

November 10, 1988

How does an ancient text speak to modern birth technologies?

God Gives Only Good Gifts

AIDS

AIDS is a very real presence in the San Francisco Bay area. Calvin Rock's (Faith Alive! Sept. 8) assurance that the church *is* doing something about AIDS falls flat.

To say that ideas are not "operational" because of "competing priorities" merely masks the fact that the church is *talking* but not *doing* anything about AIDS.

We are at the stage where everyone agrees that something should be done, but no one is willing to step out and actually do anything. I lent a destitute former Adventist AIDS victim \$100 to help with his rent, but he returned it because he found a place in the Catholic hospice in San Francisco. As far as I can determine, there is no Adventist ministry to AIDS victims anywhere near San Francisco.

The fact that nothing is operational says something about our competing priorities. Compassion and a witness to God's healing power are not high priorities. But most disturbing, we are missing our chance to make a spiritual impact on men and women who may be going to Christless graves.

In my opinion, our Christian charter commands us to reverse our priorities and put compassion, healing, and Christian witness above all other priorities. EDWARD ALLEN
Concord, California

Lagging Attendance

Lagging Sabbath school attendance ("Sabbath School—In Need of Revitalization—1, 2," Sept. 22, 29) is indicative of a deeper problem than lackluster programming. It is a symptom of the spiritual indifference that pervades the church in North America. James Londis refers to this apathy as "indifference to Adventist theology, indifference to the future of the church, indifference to local church and conference affairs, indifference to spiritual disciplines, even indifference to God" (*Adventist Review*, Sept. 29).

Restructuring church worship services is doing little more than applying a Band-Aid to the underlying

problem: the spiritual illness of the church. What is needed more than restructuring services is the restructuring of Adventist hearts. When hearts have been transformed, the fog of indifference will lift. The "pathetic paucity of attendance" will change. Empty pews will fill. Members will react as did David: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Ps. 122:1).

RUTH JAEGER BUNTAIN
St. Helena, California

Having returned to the United States recently after being overseas for 19 years, I wholeheartedly agree that our Sabbath schools in North America are in trouble. However, since Sabbath schools are alive and thriving in many countries of the world, I think we should consider that the problem here may not be with Sabbath school itself, but with the attitudes of our members.

There is no need to change the format of Sabbath school. It is already designed to create opportunities for study, fellowship, and outreach activities. Instead of encouraging our members to focus on their own needs and whether they are being met, we should paraphrase John F. Kennedy's famous challenge, "Ask not what your Sabbath school can do for you; ask what you can do for your Sabbath school."

Is it not a self-centered attitude to think that Sabbath school must cater to my needs or I will not attend? Too many members feel free to sit back and criticize the Sabbath school, but they are not doing anything themselves to revitalize it. I think the old adage "If you would have friends, you must show yourself friendly" could be applied to Sabbath school. If we want our Sabbath schools to be alive and growing, we must put our best efforts into making them that way instead of complaining that they are not meeting our needs. We get out of Sabbath school what we put into it.

CARROL GRADY
Silver Spring, Maryland

Better Choir Lofts

One of the human activities in the worship service is the contribution of the musicians—choir and instrumentalists. Since Adventist churches do not pay for their ministry, would it not be a great kindness to consider their comfort when the church is designed? According to Neville Clouten, in "Architecture of Enrichment" (Sept. 15): "Our buildings should respond uniquely to the environment, human activities, climate, cost, society, culture, and symbolism."

But our choir lofts generally are poorly ventilated, cooled, heated, and lighted. Likewise, the cubbyholes where the organist and/or pianist are located are uncomfortable and are often in areas not acoustically relevant to either the choir's contribution or the congregation's participation.

Why not have separate lighting, heating, and air conditioning controls for those presenting the musical offering? Place the controls where an appointed choir member can adjust them? This would provide a comfortable setting for both rehearsals and the worship service.

MARGUERITE N. ENTZ
Madison, Tennessee

Handicapped Welcome

Thank you for the information about the new General Conference office building under construction. Perhaps there was simply an oversight concerning the assurance to handicapped believers of planned access to the offices for them—at least I hope so. Just in case some avenue of access for them has been overlooked, please, before it is too late, make the whole building available to them.

HARRIETT RICHARDSON MUSK
Kingman, Arizona

Be assured that the entire building, by law, will be accessible to the handicapped—from the Ellen G. White Estate to the president's office to the Adventist Review office. We hope you'll come visit us.

—Editors.

ADVENTIST REVIEW

November 10, 1988

General paper of the
Seventh-day Adventist Church

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■ "The Bible and Birth Technologies," by Jack W. Provonsha. Nature and biblical revelation provide principles to

help us answer bioethical questions.

■ "Ruling on Religion," by Mitchell A. Tyner. A look at church-state cases coming before the Supreme Court that will affect Seventh-day Adventists. Last in a three-part series on religious liberty.



JUDGED BY THE LIGHT

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind" (John 9:39).

These words search my heart. They force me to ask myself: Am I blind, or do I see?

When Joseph and Mary brought their baby Son to the Temple, the devout Simeon said of Him, "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed" (Luke 2:34, 35, NIV).

Jesus revealed "the thoughts of many hearts." Regardless what a person's religious profession might be, no matter how exalted his spiritual office, his reaction to Jesus revealed his heart. Faced with Jesus and His claims, many who "saw"—or thought they did—became blind, while the blind received sight. "In this very revelation, judgment was passing upon men. Their character was tested, their destiny determined" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 475).

Jesus' statement "For judgment I am come into this world . . ." was made to a man who, blind from birth, now rejoiced in full vision. What a day that had been—that Sabbath in Jerusalem! A poor blind beggar had been miraculously healed, had stood his ground when scoffed at and scorned, had been cut off from the synagogue, but had come to faith in Jesus.

But the same day that he passed from blindness to sight, from nonbelief to faith, the "lights" of Jerusalem were going out. The religious estab-

lishment, confronted with the Light of the world, chose darkness! No greater condemnation could be possible; they condemned themselves.

Jesus still reveals the thoughts of many hearts. In the final analysis spirituality is intensely personal. We live and work in the church in a network of relationships and duties, but Jesus alone knows our hearts, knows how we react when the Light shines upon us. That's why the final judgment will bring many surprises.

What about those men of religion in Jerusalem—did they know what they were doing? Did they choose darkness rather than light in a carefully premeditated act?

I doubt it. Rather, I think, they had become victims of the greatest deception—they had deceived themselves. To them light had become darkness and darkness light.

I find that a frightening idea to contemplate. It forces me to look deep into my heart, to examine my motives. How would I have responded if I had been one of those leaders in Jerusalem?

How do I react to the Light today?

Staff Changes

Because *Adventist Review* deadlines march up in unbroken rank every week, editors have to prepare copy in advance when they go out on assignment.

So although you read this editorial in November, I am writing in early September. I leave in a few days for five weeks of travel in Africa, where I will be involved in videotaping the *Review's* 45-minute

documentary on Adventism on this continent of explosive church growth. Kilimanjaro, Nairobi, Solusi, Uganda, Addis Ababa—my mind keeps running on to the scenes just ahead.

These are days of change in the *Review* office. After nearly four years as assistant editor, Deborah Anfenson-Vance has decided to move on. As I write, she is en route to southern California with her husband and daughter.

D.A.V. made a major contribution to the ministry of the church paper. Her writing appealed to many readers; she has a literary gift of unusual power.

Never content with average work, consistently turning in the cleanest copy in the office, she worked hard in editing. She has an eye for literary nuance; this, combined with her theological background (she has a master's degree from the seminary), made a strong editor.

Deborah has a keen, creative mind and expresses her viewpoint effectively. She played an important role in planning sessions, developing and caring for the Lifestyle section of the new *Review*, among other responsibilities.

We will miss her; so will our readers.

Joining the staff as associate editor this fall is Dr. Roy Adams. Born in Grenada, he leaves the posts of associate secretary of the SDA Church in Canada and editor of the *Canadian Adventist Messenger*.

With service in the Far Eastern Division as well as in Inter- and North America, Elder Adams further enhances the world perspective of the *Review* office. A powerful public speaker, he is also a theologian of note; his Th.D. dissertation, "The Sanctuary Doctrine: Three Approaches in the SDA Church," was the first to be published in the Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series.

We look forward to his participation in the *Adventist Review* family.

WILLIAM G. JOHNSSON



GUEST EDITORIAL

IF I WERE LOOKING

If I were looking for truth and for someone who could help me find it, I would be cautious about certain people.

Truthbearers?

The people who give me pause include those who have only one subject they can talk about.

Those who declare that they have the only true message and yet do not agree with the body of the church.

So-called prophets who disagree with God's prophets.

So-called health reformers whose cupboards contain largely unrecognizable "food."

Reformers whose personal lives do not match their reforms.

Ones who reform by *not* doing, rather than by *doing*.

Ones who use underhanded, dishonest tactics or methods.

Those who build *themselves* up, and not Christ.

People who are "carried about with every wind of doctrine"—you never know what the latest will be.

