

ADVENTIST REVIEW

WEEKLY NEWS AND INSPIRATION FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

MARCH 22, 1990

SUCCESS

◆
and the
Nebuchadnezzar
Syndrome

DIGGING UP THE PAST, 10

REGAINING FAITH IN ELLEN WHITE, 14

Appointment at 6:15

Re "Time for Revival" (Jan. 4).

"Pray for the Holy Spirit at 6:15 every morning until Jesus comes" may sound like a gimmick, but it isn't. A Holy Spirit seminar that closed with the signing of a covenant to pray at 6:15 every morning recommended that we pray for the Holy Spirit in our own lives, in the lives of our leaders, in our families, and throughout the world. It's a source of strength to think of the many others who are remembering their covenant at 6:15. Early in the day it sets our minds on our greatest need and makes us more disposed to welcome opportunities to pray with others as occasion offers.

*Virginia Duffie Steinweg
Central Lake, Michigan*

Electing Leaders

I read with interest the letter ("Two in One," Jan. 25) that suggested that conference officers should be limited to serving two terms. Effectiveness in management and leadership should be the criteria used in the reelection process, not just time.

I have a greater concern over the entire election process, particularly when the selection is being made between conference sessions by a conference committee. I have had the privilege of serving on several committees when a conference president was being chosen, and was disappointed that no background sheet or résumé was shared with the committee members. Instead, members were asked to share verbally anything they might know about the persons being considered. About the only comments that could be made were on the individual's speaking ability.

Although I am a strong believer in prayer, I sincerely believe that our God is not pleased when we allow prayer to be a substitute for careful scrutiny and evaluation, which may include an interview by a conference committee with the individual or individuals being considered.

*Wesley Jaster
Laurel, Maryland*

Depression

As a Christian physician who has

treated many patients suffering from depression, I feel "How to Kill Depression" (Jan. 11) does a disservice to Christians who are depressed. The author equates losing one's first love, discouragement, and depression. He says that "self-pity, despair, anxiety, and hopelessness flee when you are consumed with preparing and giving Bible studies, for example."

These statements are like telling a diabetic he can stop his insulin if he has enough faith. Discouragement and self-pity are reactions to a situation in one's life. Depression is not. Depression is usually caused by chemical changes in the brain over which one has no control. Depression is like a weight, a cloud, or a pressure that immobilizes a person and makes him or her unable to make decisions or take action in a given situation. For a depressed person to try to prepare or give a Bible study would be totally devastating.

Obviously, one who is depressed needs to be assured of God's personal love, the freedom of forgiveness, and the transforming power of the gospel. But he or she needs appropriate medicines, antidepressants. These are not tranquilizers, narcotics, or sleeping pills.

*Ronald E. Turk, M.D., F.A.C.P.
Greenville, Tennessee*

Nutrition's Sins

While the areas mentioned in "Nutrition's Seven Deadly Sins" (Jan. 25) are problematic for some segments of a generally overfed population, there remain significant numbers of persons who are underfed and at risk nutritionally.

Good diets provide variety in food selection as well as adequate calories to maintain ideal body weight. If an individual loses weight below ideal weight guidelines, the diet should be liberalized. If such efforts do not result in adequate weight maintenance, the advice of a qualified physician should be sought.

Individuals at nutritional risk should not be led to believe they should eliminate milk from their diet. At-risk groups include children, girls approaching childbearing years, pregnant and lactat-

ing women, the elderly, and those recovering from surgery or chronic illness. It is not appropriate to restrict milk and eggs for individuals unable to obtain adequate calories from a more unrefined diet. Modest amounts of salt and sugar should not be considered "sins" for most individuals. A diet devoid of added fat is not recommended for most normal-weight individuals.

*Connie I. Dahlke, R.D.
Deer Park, California*

I have personally known the Ludington family for a number of years and was surprised to see the name misspelled *Luddington* three times (at least consistently).

*Elizabeth Cowdrick
Madison, Tennessee*

Thank you for catching this. Our apologies to Dr. Ludington.—Editors.

Hispanics and English

"A Hispanic Speaks Out in English" (Jan. 11) is superb. It should be read by every Hispanic minister in a church pastoral role in the North American Division.

There is a growing concern among a large number of Seventh-day Adventist Hispanics in the North American Division. These individuals are more at home with the English language. Many of them are youth and young adults who love the church and are a part of its mission. No longer can these constituents be neglected or ignored. They are a part of the Hispanic culture, and most do not deny their heritage; thus they feel more at home in a Hispanic church. Our Hispanic churches will gain when a bilingual ministry is offered. Culture will not be lost.

*Dan C. Robles, Sr.
Director, Offices of Urban Ministries
and Community Services,
Southern California Conference*

Letters should not exceed 250 words and should carry the writer's name, address, and telephone number. All will be edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author's meaning will not be changed. Views expressed in the letters do not necessarily represent those of the editors or denomination.

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Born to Grow

Several Sabbaths ago I witnessed a resurrection. A church that six months before was in its death throes was now packed with people. What happened there—in Boston—can happen in other churches.

The Boston Temple, located downtown two blocks from Fenway Park, had fallen on hard times. The church needed renovation; membership had dwindled; parking was impossible. Conference leaders contemplated the sale of this valuable property.

They decided to make a last-ditch effort to save the church. Calling a new pastor, they pledged their support for a program of renovations. Under Pastor Hyveth Williams the little congregation mobilized for action, donating money, working to install new carpet and banners, refurbishing the pews, and painting the large sanctuary. The church began to revive; people started to come back to church; others transferred in.

