's annual independence celebration. "We wanted to give this to you so that it can be your main guide as you lead this country along with your husband," she said, offering the Bible as a gift from the school.

Castillo de Valera later wrote on her Facebook page that she had prayed for a message from God when she opened the Bible to read it for the first time. "I opened the Bible to Psalm 112—112 years of independence—it cannot be more clear," she said. "The Lord continues to guide us. THANK YOU."

Psalm 112 describes the blessed state of the righteousness and begins with the words: "Praise the Lord! Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who delights greatly in His commandments." ■

*By ANDREW MCCHESENEY*

## Adventists Assist After Devastating Floods in India

Seventh-day Adventists have put aside their usual work to distribute desperately needed humanitarian aid as Chennai (Madras), an Indian city of 9 million people, and the surrounding region clean up from flooding caused by the heaviest rainfall in 100 years.

Floodwaters started receding in Tamil Nadu state, where at least 280 people died in early December after nearly 40 days of rainfall blamed on

climate change.

"Dazzling December has become disastrous December, creating havoc in the hearts of people," said Daniel Devadhas, president of the Southeast India Union, which is helping coordinate the relief work. "These people have lost everything," he said. "No shelter, no food. It has affected the middle class as well as higher-class people."

All Adventist Church employees, except for Bible workers, have been

deployed to distribute food, clothing, and bedding, Devadhas said. The Southeast India Union is coordinating relief efforts in partnership with ADRA India, Hope Channel India, the South-Central India Union, and many Adventist students and church members.

So far 18,150 kilograms (40,000 pounds) of rice, 6,800 kilograms (15,000 pounds) of dhal, 20,000 liters (5,300 gallons) of oil, 2,000 bedsheets, 2,000 mats, 5,000 liters (1,320 gallons) of bottled water, thousands of articles of clothing, and 15,000 meals have been handed out to Adventist church members and their neighbors in the southern and northern parts of Chennai, Devadhas said. ■





PIXABAY

## What Did Ellen White Say About Islam?

*The Ellen G. White Estate answered this question in a 2007 reply.*

**D**id Ellen White say anything about the rise and threat of militant Islam?

There is only one reference to Moslem, Muslim, Mohammed, or Mohammedanism (as the Islamic faith was referred to in her day) in her writings. It is found in *The Home Missionary*, September 1892, Article A, paragraph 4:

“The Saviour has said, ‘He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.’ He says again, ‘And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.’

“Mohammedanism has its converts in many lands, and its advocates deny the divinity of Christ. Shall this faith be propagated, and the advocates of truth fail to manifest intense zeal to overthrow the error, and teach men of the preexistence of the only Saviour of the world?

“O how we need [men and women] who will search and believe the Word of God, who will present Jesus to the world in His divine and

human nature, declaring with power and in demonstration of the Spirit that ‘there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.’ O how we need believers who will now present Christ in life and character, who will hold Him up before the world as the brightness of the Father’s glory, proclaiming that God is love!”

The prophets do not seem to receive messages regarding every political, or even religious, movement that may arise. There is nothing in the Bible or Ellen White’s writings about Nazi Germany, for instance, even though it had a major impact on the world in the mid-twentieth century. The same may be said for Communism, which added a direct challenge to religion and certainly the Seventh-day Adventist faith.

The messages of the prophets, it seems, focus on the core issues and players for the great controversy that is now going on. Ellen White was shown a different power at the core of the conflict in the last days. It was not Islam (see [ellenwhite.org/content/file/islam#document](http://ellenwhite.org/content/file/islam#document)). ■

*Editor’s note: Three people have been baptized after nine months of work by two Seventh-day Adventist missionaries in a village in China. Twelve more people are attending weekly Bible studies. But the efforts to share Jesus are challenging. Many people are traditional and superstitious. Here is the firsthand account of one woman who was baptized.*

**A** few months ago two missionaries moved to my village. They told me that they were Christians who believed in Jesus. What is a Christian? Who is Jesus? I had never heard these terms before.

The missionaries rented a house and set up a place for meetings. They called it a church, explaining that it is a place to worship the Lord of the universe. I knew of many gods, like the god of harvest and the god of thunder. But the name of Jesus was new to me.

The missionaries opened their Bible, sharing how the earth, the sun, the moon, and the rest of nature were created. They also told me that Jesus is coming to this world very soon, and that He will bring us to heaven, where there is no more death, natural disaster, and sorrow.

After spending a few months with these missionaries, I came to know that they are good people. They loved and cared for our villagers. After participating in their Bible study group for a few months, I understand the truth and decided to follow Jesus. He is the only God of the universe.

We have worship in a house

A small church in a remote village in China.



By **SISTER M**, via Audrey Folkenberg, development department director, Chinese Union Mission

# “I Knew of Thunder and Harvest Gods but Never Heard of Jesus”

*Testimony: A newly baptized church member tells how she came to know about the Lord of the Sabbath in China.*

church every Sabbath. I guess it is common for you to attend a church on the last day of the week. However, this practice was strange to me. I had to fight for the privilege of worshipping the Creator every Sabbath.

My husband, a traditional Chinese farmer, believes in the god of the harvest. He disagreed with my religion, challenging the notion that Jesus could give him a good harvest. I did not want to argue with him, because I love him. The only thing I could do is to pray for him. The missionaries told me that the Holy Spirit would lead my husband and me.

When harvesttime came, it was hard for me to worship on Sabbaths. My husband needed me to reap his

crops rather than to attend a church. But I really wanted to go to church on Sabbath!

One Sabbath morning my church had a Communion service planned. This would be my first time to experience this special event. Before leaving home for church, I prepared myself and left quietly. I was worried that my husband would come to my church and bring me back to the farm.

When I left the house to get on my bike, my husband was standing there at the front door of our house. He hit and condemned me. He snatched my Bible and pushed over my bike.

I cried because I could not go to church. I prayed silently that the Holy Spirit would soften my husband’s heart.

Suddenly a man called my husband to help him. His angry eyes stared at me as he went to lend a hand. I could go to church and worship after all. I was so thankful for the opportunity to worship that Sabbath.

My husband is still very rooted in his traditional beliefs. I have explained to him that I am not superstitious, and that church is a good place for people to learn the truth. I tell him that Jesus always loves him, begging him to accept the real God who protects him.

He now allows me to go to church on Sabbath. During weekdays I work hard to help him with his farmwork. I continue to pray that my husband will understand me and someday come to accept Jesus. ■

Last month in this column we looked at the foundation of our salvation—Christ our righteousness. This is one of three components of a healthy Christian life that we as a church will be focusing on during the next five years. The other two components are faithfulness and total member involvement.

You may have read my article “Called to Faithfulness: Now Is the Time,” in which we discussed how God is calling His remnant people everywhere to be faithful to Him through our connection and communion with Him each day (published July 2015; [www.adventistworld.org/2015/july/called-to-faithfulness.html](http://www.adventistworld.org/2015/july/called-to-faithfulness.html)).

In this month’s article I would like to focus on one especially important aspect of faithfulness—being faithful to God’s Holy Word, the Bible.

### **Our Sacred Responsibility**

One of the biggest battles we face is over the authority of the Word of God. The devil has always hated God’s Word and does everything to neutralize its effect. As Seventh-day Adventists, it is our sacred responsibility to

protect, lift up, and promote the life-saving power of the sure Word.

The world around us is falling apart. People are distraught about security and personal safety. They wonder what horrible event will next take place during normal daily activity. Millions of migrants are trying to escape the brutality and uncertainty of ruthlessness and total confusion. The unknown has become the enemy.

People don’t think the world around them is going in the right direction, and they are right. We’re living in the end of time according to Seventh-day Adventist prophetic interpretation and correct hermeneutical application of Scripture. What is needed isn’t a political, military, or social solution, but a return to a sure foundation—God’s sure Word.

### **Certainty of God’s Word**

The apostle Peter shares tremendous encouragement about the certainty of God’s Word:

“For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses

of His majesty. . . . And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:16-21).

People have always needed a sure foundation. The sure word of prophecy is something we can count on, and it’s needed today more than ever. The Bible provides the only hope for the future as it points to the gospel message of Christ, His righteousness, His salvation, His ministry in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, and His final redemption of His people at His second coming. It’s our enormous privilege to share this message through the power of the Holy Spirit.

### **People of the Book**

Seventh-day Adventists have long treasured the Bible and have been known as “people of the Book.” However, in this age of relativism with no

By TED N. C. WILSON

# Faithful Followers

*Because He Is Faithful*



# “What is needed isn’t a political, military, or social solution, but a **return** to God’s sure Word.”

absolutes, are we still known as “people of the Book”?

Of course, we don’t believe in “bibliolatry.” We don’t worship the Bible: we worship the “Word” that was made flesh—Jesus Christ, our Lord. He is the “Word,” and what’s *in* His book is important. What a privilege to hear the Word of God, to listen to its instruction, to understand its directives for living the victorious life through Christ’s justifying and sanctifying power.

## How We Read God’s Word

The Word of God, however, is being ignored more and more. It’s becoming fashionable to misinterpret and misapply what is plainly indicated in Scripture. It’s being reinterpreted by those who participate in the higher criticism or historical-critical approach to Scripture—those who place themselves above Scripture as they interpret according to their own standards and approaches.

How we read God’s Word is important because *how* we read it helps us to know truth from error. The church will be deluged with apostasies and false doctrine. But the Word of God stands sure, and His church will be triumphant against the attacks of the devil.

We are to faithfully follow and promote the historical-biblical method of interpreting Scripture, allowing the Bible to interpret itself, line upon line and precept upon precept. An excellent document, titled “Methods of Bible Study” (<https://www.adventist.org/en/information/official-statements/documents/article/go/0/methods-of-bible-study/>) carefully outlines how to faithfully study God’s Holy Word. This document was voted on October 12, 1986, at the world church’s Annual Council held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

As Seventh-day Adventists, we should carefully adhere to the Bible

study methods outlined in this document. We’re to follow the historicist view of prophecy and biblical understanding. Don’t let anyone turn you from the historicist understanding and the historical-biblical interpretation of Scripture. Be faithful, and stand firm for God’s Word.

Note the following inspired instruction about accepting the Bible as it reads: “God requires more of His followers than many realize. If we would not build our hopes of heaven upon a false foundation we must accept the Bible as it reads and believe that the Lord means what He says.”\*

## Products of Heavenly Inspiration

As we face the last days of earth’s history, we know there will be a determined effort by Satan to destroy the effectiveness of the Bible—and the Spirit of Prophecy. We see the neutralization of God’s Word all around us. The historical-critical method applied to the Word of God reduces its effectiveness as authoritative. It’s Satan’s plan to undermine God’s plain “Thus saith the Lord.” We’ve seen determined efforts by some to attack the Spirit of Prophecy and make it “of none effect.”

The Word of God and the Spirit of Prophecy are both products of heavenly inspiration and are thus accurate accounts describing the great controversy between good and evil—between Christ and Satan. This is why the devil is determined to destroy the truth found in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. Thankfully, the devil will not succeed, but in the process many people will be deceived. God has given us a mandate from heaven to be faithful defenders of His Word because it’s been shown to be true and changes people’s lives. The dilemmas of this world tell us we are at the edge of eternity. God wants to work in and through us.

We are living in the Laodicean last-day period when Christianity is often very superficial. The devil will try everything to distract us from the Bible and the truth. Every possible means will be used: recreation, media, amusements, work, music, disagreements and internal fighting, false teachings, family discord, economic problems—anything that will take time away from God’s Word.

## Responding in Faithfulness

Nevertheless, God is faithful to us. Through His power, let’s respond in faithfulness to Him. He calls us to be faithful in our personal relationship with Him, faithful to His Word, faithful in daily Bible study, faithful in the study of the Spirit of Prophecy, and faithful in our constant prayer life. In a world filled with ever-increasing violence, bombings, shootings, and tragic death all over the globe, let’s be faithful to God’s plan of restoration at His soon second coming. Jesus tells us: “Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Rev. 2:10).

By God’s grace, let’s champion the Word of God and lift up Christ, who is the Word. Let’s make the Bible come alive and make it the foundation of our belief. We are facing a battle, and we must know what we believe in. There are absolutes, and they are found in the Word of God. Now is the time for faithful adherence to His Word. Jesus says, “Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown” (Rev. 3:11). Let’s be faithful to God and His Word!

\* Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif., Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 5, p. 171.



**Ted N. C. Wilson** is president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



# Graduate Student Discovers *Tyrannosaurus* Bone

By JAMES PONDER, LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH

Matthew McLain made headlines when he announced at the 2015 annual meeting of the Geological Society of America that *Tyrannosaurus rex*, the ferocious, fanged dinosaur, was a cannibal. McLain concluded that serrated bite marks on the bones of a *Tyrannosaurus rex* from the Lance Formation in Wyoming were made by another member of the same species.

McLain presented his findings at the 2015 annual meeting of the Geological Society of America, which was held in Baltimore, Maryland, November 1-4. He also authored an abstract, which the society published under the title “Tyrannosaur Cannibalism: a Case of a Tooth-traced Tyrannosaur Bone in the Lance Formation of Eastern Wyoming.” “A lot of paleontologists have been suspecting that can-

nibalism was going on in tyrannosaurs,” McLain observes.