Those who pick up every rumor and run with it, never checking out its truth or original source.

Those whose teachings go beyond the Bible and are speculative.

People who are always talking and never listening.

Or the opposite—those who are all questions and no answers.

Those who *never* tell you where they stand.

Or the opposite—those who *everlastingly* tell you where they stand.

Those who can't get along with their brethren.

People who are always looking for thorns, not flowers.

Publishers who print letters to the

editor that say what they themselves might have said if they thought they could get away with it.

Those who persistently find fault with the church but never build it up or have anything better to offer.

Those who quote Ellen White only to tear down the church.

Or those who totally ignore what she has said.

Those who believe that because

Why not use the Sword of the Spirit to fight the *real* enemy rather than soldiers in the Lord's army?

Jesus died for our sins, we are released from responsibility for high standards or right living.

Those who want my money to support efforts to find fault with the church that I love.

Supreme Regard

I have no question that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is in need of reproof and correction. After all, it is made up of imperfect

human beings like you and me. Still, "the church, enfeebled and defective though it be, is the only object on earth on which Christ bestows His supreme regard" (*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 396).

What are we to do, then, in these sometimes confusing days? Why not put our energies into cooperation rather than competition? Why not use the Sword of the Spirit—the Word of God—to fight the *real* enemy rather than fight against other soldiers in the Lord's army? Why not make sure we are right ourselves before we set out to change everyone else?

On second thought, I would be not only *cautious* but *afraid* of most of those I mentioned in my long list. This is not the time to abandon our biblically and prophetically established message. We are too close to heaven to expend our energies in tearing down or criticizing.

It's time to *build* up the church and its mission. It's time to support the church with our time, talents, and money, and *not* to be sidetracked by every "wind of doctrine" that comes along.

The counsel and correction for Laodicea—the last church—is surely appropriate for our time. But the correction is followed by encouragement and an invitation from Christ Himself: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:19, 20).

This promise of fellowship with Christ can be ours right now. But in a larger sense it is an invitation to a banquet planned someday soon in heaven. It will not be "potluck." Our Saviour will have prepared everything ahead of time. I want to be there, don't you?

PAUL A. GORDON
Undersecretary
Ellen G. White Estate

High Court Decision Favors Adventists

In early October the United States Supreme Court refused to review an appeal on *Lake v. Goodrich*, a case in which a Seventh-day Adventist argued his right to not work on Sabbaths.

This action thus upholds the decision of lower federal courts ordering reinstatement with back wages and benefits to Melvin Lake of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, who was fired by the Goodrich Rubber Company for refusing to do work on the Sabbath, reports Mitchell Tyner, associate director of the General Conference Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department.

Lake's case has been supported by the church and conducted by General Conference attorneys and Adventist litigator Lee Boothby.

WORLD CHURCH

Zambia Prime Minister Says Thank You. Zambia prime minister Kebby Musokotwane recently expressed his appreciation for the work of Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA).

"Your projects help people rely on themselves instead of only feeding and clothing them," Musokotwane said. "You show them the way to self-dependency."

Musokotwane particularly appreciated ADRA's gardening projects, whereby people learn to make the most of a small plot of land without the use of expensive equipment or chemicals.

Tanzania Crusade Brings 862 Baptisms. An evangelistic reaping crusade, sponsored by the *Quiet Hour* radiobroadcast, resulted in 862 baptisms in Arusha, Tanzania, last September. The crusade followed nearly 300 cottage evangelistic meetings held by local pastors and laypersons.

The new converts were organized into 35 home church groups on October 1 (see picture below), reports James H. Zachary, director of global evangelism for the broadcast. The crusade, the first in the past six years in this predominantly Muslim country, increased church membership in Arusha by 144 percent, from 600 to

1,462. Also, 1,140 people have expressed a desire to join the church.

Cook Islands Ban Cigarette Ads. As a result of lobbying efforts of the Adventist Church, the Cook Islands Parliament approved a ban on all cigarette advertising, reports Tangi Tuaineiti, Cook Islands Mission health and temperance director.

The lobbying efforts included the screening of a film on the dangers of cigarette smoking for members of the legislature. "When the bill went before parliament, it was voted with little discussion," Tuaineiti says.

São Paulo Recognizes Two Adventist Leaders. In separate ceremonies, the city of São Paulo, Brazil, recently honored two Adventist leaders and awarded them the Anchieta Medallion and the Gratitude Diploma.

Roberto Cesar Azevedo, Brazil College president, was honored for his contributions in the field of education. Roberto Rabello, founder and speaker of the Brazil Voice of Prophecy, was honored for the continuing success of the radio ministry. The Brazil VOP broadcast, aired on more than 400 stations, recently celebrated its forty-fifth anniversary, reports *Revista Adventista*.

To New Positions. J. N. Kyale, former Central Kenya Field president, was elected East African Union president on October 17 at the Eastern Africa Division year-end meetings in Nairobi, Kenya. Kyale replaces C. D. Henri, who interrupted his retirement to take the position on an interim basis.

Alan Hodges, a South England Conference pastor, recently was appointed president of the Irish Mission by the British Union Conference executive committee. Hodges replaces Watson Southcott, who now serves as South England Conference secretary.

NORTH AMERICA

Ohio Baptisms Double. Ohio Conference baptisms totaled 305 for the nine-month period ending September 30, 1988. The total represents a 121 percent increase over the same period last year of 138 people baptized, reports Loren Nelson, conference ministerial director.

"I believe that the key to the increase has been a greater emphasis on public evangelism and laymen-conducted seminars," Nelson explained. "Right now there are 10 to 12 public evangelistic meetings and Revelation Seminars in progress, a large increase over last year."

Maine Church Revives Van Ministry. The Portland Adventist Church, in Maine, has revived its van ministry after a five-year lull, reports Geraldine Grout, *Atlantic Union Gleaner* assistant editor.

During the past summer the van staff performed more than 2,300 health screenings and distributed more than 4,000 pieces of literature, Grout says.



AHS/West Purchases New Hospital.



Adventist Health System/West, which owns Ukiah Adventist Hospital (UAH), in Ukiah, California, recently purchased Ukiah General Hospital from HealthTrust, Inc., in Nashville, Tennessee.

"By combining the operations of the two hospitals—which are presently operating at approximately 60 percent occupancy—we will be able to cut out the costs of providing duplicate services and use existing funds to introduce new health-care services to the Ukiah area," says Ed Ermshar (above), UAH president. At the request of the former owners, the purchase price was not disclosed.

AU Reopens Horn Museum. The Siegfried H. Horn Archaeological Museum at Andrews University reopened on October 29 after a \$100,000 renovation project.

The museum, which first opened in 1970, houses a collection of ancient artifacts, including one of the largest collections of ancient cuneiform writing tablets in North America. The museum has been closed since July 1987 for remodeling, reports Candace Jorgensen, university spokesperson.

The museum commemorates the work of Dr. Siegfried H. Horn, retired Adventist archaeologist, author, biblical scholar, and museum founder. During opening ceremonies, Dr. Horn received a commendation from the General Conference Executive Committee.

LLUMC Opens Fertility Center. Loma Linda University Medical Center opened its Center for Fertility and In Vitro Fertilization on October 20.

In the new program a number of treatments will be available to help couples conceive children, reports the *Riverside Press-Enterprise*. Procedures offered include in vitro fertilization and embryo transfer, gamete intrafallopian tube transfer, and artificial insemination. The average cost of each procedure is \$6,500.

To New Positions. Herman Bauman, formerly Montana Conference president, recently was elected Arizona Conference president. Bauman replaces E. Frank Sherrill, who has retired and now lives in the Phoenix, Arizona, area.

Perry A. Parks, formerly Maritime Conference president, recently was elected Montana Conference president, replacing Bauman.

FOR YOUR INTEREST

AIDS Committee Approves Teen Video. Seeking to provide accurate and appropriate materials for Adventist youth, the General Conference AIDS Committee recently approved the video *AIDS: Suddenly Sex Has Become Very Dangerous* for use in Adventist schools and youth groups.

The 30-minute video for grades 6-10 depicts the danger of AIDS if teens are sexually active, says Curt Dewees, *Listen* magazine editorial assistant.

The video, with accompanying teaching guide, is available in VHS format and can be obtained by writing to the Health Connection, 6830 Laurel Street NW., Washington, D.C. 20012, or by calling 1-800-548-8700. Alaska residents should call 1-202-722-6740.

ALSO IN THE NEWS

"Churches Can Be Sued," Courts Say. The California Supreme Court maintains that a religious organization can be sued for fraud or for allegedly brainwashing unknowing recruits into joining the church, the *Washington Post* reports.

The justices ruled 6 to 1 that two former members of Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church can proceed to trial with assertions that they were tricked by recruiters who denied that they were church members and then used subtle "mind-control" techniques to obtain conversions, the *Post* report says.

First Churches Completed in North Korea. Pictured below is one of only two churches in North Korea built since the Korean peninsula was divided at the end of World War II in 1945.

The estimated 10,000 Christians in North Korea, who have been worshiping in house churches since the split, can now choose to attend services in the nondenominational Protestant church in Kwan Bock (below), which seats 300, or in the Roman Catholic church (not pictured).