Crowded to the Gunwales

After only four months the sanctuary was ready for rededication. I looked out over a church crowded to the gunwales. How I loved to see the deacons filling the aisles with extra chairs! Perhaps 600 to 700 people jammed into the church that morning. The offering plates overflowed—money fluttered to the floor when the deacons brought them forward. And the mood? Thanksgiving, rejoicing, wonder, a sense of being part of a miracle.

The celebration continued the whole day. Volunteers prepared a hot meal (they catered for 700), and everyone stayed on for an afternoon program, which climaxed with a concert by Wintley Phipps. Hundreds of new people poured in for the concert, until the 1,000-strong audience filled every space—up, down, and in the side rooms.

What happened in Boston can happen again. God wants us to grow—individually and as congregations. The good news He has given us of Jesus' death, resurrection, and second coming is too wonderful to keep to ourselves.

The Boston Temple has an ethnic mix. But some congregations in North America that are essentially Anglo are also coming back to life. Several Anglo churches that have introduced innovations into the worship service, notably in Colton, California, and Milwaukie, Oregon, are attracting Adventists in huge numbers. The *Adventist Review* will report on these "celebration" churches in an upcoming series of articles.

Other Anglo congregations are growing while maintaining a more traditional worship format. Come to the Silver Spring, Maryland, SDA Church any Sabbath morning, and you will find many people arriving early and on time for Sabbath school. They don't cluster in the back rows or at the ends of aisles; they disperse throughout the church. By the 11:00 hour, when the children and their parents join the congregation, seats are in short supply.

Of course, for years Black and Hispanic churches in North America have been setting the pace for the division. White Adventists would do well to find out what makes them so successful.

The Brinklow, Maryland, church illustrates well the contagious fellowship of Black Adventists. You will find Sabbath school lively, animated; come prepared to be involved in discussion. At the divine worship hour the church will be packed, with an overflow crowd following by closed-circuit television. The music is exuberant; the program is unhurried. I stood up to preach at 12:35—and spoke until 1:25! No one left; no one looked at his watch.

What happened in the Boston Temple,

what is happening in Silver Spring and Brinklow, can happen again. We were born to grow—individually and as congregations.

I have singled out three growing churches. There are others; I chose these because I know them firsthand. They are examples, signs of hope and encouragement to us all.

For with heaviness of heart I acknowledge that the total picture of the Adventist Church in North America is not as bright. I know that many congregations are stagnant. Some are withering on the vine. The deadly chill of apathy and worldliness fills some churches. Others are preoccupied with backbiting and minutiae. Some make the stranger or the visitor feel like an intruder.

We Need Revival

How much we need revival! How much we need the wind of the Spirit to blow across our hearts and across Adventist congregations! He will bring revival, renewal, reformation—and growth.

I am not an expert on church growth. However, I travel and speak a lot for the church. For some years I have been observing churches like the ones in Boston, Silver Spring, and Brinklow, and reflecting on what is happening in them. Noeline and I also belong to a large but growing congregation, a racially mixed church, with Whites still the largest segment but no longer a majority—Sligo, in Takoma Park, Maryland. We have seen renewal in Sligo.

I find five features in common in these growing churches. Despite what some people think, ethnicity isn't the chief factor. I shall share these characteristics next time (April 12).

WILLIAM G. JOHNSON



A Perfect Partner

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Here's a story that may have a familiar ring.

John and Thomas were good friends as teenagers. They were active in their respective churches and really loved the Lord. Unfortunately, the two got separated when Thomas left town to go to school. Many years passed. Each went on to his own profession, got married, had children, and forgot about the other.

One summer during camp meeting the two friends reunited and went over old times. They talked about their professions and families. John had become quite a businessman. Working as a mortgage broker, he arranged financing for low-income families. He had also become heavily involved in real estate. For his part, Thomas worked in a small advertising firm, but he also had an interest in real estate as an investment.

Intriguing Idea

Suddenly John came up with an intriguing idea. "Let's invest together," he said. "There is a lot of opportunity in this market. The banks have huge inventories of foreclosed properties at purchase prices that will just cover their mortgages."

"Right now the stock of affordable housing cannot satisfy the demand," he explained. "Right now there's a six-month backlog of requests for rental units with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and investors are always looking for rental properties for tenants."

"In addition to the low supply of affordable housing, there's an enormous amount of housing needing rehabilitation," John said. "You can drive block after block and find units that are not

habitable, but that can easily become habitable again with a little rehabilitation. The market is wide open now. It's an investor's gold mine."

That little sales pitch was all Thomas needed to whet his appetite. He looked forward to the investment opportunity with great anticipation. Not only were there lucrative prospects; it also looked like fun to work with a person he had known for most of his life. Someone he could trust.

I'm happy that the

Christian life is not

pitted with forfeiture

protection and

revocability rights.

In an effort to formalize their business relationship, John and Thomas drew up a contractual agreement. Thomas, not having much experience in real estate, decided to take the agreement to a lawyer to look over. That's when things really got interesting.

"This agreement is just bare bones," the lawyer explained. "There's a lot more needed here. Where are the lease-back guarantees, encumbrance protection, anticipatory breach remedies, rescission rights, lien protection, property warrants, and the all-important weasel clause?"

Suddenly a wall of depression caved in on Thomas. The dream he savored was suddenly buried in legal technicalities.

His newfound fervor was starting to wear like a regulatory straitjacket. Thomas thought he could conduct business in an atmosphere of trust, understanding, and confidence—with gentleman's agreements. But he found that the real world doesn't work that way.

Strangled Dreams

In one form or another, this story has been enacted thousands of times. It doesn't matter if we're talking real estate, strip mining, international banking, or multilevel marketing. When two budding entrepreneurs have a dream, their fervor is often strangled by estoppel provisions and loss liquidation clauses.

I'm happy that the Christian life is not pitted with forfeiture protection and revocability rights.