According to the article, the yellow-brown fossil “is heavily marked with several long grooves on its cortical surface, all concentrated on the bone’s widest end.” To the untrained eye, the grooves look like a series of erratic scrape marks, yet on closer examination—especially when viewed under a microscope—they reveal the serrated patterns of the predatory animal’s teeth.

The paleontological smoking gun is not entirely without controversy, however. “Most people say there’s only one species of tyrannosaur in the Lance Formation,” McLain reports, “and that is *Tyrannosaurus rex*, or *T. rex*. But a few say there is also another species known as *Nanotyrannus lancensis*. Based on the size of this bone, this could possibly be a case of *T. rex* eating a *Nanotyrannus*. But it could



**Left:** KEY FINDING: Matthew McLain, a PH.D. candidate at Loma Linda University, recently published a paper suggesting that *Tyrannosaurus Rex* was a cannibal. **Right:** EXHIBIT ONE: Serrated marks found on this bone are similar to those that would have been made by a *Tyrannosaurus Rex*.

PHOTOS: LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH

also be a juvenile *T. rex* being eaten by an adult. Most paleontologists think *Nanotyrannus* is just a juvenile *T. rex*, anyway.”

To find out, McLain plans to compare the bone to *Tyrannosaurus* bones in other collections. If that doesn't solve the mystery, he says, researchers may slice through the sample and examine it in cross-section to see if the animal in question was finished growing at the time it died. “If it wasn't, most people will say it's a young *T. rex*,” he says. “I'm inclined to agree with that, and most researchers are, too.”

One of McLain's two mentors on the Lance Formation dig—Arthur V. Chadwick, research professor of biology and geology at Southwestern Adventist University—suggests that *Nanotyrannus* may actually be a new species. His other mentor on the project, Leonard R. Brand, professor of biology and paleontology at the Loma Linda University School of Medicine, says that because of the current disagreement over whether *Nanotyrannus* is a separate species, it can be difficult to ascertain for certain the type of dinosaur the bone represents.

Even though the exact type of tyrannosaur is somewhat in question, McLain says it's a pretty amazing finding just the same. “This finding is telling us a lot about the way dinosaurs were behaving,” he says. “Since this was one of the bones of the hind leg, we can assume that it was eaten after the animal was already dead. We do see cannibalism in some modern animals like sharks and lions. This is not the only example of *Tyrannosaurus* cannibalism, but it is the best example.

“For me, the amazing thing is that 100 years ago, people would have chucked this broken bone away,” he

says, reflecting on the current advances in protocols and technology that allow a much higher degree of certainty than in the past. “I think it's really fascinating what you can learn from a broken bone.”

McLain is scheduled to graduate with a Ph.D. degree in earth sciences in June 2016. He hopes to continue studying dinosaurs throughout his career. “I want to teach,” he concludes, “and I'd like to do research as well.”

## Southern Adventist University Involved in Two of the Top Ten Biblical Archaeology Discoveries of 2015

■ *Christianity Today*, one of the leading Christian magazines in America, recently published “Biblical Archaeology's Top Ten Discoveries of 2015.” Two of the finds listed came from excavations sponsored by Southern Adventist University's Institute of Archaeology.

Number five on the list is the Eshba'al inscription found at Khirbet Qeiyafa, located in the Elah Valley in southern Israel. The inscription dates to the days of Saul and David and mentions a man named Eshba'al, a name given to one of King Saul's sons.

The inscription's publication made international headlines in June 2015 and prompted a meeting between directors of the dig and Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. This name occurs only in tenth-century contexts in the Bible, which means that the biblical text fits very well with the archaeological data in Judah. It also confirms, with other inscriptions found at the site, that Hebrew writing was well established in Judah by the



SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

**PRIZED POTTERY:** A participant at one of the archeology digs sponsored in part by Southern Adventist University displays an artifact. Two of SAU's digs made it to Christianity Today's Top 10 Archaeology Digs of 2015.

early tenth century B.C. Khirbet Qeiyafa has become the crucial site in the ongoing debate about the early history of Judah.

New data from the site, including this inscription, has established an early date for the monarchies of Saul and David, which some scholars wish to dismiss from history.

Number four on *Christianity Today's* list is the Canaanite ostrakon found at Tel Lachish. This is the first time a proto-Canaanite inscription was found in the past 30 years of archaeology in Israel. The context of the inscription was a Late Bronze Age Canaanite temple at Tel Lachish, one of the most important cities of Canaan during the period of the Judges. The fragmentary inscription is

*Continued on next page* ▶





difficult to read, but it provides important information about the development of the proto-Canaanite alphabet as it progressed from Hebrew to Greek to Latin.

Southern Adventist University is a cosponsor with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem of the expeditions to Khirbet Qeiyafa and Lachish. The Khirbet Qeiyafa excavation concluded in 2013 and is now completing final publications. The fourth expedition to Lachish began its investigations at the second most important biblical site in Judah in 2013 and has become the largest excavation in the Middle East, with nearly 120 staff and volunteers in the field every year. An international consortium of Adventist institutions joins Southern every year, including the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (Philippines), Adventist University of Bolivia (Bolivia), and Helderberg College (South Africa).

The excavations at Lachish have also uncovered massive destructions from the Babylonian campaign of Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. (2 Kings 25), where dozens of whole vessels have been found, and the earlier 701 B.C. destruction by Sennacherib, king of Assyria (2 Kings 18; Isa. 36; 37). The Assyrian destruction level contained several LMLK jars found on the surface. In previous expeditions more than 400 LMLK storage jar handles were uncovered at Lachish many dating specifically to King Hezekiah. The term LMLK in Hebrew means “for the king.”

This summer the project will continue from June 16 to July 24 as more buried secrets are uncovered from the ancient city of Lachish. For information about how to participate, visit

southern.edu/lachish.

—*Lucas R. Patterson, Southern Adventist University*

## Haystacks Help Adventist School Win \$30,000

■ On December 17, 2015, the Pennsylvania Conference’s Mountain View Christian School in Williamsport received a \$30,000 check from the Uncle Ben’s Beginners Contest, thanks to a video about haystacks (a meal resembling a taco salad).

Third grader Jackson Fulmer and his family created a video demonstrating how to make his favorite meal, haystacks. The video, *The Adventures of Uncle Ben Boy*, shows how to make haystacks, a beloved meal of many American Seventh-day Adventists. After being selected as one of 25 finalists, the video was chosen to be among the top five videos with the most votes, making it a grand prize winner.

Jackson, his siblings, Harrison and Waverly, and his mom, April, appear in the video. His dad, Jeff, filmed and edited it. As Jeff was driving home from work the Friday before the submission deadline, he says the idea just “popped into his head,” and he had a plan for what they would do.

Local news and several Adventist organizations shared the video and encouraged people to vote for Jackson. “I was on TV a lot, in the news and on the radio,” says Jackson. “I knew I was going to win. I had a dream about it. . . [But] I had to wait and wait and wait [for the results].”

Besides helping financially, the contest helped the school “become much more visible to our community, and for good values,” says Franklin

Stahl, principal. “The local TV station has done three segments, a Christian radio station did an interview, and the story made front page in the newspaper. We hear people talking about us. Our mayor was grateful to be a part of our ceremony and requested he be part of a future celebration meal.”

Jackson found out he won on December 10, but kept it a secret from his classmates until they were surprised by a visit from Mars Food representatives, Pennsylvania Conference officials, and the mayor of South Williamsport. Representatives from Mars, the parent company of Uncle Ben’s, presented the school with a \$30,000 check.

“We couldn’t have done it without everyone faithfully voting for us,” says April. “It’s been so neat to see our Adventist community rallying behind him. It has been amazing.”

—*Michelle Bernard, Pennsylvania Conference*

## NAD Leaders Pack 20,000 Meals

■ On December 12, 2015, leaders of the North American Division, along with their extended families, packed more than 20,000 meals for hungry people around the world. Sponsored by Stop Hunger Now, a nonprofit group based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the 20,000 meals were packaged together with meals packed by other groups and shipped in containers that hold 285,000 meals each. Stop Hunger Now works in more than 70 countries, and the meals will go to feeding programs and orphanages that are coordinated by their partners.

The meals consisted of rice, dried vegetables, vitamin packets, and dried

vegetable protein, which were put into bags that feed six people at a time. The packaged food has a shelf life of two years once it is assembled. All that is needed to prepare the meal is access to boiling water, making it simple to quickly provide nutritious food to those in need.

To assemble the meals, attendees of the leadership retreat gathered at large tables set up to manage the filling of the meal bags. NAD leaders and their family members dove right into the assembly process, and a gong was rung every time 2,000 meals were packed. It had been estimated that it would take roughly two hours to fill all the bags, but the teams were able to reach their goal in only 90 minutes.

—Dan Weber, North American Division



SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

GROUP EFFORT: NAD leaders and their extended families packed 20,000 meals as part of a holiday outreach in December.

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Thanks to the support of fellow church members, Amanda Shaver uses her spiritual gifts to serve others.

# He Carries Me Through

*The church is where people come for healing.*

By RACHEL N. ASHWORTH, writing for the *Mid-America Outlook*



HONOR WARREN

In nearly six years of attending the Adventist Church, Amanda Shaver has rarely had an enjoyable experience. She doesn't have a problem with the message or the people; it's how the message is sometimes *presented*, and how the people are just *there*.

For individuals like Amanda, staying home is a more restful Sabbath experience. Even in her small church she sometimes feels overwhelmed and claustrophobic. When given jobs, she can feel pressured and uncertain. Sometimes these feelings manifest themselves in ways that seem like rudeness or indifference to her church family, but in reality are a biological response to invisible disabilities.

Amanda has suffered from sensory processing disorder, schizophrenia, and post-traumatic stress disorder since she was a child. Periodically she also deals with depression and anxiety associated with these conditions, making it hard to function in settings as simple as a small church service. Although Amanda joined the church at age 20, she wasn't taken seriously, because she spent most of her time sitting with the children or writing in a journal.

## Caring Enough to Ask

Christians have unwritten rules for maintaining self-control over our urges, emotions, addictions, and fears. When Amanda came to the church, she understood this and immediately felt as if she was doing something wrong. Often angry and afraid, she would walk out of church and retreat to her addictions of cigarettes and controlled eating. Many times she would leave spiritually unfed simply because there were too many men in the congregation.

Because a concerned member took the initiative to ask Amanda about her struggles, her church family learned that her fear of men was rooted deep in her history of familial abuse. If no one had inquired, her church would never have realized what a victory it was that she asked a male mentor and church elder to baptize her into that welcoming little church.

## The Power of Acceptance

Looking back, Amanda says that acceptance made the most difference. The church accepted the fact that Amanda was more comfortable with kids, and she excelled at ministering to them. They saw quickly that she was

honest and faithful and had a way with words, so they let her speak. They understood that she had a history, and supported her efforts to reach out to others with a similar history.

In March 2013 Amanda spearheaded the first Butterfly Project hosted at Peace Point Chapel in Sikeston, Missouri. The Butterfly Project is a self-harm awareness program where community professionals share information regarding mind-body-spirit relationships ([www.cuttingdepression.net/butterfly-project](http://www.cuttingdepression.net/butterfly-project)). Amanda feels strongly about this program. "The whole point is to educate the church and the community about mental disabilities and mental health," she says. "We also touched on physical issues."

Amanda's dream was to host an awareness seminar every year, but life brought other plans. While most of her struggles were invisible, Amanda also suffered physically for several years. In 2014 Amanda was diagnosed with myotonic dystrophy, a form of muscular dystrophy, which in Amanda's case is very aggressive. In a matter of months Amanda suffered such intense spasms in her limbs that she broke several bones in her feet and



soon gained the unlucky label “wheelchair-bound.”

Suddenly she was unable to manage young children from her heavy power chair or stand at the podium to preach. Sometimes the spasms in her hands kept her from playing her guitar. People who had come to terms with her sometimes abrasive personality and understood her internal struggles began to look on her with pity, talking as if she wasn’t there, and judging her absences from church.

It would have been easy for Amanda to become angry with God, angry with her church, and quit attending. So why does she wake up Sabbaths at 4:00 a.m. to physically prepare for the day, practice praise music, and get herself to church week after week? “Because God expects it out of me,” she says. “I love Him, and He told me to!”

### Mercy and Love Ministries

When Tina Moore, a local church elder and Amanda’s mentor, invited her to help with a Celebrate Recovery group in the nearby town of Gideon, Amanda went. At first she didn’t expect to do anything but fill a seat, but now she facilitates the group of 12 females. She is good at leading this program because she has dealt with addictions and codependency for much of her life.

At the time of her baptism Amanda was struggling with a severe eating disorder. That’s when Tina started e-mailing Amanda a daily Scripture verse. Amanda would spend the day studying the verse and writing down her thoughts about God and herself, then send the message back. Tina soon realized that Amanda was writing devotionals. Four years later these have grown in depth, along with

her spiritual understanding (to read Amanda’s blog, visit [www.mercyandloveministries.com](http://www.mercyandloveministries.com)).

### One Thing, One Person

Amanda’s thoughtful devotionals, her work with parolees at Celebrate Recovery, even her 15-minute praise services, are all things she can do. Someone told her she could, God blessed her with talents, so she does.