CHURCH CALENDAR

- Nov. 12 Annual Sacrifice Offering
- Nov. 12 Ingathering Emphasis
- Nov. 24 Thanksgiving Day
- Dec. 3 Personal Ministries Day
- Dec. 10 Health and Temperance Day Offering
- Dec. 17 World Stewardship Day
- Dec. 24 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the South American Division

A generation or two ago, as modern electronics began to burst into flower, a Sunday school teacher asked his class of teenagers if they thought God understood radar. They responded with an impulsive "No!" followed by nervous chuckles.

The class members quickly realized that to say the All-knowing One didn't know anything about twentieth-century electronics was absurd. But somehow in their minds God and radar just didn't go together. God belonged to a different world, the world of the Bible, the ancient past. (Anyone over 30 seems old [or at least old-fashioned] to children, of course. Surely God must, then, be the oldest of all. Even our God-language seems old.)

Something of this sense undoubtedly lies behind the contemporary tendency to assign religion and science to different levels of reality. Certainly the illusion that Christian faith is out of date is lent credence by the disturbing moral conflicts the new technology has thrust upon us. Many of the bioethical questions being raised seem never to have been asked before, or are being asked in new ways, raising doubts about the adequacy of our traditional guides to moral certainty.

The Challenge of Technology

A Bible-based ethic is on trial before this dazzling

Has
medical
technology
rendered
the Bible
obsolete
by the
bioethical
questions
it raises?

array of medical science achievements—genetic engineering, organ transplantation, an almost indefinite prolongation of life by artificial life-support technologies. We've always had the possible option of ending a miserable existence; there was a "Hemlock Society" long ago on the island of Cos, birthplace of ancient Hippocrates. But now the question we most often face is When shall we stop preventing death? When shall we discontinue procedures that postpone death—the complicated life-support gadgetry, artificial nutrition, respiration, cardiac pacemakers, kidney machines, and the like, of which our forefathers never dreamed in their wildest imaginings? When is enough enough? If there were only convenient Bible texts to tell us how or when.

Who can be certain in the midst of the current explosion of reproductive technology? Surrogate mothering is not new, of course. There were Hagar and the handmaidens of Rachel and Leah, Bilhah and Zilpah, in the Old Testament. They even seem to have experienced the same complications. Hagar, like her modern counterpart, appears to have refused to surrender the child. Hagar brought Ishmael into the world to be the legitimate heir of Abraham and Sarah, not for

the purpose of competing with Sarah.

In some ways Abraham and Jacob were in a more difficult moral situation than are most modern semen donors. Artificial insemination was as yet unknown. They knew nothing in those days about in vitro fertilization, embryo transfer, or the freezing of surplus embryos for future use, either, though they knew of God's command giving human beings dominion over nature, to take charge and presumably to modify it to make it better serve humankind's needs.

But are not at least some of these modern reproductive techniques violations of nature's laws and thus wrong? How shall we know? Revelation is silent on the matter. Surely God cannot have been taken by surprise. But if He knew, why are there no clearly applicable biblical texts to guide us? Has medical technology rendered the Bible obsolete by the bioethical questions it raises?

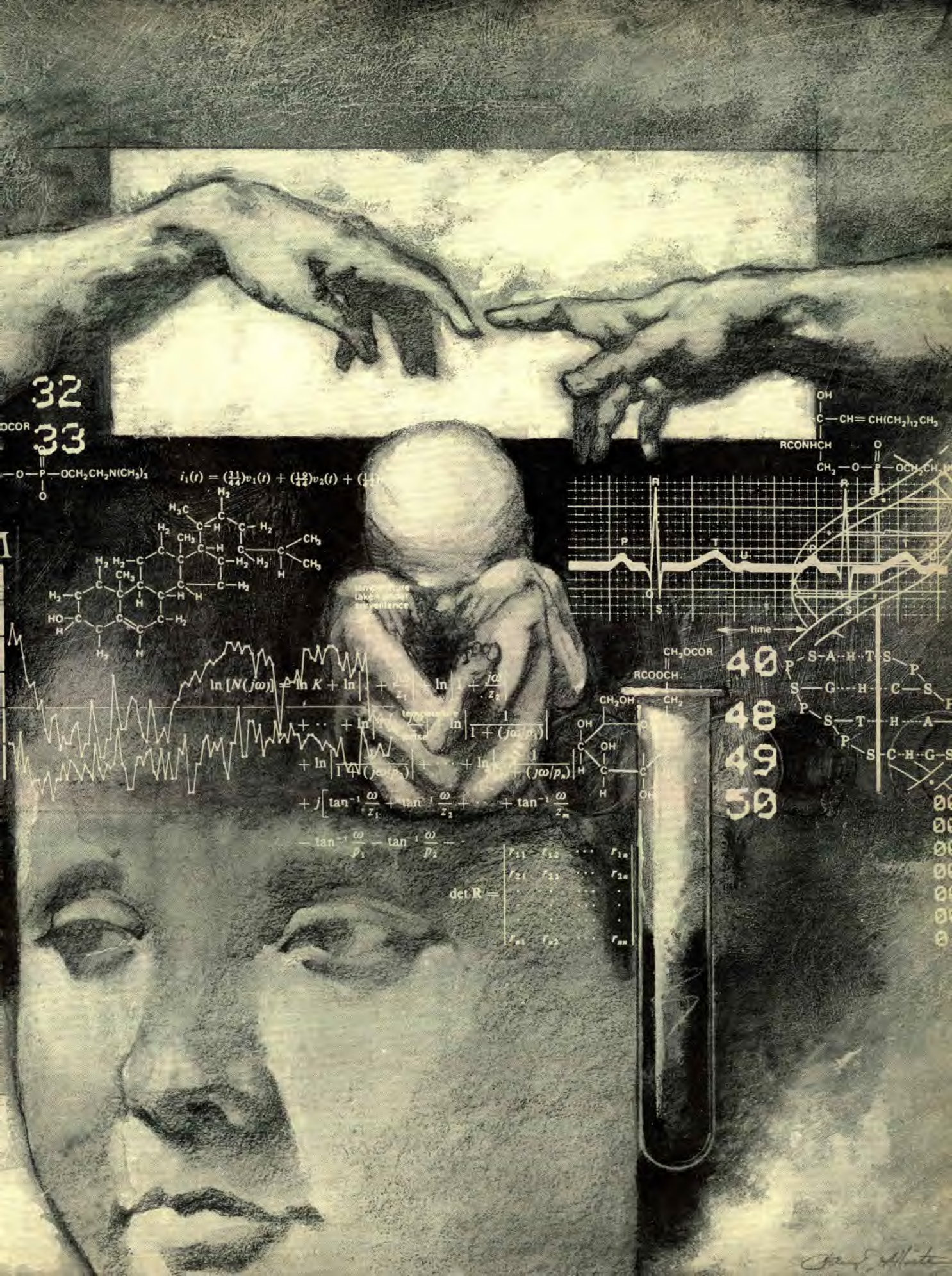
Contemporary Book

Bible-believing Christians (including ethicists) view the Bible as a contemporary book. These things were "written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. 10:11). They also believe that the God of the book is a contemporary God—and they therefore have their work cut out for them.

IS THE BIBLE OUT OF DATE?

PART I

BY JACK W. PROVONSHA



The Bible, written under the inspiration and guidance of God, is written by and in the words of men. It is therefore bound to express itself in terms of the presuppositions, language, and thought forms of its human writers—that is, if God really values human freedom. Scripture necessarily reflects the times and places of the biblical writers—even their questions. (Man's perceptions of God's other book, nature, share the same limitations.)

Since the words of human beings are also the Word of God, however, there is more. God as He is, in and of Himself, cannot be constrained by our time-space strictures. From His position of transcendence He can reveal more than human beings in any particular time or place can comprehend—but the point is, such things might be comprehensible in another time and place.

Such truth is thus likely to possess both a timeless quality, usually at the level of principles, and limited time/space applications. What this means in terms of our present concerns is that when we seek guidance from God in dealing with these current bioethical dilemmas we should look for the relevant, underlying, general moral principles set forth in God's books, and then seek to apply them as wisely as possible to the sometimes novel, specific issues at hand. (We shall be illustrating this method, especially in part 2 of this series next week.)

The Seventh-day Adventist call for all men and women everywhere to worship the Creator of all that is provides a measure of respect for the laws of nature not always found elsewhere. We believe nature's laws are the Creator's laws!

But Adventists also know that nature has participated in the Fall and that special revelation is required to assist us in

Surrogate
mothering
is not new.
Hagar, like
her modern
counterpart,
appears
to have
refused to
surrender
the child.

distinguishing that which bears the marks of sin and that which speaks clearly of the character and will of God. The two books—the Bible and the book of nature—shed light on each other. But that which is revealed—the Bible—is normative in situations of apparent conflict.

Well, what do the two books tell us that is relevant to the ethical questions we face under the prodding of the new technology? First, they remind us of God's intentions in creating man and woman. Humankind stands above the rest of creation in being created in the image of God. Now that's a complicated notion, but it means, at least, that the human being was created to be a person—some moderns would say a "self."