Jesus offers the perfect partnership. He says: "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. . . . If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:5-7).

Christ's offer comes on a strictly take-it-or-leave-it basis. There's no coercion or high-pressure tactics. The choice is ours. We can take hold of hundreds of precious promises or simply walk away. These promises are guaranteed contracts for the Christian, and there are no breach-of-performance risks or contingency clauses. It's a no-risk investment.

Jesus has never failed to honor His part of the bargain. Since the beginning of time He has always been faithful to His followers. His covenant stands firm for eternity, and the rewards are boundless. He offers a better life today and an immortal life tomorrow. That's a deal I can't refuse. How about you?

CARLOS MEDLEY

WORLD CHURCH

Niger Gives SDA Church Official Status. The Department of Religious Affairs for the Niger government has granted the Adventist Church official status, the Africa Indian-Ocean Division reports. The new status gives the church the right to carry out its health, educational, and spiritual mission.

Located south of the Sahara Desert, the young West African republic is mainly Muslim and has a population of 7.4 million.

The first Adventist presence came in October 1986 when the Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA) set up Mother and Child Health Care and well-digging projects in Naimey. Today an Adventist church with 30 members is located in the capital city.

In addition to the presence of ADRA, broadcasts in French from Adventist World Radio are beaming God's message into this republic.

Hispanic Retirees Conduct Colombian Crusade. Two retired Hispanic ministers, Efrain Murillo and Jose Roque, conducted an evangelistic effort in Bucaramanga, Colombia, last February, reports Adalgiza Archbold, editor of *Adventist Review*, Inter-America edition.

As of March 3, more than 500 persons have joined the Adventist Church and church members are following up with more than 1,200 persons.

South Pacific Exceeds Harvest 90 Goal

The South Pacific Division has reached its Harvest 90 goal of 75,000 baptisms, making it the third world division to reach the five-year objectives, reports Walter R. L. Scragg, division president.

As of December 31, Harvest 90 baptisms totaled 75,199, or 100.27 percent of the goal. For 1989, baptisms reached an all-time high 22,146—an increase of 1,782, or 8.8 percent, over the previous year. Membership for the division stands at 231,370, an increase of 8.6 percent over 1988.

Scragg cites large evangelistic efforts in Papua New Guinea as an essential factor in increasing baptisms. In addition to the South Pacific Division, the Inter-American and South American divisions have also reached (in 1988) their Harvest 90 goals. The five-year Harvest 90 campaign will close at the General Conference session in July.

African President Visits Leprosy Hospital. The state president of Sierra Leone, Dr. J. S. Momoh (center), recently visited the Masanga Leprosy Hospital to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary and officially open the hospital's new surgical ward, reports Jack Mahon, Africa-



Indian Ocean Division communication director.

The ward was made possible through a grant from the Canadian government. The Adventist Church has operated the Masanga Leprosy Hospital since 1965.

West Venezuela Seeks Conference Status. Delegates to the West Venezuela Mission voted February 14 to

seek conference status, reports Jose H. Figueroa, Inter-American Division secretary. The vote was taken at the mission's constituency session in Barquisimeto.

With conference status, West Venezuela constituents would elect their own officers, and the field would become totally self-supporting.

Established in 1950 with five churches and 281 members, the mission now has 90 churches, 87 companies, and 29,636 members. The mission operates a high school, junior high school, 19 elementary schools, a vegetarian restaurant, and a clinic.

NORTH AMERICA

Pacific Union Hispanics Exceed Harvest 90 Goal. As of December 31, 1989, Harvest 90 accessions for Pacific Union Hispanics totaled 11,510—or 167 percent of their Hispanic Harvest 90 goal, reports Eradio

Alonso, assistant to the union president for Hispanic ministries.

Alonso credited the vigilant effort of local church members for the baptisms.

San Francisco Launches Van Ministry. Adventists in San Francisco have launched a new van ministry in the San Francisco-Oakland area, reports Wayne Griffith, Central California Conference health ministries director. The \$47,000 van went into service in January and was dedicated on March 3.

The van was purchased through donations from church members and a grant from the North American Division Inner City Fund. Services offered by the ministry include blood pressure and cholesterol tests, and a lifestyle profile. Participants are also invited to enroll in health classes and Bible correspondence courses.

Ohio Church Helps South Dakota Indians. The Adventist church in Brooklyn, Ohio, has taken on a project to assist the Lakota Indians in South Dakota, the Ohio Conference reports.

The church recently sent a truckload of clothing, mattresses, and furniture to the Pine Ridge reservation. The church will also be sending financial gifts.

LLU Ethics Center Awarded Humanities Grant. Two ethics professors at the Loma Linda University Center for Christian Bioethics were awarded \$150,000 from the National Endowment for

the Humanities (NEH) for an ethics and aging project, reports *LLU Today*.

James W. Walters, Ph.D., and David R. Larson, Ph.D., will be the director and associate director, respectively, of a wide-ranging discussion on the challenge of the growing elderly population in the U.S. The project includes a scholarly conference, lecture series, community forums held throughout southern California, and a publication.

Chinese Physicians Receive Training in AHS/West.

Four physicians, who also serve as hospital administrators in China, currently are receiving three months of training in health-care administration and management at two Adventist Health System/West institutions, reports Rita Waterman Wilcox, AHS/West spokesperson.

The physicians, now training at Glendale Adventist Medical Center and White Memorial Medical Center, were chosen from a field of more than 400 applicants by the Chinese Ministry of Public Health.

SDA Institutions Raise

\$45.7 Million in 1989. Voluntary financial support for Adventist institutions has reached an all-time high, says Charles E. Bradford, North American Division president. Bradford announced that \$45.7 million in contributions were received in 1989—a 50 percent increase over the \$30 million reported in 1988 and the highest total recorded since Philanthropic Service for

Institutions started tabulating data in 1978.