Amanda offers this advice to those who may have a family member with a disability, or a church with no program for such individuals: “Find the one thing that is possible to do, and do it. If you have a gift and are able to use it for God, you don’t need a special program. All you need is one person saying you can do it.” ■

For more information about ministering to those with disabilities, visit: [NAD-dm.org/](http://NAD-dm.org/).



HONOR WARREN

Amanda Shaver (center) is thankful for the understanding and acceptance she receives from James and Tina Moore.

## Connecting With People With Special Needs

1. Remember that a medication, diagnosis, or special need is unrelated to a person’s relationship with God.
2. Instead of inviting them to functions they repeatedly miss, consider planning something new, or simply invite them to socialize at your house.
3. Be a friend despite their absence at church. They miss their church family when they cannot attend.
4. To get to know them or understand their behavior, tactfully ask them to educate you about their disabilities.
5. When you speak, remember personal space. Speaking slowly and loudly only helps people who are hearing-impaired.
6. Those in wheelchairs, especially children, love to be on your level. Consider bending down or pulling a chair close.

*Disabilities Ministries Quick Start Guide in English or Spanish is designed to help you begin or improve disabilities ministries in your local church. Order one at [AdventSource.org](http://AdventSource.org), or through your local Adventist Book Center.*

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- Stephan, Listener in Ukraine



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By DANIEL WEBER

# Our Gift to Strangers

I was recently nominated to take part in a social media challenge to spend seven days sharing photos of nature, then challenge others to take part in the event. As I went through my collection of photos, I paused to reflect on the stories behind each one: stories of different cultures and people groups; landscapes with never-ending beauty; and a focus on the mission of a church intent on spreading the gospel around the world.

Further reflection opened my mind to the landscape of the North American Division, and how it is a reflection of the world. Many of the cultures and people groups I have visited around the world are now represented in the demographics of my homeland. In many ways the world has come to North America. We must try to understand the way this world speaks and thinks if we are to succeed in connecting with it. Just as those arriving must adapt to life in a new country, we must also adapt our “old” methods of reaching people to ones that will be effective to this “new” audience.

Psalm 96 gives us a look at how we must proceed as people called to share the love of God with the world. These words of wisdom are even more relevant as we see the world coming to our shores, and the North American Division becoming a mission field at home.

*“Oh, sing to the Lord a new song!  
Sing to the Lord, all the earth.  
Sing to the Lord, bless His name;  
Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.  
Declare His glory among the nations,  
His wonders among all peoples.  
For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised;  
He is to be feared above all gods.  
For all the gods of the peoples are idols,  
But the Lord made the heavens.  
Honor and majesty are before Him;  
Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.*”

*Give to the Lord, O families of the peoples,  
Give to the Lord glory and strength.  
Give to the Lord the glory due His name;  
Bring an offering, and come into his courts.  
Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!  
Tremble before Him, all the earth.  
Say among the nations, ‘The Lord reigns;  
The world also is firmly established,  
It shall not be moved;  
He shall judge the peoples righteously.’  
Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;  
Let the sea roar, and all its fullness.  
Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it.  
Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the Lord.  
For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth.  
He shall judge the world with righteousness,  
And the peoples with His truth.”*

I have written about my experience as a student missionary, and the impact it played on my life. It was a life-changing experience to live in a different culture and try to share my faith to those I was different from. I was changed as much as the people I witnessed to. What I didn’t account for was the challenge I faced when I returned home.

In a short two-year span I had adjusted to living in a different culture. The changes I faced upon returning home were dramatic. I remember being on a plane as it approached the Eastern seaboard and crying when I saw the wall of pollution that blocked the blue sky I had come to take for granted. Large crowds overwhelmed me, and I found myself looking for ways to escape this now-strange world, one in which I had spent the first 20 years of my life. Imagine how hard it must be for people who come to North America for the first time.

As you interact with those who are new to this land, pause for a moment and imagine yourself in their shoes. What must they be going through? What challenges do they face?

Maybe all they need is a compassionate word, look, or touch. One that represents the hope we sometimes take for granted. ■



**Daniel Weber** is director of communication for the North American Division.





## NAD Letters

### “Did God Create Dinosaurs?” (November 2015)

God through Ellen White gives us the following insight on the subject: “Every species of animals which God had created was preserved in the ark. The confused species which God did not create, which were the result of amalgamation, were destroyed by the Flood. Since the Flood, there has been amalgamation of man and beast, as may be seen in the almost endless varieties of species of animals, and in certain races of men (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 78).

LYN BRIGHAM  
Keene, Texas

### “Looking for Legalism, Finding Hypocrisy” (November 2015)

I appreciated Joseph Olstad’s analysis in “Looking for Legalism, Finding Hypocrisy” (November 2015). Thank you for publishing it.

Displaying the righteous facade to hide one’s disobedience is just as common today as it was in the days of Jesus. But the greatest insight in this article is how easy it is for us to miss a vital point, no matter how many times Jesus plainly states it, simply because it doesn’t fit the paradigm we have in our minds.

I want to take that step from only seeing what I’m looking for, to looking for what the Bible actually says.

KEN LEBRUN  
Kettle Falls, Washington

Wow! I just read Joseph Olstad’s article “Looking for Legalism, Finding Hypocrisy” in the November edition of *Adventist World*.

I estimate that I have sat through nearly 1,000 Sabbath school discussions on this topic, and Olstad’s careful biblical analysis brings such a breath of fresh air. I noticed especially the focus on inauthenticity, which constitutes problem 1 in reaching and gaining the trust of today’s young people.

BILL KRICK  
Clovis, California

Joseph Olstead, in his vigorously argued article, pointed out that Jesus never described actions that are commonly called legalism today as “legalism,” but rather “hypocrisy.”

However, it should be noted that Jesus never would have used the term “legalism,” because the term did not even exist in His day, nor is it found in all of Scripture. The term “legalism” is a later theological term describing part of Paul’s theology, in which he describes and decries his own experience.

DENNIS BERLIN  
Price, Utah

### “A Question of Sonship” (November 2015)

Angel Manuel Rodríguez states that in the Old Testament, sons of God are angels. I am taking that to mean heavenly angels. He also says, “At the moment of creation we are told that ‘all the angels [Heb. “sons of God”] shouted for joy.”

I have a question. In Job 38:7, who are the morning stars that sang together if the sons of God are the angels?

May our Father in heaven bless and watch over you through this end-time. Like Jesus said: “Take ye heed, watch and

pray: for ye know not when the time is” (Mark 13:33, KJV). Jesus is coming!

AUBREY THOMAS  
Helena, Oklahoma

### Thank You

I always appreciate each issue, even passing them along to someone who I feel could use the information. Sometimes, though, it’s just better to write you to say: Thank you, *Adventist World*, and to all who made it possible for me to receive this gift.

JERRY THOMPSON  
Aberdeen, Washington

### “Relief From Osteoarthritis Pain” (October 2015)

I appreciated this article. You mentioned reduction of weight as a possible benefit; however, I wish you had given some thought to the types of foods to avoid that might be helpful. In my case I had a crippling in my hand a number of years ago, but the disease stopped advancing almost immediately when I avoided dairy products.

Lately, while using the medication Lyrica, the swelling and pain began again, so obviously some medications in some individuals seem to increase this health issue. Just a thought.

ERIC KREYE  
College Place, Washington



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By PETER N. LANDLESS and ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES

# The Antibiotic Dilemma



**I was recently diagnosed with pneumonia, and my doctor prescribed antibiotics. I was feeling very unwell, but because I don't like taking any medications, I took the antibiotics only until I felt better and then stopped. Is it safe to use the balance later?**

**T**his question highlights some very important concepts.

Antibiotics are helpful medications intended to fight infections and diseases caused by bacteria. They work by either killing the bacteria or preventing them from reproducing. Antibiotics are helpful in bringing infections under control, and assisting the body's immune system in the process of eliminating offending bacteria from the system.

Sir Alexander Fleming discovered the earliest known antibiotic in 1928. Only in the 1940s was penicillin used in the treatment of wounded soldiers in World War II. This successful experience ushered in an exciting era of progress in fighting bacteria with antimicrobials (antibiotics). Since that time many different kinds of antibiotics have been manufactured, even to the extent of the so-called designer type of antibiotic, which aims at very specific mechanisms to control the multiplication and kill the bacteria.

As exciting as the journey of discovery and refinement of antibiotics has been, it has also been fraught with numerous problems. Some individuals

are unable to tolerate certain antibiotics; this intolerance ranges from severe allergy (anaphylaxis)—which may even cause death—to skin rashes; mild to moderate diarrhea; and superadded infection with fungi, such as *Candida*.

In addition, numerous bacteria have developed the ability to create resistance to the antibiotics being used; Fleming himself noted this characteristic in the earliest days of penicillin. This has resulted in the need for the use of combinations of antibiotics, and also for the development of what have become known as third- and fourth-generation classes of specific antibiotics.

The mechanism by which bacteria develop resistance has been recognized for many years; these microorganisms undergo genetic changes, which are mediated by phages and plasmids. These small molecules, or “packages,” of DNA (genetic material) can be transferred from one bacterium to another. Recently Chinese scientists have noted a very significant and extremely worrying development: the ability of certain bacteria to transfer this resistance horizontally between different bacterial strains.

This was noted in routine surveillance of food animals, such as pigs, and signaled the first time that such resistance to the polymyxin antibiotic colistin was observed. This has caused great consternation in the scientific world, with fears that if such resistance continues to develop, the practical and helpful use of antibiotics may be coming to an end! Although the resistance described above is currently limited to China, it is anticipated that it will spread throughout the world.

Back to your question: Always complete the course of antibiotics, even if you feel better before the treatment is completed. This will decrease the amount of antibiotic resistance. There should never be leftover antibiotics in your medicine cabinet. Encourage those over whom you have influence to do the same. ■



**Peter N. Landless**, a board-certified cardiologist, is director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department.

**Allan R. Handysides**, a board-certified gynecologist, is a former director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department.



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Read Ellen White's letters and manuscripts at [EGWwritings.org](http://EGWwritings.org) and the EGWwritings2 app (for iOS products).



# Ellen White's Letters and Manuscripts

By TIM POIRIER

*Things you should know about the new online collection*

In July 2015, on the centennial of Ellen White's death, the White Estate made available for free on its Web site and apps the letters and manuscripts of Ellen White. The entire collection, found at [www.egwwritings.org](http://www.egwwritings.org), consists of more than 8,000 documents roughly equivalent to 50,000 pages. These materials were previously available for reading and study only in hard copy form at the White Estate main office and its many branch offices and research centers around the world.

## Why Not Published Earlier?

Although commonly referred to as Ellen White's unpublished manuscripts, it is important to note that many of the documents—in fact, about two thirds of them—have already been printed in whole or in

part in the many compilations and manuscript releases published over the years. Sensitive materials, often dealing with the personal failings of individuals, had remained largely unpublished up to their 2015 release, but with the passing of more generations since the time of the original recipients, it was decided the materials could be made available generally.

Another factor is the advance of technology. If the entire collection was to be printed and sold in bookstores, it would take the shelf space of more than 100 volumes, and the cost would be prohibitive. However, thanks to our digital age, if you want to read the complete letter from which only a portion was quoted in one of the compilations, you can access the materials with a few clicks of a mouse or by simply launching the EGW Writings app.

## Complimentary Materials

Some might ask why anyone would take an interest in these materials when we already have all her published works. That's a good question, because there is nothing wrong with confining one's study to the thousands of articles and scores of books and pamphlets Ellen White published during her lifetime. In fact, she said quite plainly regarding herself: "If you desire to know what the Lord has revealed through her, read her published works."<sup>1</sup> We might regard her letters, sermons, diaries, and other unpublished communications as complementary materials that provide a window not only into her beliefs and prophetic teachings, but also into her personal life as a wife, mother, counselor, and church pioneer.

### Some Major Distinctions

At the same time, it is important to recognize some of the major distinctions between her unpublished manuscripts and her published works. Foremost is that what she wrote in her articles and books was intended to speak to the church at large. In contrast, Ellen White's personal letters were addressed to individuals in particular circumstances; they often dealt with matters of local interest, such as who might best serve at a certain sanitarium, or how "Brother Smith" needed stronger support from his fellow believers. Principles can be derived from such communications, but understanding the historical context is important so as not to misapply the instruction given. In 2014 the White Estate made a start toward providing such background with its publication of volume 1 of *The Ellen G. White Letters and Manuscripts With Annotations*, covering the first 15 years of her ministry. It is hoped that funding will be forthcoming to keep that project moving forward.

Another distinction between Ellen White's unpublished collection and her published works is in the level of attention she gave to materials she never expected to be published. In other words, consider the difference in how you write a quick routine e-mail compared to one that you expect to be posted online and read by anyone in the world. You would scrutinize every sentence to make sure it accurately expressed your thoughts so as to avoid as much misunderstanding as possible. And if you shared a draft with your associates, they might suggest ways in which the communication could be better organized or rephrased.

So it is with Ellen White's letters and manuscripts. When comparing what she first wrote in letter form with what she may have later incorporated into a published article or book, we should not be surprised to find the



The background image here and on the previous page is an example of the editorial corrections made by Ellen White's literary assistants, with her supervision. The cabinet that contains her letters and manuscripts is in the Ellen G. White Estate offices in Maryland, United States.



material improved editorially. That was the assignment of her literary assistants: not to write the content, but to assist Ellen White in preparing it for publication.