Created a Self

A number of qualities go into the making of a self. There is, above all, consciousness—the great mystery of nature. There is self-consciousness. The self is not only aware; it is aware that it is aware. It is able to anticipate the future, including its own death. It is able to recall the past and bring meaning to the present. It is sensible to time. Its self-awareness gives it a measure of control over things—freedom and responsibility. It can perceive spatial limits and interrelationships. It is able to experience self-value. Being a self refers not only to who I am, but where I am, where I came from, why I am here, and where I am going. It also means knowing how much I am worth, and knowing these things in order to make hard choices.

To be a self also involves relating to other selves. The Creator intended that man should not be alone. He even allowed man to experience loneliness momentarily to ensure that he would value the companionship of another self—woman. The Bible por-

trays the first two selves as becoming one, and in their oneness passing on the gift of life and identity to their children. To be a self is to exist in a community of selves—including a community spanning the generations. "Honour thy father and thy mother."

God's Highest Gift

Selfhood, on these terms, is God's highest gift to His human creatures. It reflects God's own nature and is the essence of our humanness. The moral guidance He provided, especially after sin confused the picture, was designed to protect this quality. Paul Lehman defines ethics as "what it takes to keep human life human." Think of how many of the laws of God function in this way—indeed, all of them, if one includes in selfhood creaturely dependence on the divine Creator Self. It is in being false to the Creator's intention for human selfhood that the false self falls into selfishness.

This is what constitutes the heart of an approach to ethics based on God's two books. Ethics has to do with what it takes to protect, to nurture, and to maximize man's potential for reflecting God's selfhood, to be in the image of God, to be a true self with all that implies.

Next week we will look at what an ethic so characterized has to say to some of the pressing bioethical issues of our day. □



Jack W. Provonsha, M.D., Ph.D., is a physician and ethicist writing from

Nordland, Washington. For more than 25 years he taught medical ethics and philosophy of religion at Loma Linda University.



MEYLAN C. THORESEN

GOD GIVES ONLY GOOD GIFTS

On deciding whose will is best

BY IVAN C. BLAKE

A troubled inquirer spoke for countless others when he wrote to the editor of a Christian magazine, "I read in the Bible that when

I ask, I will receive (Matt. 7:7-11). I've been asking a long time, but I don't receive. Should I give up?"

How would you reply to this perplexed person? Perhaps you wouldn't try to answer, since you

may have asked the same question. Maybe for a long time you have been asking God for something that seems reasonable, but no satisfactory answer has ever come.

Trevor and Shela became our friends after we had spent many enjoyable hours together studying the Bible. They shared our joy when our two boys were born, and we looked forward to the day when they would have their own children. But it seemed that Shela could not bear children. We prayed with them, asking God to bless them with a child of their own. Our prayers were answered. A baby was on the way—a miracle child, we said.

We moved to a nearby city before the baby came. When I heard Trevor's voice on the phone the day their baby was due, I knew he had bad news. Their baby had lived for only a few hours.

They had asked God for a good gift, but did not receive what they had asked for. How are they to un-

derstand the promise of Jesus?

Another couple called me late one Friday night to tell me their newborn baby was dying. I found them at the hospital sobbing around the incubator in which their tiny child fought for his life. The medical staff held out no hope.

We prayed together around that incubator, asking God to heal this baby if it was according to His plan. We asked Him for a good gift. Ten days later the mother carried her baby out of the hospital, full of praise to God.

These parents had no difficulty telling others what God meant when He told them to ask, and they would receive. Yet I wondered how I could help the first couple make sense out of this same promise.

Doubtless you could relate experiences of having asked for good gifts and sometimes having received them, sometimes not. You may even feel you received a stone when you asked for bread.

Is the promise only for some and not for others? Do only those who meet certain requirements get good gifts? How can He not give, when He said He would?

"Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For the one who asks always receives; the one who searches always finds; the one who knocks will always have the door opened to him. Is there a man among you who would hand his son a stone when he asked for bread? Or would hand him a snake when he asked for a fish? If you, then, who are evil, know how to give your children what is good, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him?" (verses 7-11, Jerusalem).

One central truth flows from these words: you can expect only the best from God.

Three sections in the passage illustrate this kernel of truth.

Promise in the Positive

First, Jesus states the promise in the positive when He says, "Ask, and you will receive." He tells us

what we can expect from Him.

In the Greek the passage reads: "Go on asking, go on seeking, go on knocking." Jesus encourages us to persist in prayer.

God doesn't play games with us to see how long He can hold off giving and how long we can keep asking. Why then isn't asking once enough? Asking God for something does not stand by itself, but comes within the setting of communion and fellowship with Him. It has more to do with our relationship to Him than with simply receiving a favor.

When my boy asks me for a bicycle, it becomes not a mere transaction: he needs one, so here it is, and that's it. No! Rather it presents an opportunity for us to draw closer to each other. We take time to talk about it. What kind would he like? What color? How does he plan to take care of it? What will his policy be on sharing rides with friends? What if his dad wants to ride it too? And while we talk it over, he sits up close, his arm around my neck. We have a good time! The bicycle takes second place to our fellowship and communion. The more we talk and fellowship, the more ready he becomes to receive that bike. When he finally gets it, he and I are closer than we have ever been before.

Jesus wants us to keep asking, seeking, knocking, so that we will grow to know Him better as we work together on the issue we seek answers for.

Continuous asking serves to put us in the right frame of mind. It makes us fully aware of our need of God, our dependence on Him. The more we share our needs with Him, the more we are led to see how those needs can best be met, and the more we learn to think the way God thinks. We come to expect only the best from God.

Promise in the Negative

The second part of Jesus' statement comes in a negative form, as He assures us that He will not give a stone when we ask for bread.

To a limited degree we can claim to know what is best for us and our

families. Jesus Himself knew we would not give a stone when our child asks for bread.

But we have limited insight into what is best for us. "Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" (1 Cor. 13:12, NIV).

God sees what we do not; He knows what we will know only when delivered from mortality. We look at life from our narrow point of view. God looks at it through the broad spectrum of the great controversy between good and evil and how we fit into it.

This is why God often doesn't give us what we request. Sometimes what we get makes us feel we received a stone when we asked for bread. We must remember, however, that it only seems that way from our perspective. In reality—and God's perspective is reality—we received nothing but the best, and we will see it that way one day when our eyes have been opened.

Moses asked to go into the Promised Land, but God let him die on Mount Nebo instead. Was that a snake instead of a fish? Moses could well have thought that. But in the end it all turned out better than he had asked for. He received the real Promised Land—heaven itself. You can expect only the best from God, who gives only good gifts.

Promise in the Superlative

Jesus completes the promise by referring to God's "good things" as the very best. When He said, "How much more will your Father in heaven give *good things* to those who ask Him," He had better things in mind than those which we believe are best for us.

Our asking centers on the things we believe we need most; and while these represent real needs, which God does concern Himself with, they are secondary to what God knows we need most.

"How much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to

those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13, Jerusalem). The "good things" God gives are the best gifts because they are spiritual. They point to eternal life and everlasting values. The Holy Spirit represents every best gift God can give.

To receive the Holy Spirit means to possess peace while the storms of life rage around us. It means inner strength when we have to face great hardship. It means holding on to God, even when it seems He has left us. To receive the Holy Spirit means to focus our eyes on the new earth when this world treats us like aliens.

God's good things may not include a satisfactory solution to your problems right now, but His good things include the means to cope and endure.

If we ask Him only for those things that we believe we need in order to live a reasonably smooth life here on earth, and He should grant them, we might end our lives without the *best* gifts: knowing God personally, enjoying His friendship, and receiving assurance of eternal life.

So God says, "I want to give you those things that are most important, the things that belong to the kingdom of heaven. I want you to learn to ask for *them* first. If those become primary to you, the rest of your needs will be taken care of too. You'll see life from the perspective of eternity."

"Make no mistake about this, my dear brothers: it is all that is good, everything that is perfect, which is given us from above; it comes down from the Father of all light" (James 1:16, 17, Jerusalem).

You can expect only the best from God. He gives only the best gifts. □



*Ivan C. Blake
pastors the
Greater New Al-
bany, New York,
church.*

A WISH FOR GOOD SAMARITANS

BY PAT HOWARD

I started reading *The New English Bible* when I thought I had just a cold and expected to resume my normal activities in a few days. When I reached the New Testament a few months later, I switched to other devotional reading. It was too discouraging to read of Jesus' healing miracles while I was undergoing testing to determine whether the muscle problems I now lived with were the residual effects of that cold or the beginning of a new disease process.

Recently I retrieved the last of my belongings from storage. When I unpacked that *New English Bible*, I started to read the Gospel stories I had skipped a few years ago. I wish I had friends like those of the paralyzed man who let him down from the rooftop to be in Jesus' healing presence. Dark years were unnecessarily darker because my experience was more like the traveler's in the parable of the good Samaritan.