During the year, Adventist colleges and universities received \$23.7 million, academies brought in \$2.5 million, and Adventist hospitals netted \$19.5 million.

NAD Institutions Support Community-wide Giving.

Employees of Adventist institutions in North America gave \$799,401 to the United Way and other community-wide fund raising campaigns in 1989, reports Curt De-wees, an assistant director of Philanthropic Service for Institutions at the General Conference.

The total represents the highest annual contribution to date and an increase of 10.3 percent over 1988. The institutions have given \$7,709,986 since 1953.

FOR YOUR INTEREST

New Brochure Helps

Temperance Leaders. "The Health and Temperance Leader in the Local Church," a 16-page brochure now being marketed through Narcotics Education, Inc. (NEI), at the General Conference, offers helpful guidelines and ideas for local church health and temperance leaders, says Leilani Proctor, NEI marketing director.

For firsttime leaders, the brochure offers pointers on getting started and effective planning. It also has new, refreshing ideas on how to keep health and temperance programs alive. For more information, write NEI, 12501 Old Columbia Pike,

Silver Spring, Maryland 20904, or call toll-free 1-800-548-8700.

ALSO IN THE NEWS

VISN Gets a Lift. The trustees of National Interfaith Cable Coalition recently signed an agreement with Tele-Communications, Inc., of Denver, the nation's largest cable television operator, that will provide funding support for the religious cable network VISN,

be canceled. VISN provides 18 hours of interfaith programming daily to 7 million households.

Baptists Plan Media Blitz to Promote Revivals.

Billboards, bumper stickers, radio spots, and ads in *Time* magazine are among the media being used by the Southern Baptists' Home Mission Board for an advertising blitz to promote a series of simultaneous revivals in the denomination's churches.



Seventh-day Adventists will benefit from cable funding.

Religious News Service reports.

Under the agreement VISN, which is supported by 22 Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish groups, including the Seventh-day Adventist Church, will get \$8-10 million in new funding for operations while the new network seeks to gain cable subscribers. If VISN becomes commercially viable, the money is to be repaid. If not, the debt will

The theme of the revivals, which will be held March 18 through April 29, is "Here's Hope. Jesus Cares for You." About 80 percent of the convention's 37,000 churches are planning to participate, reports Religious News Service.

The board has purchased advertising on 1,157 radio stations for English-speaking spots and an additional 1,500 time slots for Spanish-speaking versions of the ads.

CHURCH CALENDAR

- Mar. 24 Sabbath School Community Guest Day
- Mar. 31 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the Inter-American Division
- Apr. 7 Missionary Magazine Emphasis
- Apr. 14 Andrews University Offering
- Apr. 14 Youth Spiritual Commitment Celebration
- Apr. 21 Literature Evangelism Rally Day

SUCCESS

and the Nebuchadnezzar Syndrome

By B. Lyn Behrens

James stared out the airplane window into the black night, trying to understand the crisis in his life. Just yesterday as he jetted from Los Angeles to New York he had pronounced himself a "success."

On a scale of 1 to 10, professionally and personally he was a 10. He was a trial lawyer with a national reputation that led him to courtrooms across the country, bringing him fame, esteem, and wealth. James was 33.

His lifestyle was consistent with his professional achievements. Pam, his wife of four years, was both beautiful and intelligent. Their coastal home was luxuriously furnished. Socially, they entertained and were entertained by others who had climbed the mountain of success, other yuppies.

Six weeks before this day James and Pam's life became complete with the arrival of a perfectly formed male child, the product of a carefully planned pregnancy. It was a much-wanted and much-loved baby.

Yes, James concluded that he was a success—and that he deserved it. Had he not worked hard, used exceptionally good judgment, and had a few important lucky breaks?

That was yesterday. Now, 24 hours later, his life was unraveling in a way he was powerless to stop. It was the baby.

Pam and the baby had driven to a desert city to spend the weekend with the grandparents. Pam had nursed the baby on schedule and placed him in the crib at 6:30 p.m. At 6:45, hearing a noise in the bedroom, she had checked on this child of promise. She found him lying in a pool of vomit, pale and not breathing. She knew and commenced CPR. Paramedics arrived within minutes and, continuing the resuscitation, transported the baby to a nearby hospital. Now their child was on full life-support systems, a baby rescued from sudden infant death syndrome but left with profound brain damage from those minutes without oxygen.

A life crisis. No amount of hard work, good judgment, or wealth could give back the baby of yesterday. *Success* was more fragile than James had imagined. His life was unraveling out of his control.

Another man, another time, another place. At 60, Nebuchadnezzar stood reviewing his professional accomplishments and brilliant career. Born of royal lineage, he had at 24 become commander in chief of the military. Upon the death of his father a year later, he became king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

His successes as a military leader in Egypt, Canaan, and Assyria allowed him to rule from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea.



JOEL D. SPRINGER

An architect and an engineer, he filled his capital, the largest city of the civilized world, with elegant buildings, wharfs for trade, an impressive irrigation system, and walled fortifications that enclosed the 2,500 acres.

There were the Hanging Gardens, one of the Seven Wonders of the World; the 300-foot "high-rise" tower of Babylon, recently repaired and rebuilt; the Temple Esagila, which housed their god Marduk, "creator of the world"; the Wide Processional Way, lined by public buildings; the Ishtar Gate with its brightly glazed brickwork of bulls, lions, and dragons; the splendor of his palace.

Trade and commerce had flourished. Babylon had become the world's center of education, religion, culture, and economics.