Ellen White's son W. C. White explained that "Mother's workers of experience . . . are authorized to take a sentence, paragraph, or section from one manuscript and incorporate it with another manuscript where the same thought was expressed but not so clearly. But none of Mother's workers are authorized to add to the manuscripts by introducing thoughts of their own."<sup>2</sup> The documents were then reviewed and approved by Ellen White before being printed or mailed. Similarly, changed circumstances might result in Ellen White's choosing to add or omit entire sentences or paragraphs when making use of a letter or manuscript in a later publication.

### Was Everything Ellen White Wrote Inspired?

Perhaps the most challenging question related to Ellen White's letters and manuscripts is: Can we draw a sharp line between what is inspired counsel and what is mere human opinion? Her collection consists of letters written to well-known Adventist leaders, but it also contains letters addressed to "My Dear Son Edson," or "My Dear Niece Addie," or "My Dear Granddaughter Mabel." Fully one fourth of the letters preserved are addressed to Ellen White's family. Did she write those under inspiration? What about letters written to those managing her property back in America while she was serving the church in Europe and Australia?

We are reminded that at least 20 books in the New Testament are actually letters written to churches or individuals, and we correctly regard them as having been written under inspiration. In a similar fashion, Ellen White used letters to convey Spirit-inspired

instruction she received. At the same time, however, she plainly expressed that she did not expect us to take everything she said or wrote as a revelation from God.

Ellen White explained that "there are times when common things must be stated, common thoughts must occupy the mind, common letters must be written and information given that has passed from one to another of the workers. Such words, such information, are not given under the special inspiration of the Spirit of God. Questions are asked at times that are not upon religious subjects at all, and these questions must be answered. We converse about houses and lands, trades to be made, and locations for our institutions, their advantages and disadvantages."<sup>3</sup> "In my words, when speaking upon these common subjects, there is nothing to lead minds to believe that I receive my knowledge in a vision from the Lord and am stating it as such."<sup>4</sup>

We should also remember that the mere absence of phrases such as "I was shown" does not automatically mean that counsel she was giving was not in harmony with light that she had received on the subject.<sup>5</sup> Although it may be impossible to lay down a rule that neatly divides what is inspired from what is uninspired, it's usually the case that it is self-evident from the message itself what authority was being claimed in the letter.

### Missing Documents?

Users accessing the letters and manuscripts in the new database may wonder why there are occasional gaps in the file number sequence. For example, letter 20, 1889, might be followed by letter 22, 1889. What happened to letter 21? Why is it missing? There are several reasons for these "gaps," none of which is that documents have been withheld. In most cases the reason is that the docu-

ment was found to be misdated and it has been refiled with a new number in the correct year. In other cases the document was found to be a duplicate of one already on file, or merely retyped from an already available, published source. Additionally, for some years—1904, for example—Ellen White's secretaries assigned only odd numbers for letters and only even numbers for manuscripts. The database will soon be updated to indicate the reason for each "missing" number.

These are some of the issues to be aware of when researching Ellen White's unpublished materials. Fortunately, there are new tools and resources available that assist us in appreciating the context for these writings: publications such as the *Ellen G. White Encyclopedia*, scholarly biographies of Adventist leaders, and digital access to the church's historical papers. In addition, the White Estate is placing on its Web site the tens of thousands of pages of correspondence written to Ellen White by church members and leaders giving the "other side" of the conversation to her letters.

Whether reading the day-to-day accounts of Ellen White's activities in her diaries, a strongly worded testimony to an unfaithful leader, or a mother's heart-wrenching appeal to her wayward son, we are privileged to find in these writings insights and guiding principles that still speak to our time and circumstances. ■

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 5, p. 696.

<sup>2</sup> W. C. White to G. A. Irwin, May 7, 1900, cited in Herbert E. Douglass, *Messenger of the Lord* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1998), p. 110.

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958, 1980), book 1, p. 39.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>5</sup> See E. G. White, *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 64-67.



**Tim Poirier** is vice director of the Ellen G. White Estate in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.





# *Journeys* of Faithfuln

**T**he concept of “faithfulness” is intricately woven throughout the fabric of a person’s lifestyle and belief system, particularly that of a Christian. Some describe it as remaining loyal to someone or something regardless of the circumstances. Others say it entails “standing firm” for convictions and principles. Synonyms include fidelity, devotion, dependability. Faithfulness evokes an image of what is best in humankind as we relate not only to one another but also to our Creator. Stories of faithfulness to family, friends, country, and God abound, inspiring and encouraging

us to become better people—more caring, more courageous. Sadly, in our weakness and in spite of good intentions, humans often fail. We don’t reach that pinnacle of “greatness and goodness” we may long to achieve. God, however, has no such limitations. Faithfulness is part of His character (Ex. 34:6, NIV); it helps define who He is. “Great is [His] faithfulness” (Lam. 3:23, NIV).

In describing those in the Bible who suffered reproach and persecution for “His name’s sake,” Ellen White doesn’t laud the faithfulness of these men and women, but gives the credit fully to God:

ess

“These examples of human steadfastness bear witness to the faithfulness of God’s promises—of His abiding presence and sustaining grace.”\* After all, it is He alone who is truly faithful.

The short narratives that follow come from West Africa, New Zealand, Malaysia, Tchad, and the United States. They describe personal journeys of faith that reveal the character and love of the God whom the writers believe in and worship. May these stories inspire you to love and trust Him more.—*Editors.*

\*Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, Calif. Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), p. 575.



## FAITHFULNESS *in Adversity*

By JULENE DUERKSEN-KAPAO

*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths”* (Prov. 3:5, 6).

**A**ugust 19, 2009: The date changed my life, my plans, everything. The weeks leading up to August 19 included a family trip from New Zealand to California to visit my family, and a weekend trip with my 4-year-old son to Melbourne, Australia, to speak at a women’s conference. During the conference I got a headache that no matter what I did—sleep, medication, water—would not budge.

The days following my return from Australia were a blur of bizarre symptoms, including blurry vision, light sensitivity, headaches, exhaustion, balance issues, lack of appetite, and weakness.

On August 19 a colleague where I taught walked with me upstairs and noticed I could not lift my right foot without tripping. “You’d better go to the emergency room” were his words after hearing the other symptoms.

Eye exams, X-rays, EKGs, and an array of tests did not bring clear answers. “You may have had a stroke” or “It may be a fast-growing tumor,” I was told. The final stop was an MRI. As I lay in the noisy machine, head held firmly in place, I prayed Psalm 23. “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.” I had no idea what the future held, but I knew God’s hand was on my life. I asked God for the MRI to show answers, so no matter what the outcome was I would know what I was facing.

About 8:00 p.m. the emergency room doctor asked me to go to a private room. “You have multiple sclerosis.” And there it was, my answer. Literally “many scars” on my brain and spinal cord.

I cried. I prayed. I questioned. I went home. I rested. I cried some more. My husband, Rouru, and our two small children prayed a lot. We had no idea what this meant and how this reality would impact our lives.

Within 10 days I was admitted to the hospital for extreme nausea, balance issues, and muscle weakness. I lost my ability to walk and talk. I could not move my head. I was overcome with sadness and loss. For the next nine weeks Rouru would hold my hand, sing and laugh with me, and pray.

Through the chaos, the not knowing, the fear, and the sense of loss I heard God.

One night I had a dream in which I awoke to a bright light. I jumped out of my hospital bed—even though I couldn’t walk at the time—and ran to the window. It was the Second Coming! I was overwhelmed with peace and the warmth of Jesus’ love. His clear words washed over me: “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Cor. 15:51, 52).

In that moment I began a new life—a life of peace and total acceptance of the chaos now consuming me. God showed me that we all have





scars, some seen and others unseen.

I determined to live and live well, and so my neurologist, my family, and I chose the most aggressive approach: six-month chemotherapy treatment starting October 2009. For the first treatment I was in the hospital; the second, my husband pushed my wheelchair; third, I pushed a walking frame; fourth, crutches; fifth and sixth—I walked! The oncology nurses

gave me a standing ovation!

The journey has been chaotic, traumatic, frustrating, blessed, and hope-filled. During the past more than five years my faith has been tested and grown dramatically. I am blessed to experience my human brokenness and have had an opportunity to live knowing my scars. I am better now. I work full-time in a fulfilling and challenging job. I am on daily

medication to prolong remissions and decrease severity of relapse. I play with my kids. And I live in the hope of the Second Coming. ■

**Julene Duerksen-Kapao** is assistant business manager and learning facilitator at Te Aroha Noa Community Services Trust. She and her husband, Rouru, and two children—Gwen, 7, and Griffyn, 10—live in Palmerston North, New Zealand.



## STAYING FAITHFUL *Against the Tide*

By MELODIE ROSCHMAN

They're everywhere." Our guide gestured dramatically at the city surrounding us. "And they're targeting you. So look out for each other. And be careful."

We were on a three-week tour through Europe, taking in incredible historical buildings, eating delicious food, and making stumbling attempts at learning at least a little French. It was nearly a paradise, except, we were advised, for all of the pickpockets and thieves. "Marseille is a city where they'll steal your wallet as fast as they look at you," we were told. Later, in Paris, we were ever vigilant: on the metro, in the markets, even at the top of the Eiffel Tower. Pickpockets, it seemed, would hunt you to the ends of the earth.

Most troubling were street beggars. Holding out their children, asking for directions, begging on the steps of buildings. We were warned that they would prey on your generosity and rob you blind. It felt wrong, but we got used to avoiding eye contact, huddling together, walking past outstretched and empty hands. For the most part,

people were never as persistent as we had been told they would be. No babies were thrust into our arms. No one was ever robbed. When they held out their hands, we shook our heads and stepped around them. We pretended they were invisible.

One day, though, leaving a church, my friend Matt couldn't take it anymore. I looked up to discover that I had left him behind on the steps, where he was stooped, handing a few euros to an old woman wearing a shawl. Soon he jogged to catch up with me. "I couldn't say no," he said simply.

Instantly I felt ashamed, humbled by his instinctive generosity regardless of counsel.

Matt's simple act reminds me of evangelist Tony Campolo's words: "God puts the wealth in our hands, without any guarantee from us that we will use what He gives us in a way that pleases Him. He trusts us. Ought we not to do to others what He has done for us? On that great day when I stand before Him, He will ask if I gave

*“While the rest of us, out of fear, treated these people as less than human, Matt reached out.”*

to the needy. I do not think it will wash if I say, 'I thought about it, but they did not look trustworthy.'”\*

While the rest of us, out of fear, obediently treated these people as less than human, Matt reached out. He bent down and smiled, and he gave to the least of these. "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me" (Matt. 25:35, 36, NIV). ■

\*Tony Campolo, *Is Jesus a Republican or a Democrat?* (New Publishing Group, 1995), p. 160.

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## A *Reckless* FAITH

By OLEN NETTEBURG

Walking from our hospital in Bere, Tchad, to Nigeria, you traverse tribes speaking Nangere, Maraba, Lele, Mesme, Moussaye, Keira, Toupouri, French, Arabic, and that's before reaching the Cameroon border.

A woman came to our hospital. Nobody could understand her, but she brought her sick baby girl. We rapidly diagnosed her with malaria and started intravenous quinine. The mother clearly had no money, but we did what we always do: we treated the child for free and gave mother and child food to eat. Her baby required three days of continuous IV treatment before she started eating again. We kept mother and baby at the hospital for four days while trying to figure out what to do with this family.

One day I noticed the mother reading her Bible and saw the word "Hausa," a language in northern Nigeria. I cautiously put forth the only Hausa word I knew, "Sannu" (hello). Her eyes lit up in amazement, and she replied vigorously, "Sannu! Sannu! Sannu!" shaking my hand like I was her long-lost friend. Imagine a land with more than 120 languages and nobody understands you!

Providentially, one of the women who works for us, Naomie, spent years in Nigeria and speaks fluent Hausa. I immediately called for Naomie, who came and talked to the mother. We learned that her name was Nagodé, and we heard her incredible story.

A man from the Tchadian Nangere tribe moved to Nigeria for work. He met and married Nagodé. They had a

girl, whom they named Blessed. Boko Haram, a terrorist group, began targeting and killing Tchadians. Caught in an ambush, the husband fled into the wilderness, disappearing for months. And that's when Nagodé's optimism became apparent. Absolute, reckless optimism.

Nagodé wondered if her husband had returned to Tchad, so she did what any recklessly optimistic person would. She set off to look for him. She crossed into Cameroon and went from church to church, asking for just enough money to get to the next church. She arrived in Tchad and tried to ask where she could find the Nangere tribe. As she traveled farther from home, it became progressively more unlikely to find people speaking Hausa. She began spending days in each village, seeking people who spoke Hausa.

Nagodé arrived in Kelo, a village 42 kilometers (26 miles) from Bere, and learned she was close to the epicenter of the Nangere tribe. So she trekked the 42 kilometers to Bere the exact same way she had covered the previous hundreds of kilometers, on foot and with her two possessions strapped to her back: Blessed and her Hausa Bible.

Through it all, Nagodé's foolishly optimistic belief in that which she had no evidence—her faithfulness—never wavered.