More crippling than my damaged muscles was the response of the people around me. To many, I was invisible. Others noticed, but most gave only words as fitting and fashionable as old clothes being donated to Community Services.

Why I Left

Convinced that I was still valuable professionally and attractive socially, I reluctantly left the comfortable nest of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, in which I had been educated and employed. Among non-Christians and Christians of other faiths, I am again active socially and professionally. I did not give up my beliefs in order to be accepted, because in my new environment both physical and

ideological differences are acknowledged but not allowed to overwhelm shared values and goals.

Sometimes I wonder whether the special insight our church has been given regarding healthful living and the cosmic conflict has handicapped us in relating to church members who, despite a lifetime of optimum health habits, are now victims of a genetic or environmental disease process. Perhaps we are so embarrassed that like the Sabbath-keeping, diet-conscious people of 2,000 years ago, we too go past on the other side and leave the victim to find help outside his church family.

People Who Made a Difference

The good Samaritans in my life didn't do anything as risky as rescuing me from a bandit-infested road or as costly as paying the medical expenses. People who made the difference for me include the boss who assured me, "I'll work with you," the old friend flexible enough to shift to other shared interests, and the friend willing to walk just a bit slower and to take some rest stops.

Maybe more important than what they did is what they did not do. They didn't hide behind "I'm praying for you," didn't wrap tidy answers to complex questions in black-and-white boxes, didn't play doctor, and didn't project their problems onto my experience. By being more concerned about dignity than diagnosis, about assurance than answers, these good Samaritans gave the greatest gift—their presence.

Pat Howard is a pseudonym.

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HARRY ANDERSON

CHURCH AND STATE SEPARATION: WHY DO WE STILL FIGHT FOR IT? PART TWO

BY MITCHELL A. TYNER

A century ago A. T. Jones almost single-handedly led our church into the arena of church-state relations. Motivated by the efforts of influential

members of the United States Congress to pass a law recognizing the sanctity of Sunday, Jones raised the consciousness of both the Congress and the church to the dangers in such efforts and to the necessity of protecting the rights of religious minorities.

A century later, defending religious liberty has become an article of faith for most Adventists. In the intervening decades our church has come to occupy a position of influence and respect in this field totally disproportionate to our numbers.

But the Sunday-law threat that motivated Jones no longer exists. Although an independently published book currently being read

and circulated by many Adventists contains highly sensationalized claims to the contrary, there is no current threat of a national Sunday law. Dozens of such laws on the state and local levels have been repealed in recent years. While support for such legislation could arise in a short time, no serious effort in that direction is currently visible.

So what then motivates Adventists' continued involvement in church-state relations? Why do we continue to expend so much time and energy when Adventists are no longer jailed for working on Sunday? Four points come to mind.

First: Real problems still exist. Although American Adventists are not jailed for working on Sunday, they frequently lose their jobs for refusing to work on Sabbath. In some areas of the world our fellow believers still encounter real persecution. Unfortunately, those countries in which the church has had its highest rate of growth do not often have a correspondingly high regard for the rights of religious minorities.

And even in those nations with the best developed rule of law, problems remain. Fundamentalists of whichever faith usually fail to see the necessity of tolerating viewpoints opposed to their own, while on the opposite extreme the secularist mind considers religion—and therefore religious freedom—to be largely irrelevant. Those of us who because of position, profession, wealth, education, or geographic accident find ourselves shielded from such pressures must never forget that we are indeed a minority within a minority.

Second: We protect our own rights most effectively by protecting the rights of others. If a government is free to burden the religious practices of another group, even one with which I strongly disagree, then that same government is free to burden my religious practices.

An example: the United States

Constitution, as currently interpreted, requires that government must demonstrate a "compelling interest" in order to justify a burden on the free exercise of religion. It must show that such an action is virtually a necessity. That's a very high standard of proof. It has been used, for instance, to prohibit states from requiring schoolchildren to say the Pledge of Allegiance if they have religious scruples against doing so. Although I disagree with those who believe that scripture forbids recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, it is in my best interest to defend their interests. If that high standard of proof protects their religious practice, it protects mine as well.

Third: Religious freedom facilitates the spread of the gospel. The earliest Christians observed that "the blood of the martyrs is seed," by which they meant that persecution often results in even wider dissemination of believers, and that persecution cannot eradicate the church. Yet the proclamation of truth to large populations occurs most efficiently in an atmosphere of mutual respect between government and religion. So in order to move financial assets and denominational workers across borders, in order to use mass media, in order to be able to establish an efficient church organization, we will wish to establish such an atmosphere whenever possible.

The foregoing all center on the protection of our own rights—a pragmatic, realistic reason to support religious freedom. But in a sense, such a reason is like obeying God in order to escape punishment—religion as fire insurance. Such a motive is pragmatic and realistic, but incomplete. While serving God from fear is not illegitimate, the mature Christian serves Him from love. Obedience springs from an appreciation of who God is and of the rightness of His direction; from a desire to spend eternal life with Him, not just to avoid eternal death.

In the same way there exists an even better reason to work for religious freedom.

Fourth: Religious freedom is biblically mandated. Perhaps you've never thought of the parable of the prodigal son as a religious liberty story, but consider the facts. The father in the parable represents God. The father in the story is right, and the son wrong. The father would have been completely justified in refusing the son's request for half the family fortune. Yet he allowed the son to waste his time and the family's money because he would not be satisfied with forced allegiance. He gave the son the right to be wrong, knowing that a satisfactory relationship would be established only when the son became willing. The message: God forces no one.

The life of Jesus Christ demonstrated the point. Jesus taught, entreated, and reasoned. He took ethical and moral positions that spoke clearly to the societal problems of His day. But He never forced anyone to follow Him. Perhaps that is why He so frequently referred to us as His sheep, which voluntarily follow the shepherd, rather than His donkeys, which must be driven. The story of the Gospels establishes this: Every man, woman, boy, and girl has the right to relate to God according to the dictates of conscience—his or hers, not someone else's.

The defense of that principle not infrequently requires us to defend unpopular positions. A case in point is the matter of state-mandated prayer in public schools. Aren't we, as a religious body, on the wrong side when we oppose such exercises? No, we are simply defending equality and freedom of individual conscience, and opposing the coercion of minorities that would inevitably result.

Though the supporters of mandatory school prayer deny it, coercion is inherent in the concept. What kind of prayer shall it be—Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, or Muslim?

Even if you assume the proper prayer to be Christian (as do the majority of school prayer advocates), how do you go about it? Do you pray sitting, standing, or kneeling? With eyes closed, or open? Do you remain still, or raise your arms? Various Christian groups espouse one or more of these variants and insist on them to the exclusion of other ways. Which should the local school board choose?

Inevitably the choice would be that favored by the local majority, which might be Roman Catholic in Boston, Jewish in Brooklyn, Mormon in Utah, or Buddhist in Hawaii. And the child whose parents are of a different faith—or none at all—would be told, "If you don't wish to participate, you may leave the room." For a child of tender years to be forced to opt out of a practice being followed by the school authorities, his or her teacher, and most of the other students constitutes coercion, and as such is antithetical to the gospel.

The Bible closes with an invitation: "Whosoever *will*, let him take the water of life *freely*" (Rev. 22:17). Not whosoever is coerced by friends, family, government, or church, but whosoever of his or her own free will decides to accept it. God went to great lengths to give us the freedom of choice. He could have denied us that power and avoided Calvary. But He knew that our allegiance must come from a willing heart, freely given. Our Lord went to great lengths to protect human freedom and to avoid any hint of coercion. Surely He expects us to follow His example. □

Series concluded next week.



Mitchell A. Tyner serves as an associate director and legal counsel in the General Conference Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty.



CHILDREN AND COMMUNION

BY CALVIN B. ROCK

Should unbaptized children participate in the Communion service? How can they be "worthy" when they are so young and not baptized? Where do we stand?

Quoting *The Desire of Ages*, page 656, the *SDA Church Manual* states: "'Christ's example forbids exclusiveness at the Lord's Supper. It is true that open sin excludes the guilty. This the Holy Spirit plainly teaches. But beyond this none are to pass judgment. God has not left it with men to say who shall present themselves on these occasions. For who can read the heart? Who can distinguish the tares from the wheat? 'Let a man examine himself, . . .'"

It continues: "'There may come into the company persons who are not in heart servants of truth and holiness, but who may wish to take part in the service. They should not be forbidden.'"

Seventh-day Adventists do not conduct closed Communion. We open our service not only to baptized members but to sincere individuals not of our fellowship. If baptized and unbaptized persons who are not a part of our spiritual family may participate, is it not reasonable that our unbaptized children may also?

Of course, age or maturity is a consideration. Under no circumstances should children too young to appreciate the meaning of Communion be allowed to receive the sacred emblems. But as neither the Bible nor the *SDA Church Manual* speaks of a specific age that qualifies one, parents should guide in this matter.

Many parents encourage their children to wait, making the Communion service an incentive to baptism and formal membership. Others see participation before baptism as a means of strengthening their children's ties with the Lord and His people at an early age. The final decision must be based on local church custom and family preferences.