Surveying this vast estate and reflecting on his success, he proudly claimed, "I, by my own mighty power, have built this beautiful city as my royal residence, and as the capital of my empire."¹

On that very day Nebuchadnezzar met his own personal life crisis, one that left his life unraveling. Seven years later, with the return of his sanity, he reflected on the meaning of life from a radically different perspective. "Now, I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and glorify and honor the King of Heaven, the Judge of all, whose every act is right and good; for he is able to take those who walk proudly and push them into the dust!"²

Like many others past and present, Nebuchadnezzar was arrogant about his success, giving way to a syndrome of egocentricity that I would call the Nebuchadnezzar syndrome.

Rudolf Hirschberg describes the egocentric man as one who "sees himself as the hub of the world. All the rest of the people in the world revolve about him. Everything in life leads to him."

Webster defines *success* as "the attainment of wealth, position, esteem, favor, fame, or eminence." *Arrogance* is defined as "a feeling of superiority that is overbearing, exalting one's own importance and making excessive claims of position, dignity, or power."

We must here ask if *success* itself is the problem?

An answer to this question is contained in the biblical record of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel, a contemporary, was likewise of royal birth. Captured as a youth, he was transported to Babylon and trained in the finest university of the time. At his graduation he was found to be 10 times more knowledgeable than his peers. Filled with wisdom, he became adviser, counselor, and friend to Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel was successful. But he was not arrogant. Unlike Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel maintained an unswerving loyalty to God. God, not self, was at the center of life. Daniel mixed success with service. His was a life of sharing, giving, and caring.

Ellen White commented on such a God-centered life when she wrote: "constantly praying, conscientiously studying, keeping in touch with the Unseen, they [Daniel and his companions] walked with God as did Enoch."³

The Nebuchadnezzar syndrome is a prevalent spiritual disease that today can infect any successful man or woman. Our susceptibility to or resistance against this syndrome depends upon two ongoing choices. First, who will be at the center of our life—self or God? Second, what will we mix with success? Will it be *arrogance* or *service*?

Every successful person has many options in modern society. Our susceptibility to the Nebuchadnezzar syndrome may become evident if we answer yes to most of the following questions.

■ Do we mainly use our professional accomplishments to gain material possessions? to provide an extravagant lifestyle? to acquire expensive adult recreational toys? to squander time in pursuit of pleasure?

■ Do we use people for our own ends—parents, spouse, our colleagues, our employees?

■ Have we become preoccupied with getting and hoarding, and like Silas Marner, find that we never have enough gold?

But there are options that will increase our resistance to the Nebuchadnezzar

Success can be heady, but as James and Pam discovered, it is also fragile.

syndrome. We can daily remember the centrality of God in our lives and accept the privilege and responsibility of serving others.

The cure for the Nebuchadnezzar syndrome can be as painful today as it was centuries ago. A life crisis may get our attention, as it did for James and Pam. But I encourage each of you to choose prevention, not cure.

Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, wrote a "prescription for prevention." He came to this view after living at a distance from God and reckoning with the loss of years spent in self-centered living. "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before . . ."⁴

What does it mean to "remember" God? Is it like remembering the highway patrol when you are speeding? Is it like remembering Santa Claus before Christmas? Is it like remembering an insurance agent after an accident? The answer to each of these questions is no.

Remembering God means a friendship cultivated daily through prayer and Bible study. It means a relationship of trust and admiration that results in spiritual formation, a process of becoming like Christ.

Today what shall we choose to mix with our success? May we choose service, not arrogance. For our choice will determine whether or not we will acquire or prevent the spiritual disease called the Nebuchadnezzar syndrome.

¹ Dan. 4:30, TLB.

² Dan. 4:37, TLB.

³ *Prophets and Kings*, p. 486.

⁴ Eccl. 12:1, NIV.



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Digging Up the Past

*Adventist
archaeologists
shed light on
the Bible.*

BY LAWRENCE T. GERATY, DOUGLAS R. CLARK, LARRY G. HERR, ØYSTEIN S. LA BIANCA, AND RANDALL W. YOUNKER

Where was Uriah the Hittite between the time David asked him to crush the Ammonites and his death in battle at Rabbath-ammon, the Ammonite capital (see 2 Sam. 11)?

A group of Adventist archaeologists may have discovered the answer to this question last summer during the Madaba Plains Project's third season of archaeological excavation and survey in Jordan.

In 1984, 1987, and again this past summer, Andrews University team members—along with representatives from Atlantic Union College, Canadian Union College, Walla Walla College, and Wilfrid Laurier University (Waterloo, Ontario)—have been digging at Tell el-*c*Umeiri. (A tell is a large mound of dirt built up from many layers of ancient occupational remains.) This tell lies six miles south of Amman, the Rabbath-ammon of the biblical story.

In these three seasons of work the team has uncovered what may be the best-preserved city defense system from the early Iron Age (tenth century B.C.) ever found. Around the summit of the city ran two parallel walls. The space between these walls provided

rooms for guards, storage, and other activities.

The portion we excavated contained evidence of a fiery destruction. Limestone building blocks had turned to powder. The mud-brick superstructure had come tumbling in on a large cache of storage jars, which we found smashed in place. Even some of the burned timber rafters were uncovered.

Outside the double walls (known to archaeologists as casemate walls) was a steep earthen rampart skillfully built up from a retaining wall at the bottom of the slope. The retaining wall itself was built on the lip of a bedrock shelf purposely cut to create a deep dry moat.

Was It Uriah?

Who got across this moat in the tenth century B.C., climbed the rampart, and breached the Ammonite city walls? It may have been the Israelite army under Joab and led by Uriah the Hittite.