Once she was in Bere, she found that her troubles were just beginning. Nagodé spent three days living and sleeping in the market, searching for somebody who understood her. She

*“Nagodé’s foolishly optimistic belief in that which she had no evidence, her faithfulness, never wavered.”*

did not eat the few crumbs she found, but gave them to Blessed. When Blessed fell ill with malaria, a stranger brought them to our hospital.

We fed Nagodé. As she started to get her strength back, she began to smile as well. Life returned to her eyes, as it did to the eyes of Blessed. Through it all, Nagodé continued to read her Hausa Bible every day.

Naomie, herself a single mother of four boys, came to me in tears on Nagodé's behalf. She begged me to allow her to take Nagodé and Blessed to her house.

I don't know the ending to this story. I don't know if Nagodé will find her husband. I don't know if he's been killed by Boko Haram, hiding in the African bush, or looking for his wife and child in Nigeria, Cameroon, or Tchad.

But I know God put Naomie in Nagodé's path at exactly the right time. I know Blessed would have succumbed to malaria without the free lifesaving medications given by our faithful donors. Nagodé's optimism, determination, and faithfulness saved Blessed's life, and probably her own as well.

Nagodé has a reckless optimism put into action. Would Peter agree that's an alternative definition of faithfulness? Buoyed by a mother's



instinct and a Hausa Bible, Nagodé took off blindly in search of what she had confidence and assurance in, despite the lack of what any logical person would consider a decent plan or evidence of success.

Mother and child are well-fed, healthy, and happy. Nagodé thanked

me endlessly, ceaselessly wishing God’s blessings on me for the free care Blessed received at our hospital, care made possible by the faithfulness of our supporters.

But little did Nagodé know that her own faithfulness, her reckless optimism, had already blessed me. ■

**Olen Netteburg** and his wife, Danae, are the physicians at Béré Hospital in Tchad, Africa. Their family includes two sons, Lyol and Zane, and two daughters, Addison and Juniper. To learn more about their work in Tchad, check out their blog at [missionarydoctors.blogspot.com](http://missionarydoctors.blogspot.com)



## FAITHFUL TO *Sabbathkeeping*

By RAYMOND ADIVIGNON HOUNNONKPE

The biblical story of Daniel and his friends—their commitment to live according to God’s principles—has been a powerful support for me. Following Jesus means carrying His cross, including when it comes to keeping the Sabbath.

I grew up in Côte d’Ivoire (Ivory Coast). In 2001, I traveled to Benin, where I stayed with two of my older brothers while I continued my education. The younger brother was an Adventist. I began attending the Adventist church, and was baptized in May 2007. Even though I was now an Adventist I continued taking exams on Saturdays until I earned my diploma to enter university.

Then I took the entrance exam for a teacher’s college, and was accepted. So in November 2009 I left for Natitingou in northern Benin to continue my university studies.

We had classes and exams on Sabbath. I managed to miss classes in order to go to church, but when it came to tests, I missed church to write the tests. My conscience was troubled, but I didn’t know what to do. I went to church irregularly. I

asked some brothers in church to pray for me, but the prayers didn’t seem to help.

Midway through my second year in university, however, God helped me make one of the most important decisions of my life. A calculus exam was scheduled for Sabbath. I hesitated. *Should I take the test on Sabbath or not?* A testimony by our pastor about his daughter’s decision to stay faithful to the Sabbath greatly strengthened me. I also reread the story of Daniel and his friends, as well as stories of the Reformers in *The Great Controversy*.

I decided not to take the test, not only this one, but all future tests as well. I was ready to give up even my studies for the glory of God. It wasn’t an easy decision to make, but God’s Spirit helped me. When the Sabbath came, I went to church. My friends couldn’t understand it. Several of them asked me questions. It was an opportunity for me to share my faith with them.

I didn’t write the test, and God showed me His power. My teachers decided to give me the same grade I had received so far in the class. This

“A recent testimony by our pastor about his daughter’s decision to stay faithful to the Sabbath greatly strengthened me.”

miracle encouraged me to be even more faithful to God. Until the end of my studies in Natitingou, God strengthened me to be steadfast in my decision to keep sacred His holy day.

Unfortunately, that wasn’t the last of my Sabbath challenges. Graduation ceremonies at the end of my three years of study were held on Sabbath. But I chose not to attend, even though, by God’s grace, I was the head of my class. Again, this was a chance to explain about the Sabbath to my friends and teachers.

In 2014 I was given the opportunity to take an entrance test to study statistics in Senegal, West Africa. When I learned that there would be classes on Sabbath, I didn’t go. Some of my relatives didn’t agree with me, but for me, only God’s will was important. I decided to continue my studies nearer my home.

Tests scheduled for Sabbaths still continued, but I always chose to keep the Sabbath and not take the tests. The final exam was also scheduled for Sabbath, but the Lord intervened, and my teachers allowed me to take it on a different day.

Keeping the Sabbath holy is a chal-

lenge for many people. My experiences have helped me understand that we must not be afraid to commit ourselves fully to God. Despite all the obstacles, God has consistently sustained me. I am now studying for my doctorate in mathematics, supervised by a professor who previously was

disappointed in me because of my stand for the Sabbath.

Our God is marvelous and powerful. Nothing is impossible for Him. Let us choose to trust Him. ■

**Raymond Adivignon Hounnonkpe** is a doctoral student in Benin, West Africa.



## GIVING AWAY *God's Blessings*

By FAITH TOH

In the hills of Sabah, surrounded by the mountains of Malaysia, lies a little village. To get to this village, you have to navigate a bumpy 36 kilometers (22.4 miles) off road to a river. Crossing the river is uncertain. During drier months the crossing is smooth. When it's monsoon season, the water level rises too high, and crossing is impossible.

If you make it across the river, there is another bumpy ride up to Bambang village. It's a beautiful place, and if you climb up the tallest hill, you can see the back of Mount Kinabalu in the distance.

The people of Bambang are subsistence farmers. One school serves them and a neighboring village about a 40-minute trek away. The school, called Sekolah Rendah Advent Bambang (or Bambang Adventist Primary School), employs three instructors who teach grades 1 to 6. This year 53 children are enrolled, but actual attendance can drop to 20 during harvest season, planting season, and rainy season. In a place where parents barely have enough to feed their children, paying school fees is sometimes a luxury they cannot afford.

For the past 13 years Ester Gerber has been faithfully supporting the work of Bambang School, and tirelessly mentoring its students. Ester was born in a tiny village in Germany, the sixth child of a poor family. It wasn't easy for her parents to make ends meet, yet they made sure she completed her education.

Ester is passionate about education. For her, supporting the school means more than just contributing financial aid to help pay teachers' salaries or sponsoring school fees. She says, "Making the world a tiny bit better for someone else is not just giving one push and then saying 'OK, it was nice meeting you. Goodbye.' People need to be treated with respect, fairness, and justice, regardless of whether they are rich or poor, educated or uneducated. . . . No matter where someone comes from, they should always know they are princes and princesses of our heavenly Father."

Stephen\* is a graduate of Bambang School. Influenced by wayward friends at secondary school, he was on a slide down the wrong path. He had so much potential, but he didn't seem to be interested in learning. Ester was

adamant. She told him, "OK, young man, I will not force you; it will be your own free will. But I would love for you to change schools for your last year. Would you please consider?" Stephen ended up switching schools.

"For the first couple of months, he sent me one message after another," Ester recalls, "begging me to please allow him to go back to his old school because he was so miserable." But eight months later Stephen started to tell Ester how his life had changed by being at the new school. He became a spiritual leader, involved in church activities. "He still has some ways to go, but God will lead him," says Ester.

"We can improve their lives; we can even improve their physical well-being," adds Ester. "But unless we manage to bring them the good news and help them accept Jesus as their personal Savior, what have we achieved?"

Ester, who continues to mentor students, is quick to assert that "it is not my faith that keeps Bambang going. Bambang is keeping *my* faith going.

"Sometimes I feel like I just don't have any energy left. But then God gives me strength, and I can fly and soar on wings like an eagle. God has really blessed me, blessed my family. I need to pass the blessing on to others. I'm not really giving something away, because I'm getting so much more back." ■

\*Not his real name.

**Faith Toh**, from Singapore, works for Studio Elpizo.





It was over. “Today I am terminating my selection process!” A chuckle rippled through the audience as Bill spoke these words of finality 17 years ago as a part of his self-written wedding vows. “What God has joined together” (Mark 10:9) in exclusive commitment that day He also has kept fused with a bond more powerful than the best commercially rated adhesive available.

Research has confirmed the overwhelming benefits of a long-term marriage. A study published in *The Journal of Clinical Oncology* found that a happy, healthy marriage may benefit a cancer patient even more than chemotherapy.<sup>1</sup> A faithful and stable marriage provides a stronger immune system, more successful recovery from surgery, better pain tolerance, and lower risk of cardiovascular disease.<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, cohabitation doesn’t provide the same health benefits, nor the same satisfaction. One study showed that only 36 percent of cohabitating couples said both partners are “very satisfied,” while 57 percent of married couples reported the same.<sup>3</sup>

Faithfulness is loyalty, fidelity, allegiance, constancy, dependability, trustworthiness, steadiness. It means being “true to one’s word, promises, vows, etc.”<sup>4</sup> not shirking duty, and putting your spouse first when you don’t feel like it.

With a sense of wonder, we just celebrated the fiftieth wedding anniversary of Heather’s parents. We experienced firsthand what 50 years of marriage contributes to a family. Like a “peg that is fastened in [a] secure place” (Isa. 22:25), their long, stable, happy marriage provides security not only to their children but also to their grandchildren.

God uses a strong and lasting union to strengthen society and witness to others, revealing Himself to humanity. Ellen White observed: “Through . . . the

By BILL AND HEATHER KRICK

# What God Has Joined Together

## *Dividends of devotion*

deepest and tenderest earthly ties that human hearts can know, He has sought to reveal Himself to us.”<sup>5</sup> “One well-ordered, well-disciplined family tells more in behalf of Christianity than all the sermons that can be preached.”<sup>6</sup>

Such a family silently says: “We’re happy. We are not hankering for something else, not wanting to flit like a butterfly from one flower to the next. We are content with God’s arrangements.”

Society, however, seriously questions this exclusive system and its potential for happiness and success. According to Gallup’s research, more than half (52 percent) of American young adults ages 20-29 say that they see so few good or happy marriages that they question it as a way of life.<sup>7</sup> A Pew Research study revealed that nearly 40 percent of Americans of all ages believe that marriage is becoming obsolete.<sup>8</sup> Legislators in Mexico City even proposed a two-year marriage contract, where spouses would not need to make long-term commitments to faithfulness, but would be able to renew after two years if they felt happy.<sup>9</sup>

In her book *The Monogamy Myth*, noted author Peggy Vaughan states that 60 percent of married men have committed adultery, and 40 percent of women; since there is some overlap, 80 percent of all marriages will be touched by infidelity.<sup>10</sup> Faithfulness seems to be on a journey toward extinction, but it definitely pays off, even in tight circumstances.

### **Abigail and Nabal: Faithfulness Pays Off**

Somehow Nabal, whose name means “foolish” or “senseless,” had married beautiful Abigail, virtuous and wise, whose worth was far above rubies (1 Sam. 25; cf. Prov. 31:10). The primary recorded incident in the married life of this wealthy couple took place while David was fleeing from Saul and heard that Nabal was shearing his sheep. David and his men had protected Nabal’s shepherds, and he now asked for the favor to be returned in the form of food for his men. Nabal shot back with a rude and selfish reply that infuriated David.

Here Abigail entered the story. Marriage to Nabal could not have been easy, but “little did Abigail realize in her daily ministrations to Nabal that she was developing a clearness of spiritual perception.”<sup>11</sup> Faithful Abigail was in tune with God and ready to do whatever it took to get her husband out of trouble.

Hurriedly she loaded all kinds of choice, already-prepared food onto donkeys and sent her servants ahead to meet David. Upon meeting him herself, she respectfully took the blame for her husband’s behavior, not glossing over the uncomplimentary truth about Nabal, but in fact saving him without his knowledge. David humbly accepted Abigail’s tactful rebuke and gifts, averting disaster.

### More Blessings

Faithful marriages bless society through their children. Healthy homes produce emotionally healthy children who become the building blocks of a robust society. According to Ellen White: “The heart of the community, of the church, and of the nation is the household. The well-being of society, the success of the

church, the prosperity of the nation, depend upon home influences.”<sup>12</sup> Children from divorced homes face enormous hurdles. Robert Emery, author of *The Truth About Children and Divorce*, simply says, “They’re devastated.”<sup>13</sup> The benefits of “What God has joined together” extend far beyond the two marriage partners.

What if, in this imperfect world, we face a divorce, or find ourselves in less-than-happy relationships, or are single? God’s faithfulness still meets us right where we are. He offers Himself to us, a glorious relationship with Him transcending any other relationship, and helps us through any trouble we may be facing.

Notice these two promises: “For your Maker is your husband, The Lord of hosts is His name” (Isa. 54:5). “This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself” (2 Tim. 2:11-13).