However, where children are obviously aware and sincere, we do well to remember the words of Christ: "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me." "See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 18:5, 10, RSV). You and I can probably make accurate judgments as to a child's level of comprehension, but beyond that only God can judge worthiness.

I am often asked to write my congressional representative in support of legislation such as gun control or the Child Protection and Obscenity Enforcement Act. Should Adventists get involved in this kind of politics?

As caring Christians and loyal citizens, Seventh-day Adventists have not only the privilege but the duty to assist in providing the best of conditions and services in their communities. We know that as long as sin exists we will never have a perfect or entirely just society, but our expectation of a better world should not cause us to meekly concede this present society to evil and evil-

doers. We must "occupy" until Jesus comes.

In a civic sense, this means making the most of our opportunities to establish the will and reign of God in this present life. Surely the will of God does not include such items as child abuse, infant mortality, crime, pornography, etc. Any dignified effort we can make to combat these evils is legitimate.

Writing one's congressional representative in support of bills that combat human misery does not involve the kind of politics the prophetess said we should avoid (see *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 475-479). Her negative statements about politics are warnings against loyalty to persons or parties that transcend respect for the truth and align us with the dishonesty and duplicity so often associated with office-seeking and party power.

Far from giving us an excuse to ignore community betterment issues, our prophetess repeatedly admonished participation. Her many counsels regarding involvement in temperance reform (see *Temperance*, pp. 253-256) provide a clear illustration of this. Another illustration is her instruction regarding our responsibility to the poor (see *Welfare Ministry*, pp. 188-190). We find our supreme inspiration, of course, in the ministry of Christ, which so frequently involved relieving individuals of physical and psychological suffering.

The view that encourages one to enjoy the benefits of civic freedom and well-being without contributing to their gain and protection is a distortion of the gospel. It remains true today that we should "render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's" and that "all that remains for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing."

Calvin B. Rock serves as a general vice president of the General Conference. Formerly president of Oakwood College, he holds doctoral degrees in ministry and religious ethics.



Three thousand SDAs attended a celebration in Warsaw on May 7 to mark the centennial of the church's work in Poland.

Adventists Celebrate 100 Years in Poland

New freedoms lead to unprecedented growth.

The Second Advent movement reached Poland in 1888. From that humble beginning, the Polish Adventist Church has grown to 10,000 adherents worshipping in 136 churches and groups, administered by three conferences.

The country's 1988 jubilee coincides with several other anniversaries: 170 years since the birthday of Michael Belina Czechowski, a Pole who was the first Adventist missionary to Europe; 125 years since the General Conference organized; 100 years since the Minneapolis General Conference; and 70 years since Poland's first conference organized.

The history of Adventism in Polish lands divides into three periods.

1. The shaping of the Advent movement (1888-1920). After the Adventist message came from the Crimea, the church established itself in the Volhynia region and in central Poland. The first churches were established in Lodz, Poznan, and Warsaw. Persecution forced members to

meet in homes. However, in 1921 the church had grown large enough for its first union session.

2. Period as a tolerated sect (1921-1945). During this time the church witnessed the creation of its first organizational structure supported by evangelistic outreach. Difficulties for Adventism developed because of the political and religious situation in the country. On the basis of Poland's 1921 constitution, Seventh-day Adventists were granted only the status of a tolerated denomination, while the Roman Catholic Church received a privileged, dominant position. As a result, Adventists were often persecuted and ridiculed, with their church regarded merely

as a sect. During this period, members created artificial organizational structures in order to operate church institutions. Then came the trauma of the Second World War, with Polish Adventists sharing the fate of their nation. Churches were closed, material possessions were destroyed, and many members lost their lives.

3. Period as a legal church (1946-1988). The church, along with the nation, rebuilt its structure and established its presence in Polish society. Since World War II the SDA Church has shaken off the stigma of a tolerated sect in a Catholic society. The church received legal recognition as a religious body with denominational equality among more than 30 Christian denominations. The late seventies and eighties have seen rapid church growth in numbers and in promulgation of its message through a strong publishing program and effective witnessing.

As an integral part of the Polish nation, the church combats social evils such as alcoholism, smoking, drug dependency, and crime and promotes work, social values, and family life as it begins its second century.



Banner at celebration proclaims "100 Years of Adventism in Poland" with Bible text: "Your labour is not in vain."

By Stanislaw Dabrowski, Polish Union president. An adaptation of an address delivered during the jubilee celebration in Warsaw, May 7, 1988.



SAMUEL EMANUEL

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Larry Unterseher (left), new principal of DAA, and Marvin Denney (right), business manager, gather with students and faculty in the circle where all socialize between classes.

Dakota Adventist Academy Back in Business

School opens after one-year shutdown.

North and South Dakota Adventists have reopened their academy one year after closing it because of financial problems (see Newsbreak, Sept. 8). They accomplished this in spite of crops that withered in the fields, forcing some farmers to sell out and causing tithe to drop more than 8 percent in the Dakota Conference, the biggest decline in the Mid-America Union.

Many Dakota Adventist Academy (DAA) students last year were forced to attend an academy outside of their home conference. Twenty-three went to Platte Valley Academy in Nebraska; others went to Maplewood in Minnesota and Campion in Colorado. Larry Unterseher, former education director of the Dakota Conference, who spent the past year as principal of Upper Columbia Academy in Washington, is the new principal of DAA.

Winter Maintenance

Tom and Ella Mae Thompson, who have been with Dakota Adventist secondary education for 28 years, along with Dennis and Cheryl Kaiser (maintenance man and food service director, respectively),

checked the furnace during the long cold winter, cleaned rooms, and kept watch over the \$13 million empty academy building on 1,300 acres 15 miles northwest of Bismarck, North Dakota's capital. "It's good to be back in business," Thompson declared.

Dedicated lay members have given more than sacrificially to make an impossible dream come true. Almost as soon as the academy closed in August 1987, a lay advisory committee headed by Cliff Kahler, a farmer from Goodrich, North Dakota, began investigating the feasibility of reopening the school.

After much discussion and prayer, they appointed Ron Miller, Dakota Conference ABC manager, as chairman of the committee to reopen DAA. They surveyed the 5,000 members of the conference and found that the majority wanted to see the academy reopen. A February 28 constituency meeting voted 229 to 158 to reopen the school.

DAA needed \$294,000 in cash to operate debt-free for the 1988-1989 school year, based on 55 students. By registration day, members had sent in \$300,000, plus more than \$30,000 in worthy-student money if any more students wanted to attend.

By James L. Fly, communication director, Mid-America Union.



BROWN RICE JUBILEE

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About half the school's students require financial assistance.

Student Sells Bike

Brent Mercer, of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, wanted to go to DAA so badly that he traded his bicycle for a new pair of shoes and pawned his radio so he could buy a new shirt and tie, trusting that somehow he would be able to go. His mother was in the hospital in a body cast and had no money to help him. When the Bismarck church heard his story, members contributed \$3,500, enabling Brent to attend the school.

Brent is one of 71 students enrolled at DAA this year. Not only have Dakota Adventists reopened their academy with a surplus of students, but by January 1 they expect to pay the final \$125,000 of \$1 million they owed to the General Conference only two years ago. The GC has matched the Dakota Conference

\$200,000 for the past two years. Additional debt on family and staff housing remains, however.

On top of this, members raised \$93,000 to pay off back debts owed to vendors in the Bismarck-Mandan area, the financial crisis that precipitated the closing of the school. Members have also pledged \$115,000 for the next four years. But to operate DAA will take more money yet. The General Conference's Philanthropic Service for Institutions (PSI) has chosen the academy as part of their AAA Challenge, a matching fund program that encourages alumni to support their alma mater. Academy staff members have pledged \$220 a month to help a worthy student.

New emphases at DAA this year include computer technology and spiritual outreach. As the motto on the academy sign says, they are back in business "building friendships for eternity."

Prayer Brings Check for Chilean Clinic

At the Adventist clinic in Los Angeles, Chile, the nursing staff requested the purchase of certain surgical equipment urgently needed to care for patients expected to arrive shortly. That day, Friday, February 20, 1987, the director, Arturo Opazo, examined the clinic's finances, only to discover that the institution had no funds.

He invited the chaplain and the nurses' supervisor into his office, where they asked God to solve their plight. Following the fervent prayer session, Opazo went into town to purchase the required equipment. He paid for it with a sizable check.

By this time banks were closed. Since Chilean banks do not open on Saturday, the check would not be deposited for collection until the following Monday. Opazo wondered how to cover his check within the next two days. He intended to go to the bank as soon as it opened on Monday and ask the manager to honor the overdraft so the check would not be returned

because of insufficient funds.

On Sabbath morning a humble old man appeared at the Los Angeles Adventist Church. He had come from a small town near Concepción. This gentleman had gone to his bank on Friday to collect interest on some funds he had had there for some time and discovered that it was more than he thought it would be. He thought, *I don't need this money. What can I do with it?* He decided to ask God in prayer. Immediately the answer came: "In the city of Los Angeles is the Adventist clinic. Take your money there."