How so? Because the Ammonites considered Israel its enemy and had fortified its *western* frontier against Israelite attack. But instead of coming directly east from Jerusalem across the Jordan Valley and up to Rabbath-ammon, as might otherwise be expected, the Israelite army could have approached the Ammonite hill country stronghold from the *south*. As they came north out of the Madaba Plains, the first fortifiable town they would have approached would have been Tell el-*c*Umeiri, perhaps known as Abel-keramim in Bible times (see Judges 11:33). Only after subduing this border fortification could Joab and Uriah proceed to the capital itself, where Uriah lost his life.

Though the biblical story is silent about this destruction of Tell el-*c*Umeiri, there is circumstantial evidence to suggest it is true. No one more likely than Uriah and the Israelites can account for the dramatic destruction at this particular time.

Ammonite Scarab-shaped Seal

The most interesting small find of the summer was an Ammonite scarab-shaped seal, inscribed on both top and bottom. Holes drilled into its sides suggest that it was once mounted on a signet ring. The upper side of the seal depicts a ram's head complete with horns and the inscribed words "Belonging to 'Amats-'el." The lower side has



Archaeologists discovered 28 smashed pots in an ancient storeroom from a farmstead like those described in Isaiah 5.

a beautifully defined bird sitting on a lotus blossom surrounded by the inscription "Belonging to 'Amats-'el, son of Tamak-'el."

Dated to the seventh century B.C., this find illustrates the many contemporary references to seals in the Bible. It is interesting to note that the owner of this seal bore the same name as Isaiah's father (Isa. 1:1). The name of the owner's father is a typical Ammonite name. Both were "theophoric," that is, bearing a god name (in this case, " 'El," or the " 'Elohim" of the Hebrew Bible).

Thutmose III Seal

At the previous dig in 1987, similar excitement was generated by the discovery of a seal impression on a jar handle that mentioned Thutmose III, the famous pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty, identified by many as the pharaoh of the Exodus. In addition to the well-known biblical story, we have the account of Thutmose III himself concerning his visit to our site back in the fifteenth century B.C.

Ammonite Seal

But the most sensational inscriptional find of all occurred in 1984 when a conical clay jar stopper was discovered bearing a royal Ammonite seal impression that reads "Belonging to Milkom-'ur, servant of Baal-yashac." Both these names are theophoric also. The first name means something like "Milkom's Flame," Milkom being the well-known god of the Ammonites (see 1 Kings 11:5, 33). It is really the same as Uriah (meaning "Yahweh's Flame"), except that in the latter case the name of Israel's God is used, while in the former case it is the god of Ammon that is referred to.

The second name, always the royal name in this formulation ("X, the servant of X"), means something like "Baal saves." It is really the same name as Elisha, "My God saves."

The most exciting thing about this find was its reference to Baal-yashac, an Ammonite king heretofore known only from the Bible (Jer. 40:14), where he is known by the spelling Baalis. There we learn that this Ammonite king was aiding and abetting the Jewish underground resistance to Babylon—a cause that eventually ended with the murder of Gedaliah,

Interested in Digging?

The work of the 140-member Madaba Plains Project team is ongoing every other summer. Those readers who may be interested in joining a future dig and thus participating in the joy of discovery are welcome to communicate with any of the team leaders or to contact Dr. Doug Clark, Walla Walla College, College Place, WA 99362; phone (509) 527-2456. Clark is in charge of processing volunteer applications.

The next season of fieldwork is scheduled for June 20 to August 10, 1991, and promises to be the most rewarding yet. The main requirements for a volunteer are that he or she be inquisitive, healthy, and willing to work hard. If you fit that description, join the team for "one of the most memorable times of your life!"

the Babylon-appointed Jewish governor of Judea. The story is fascinating, and it was a thrill to discover the first extra-biblical proof of the existence of this little-known royal personage.

Regional Survey

The Madaba Plains Project has become known for its *regional survey* in addition to its tell excavation. One of the survey's fascinating finds has been the remains of agricultural installations from Bible times. One prominent feature has been some 50 watchtowers—very much as described in the "Song of the Vineyard" in Isaiah 5. The poem speaks of a vineyard on a fruitful hill, surrounded by a fence, cleared of stones, protected by a watchtower, and even furnished with a winepress.

Our survey has found all these features on Israelite farms, with the telltale structure usually being the watchtower. We have even excavated at a couple of these farmsteads.


This past summer our work extended to include yet another prominent tell a few miles due east of 'Umeiri—Tell Jawa, another Ammonite stronghold on the eastern road leading out of the Madaba Plains. Occupation contemporary with biblical times apparently came to an end early in the sixth century B.C. The presence of 13 javelin points against the outside of the slumped town wall suggests the collapse could be related to an attack on the town. It might even be dated to 582/581 B.C., when, according to Josephus, Nebuchadnezzar mounted a punitive

campaign against the Ammonites and the Moabites. It is always satisfying to be able to relate an incident known from history to the evidence "found in the dirt" on an archaeological project.

A dig discovers not only evidence for specific people or events but also data that suggests how people lived at a given period. Being interested in the biblical periods as we are, we are happy that the results of our project throw a great deal of light on the context of the biblical story.

For instance, from the time of the biblical patriarchs (about 2000 B.C.) we excavated several domestic dwellings that suggest how the inhabitants processed their food and sheltered their animals. The storeroom in one house contained the remains of 28 ceramic storage vessels full of carbonized seeds of the foods used by an ancient family. These included legumes (lentils and garbanzos), fruits (grapes and figs), and grains (wheat and barley). Two jugs appear to have contained oil.

From the time of Moses and the early judges (about the fourteenth century B.C.) a well-preserved Astarte fertility plaque was found. It depicts a nude woman holding her breasts. We know from such passages as Judges 2:13 and 1 Samuel 12:10 that the Israelites were in constant danger of adopting the customs and practices of their Canaanite neighbors. Perhaps they thought that the possession of a plaque such as the one we found might help a nursing mother produce more milk, not to mention more babies.