Our “selection process” did indeed terminate 17 years ago, but the dividends of devotion continue to enrich

and bless our lives daily. Thank You, God, for establishing marriage. We see the benefits of faithfulness in committed families all over the world. Help us to be faithful too. ■

<sup>1</sup> <http://jco.ascopubs.org/content/early/2013/09/18/JCO.2013.49.6489.abstract>

<sup>2</sup> [www.macleans.ca/society/life/how-marriage-can-save-your-life/](http://www.macleans.ca/society/life/how-marriage-can-save-your-life/)

<sup>3</sup> [www.nytimes.com/2012/09/30/fashion/marriage-seen-through-a-contract-lens.html?pagewanted=all&r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/30/fashion/marriage-seen-through-a-contract-lens.html?pagewanted=all&r=0)

<sup>4</sup> Dictionary.com

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1956), p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Ellen G. White, *Ye Shall Receive Power* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1995), p. 247.

<sup>7</sup> [www.gallup.com/poll/4552/singles-seek-soul-mates-marriage.aspx](http://www.gallup.com/poll/4552/singles-seek-soul-mates-marriage.aspx)

<sup>8</sup> [www.pewsocialtrends.org/2010/11/18/the-decline-of-marriage-and-rise-of-new-families/](http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2010/11/18/the-decline-of-marriage-and-rise-of-new-families/)

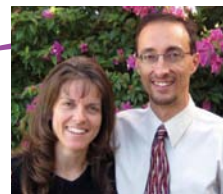
<sup>9</sup> [www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-15114406](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-15114406).

<sup>10</sup> Peggy Vaughan, *The Monogamy Myth* (New York: William Morrow, 2003). See also David Barash and Judith Lipton, *The Myth of Monogamy: Fidelity and Infidelity in Animals and People* (New York: Henry Holt, 2002).

<sup>11</sup> F. D. Nichol, ed., *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1954, 1978), vol. 2, p. 574.

<sup>12</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1952), p. 15.

<sup>13</sup> [www.nytimes.com/2012/09/30/fashion/marriage-seen-through-a-contract-lens.html?pagewanted=all&r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/30/fashion/marriage-seen-through-a-contract-lens.html?pagewanted=all&r=0)



**Bill and Heather Krick** live in California, where Bill is director of literature ministries for the Central California Conference and Heather homeschools their two daughters, Savannah and Heidi.

# Marriage *and the* Family

Marriage was divinely established in Eden and affirmed by Jesus to be a lifelong union between a man and a woman in loving companionship. For the Christian a marriage commitment is to God as well as to the spouse, and should be entered into only between a man and a woman who share a common faith. Mutual love, honor, respect, and responsibility are the fabric of this relationship, which is to reflect the love, sanctity, closeness, and permanence of the relationship between Christ and His church. Regarding divorce, Jesus taught that the person who divorces a spouse, except for fornication, and marries another, commits adultery. Although some family relationships may fall short of the ideal, a man and a woman who fully commit themselves to each

other in Christ through marriage may achieve loving unity through the guidance of the Spirit and the nurture of the church. God blesses the family and intends that its members shall assist each other toward complete maturity. Increasing family closeness is one of the earmarks of the final gospel message. Parents are to bring up their children to love and obey the Lord. By their example and their words they are to teach them that Christ is a loving, tender, and caring guide who wants them to become members of His body, the family of God, which embraces both single and married persons. (Gen. 2:18-25; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:5-9; Prov. 22:6; Mal. 4:5, 6; Matt. 5:31, 32; 19:3-9, 12; Mark 10:11, 12; John 2:1-11; 1 Cor. 7:7, 10, 11; 2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4.)



By CHANTAL J. KLINGBEIL

# SNAPSHOTS *of* Faithfulness



*“Then Jonathan said to the young man who bore his armor, ‘Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; it may be that the Lord will work for us. For nothing restrains the Lord from saving by many or by few’” (1 Sam. 14:6).*

Jonathan, how did you get it right? (I often find life so complicated. It sometimes seems impossible to be faithful to the people around me when they are not meeting my needs.) How were you able to be faithful to your father, King Saul, who even tried to kill you twice? You always remained loyal and faithful to your family. And, at the same time, you were faithful to your friend David, who was being hunted by your father. You remained best friends and swore loyalty to David, even when you realized that he would take your throne. How did you do it?

*“And he said to his men, ‘The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord’s anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord’” (1 Sam. 24:6).*

David, you were given a golden opportunity in that cave. King Saul, who had been hunting you for so long, entered the cave completely oblivious to your crouching men. (I hate waiting. I hate waiting for things that I consider my right. Waiting and waiting and not seeing God actively working the way I believe He should be is a real test of faith for me.) It would have been so easy; it even seemed providential. The sword would have found its mark, and all your months of living in the wilderness like a hunted animal would have been ended and the path to the throne wide open. And yet you chose not to take Saul’s life. You waited for God’s timing. Being still and waiting—being faithful to God’s timing. How did you do it?

*“And Uriah said to David, ‘The ark and Israel and Judah are dwelling in tents, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go to my house to eat and drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing’” (2 Sam. 11:11).*

Even though you are known as “the Hittite,” you were faithful to your adopted country and faithful to your God. (I find being faithful difficult when it means going against the flow. Being faithful means holding on to something even when others let me down, even when others try to manipulate or bribe me.) You were loyal and brave. You set high standards, and you kept to high standards. It was so much a part of the fabric of your being that gifts, bribery, or even perfectly permissible pleasures couldn’t distract you from that loyalty and faithfulness. Nothing could persuade you to go home and take a break as long as the ark of God and the Lord’s army were on the battlefield. You paid for your faithfulness with your life. How did you do it?

PHOTO: PIXABAY/GOMEZ SANTOS





*“Then Mary said, ‘Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word’” (Luke 1:38).*

With just a flash of an angel’s wings you were ready to have your life turned upside down. (I am more inclined to look for a tame faith. I prefer something that I think I can control. To be faithful to God when I don’t see any immediate benefits is hard.) What about all your carefully laid plans for your wedding? What would Joseph say? What would the neighbors say? What about a lifetime of living with the shame? You just simply said “yes” to a lifetime of whispers when you entered a room, a lifetime of being misunderstood and judged to be someone you were not. What made you simply say “Behold the maidservant of the Lord”?

*“How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Gen. 39:9).*

Joseph, you were far away from home. You were on your own in Egypt. Your brothers had sold you. (It’s one thing being faithful when everyone is watching. I find it so much harder when no one will ever know. It is hard to be faithful when duty and desire go in opposite directions.) You had to watch out for yourself, and then Mrs. Potiphar made her move. She represented an opportunity for you. She made an offer that would be so hard to refuse, and yet you turned from it and fled, even leaving your coat behind. What made you faithful to your pagan master? How could you still be faithful to a God who had let you be torn away from everything that had made life worth living?

*“And Elijah said to her, ‘Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son’” (1 Kings 17:13).*

You were a poor widow from the city of Zarephath. He was asking for your last bit of oil and flour. You had a son to think of. What was it about this foreign man of God that gave you the assurance that what he said was true? Why did you go home and make him that last bread? I suppose you didn’t have too much to lose. It was the last meal anyway. (I sometimes hang on very tightly to things. Being faithful often involves letting go of the stuff that my life revolves around. Having too much can be a curse and not a blessing.) You gave up your last bit of material security and threw your family into the arms of this unknown God. What made you take this leap of faith?

Jonathan, David, Uriah, Mary, Joseph, the widow of Zarephath, none of you were perfect. I’m sure that you all had your moments of doubt, and yet the story of your lives could be titled *Faithful*. Your faith was a reaction to meeting the Faithful One. You caught glimpses of your Creator, who was not constrained by the visible but could look at a formless empty world and see trees and animals and then speak them into being. You understood that here was Someone who loved you so much, who saw such potential in you, that He would be willing to die rather than spend eternity without you.

You were prepared to let go of how you thought things should be, and you chose to trust this God even when the outcome was so different from what you had ever imagined. Thank you for sharing your faith. The testimony of your lives challenges me.

*“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful (Heb. 10:23).”*



**Chantal J. Klingbeil** serves as an associate director at the Ellen G. White Estate of the General Conference. She is married to Gerald and has three teenage daughters.



When John Tay met Jesus, everything changed. As a teenager John loved the sea, sailing ships, and a small South Sea island called Pitcairn. Now his love was the same, but different. For Tay, loving Jesus meant telling everyone about his new Friend.

Tay went regularly to the wharf to meet the large ships. He used to talk to sea captains about faraway places, but now he talked about Jesus. He gave them books to read. He still thought of the island of Pitcairn. Did the people there know about Jesus?

**The Beginning of an Adventure**

In 1886 Tay could resist no longer. He left behind his wife and home in Oakland, California, finding passages on different ships until he arrived at Pitcairn Island about four months later. John stayed on the island until the next ship arrived, about five weeks later. During that time he preached about Jesus. When he ate with people, he shared Jesus. He conducted Bible studies. When he left, every single individual on Pitcairn was keeping the Sabbath and requesting baptism! Tay promised to send a minister to baptize them and organize a church.

In April 1888 the Seventh-day Adventist Church agreed to send a minister. Church leaders asked Andrew John Cudney, 34, a minister from Nebraska, to accompany Tay back to Pitcairn. They told both men to find their own way there. Cudney wanted to share Jesus and didn't hesitate. Leaving his wife and two young sons behind, he answered the call, even though it was 5,000 miles away, and he had no idea how to get there. He would go so that people could learn about Jesus.

Cudney and Tay arrived in San

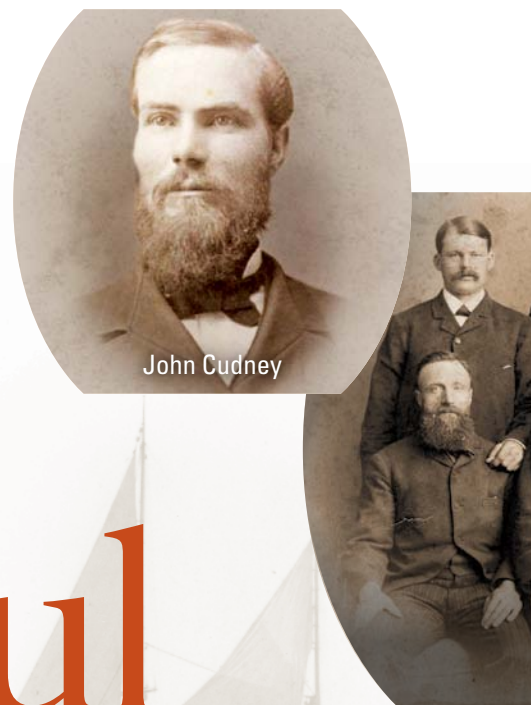
Francisco, California, in May 1888. They waited several weeks, but found no ships leaving for the South Pacific. Church leaders counseled them to separate; Tay would remain in California waiting for a ship sailing to Tahiti. Cudney would sail for Honolulu, Hawaii, on May 20. There, he would take a ship to Tahiti to meet Tay, and together they would proceed to Pitcairn.

It seemed like a good plan, but Cudney's arrival in Hawaii found no ships destined for Tahiti either. He was uncertain about what to do. Returning to California seemed unwise. Yet no way forward seemed possible. N. F. Burgess, a believer, offered to purchase a previously owned transport vessel that was up for auction. He would repair and fit it for sailing as long as it was used to go to Pitcairn. Encouraged, Cudney agreed. While waiting,

Cudney shared Jesus with people in Hawaii. He encouraged them, conducted Bible studies, and, before leaving for Tahiti, organized the first Seventh-day Adventist church in Honolulu with nine members.

**Meet Me on Pitcairn**

On July 31 Cudney left Honolulu on the newly refitted *Phoebe Chapman* to rendezvous with Tay in Tahiti. Just



John Cudney

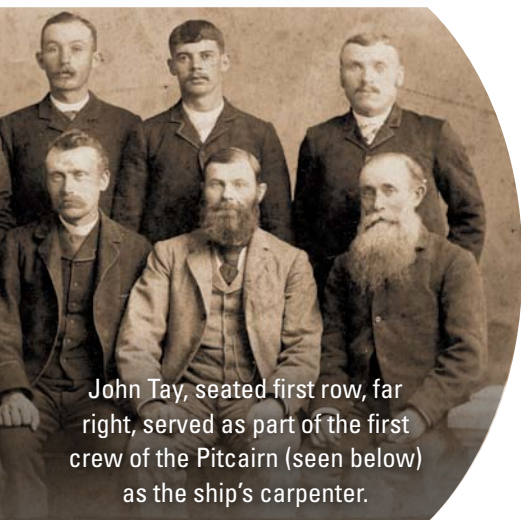
By MERLE POIRIER

# Faithful *Unto* Death

*Ordinary people who answered God's call in spite of uncertainty*



before leaving, he wrote of his desire to share Jesus: “An English captain, of extensive experience, whose wife is a Sabbathkeeper, goes as sailing master. He speaks the principal languages of the South Seas. A Swede goes as mate, who can speak five languages. Two men go before the mast as far as Tahiti without wages. . . . It does seem God’s hand is in the work. The crew are strangers; but most of them seem to be exceptionally goodhearted men, and I trust that some of them will learn to love the truth before the voyage is over. We sail at noon today, going first to Tahiti, where I expect



John Tay, seated first row, far right, served as part of the first crew of the Pitcairn (seen below) as the ship’s carpenter.