He arrived in Los Angeles on Sabbath morning and was introduced to the clinic's chaplain, to whom he told his offer. The chaplain gathered other personnel of the institution so they might hear how God had intervened.

When Arturo Opazo arrived he was amazed by the news. He was even more surprised when he saw that the donated money equaled the exact amount required to cover the check he had written the day before.

Adventist Scandinavians Hold Congress

Church leaders meet Norwegian King Olaf V.

This truly was a special event for Scandinavia," declared a participant at the Nordic Congress, a meeting that brought more than 3,000 Adventist members from Den-

mark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden to Ekeberg Hall in Oslo, May 12-14. Messages reflecting the theme "Jesus Is Calling," fellowship, inspiring music, and beautiful

summer weather made the congress a memorable event.

General Conference president Neal C. Wilson and his wife, Elinor, attended. He took advantage of the occasion to visit representatives from parliament, the Norwegian state church, the Council of Independent Churches, and the National Ecumenical Council. Also participating in these talks: Jan Paulsen, president, Trans-European Division; Rolf Kvinge, president, West Nordic Union Conference; and Paul Liseth, West Nordic Union public affairs and religious liberty director.

During the visits, the Adventist leaders made known SDA viewpoints on various current topics. Talks with parliament representative Kjell Magne Bondevik (Christian People Party) and Bishop Andreas Aarflot proved especially interesting. The visit touched on alcoholism prevention, racism, the world situation, and the role of the Christian church. The biggest event was the visit with King Olaf V at his palace, on May 16.

The conversation with the king touched on some of his special interests, and he proved to be very concerned about development aid and Christian engagement in the world's needs. Elder Wilson brought greetings from the General Conference and the world family of Seventh-day Adventists. Rolf Kvinge greeted the king on behalf of Adventist congregations in Norway. The king was also informed about the Nordic Congress. He received the book *Patriarchs and Prophets*, by Ellen G. White, as a memento of the visit, which lasted for 20 minutes, though such audiences usually last no longer than 10.

By Rolf H. Kvinge, president, West Nordic Union.

ANNOUNCING THE NEW

Friendship

ISSUE

From the Adventist Review

The next time someone asks you, "Who are Adventists?" hand them this friendly answer from the editors of the *Review*.

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shares the joys of the Sabbath, and Dr. Richard L. Neil, Loma Linda University, reveals the benefits of our lifestyle.

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To New Posts

Adventist Youth Service

Jeffery Allan Bovee (WWC), of Days Creek, Oregon, to serve as conversation teacher, Taiwan Seventh-day Adventist English School, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, left August 24.

Guadalupe Campos (UC), of Lincoln, Nebraska, to serve as medical assistant, Central Philippine Union Mission, Cebu City, Philippines, left Chicago June 28.

Karen Susanne Carter (SC), of Lakeland, Georgia, to serve as conversation teacher, Thailand English Language Centers, Bangkok, Thailand, left August 16.

Sue Yun Cho (PUC), of Temple City, California, to serve as conversation teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 24.

Mark Joseph Cimino (PUC), of Burlingame, California, to serve as conversation teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 22.

Susan Carol Comilang (CUC), of Hyattsville, Maryland, to serve as teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left June 14.

James Todd Ferneyhough (WWC), of Scottsdale, Arizona, to serve as teacher, Taiwan Seventh-day Adventist English School, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, left August 29.

Kurt O. Friederich (SC), of Manchester, Iowa, to serve as conversation teacher, Thailand English Language Centers, Bangkok, Thailand, left June 14.

Beth Elaine Fuller (AUC), of Monsey, New York, to serve as assistant dean, Finland Junior College, Piikkio, Finland, left August 21.

Randy L. Griffin (SAC), of Keene, Texas, to serve as teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 23.

Bridget Annette Gross (AU), of Richmond, Virginia, to serve as conversation teacher, Taiwan Seventh-day Adventist English School, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, left June 14.

Randal Wade Hagen (UC), of McBride, British Columbia, to serve as teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 23.

Eslyn B. Howard (CUC), of East Orange, New Jersey, to serve as assistant dean, Danish Junior College, Dagaard, Denmark, left July 24.

Vincent Pang-Ta Hsu (PUC), of Angwin, California, to serve as teacher, Taiwan Adventist College, Nantou County, Taiwan, left August 18.

Ted Tae-Yul Im (PUC), of Temple City, California, to serve as conversation teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 24.

Linda Renate Jardine (SAC), of Leavenworth, Kansas, to serve as teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 24.

Carolyn Lawry (SAC), of Mena, Arkansas, to serve as teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 24.

Jill Orlaine McKenney (SC), of Maclede, Missouri, to serve as teacher, Thailand English Language Centers, Bangkok, Thailand, left June 12.

Alice Fay Martin (UC), of Lenexa, Kansas, to serve as conversation teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 21.

Alan Meis (AYS), of Collegedale, Tennessee, to serve as teacher, Marshall Islands Seventh-day Adventist Academy, Majuro, Marshall Islands, left August 24.

Charles Ray Osborne III (OC), of Houston, Texas, to serve as conversation teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 24.

Cindy Lou Phillips (WWC), of College Place, Washington, to serve as conversation teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 24.

Dennis Larry Ray (UC), of Lincoln, Nebraska, to serve as conversation teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 24.

Rick Robinson (WWC), of Spokane, Washington, to serve as teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 11.

Betty Jean Smith (OC), of Saginaw, Michigan, to serve as conversation teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 24.

Gregory D. Vence (WWC), of College Place, Washington, to serve as broadcast traffic controller, Adventist World Radio-Asia, Agat, Guam, left June 2.

Donna J. Warman (AUC), of Billerica, Maine, to serve as teacher, Japan Seventh-day Adventist English Schools, Osaka, Japan, left August 24.

William George Wiedemann (WWC), of College Place, Washington, to serve as conversation teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 15.

Cynthia Yvette Williams (OC), of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to serve as conversation teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left August 24.

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Obituaries

Obituaries should be sent within one month of the date of death and must include date of birth and death, place of birth and death, denominational employment, and survivors. Obituaries must be sent to: *Adventist Review*, 6840 Eastern Ave., NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.

HARRIS, George Ernest, Sr.—b. Jan. 17, 1895, Memphis, Tenn.; d. Aug. 4, 1988, Huntsville, Ala. He served Oakwood College as supervisor of grounds for many years. He and his wife founded the Harris Home for Children (Huntsville). Survivors include his wife, Chessie; and five children, Herbert, George, Jr., Chester, Marilyn, and Joan.

HORTON, Ruth C.—b. June 6, 1908, Taloga, Okla.; d. June 25, 1988, Coarsegold, Calif. She worked as a nurse for more than 40 years, including her 18 years of service at Washington Sanitarium and Hospital and Loma Linda University Medical Center. Survivors include her husband, Douglas; and one sister, Florence Stewart.

JOHNSON, Darlene B.—b. Aug. 20, 1931, Shafter, Calif.; d. Aug. 30, 1988, Rocklin, Calif. She was a registered nurse at Glendale Sanitarium and Hospital and Washington Adventist Hospital, and taught community health nursing at Columbia Union College and Loma Linda University. Survivors include one sister, Martha Jane Thesman. She

was preceded in death by her parents, William and Lydia; two brothers, Arman and Eugene; and two sisters, Ellen and Geneva.

LOOMIS, Samuel R.—b. Feb. 22, 1893, Huron, S.Dak.; d. July 9, 1988, Apopka, Fla. He was the secretary-treasurer of the Nebraska Conference and was the last mayor of College View, Nebraska, before its incorporation into the city of Lincoln. For five and a half years he was secretary-treasurer of the Bolivia Mission. Survivors include his wife, Winnifred; one sister, Lora Blackstone; two granddaughters, Carolyn Trace and Winette Aho; one grandson, William Hawkins; and nine great-grandchildren.

MANLEY, Myrl O.—b. July 11, 1913, near Stockton, Ill.; d. Aug. 15, 1988, Loma Linda, Calif. Before his service in India, he worked at Cedar Lake Academy. He served a total of 13 years at Vincent Hill School (India), first as teacher and later principal. He was president of Spicer Memorial College and later Burma Union Mission. He returned to America and served in various capacities for nine years at Andrews University. From 1973 until his retirement in 1980 he was president of Union College. After retirement he served for two years as Caribbean Union College president and one year as interim president at Union College. Survivors include his wife, Elizabeth; one son, Robert Elliott; four grandchildren, Brent, Brian, Todd, and Traci; and one brother, Albert A. His son James preceded him in death.

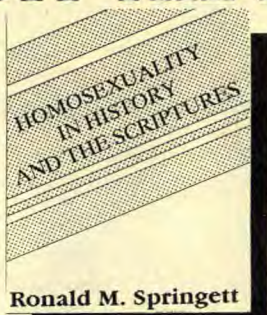
MANN, Eliada—b. Nov. 8, 1920, Fish Creek, Wis.; d. Sept. 5, 1988, Dayton, Ohio. After receiving her B.S. in nursing from Washington Adventist Hospital, she served for 13 years in Burma, where she helped establish the Rangoon SDA School of Nursing. Shortly after her return she became OB supervisor at Kettering Memorial Hospital, where she remained for 17 years. Survivors include one sister, Flora Horvath; and one brother, John Henry, Jr.