As can be readily seen, such information is extremely useful in helping us better understand many obscure passages of Scripture. Furthermore, it enables us to put the entire biblical period in its historical and sociological context. 

Lawrence T. Geraty is the senior project director of the Madaba Plains Project (MPP) and president of Atlantic Union College; Douglas R. Clark, MPP's consortium director, teaches Old Testament at Walla Walla College; Larry G. Herr teaches Old Testament at Canadian Union College; Øystein S. La Bianca chairs the Behavioral Sciences Department at Andrews University; and Randall W. Younker is the director of the Andrews University Institute of Archaeology. The latter three are project directors with the Madaba Plains Project: Herr directs excavation at Tell el-'Umeiri, LaBianca directs the regional survey, and Younker directs the hinterland excavations, including Tell Jawa.

Why?

Questions from a suffering servant

BY FRED ADAMS

At the time of his injury Fred was working as a vocational teacher on a regular overseas call at Linda Vista Academy in Chiapas, Mexico—an academy his parents helped create years ago. The accident that caused him to return to the U.S. with his family occurred on February 17, 1987. Fred and Diana have since accepted a two-year Adventist Volunteer Service call to teach computer science at the same academy.—Editors.

It happened within five seconds. I was helping with the construction of a large building that would house the school's furniture-making industry. One truss snapped overhead, and the entire roof structure came down instantly. The 15 tons of wooden roof trusses flung me down backwards to the concrete floor, and a numb feeling came over my body. My neck was broken. I was paralyzed.

Until that moment everything had been going so well. My wife, Diana, and I were in the sixth year of a happily married life, enjoying the challenge of rearing our lively 1½-year-old son. I was involved in genuinely fulfilling work as a vocational teacher in the mission field. Now in just five seconds everything had changed.

The Questions

A long plane trip to Loma Linda University Medical Center in California was followed by surgery and five months of intensive rehabilitation.

I was facing the future as a wheelchair rider, given no medical hope of ever walking or even using

my fingers again. Many times the question would come up: "Why, God? Sure, these kinds of things happen to other people, but to a missionary in overseas service? God, I don't understand."

I have been paralyzed for more than three years now. I may never fully understand why God allowed me to become a quadriplegic. But I don't have to. Several months following my discharge from the hospital, something occurred that has helped me to understand the situation a little better.

A Partial Answer

Our son, Daniel, had been sick all day and couldn't keep food or liquids down. By evening he was weak and very thirsty. Nevertheless, our pediatrician informed us to wait two hours from the time Daniel had last attempted to take liquid. Then he could have two tablespoons of water. If he kept it down, he could have increasing amounts every half hour.

It was 7:00 p.m. Daniel was already pleading for a drink. It was an agony for us as parents to hear his heart-wrenching sobs and pitiful cries: "Mama, wa-wa. Daddy, d'ink p'ease." Again and again Daniel pleaded. The time seemed to go by *so* slowly! How we wished 9:00 p.m. would come!

As loving parents we wanted to explain the situation to Daniel—that he *would* get the drink he wanted so badly, that we were making him wait only because this was the best thing for him in that situation. But he was too young to understand. He kept on pleading: "Mama, j'oos p'ease." Oh, how our hearts ached for him! But if we had given it to him then, it would have done more harm than good.

As we waited through those long, agonizing moments with our son, I began to think about my situation. Every day I would plead with God for healing, asking for a perfectly good thing. Then I realized that God is suffering here with me and with every other person in this world who suffers. I can almost feel His big loving arms around me, holding me close to His shoulder. He softly strokes my head while big tears roll down His cheeks into my hair.

And He says, "Fred, I love you even more



than you can understand. I have the power, and I really want to heal you; but it isn't the right time yet. My precious child, I am so very, very sorry that I had to permit this to happen to you. Oh, what I would give if there were *any* way to spare you from this! But Satan must be permitted to demonstrate his works of darkness before the universe. That old dragon claimed that *he* should be king! Well, just let everyone see what Planet Earth has become under *his* rulership.

"My child, you are fulfilling the highest purpose you could ever have in existing—to vindicate My goodness to the universe. When the other created beings see how sin destroys all that is beautiful and causes only sorrow and suffering, no one will ever again question My sovereignty. Because of your suffering, millions of billions will be spared such agony.

"My child, someday soon I will make it up to you. Satan and his followers will

*I was facing the future
as a wheelchair rider,
given no medical hope of
ever walking or even
using my fingers again.*

be eternally destroyed, and I will wipe away all tears. Even now I am preparing a new home for you, one that far surpasses your wildest dreams. Just you wait!"

And He is sobbing still, squeezing me close—unable to speak anymore.

Little Daniel *was* able to have his raging thirst satisfied that night, and by the next morning he was feeling better. Just as certainly as Daniel was healed, I *know* that God *can* heal me at any time, either instantly or gradually. But if He doesn't, that's OK. I definitely will be healed when Christ returns. And I can continue to live and work for Him, paralyzed as I am, confident that He will do what is best for me.

God loves each of His created beings so much more than I will ever be able to love Daniel. But certainly the love I have for Daniel is helping me to grasp the reality that God *is* a caring Father in whom I *can* fully trust!



Fred Adams, with his wife, Diana, is now serving a two-year term as an Adventist Volunteer Service worker in Mexico.



Flagpole Rex

BY RUTH M. INGRAM

Come, see this beautiful dog," called Maria and Isabel. "He looks lost."

"He looks tired, too," answered Miss Liles, who was dean of the mission school.

"I think he didn't like all the shooting over there," Maria explained. "I wish the war would end."