Brother Tay is waiting for me; thence we shall go directly to Pitcairn, as fast as the wind will carry us.”\*

Meanwhile, John Tay left San Francisco for Tahiti on July 5, arriving there August 8, where he waited for Cudney to arrive. Each day found him at the harbor inquiring of ships, but Cudney’s vessel never arrived.

Those at the General Conference were also waiting word of the ship’s arrival. Cudney’s anxious wife wondered and prayed for her husband’s whereabouts. Minutes of meet-

ings recorded prayers and actions that revealed the church’s anxiety for the missing ship and its crew.

Tay attempted to find a ship to take him to Pitcairn, thinking that Cudney went on without him. Once captains found out his intentions to talk about Jesus, no one would take him. After waiting in Tahiti for six months, he finally sailed for home. A year later, with no word from Cudney or his crew, it was decided they must have been lost at sea. Cudney’s wife kept his clothes for many years, hoping he would one day be found, having run aground on another island.

### A Call to Action

In response, the church did not waver on the request of those in Pitcairn still waiting for baptism. Because of the challenges faced by Cudney and Tay, the church decided to build its own ship. The *Pitcairn* was launched in the fall of 1890, carrying three missionary couples, including John Tay and his wife. Upon their arrival on Pitcairn, 82 people were baptized into the newly organized church.

The remains of the *Phoebe Chapman* were found on the west coast of Tahiti in 1891. A. J. Cudney, while close, never reached his destination. Cudney wanted to share Jesus despite any obstacle set before him, sailing out in faithfulness to his call. Now he awaits the Second Coming, when the Life-giver will call him again, this time from his watery grave, where he will hear the words “Well done, good and faithful servant. . . . Enter into the joy of your Lord” (Matt. 25:21). ■

\* *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Aug. 21, 1888, p. 539.



**Merle Poirier** is operations manager for *Adventist World*.



Phoebe Chapman

## Careless Words

The Chapman family was one of the first in Petaluma, California, to accept the Adventist message from John Loughborough. Several male suitors were seeking the attention of their daughter, Phoebe, a popular and beautiful young woman. The family tells the story of the day when one young man approached Phoebe, interested in making an impression. He shared with her that he had named the first Adventist missionary ship after her—the *Phoebe Chapman*. Hearing that, she tossed her head and said, “I hope it sinks.”\*

Later, upon hearing the news of the lost vessel, she regretted her careless words. While her words did not cause the tragedy to occur, there is wisdom in being faithful and true in our speech. “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things” (Phil. 4:8).

\* Mary Colby Monteith, “California’s First Tent Campaign,” *Adventist Review*, Feb. 28, 1980.



# Going the Dista

By ANDREW McCHESNEY

*Gary Rittenbach doesn't stop  
until he crosses the finish line.*



**G**ary Rittenbach's full-time job is running between computers as director of academic computing at Walla Walla University in College Place, Washington. His other big pursuit is running, just running.

He's good at it—so good, in fact, that he recently joined a small club of runners who have completed all six of the world's top marathons: New York, Chicago, Berlin, Boston, Tokyo, and London.

Remarkably, Rittenbach is 64 and started running only 10 years ago after getting a nudge from his niece to get off the couch during Christmas break.

"When I was young, our church had a lot to say about healthy living," Rittenbach says. "Most of it was what not to do to be healthy: Don't smoke, don't drink, and don't

AT THE FINISH LINE: Gary Rittenbach poses with his niece, Jolene Bauer Ketting, after completing the Vancouver Marathon in 2009.



eat meat. While these are important, not much was said about what we can do to be healthy.”

He adds, “Today we are more aware that to honor God best mentally and spiritually, we need to also be physically fit.”

For Rittenbach, that awareness came years after he completed his formal education and was already deeply immersed in implementing and maintaining computer labs, purchasing computers, and assisting faculty with computing problems at Walla Walla University.

His niece, Jolene Bauer Ketting, announced during a visit the day after Christmas 2004 that she needed to run 12 miles (19 kilometers) because she was training for the Los Angeles Marathon on March 6, 2005. She asked Rittenbach and his adult son, Jon, to run with her.

“We both told her that we couldn’t possibly run 12

miles,” Rittenbach said. “The most we had run was about three miles.”

Ketting wasn’t put off. She suggested that they join her in running three miles (five kilometers), stopping to stretch, then running three more miles before turning around and repeating this on the way home.

Rittenbach and his son finally agreed.

“Later that afternoon we had run 12 miles, and the mental barrier had been broken,” Rittenbach said. “She talked me into signing up for the Los Angeles Marathon. So the Los Angeles Marathon was the first race of any kind that I ran.”

### Running Blocks From Boston Bombs

Rittenbach’s quest to enter all six major marathons began in 2010 when he ran the Boston Marathon in April and the New York Marathon in November. It finished five years later in April 2015 in London. Upon crossing the finish line at the London Marathon, Rittenbach became one of just 428 six-star finishers of the Abbott World Marathon Majors.

# nice

WHEN IN JAPAN: The Tokyo Marathon in February, 2015 was the next to the last of the world’s six largest marathons in which Rittenbach competed.



She just told us what she's thinking. **Will you?**



*@adventistreview*



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**THE FIRST STEP:** Rittenbach's niece, Jolene Ketting (left), inspired her uncle to join her on a training run. That led to the two of them running the Los Angeles Marathon.

Rittenbach finished his fastest marathon with a time of 3:43:19 at the Berlin Marathon in 2012. A marathon is 26 miles, 385 yards (42.195 kilometers).

In 2013 he ran the Boston Marathon for the second time. "Providentially, I had a good run and finished 19 minutes before the bombs went off," said Rittenbach, who was just a few blocks away when he heard the explosions that rocked the finish line.

The terrorist attack—two pressure-cooker bombs that exploded 12 seconds apart from each other—killed three people and injured 264 others on April 15, 2013.

"I will never forget my comment after the first explosion: 'No sound like that should ever come from the finish line. I hope it's just an accident and not malicious,'" Rittenbach said. "But when the second one went off, my heart just sank."

Entering major marathons is no simple feat. The Boston Marathon is a time-qualification entry, but the rest are based on a lottery system. Rittenbach tried to get into the London Marathon for four years, but never was accepted in the lottery. In 2014, after running Boston for the third time, he signed up with a marathon tour operator to gain a spot in Tokyo. Not long after he got the long-awaited news that he had a place in the London Marathon.

In February 2015 Rittenbach completed the Tokyo Marathon, and in April he crossed the finish line in London.

"Running two marathons in one year is a big deal, especially when they're nine weeks apart," he said.

**"Go Out and Do Something"**

London was the last planned marathon, but Rittenbach, who has run more than 10,000 miles in the past

# Life Lessons

## From Running

**Use it or lose it.** If we don't exercise, our muscles atrophy. To stay healthy and fit, we must exercise, or we will lose muscle strength. Astronauts spend an extended amount of time in space exercising to keep from losing bone mass. Without exercise, their "one small step" on Mars will result in a broken leg.

The same is true with spiritual gifts. If we don't use our spiritual gifts, we will lose them. As a child I never quite understood the parable of the talents. The person with one talent had his talent taken away and given to the person with

10 talents. It never seemed fair. But if we don't exercise our spiritual gifts—such as faith, love, and trust—we will lose them.

**Help and encourage each other.** At most marathons thousands of spectators shout encouragement to the runners: "Good job," "You can do it," "Pain is temporary; pride is forever."

Church should be like this: Christians encouraging each other. The apostle Paul understood this: "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). "Therefore comfort each other

and edify one another, just as you also are doing" (1 Thess. 5:11).

**Don't be overwhelmed by the size of the task; get started in simple ways.** Running a marathon may seem impossible. But it will seem more possible after running a 10K or a half marathon.

When the Israelites crossed the Jordan River, the water didn't part until their feet got wet.

**Eat before you're hungry; drink before you're thirsty.** If you wait until you feel hungry or thirsty in a marathon, it's too late. Hydrate and take a gel every ▶▶



decade, said he will always be a runner. “My running has given me a lot of time away from phones and other distractions,” he said. “I have had a lot of time to think during those runs.”

He recently composed a list of eight life lessons that he has learned from running. Number 2, “Help and Encourage Each Other,” reads in part: “At a marathon, thousands of spectators shout encouragement to the runners: ‘Good job,’ ‘Black toenails are sexy,’ ‘You’re almost there.’ Church should be like this, Christians encouraging each other on life’s way. ‘Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing’ (1 Thess. 5:11, NIV).”

His advice to others? Not everyone has to run, but everyone has to be active.

“If I could say just one thing to people, I would encourage them to go out and do something,” he said. “No matter what it is—biking, swimming, running—rediscover the joy of movement. It will change your life.” ■



Andrew McChesney is news editor for *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World* magazines.



A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE: Rittenbach has run marathons in Europe, Asia, and the United States, such as this one in Berlin, competing with people of all ages who are committed to being healthy.

## Life Lessons

### From Running CONTINUED

▶▶ three or four miles, even at the start, when you don’t think you’ll need it.

We will have a much better spiritual life if we pray and study daily, not just when times are bad.

**Don’t worry about tomorrow; focus on today.** Don’t worry about all the runs and miles necessary to be ready on race day. Just do the run in your plan for today.

**We are capable of much more than we think: physically, mentally, and spiritually.** Ten years ago I could only run three miles; anything more seemed impossible. Now I have run each of the six major marathons in

the United States in less than four hours. “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Phil. 4:13).

**When life gets tough, go back to the basics.** During the last part of a marathon, when I feel my pace slowing, I focus on my gait: I don’t overstride; my footfalls land directly beneath me, I keep a cadence of 180 steps per minute, high knee lift and long follow-through. Then I see my pace increase, or at least not decrease.

When our spiritual lives are not going well, let’s go back to the basics: Read God’s Word. Pray. Tell others how God has helped us.

**Persevere.** The race isn’t over until you cross the finish line. In 2010, when I ran the New York City Marathon, my wife took a picture of a runner who collapsed a few hundred feet from the finish line and had to be carried away. In 2011, when I ran the Chicago Marathon, a 35-year-old firefighter collapsed at the mile-26 aid station, just 385 yards from the finish.

The apostle Paul understood the importance of discipline and perseverance. He wrote: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness” (2 Tim. 4:7, 8).



# Get Started

## Tips for running and race preparation

### Follow a training plan that includes five run days per week.

- Free plans are available at [halhigdon.com/training/51135/Marathon-Training-Guide](http://halhigdon.com/training/51135/Marathon-Training-Guide).

### Get proper clothes and equipment.

- A Garmin GPS is a big help. Good running shoes are a must. Not sure what shoes to get? Let the shoe dog fetch your shoes at [roadrunnersports.com/rrs/product/shoe-dog.jsp](http://roadrunnersports.com/rrs/product/shoe-dog.jsp).

### Vary your runs with:

- Hill repeats.
- Speed intervals: 60-second sprints followed by 60-second recovery periods.

- Tempo runs, running at maximum pace for 15 minutes or more.
- Long, slow distance runs.
- Work on your form.
- Run erect.
- Footfalls should land directly under you, not in front.
- Use a high leg lift followed by a long follow-through.
- Move your arms forward and backward, not side to side. Keep your forearms and upper arms at about a 90-degree angle.
- Use a cadence of about 180 strides per minute.

### Hydrate and fuel.

- Hydrate well and fuel up for training

runs that last more than one hour. A good option is to drink an energy gel dissolved in about eight ounces of water every 30 minutes.

- During races, take an energy gel at a water station every three or four miles. Wash down the gel with water from the aid station. Don't carry water during a race.
- Have a recovery drink ready at the end of training runs.

### When the race gets tough, focus on the basics of your running form.

- Everyone can run a good first half marathon; it's the last half when your form breaks down. Focus on lifting your legs and driving them behind you. If your form and cadence are right, your speed will be better.

### Get eight hours of sleep at regular times.

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# Symbols and Metaphors

*Is Hebrews 10:19, 20 saying that the veil of the temple represented the flesh of Jesus?*

Let me quote the passage to which you refer:

“Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most

Holy Place [Gr. *ton hagion*, “the sanctuary”] by the blood of

Jesus, by a new and living way opened

[Gr. *enekainisen*, “inaugurated”] for us through the curtain, that is, his body [Gr. *sarx*, “flesh”] . . .”

(NIV). Bible students have provided three main interpretations of these verses. We need an interpretation that is contextually sound and consistent with the message of the overall letter.

**1. The Veil Is the Flesh of Christ:** This reading is exclusively supported by the fact that the phrase “that is” in Hebrews often refers to the previous noun or phrase. In this case it would mean that Christ inaugurated a way through the veil, that is to say, through the veil that is His flesh. Let me offer a few comments.

First, the explicative “that is” does not always refer back to the immediate noun or phrase (Heb. 7:5; 13:15); the phrase could be related to “through the veil,” or to something else.

Second, the idea that Christ opened a way through the veil that is His flesh is, to say the least, extremely obscure. If the veil was an obstacle that had to be removed in order to have access to God, the idea would be that the “flesh” of Jesus had to be removed to access God! Since equating the veil with the flesh of Christ is not found anywhere else in Hebrews, and is not developed in our passage, scholars have explained the concept in different ways. A common view is that the preposition “through [the curtain/his flesh]” is used in two different ways. Through the curtain would refer to moving from one place to another, while “through his flesh” would designate Christ as the instrument of access. This distinction in usage is highly questionable.