STAFF, Elwood Edward—b. Aug. 2, 1931, Nevada, Iowa; d. Aug. 20, 1988, Loma Linda, Calif. From 1958 to 1977 he was associate pastor of various churches in the Southeastern California Conference. He was secretary of the Southeastern California Conference for nearly nine years before stepping aside to become associate secretary. Survivors include his wife, Toni; two sons, Kevin and Sean; his parents, Herman and Hilda Staff; and one brother, Virgil.

VOGEL, Ellen Mae—b. Jan. 30, 1907, Parkesburg, Pa.; d. Aug. 22, 1988, Loma Linda, Calif. She taught English for two years at Canadian Junior College and two years at Southern Junior College before graduating from the White Memorial School of Nursing. After receiving her master's degree, she served as assistant director of the White Memorial Hospital School of Nursing for eight years. She received an M.D. from the College of Medical Evangelists in 1951, later setting up her own private practice. Survivors include one nephew, Richard Vale; and one niece, Victoria Wical.

WEISS, Samuel—b. Dec. 1, 1909, Crespo, Argentina; d. Oct. 24, 1987, Loma Linda, Calif. He devoted 40 years of service as pastor, departmental secretary, evangelist, and president in Peru, Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, and the United States. He was the first Spanish coordinator and evangelist of the Pacific Union Conference. Survivors include his wife, Raquel; one son, Osiris; two daughters, Mafalda Schmidt and Marlene Weaver; three brothers, Henry, David, and Joe; three sisters, Martha Schmidt, Ruth Roscher, and Mary Maier; 11 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

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Literature Requests

Each address below is in need of the following: Bibles, Spirit of Prophecy books, devotional books, periodicals (*Adventist Review*, *Ministry*, *Liberty*, *Vibrant Life*, *Message*, *Insight*, *Guide*, *Primary Treasure*, *Our Little Friend*), hymnals, songbooks, sermon ideas and illustrations, audio/visual aids, cassette tapes, Picture Rolls. Additional specific requests are listed after the address.

West Africa

Elder Amoako-Agyemang, Lay Activities, P.O. Box 44, Toase, Ashanti, Ghana: *Man the World Needs Most*, temperance material, *Beyond Pitcairn*

Michael Appiah-Baffoe, Seventh-day Adventist Church, P.O. Box 127, Winneba, Ghana

Pastor and Mrs. Kwabena Bonah, SDA Church, P.O. Box 91, Juaso, Ashanti Akim, Ghana

John K. Domeh, Amakom SDA Church, P.O. Box 1818, Kumsai, Ashanti, Ghana: musical aids, *The SDA Bible Commentary*, projector, film

Isaac Duah-Kwarteng, SDA Church, P.O. Box 31, Oyoko Koforidua, Ghana: *The World of Ellen G. White*, *Such Bright Hopes*, *The Unknown Prophet*, *From 1888 to Apostasy*

Onusu Isaac, P.O. Box 182, Sefwi Wiawso, Ghana
Las Kwadwo Kwarteng, P.O. Box 96, Kintampo, Brong-Ahafo, Ghana

THE SWEET GUM TREE

BY KATHERINE HAUBRICH

What is very tall, a home to birds, food for squirrels and beavers, useful to man, and beautifully colored? Yes, a tree.

Let's see what we can learn about the gum tree family. They are called gum trees because they give off a sticky substance. They usually grow about 75 to 150 feet tall and can be found in many parts of the world. There are many different kinds of gum trees. A relative of the American sweet gum tree is the Australian gum tree, better known as the eucalyptus (pronounced yoo-ka-lip-tus) tree.

The American sweet gum is found in the southeastern United States and in the mountains from

Mexico to Honduras. It is easy to identify by its star-shaped, five-pointed leaf. In fact, it is one of only a few trees in North America that have star-shaped leaves. Sometimes people mistake the gum tree for a maple. But when they learn to identify the star-shaped leaf, it is easy to tell the difference between the gum tree and the maple tree.

The gum tree seeds are quite unusual. Many birds and animals eat the prickly seed balls of the gum tree. In autumn these seed balls fall to the ground in great numbers. Chipmunks and gray squirrels like them, as well as mallard ducks, bobwhites, chickadees, finches, wrens, and many other birds.

The gum tree is likely to grow in wet places where beavers live. They like to eat the wood of the gum tree. The wood is very heavy and is made into furniture or heavy crates for shipping goods.

In the fall, the leaves of the gum tree change to beautiful shades of yellow, orange, and maroon. Perhaps you will find a sweet gum leaf. Collect leaves from different trees and dry them by pressing them between the pages of a large, heavy book. Or in late fall the leaves may already be quite dry and can be pressed between two pieces of waxed paper. Lay the leaves out on one sheet of waxed paper in a pretty pattern. Cover the leaves with a second sheet of waxed paper and, *with the help of your parents*, use an iron (set on low heat) and press the sheets together.

Hang it on your wall in your room or tape it to a window. With the sun shining through, the leaves will light up with their lovely colors.

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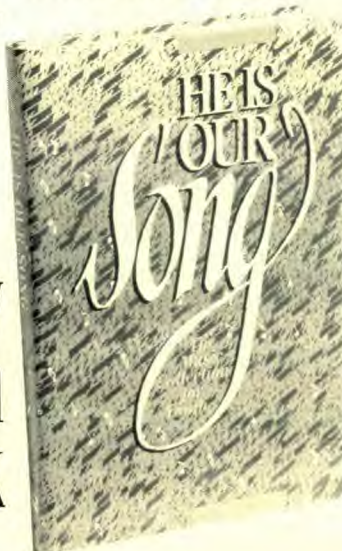
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THE POTATO HARVEST

The late-afternoon October sun cast long shadows on the three sacks of newly dug potatoes that sat at the edge of my garden. My two sons and I had spent several hours spading the potato vines, shaking off the dirt, and gathering the crop for winter.

My mouth watered as I thought about the delicious baked potatoes that would grace our dining room table. I felt thankful for the bountiful harvest.

As I loaded my wheelbarrow with the potato sacks, I looked across to my neighbor's garden. Bill had also been digging potatoes, and I could see the results of his labors. I walked over to the fence.

"I see you've been digging potatoes too," I said, engaging him in conversation as he leaned on his potato fork. Bill nodded and I continued, "We got four or five nice potatoes under each hill."

Double Take

Looking over at his sacks of potatoes, Bill acknowledged my conversation. "It's been a good year for potatoes. I found 9 or 10 potatoes under each hill when I dug," he added.

His reply started my brain whirling. Why had Bill gotten twice as many potatoes in his harvest as I had? My mind raced for an answer. Our potato plots were similar, lying only a few yards apart. It couldn't be the soil. And following his example, I had fertilized my garden from a well-rotted manure pile near his barn. To climax it all, in the spring I had asked him which kind of potatoes would grow best, and I had planted the same Idaho baking potatoes he had seeded.

I couldn't hold back my question any longer. "How is it, Bill, that you got twice as many potatoes as I did?"

In his matter-of-fact manner Bill replied, "Well, most people plant one potato in a hill. I plant two!"

Though the experience happened several years ago, I have never forgotten it or the spiritual application it brought to mind. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, said, "All I will say is that poor sowing means a poor harvest, and generous sowing

We get back in measure what we have planted.

means a generous harvest" (2 Cor. 9:6, Phillips).

This law of the harvest, I suspect, goes far beyond planting potatoes. We get back in measure what we have planted. Halfhearted effort yields halfhearted results. When one gives desultory dedication to a task, he can expect a proportionate return. Sowing generously brings a bountiful harvest whether it be with one's work, church, or family.

Sometimes we call them "eager beavers," these individuals who are willing to do a little extra. They are the ones who look for a guest in church to take home for dinner. They are ready to help with Vacation Bible School when no one else is.

Whether they know it or not, they are, as Isaiah says, "sowing [their] seed by every stream" (Isa. 32:20, NIV). Their harvest comes in the satisfaction of helping others.

But there is a secondary harvest that isn't readily evident. That is the influence they have on the lives of others, which can have eternal consequences for good.

There is also the main application of these texts, which has to do with one's personal stewardship. Paul continues with his thoughts: "Let everyone give as his heart tells him, neither grudgingly nor under compulsion, for God loves the man who gives cheerfully."

Then he adds an unusual promise: "God can give you more than you can ever need, so that you may always have sufficient for yourselves and enough left over to give to every good cause" (2 Cor. 9:7, 8, Phillips).

Anyone who practices Christian stewardship has seen these demonstrations of God's love for the cheerful giver. There is no logical explanation for tithers who find that nine tenths of their income goes further than the ten tenths did previously. But thousands testify that this is the case.

Perhaps it's as simple as planting two potatoes to a hill. The law of the harvest makes me think so. □



Morten Juberg is editor of the North Pacific Union Gleaner, published in Portland, Oregon.

BY MORTEN JUBERG