Third, if the veil of the heavenly tabernacle is the flesh of Christ, the apostle is using a metaphorical or even allegorical interpretation of the heavenly sanctuary. This goes against the apostle’s conviction that there is a sanctuary in

heaven with a veil, where the throne of God is located. For these and other reasons this interpretation is unreliable.

**2. The Flesh of Christ Is the Way:** It has been suggested that the phrase “that is” refers back to “the way”—“the way . . . that is to say, [the way] of his flesh.” This possible reading of the text avoids the pitfalls of the previous one. Christ is identified as the means, the way, our access to God. But the fact that the explicative “that is” is too far from “way” weakens it. However, if we were to assume that the noun “the way” is to be repeated before “of his flesh” the problem would be solved.

**3. “That Is” Refers to the Content of the Sentence:** According to this view “that is” refers back to the statement that Christ “inaugurated [incorrectly translated “opened”] a new and living way through the veil by means of/through His flesh.” In other words, the new way of access to God is the result of His incarnation that made possible His sacrificial death. This idea is often found in Hebrews (e.g., 2:14; 6:19, 20; 9:12, 24-26). The idea of access to God through Christ is central to Hebrews. This interpretation is also supported, as suggested by a number of scholars, by the verses we are discussing. Some important parallels between verses 19 and 20 help us clarify the use of “that is.”

#### Verse 19

To enter  
the sanctuary  
by the blood of Jesus

#### Verse 20

a new and living way  
through the veil  
that is, through his flesh.

The idea of entering is further developed by the mention of a new way: access to the sanctuary is through the veil. Through Christ’s flesh clearly refers to the blood of Jesus on the cross as the means of access to God, not to the veil in the heavenly sanctuary. This interpretation appears to be the best one grammatically, contextually, and theologically. ■



**Angel Manuel Rodríguez** is retired, having served the church as a pastor, professor, and theologian.

By MARK A. FINLEY

# Moses

## *God's Friend*



**M**oses' life is a story of God's miraculous leading and providential guidance. Although Moses revealed character traits common to all humanity, his life demonstrates the glory of God's forgiveness and power. Moses faced major obstacles, and the challenges he confronted could have overwhelmed him. But he looked beyond the problems and endured by faith because he saw "Him who is invisible" (Heb. 11:27).

Through the enormous challenges, obstacles, and difficulties Moses faced, he developed an intimate friendship with God. Near the end of the book of Exodus the record states, "So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend" (Ex. 33:11). What could be more rewarding? To know God intimately and speak to Him as a friend is life's highest joy. In this lesson we will review some of the events that shaped Moses' life, and how he developed such a close friendship with God.

### **1** What events at the time of Moses' birth shaped His life? Read Exodus 1:7-12, 22.

Moses' life was seriously impacted by Pharaoh's decree that all Hebrew babies be destroyed. Yet God turned this curse into a blessing for Moses.

### **2** How was Moses' life miraculously preserved? And how was his future life affected? Discover the answer in Exodus 2:1-10.

Moses' life was providentially preserved for a special purpose. Not only was he raised to the age of 12 by his own mother; she was paid from Pharaoh's treasury to raise her own son. Moses was given the highest education in Egypt at Pharaoh's expense. God has a way, even when there seems to be no way. God's plans succeed in spite of humanity's intervention.

### **3** Read Exodus 2:11-15. What serious character flaw did Moses exhibit?

Moses believed, based on his background, education, and military training, that he was to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage. He believed he was ready to accomplish something great, but God knew he was not ready. Moses

had to learn lessons of humility, patience, and trust; so God sent him to herd sheep.

### **4** Moses fled into the wilderness and ended up herding sheep for 40 years. He must have thought that God could no longer use him. How did God reveal Himself to Moses in the wilderness? Read Exodus 3:2-10.

Because of his earlier failures, Moses could easily have believed that God had forgotten him, that God could no longer use him. But God watched over Moses in his desert wanderings as a shepherd, and at the right time He revealed Himself. Moses was now ready to lead Israel out of Egyptian bondage and be the leader God wanted him to be.

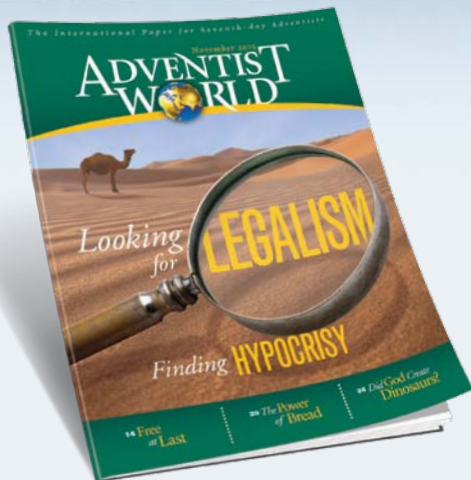
### **5** What was Moses' response, and how did God answer Him? Read Exodus 3:10, 11; 14-17.

Forty years before, when Moses felt he was ready to deliver Israel, God knew he needed more preparation, so He sent Moses to herd sheep for 40 years. When God saw Moses had learned the necessary lessons, Moses felt he was not ready. God uses those who feel inadequate because they are ready to depend on Him. God uses those who sense their weakness, because He can be their strength.

### **6** Throughout the book of Exodus God revealed His miracle-working power. Read Exodus 4:1-4, 13, 14; 6:6, 7, and list three miracles God performed to demonstrate His mighty power to both Israel and the heathen nations nearby.

### **7** What was God's ultimate purpose in raising up Moses to lead Israel? Read Exodus 9:16.

God raised up Moses for the express purpose of revealing His glory to the world. God has raised up each one of us in our spheres of influence to reveal through our words and witness His glory. We too are to show God's power in our lives to glorify His name, so that like Moses, we too can be friends of God and represent Him aright in everything we do. ■



# Letters

## Grateful

I am grateful for the blessings in *Adventist World*. I wait for it with joy every month. Through this magazine I find out what is happening in the world among our brothers and sisters.

The items I enjoy most are those that speak of missionary experiences, that help me focus my ministry and give me new ideas. Please include more items on youth work in the mission field.

Thank you for the blessing of being able to access much of this through the Web site.

LUIS MOREIRA  
Quito, Ecuador

Your publication is one that inspires and touches lives, and for that I commend you. We ask that you dispatch more of these to reach our brothers and sisters in remote parts of the country.

CLIFFORD KEYA  
Kenya

## On the Jericho Road

The article “On the Jericho Road” (November 2015) was so touching I cried. We need this kind of article to show others who our God is!

In Genesis 19 God saw only one righteous family. We know the story of Lot. God saved his life because he was willing to sacrifice to save the lives of strangers (angels) who came under his roof. He put their safety ahead of his own and his children’s. Lot is the nephew of Abraham, who was willing to give Isaac to obey God. We have to give all to follow Jesus.

MONI DOMINIC  
India/United States

## Providence

On our Sabbath afternoon rounds we met Leanne, a former Catholic who accepted *The Great Controversy*. No, she didn’t want a DVD from my wife; all she wanted was a book from me.

She mentioned the terrible slaughter in Paris the previous Friday

(November 13), which at the time I knew nothing about. I said it sounded like a replay of an event in Paris in the 1790s. Prompted by the Holy Spirit, she opened the book to chapter 15 (on the French Revolution) and was amazed that the book she held in her hands was as up-to-date as the daily newspaper.

Praise the Lord! I’m sure she couldn’t wait to read the book! Many blessings for your wonderful magazine.

BILLO SMITH  
Queensland, Australia

## Legalism and Hypocrisy

Thank you for publishing “Looking for Legalism, Finding Hypocrisy” (November 2015). It makes a point about which all Christians should be aware.

MATTHEW ALEXANDRA  
Australia

Legalism is born from not understanding God’s perfect law. Love is the law. Our beloved Messiah walked and spoke in perfect love, so He was not a legalist.

He worked on Sabbath and was judged by legalists for breaking the law. The works Jesus did on Sabbath were works of love for others, and those works are pleasing to Yahweh

# Prayer & PRAISE

I am requesting prayers so that I will not draw back from faith; for God to help me keep Sabbath as it is written in the Bible, and for a financial breakthrough.

VINCENT, Zimbabwe

I ask you to pray that the Lord will make a profound change in my life in a very radical way, so that I am revived spiritually, morally, and from any other point of view. May He grant me pardon, cleanse me, and sanctify me because I want to renew my covenant with Him.

MERIZIER, Haiti

Please pray for me and my fiancé. I’m in another country to study, and our relationship is almost over. Please pray she can join me soon.

Name Withheld, Brazil

My family is going through hard times. Kindly pray for our financial situation; my husband abandoned me and the kids.

MERCY, Zimbabwe





and not against the commandments.

It is good to do good works on Sabbath. We must learn to walk in the perfect loving-kindness of the Holy Spirit. It is legalistic to obsess with the strict adherence of the laws and bylaws without understanding or following the deeper meaning of the law.

Love God with all your heart, mind, body, and soul; and love each other as or more than ourselves. The whole of the law is based on this. When we live in love, we naturally tend to be in harmony with the commandments. But trying to live only by the statutes and commandments without love is like filthy rags to Yahweh and definitely legalistic. There is no law against actions/thoughts that are of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Love is the meaning and point of the law, and when we truly live in love, we are truly free.

Hallelujah forever and ever, for God is truly good and beautiful in all His ways!

JASON GILBERTSON  
Via Facebook  
Hawaii, Unites States

**Letters Policy:** Please send to: [letters@adventistworld.org](mailto:letters@adventistworld.org). Letters must be clearly written, 100-word maximum. Include the name of the article and the date of publication with your letter. Also include your name, the town/city, state, and country from which you are writing. Letters will be edited for space and clarity. Not all letters submitted will be published.

## Two by Two

Each day we breathe about 23,040 times, moving 12.4 cubic meters (438 cubic feet) of air.

Breaths come in pairs, except for two times in our lives: at birth, when we inhale for the first time, and at death, when we exhale for the last time.

Source: *A Natural History of the Senses*

## TEA TIME

With at least half the world (the Northern Hemisphere) still caught in winter's icy grip, consider these herbal teas to soothe a sore throat or help you sleep before you take a winter nap:

- green tea
- oolong tea
- mint tea
- white tea
- rooibos tea

Source: EatThis.com

PHOTO: PIXABAY/  
LARISA KOSHKINA



Please pray for my family; I don't want them to be lost. I'm worried for our salvation. Please pray for us to see how important it is to be ready for Christ's second coming and help us to see how near it is.

VICKY, *United Kingdom*

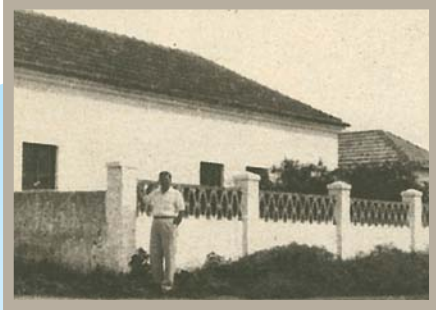
I once asked the prayer team to help me in praying. I was trusting God as the only source for a good job and a woman for a wife. I am happy to let you know that God heard our prayers. I have a good job and a beautiful wife. Indeed, if we partner in prayer, God answers us.

PETER, *Malawi*

Please pray for me so that I can give my whole heart to Christ and earn a promotion at work.

PETER, *South Africa*

**The Place of Prayer:** Send prayer requests and praise (thanks for answered prayer) to [prayer@adventistworld.org](mailto:prayer@adventistworld.org). Keep entries short and concise, 50-words or less. Items will be edited for space and clarity. Not all submissions will be printed. Please include your name and your country's name. You may also fax requests to: 1-301-680-6638; or mail them to *Adventist World*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 U.S.A.



# 65 YEARS AGO

In February 1951, at a meeting of the Angola Union mission committee held in Nova Lisboa, Angola, the Angola Publishing House was established, with E. L. Jewell as manager.

As early as 1937, Sabbath school publications were printed on a duplicator, then on a Multigraph press at Bongo Training School at Lepi. Plans for the purchase of a larger press began when it became apparent that more than a printshop would be required to produce the projected amount of literature.

The publishing house in Angola was at first linked to the publishing house in Portugal and named Atlantic Publishers Limited—Angola Branch (Publicadora Atlantico Limitada—Filial de Angola). After a building in Nova Lisboa was selected and a Babcock cylinder press and a paper trimmer were ordered, the city council decided to widen the street, making it necessary to reduce the size of the building, rendering it inadequate as a printing plant. A new plant was completed in 1958 at Bongo Mission.

Angola Publishing House (Casa Publicadora Angolana) is now operated by the South-Western Angola Union Mission. In the late 1970s the publishing house was moved to Huambo.

*“Behold, I come quickly...”*

Our mission is to uplift Jesus Christ, uniting Seventh-day Adventists everywhere in beliefs, mission, life, and hope.

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# Multicultural Christians



Seventh-day Adventists are among the most ethnically and racially diverse religious groups in North America. Its more than 1 million members are:

- **White (37 percent)**
- **Black (32 percent)**
- **Hispanic (15 percent)**
- **Asian (8 percent)**
- **other (8 percent)**

Source: WorldReligionNews.com

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