The mission school was located in the mountains of a little Central American country. A fierce civil war was being fought there, making it dangerous all around the campus.

That night the girls tried to get the collie to stay near their dormitory. But the dog insisted on inspecting the entire campus. He finally chose to sleep by the flagpole, in the middle of the campus. After much discussion, the girls named him Rex.



During the day Rex often romped and played with the boys, and slept on their patio. He made himself at home in both dormitories. But at night he always chose to sleep by the flagpole. He faithfully guarded the entire campus. Even

after the war ended, every night Rex continued his guard duty by the flagpole.

One weekend when all the girls had gone away, Miss Liles was left alone in the big dormitory. She had never stayed alone in the dormitory, and actually dreaded the long weekend.

Friday evening after she had locked all the doors, she went to the window to enjoy the lights twinkling in the villages below. To her surprise, she saw Rex lying on the porch, just outside her window. The Lord had sent Rex to be with her when she was alone. He slept there all weekend, guarding her door.

Monday when the girls returned, Rex again took his usual place that night by the flagpole. And never again was he known to sleep away from his station at the flagpole.

My Burial and Resurrection of Ellen White



*How one
minister found
his way through
a time of doubt*

BY RITCHIE WAY

Where did you get this book, Jack?" I asked, holding up a small hardcover volume with a yellow dust jacket. "I've never read anything like this before. It's fascinating."

Not long after I became a Christian, my friend Trevor invited me to spend the weekend with him at Jack's place. After our evening meal I noticed beside me on the sofa a small book with the intriguing title *Early Writings*. I picked it up and began to thumb through it, reading whatever took my fancy. I soon found myself gripped by its contents; hence my question to Jack.

"That's one of Mrs. White's books," he responded casually.

"Mrs. White?" I questioned. "Should I know about Mrs. White?"

Thus began my acquaintance with Ellen G. White. Over the years I purchased every volume by her that came out: counsels on this and that, volumes of testimonies, daily reading books, compilations—the lot. And I read them all. In fact, I read *The Great Controversy* 15 times! I

wore out three volumes of this book with marking, cross-referencing, and constant use. I spent far more time reading and studying the Spirit of Prophecy than the Bible.

Then in 1980 I died a mini-death when I discovered that the person whose writings I revered had not always believed or taught the truth on every point.* I reasoned—wrongly—that if she had ever once espoused anything whatsoever that was in error, I could not trust anything else she wrote. I further discovered that some of her writings had been borrowed from other authors and were not original with her.

I felt betrayed and sick. Looking back, I can see that over the two-year period following these discoveries, I went through a grief experience. Someone I revered had "died." During my period of "mourning" I couldn't bear to open any book by Ellen White. About the same time, a friend and fellow minister left the church over similar disclosures about E. G. White's writings. He gave me two cartons of her books to sell for him. Another church member took his Spirit of Prophecy books to the rubbish dump and set fire to them.

Maybe someone reading this has gone through a similar time of trauma. Many people still haven't recovered from the assault on their belief in the inerrancy of Ellen White's writings.

The Divine and the Human

With the passing years, we have discovered that the real problem was not Ellen White, but our mistaken concepts of her and her writings. The gift of prophecy is listed in Ephesians 4:11 along with apostleship, evangelism, pastoring, and teaching. Not one of these gifts made its recipients infallible. The prophet Nathan, for example, had to confess that he had given some wrong counsel (1 Chron. 17:1-4). Paul took Peter to task "because he was clearly in the wrong" (Gal. 2:11, NIV). Paul and Barnabas fell out over Mark (Acts 15:36-40).

So why should we get upset if Ellen White made mistakes? The divine gift never overrode a person's humanity. We have exalted the divine side of Ellen White's gift while overlooking the

side of Ellen White's gift while overlooking the fact that she was a fallible human being.

In a letter to her husband dated May 16, 1876, she wrote: "I do not claim infallibility, or even perfection of Christian character. I am not free from mistakes and errors in my life" (letter 27, 1876). *She* never claimed inerrancy, but *we* have claimed it for her—a serious mistake.

If there are inaccuracies in the writings of Ellen G. White, how can we detect them? Well, the historical portions of her writings can be tested by the facts of history, while the theological sections can be tested by the Bible (Isa. 8:20). We are told to test prophecies and hold to the good (1 Thess. 5:20, 21). The Bereans "examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true" (Acts 17:11, NIV).

If the Bereans were so cautious about the apostle who wrote more of the New Testament than anyone else, how careful we should be in accepting messages from people who claim to speak for God. Joseph Smith, Mary Baker Eddy, Ellen G. White, or anyone else must have his or her messages tested by Scripture.

Tests of a True Prophet

There are two tests of a true prophet that Satan cannot duplicate. The first is the "orchard test"—you can tell a tree by its fruit. In Matthew 7:15-23 Jesus identifies a false prophet as one who does not bear the fruit of His Spirit. Such may have supernatural gifts, but they are immoral people, complete strangers to God's grace. They have a form of religion, but God doesn't know them.

Whatever we might think about Ellen White, only a person ignorant of her life would claim that she was not a genuine Christian. If *she* was not a Christian, then God have pity on us, who are lesser mortals by comparison! Sister White was a good, hardworking woman who loved the Lord, and her neighbor as herself.

God gave inspiration and leadership to the fledgling Seventh-day Adventist Church through Ellen White. It would be no exaggeration to say that our denomination wouldn't have accomplished a

fraction of its gospel outreach if it weren't for the influence of this gifted pioneer.

As for Ellen White's so-called copying, God does not reveal truth to us by supernatural means when it is available otherwise. So she read widely, gathered gems of truth, and put them in right settings in her books and articles. She had not only the gift of prophecy but also the gift of discernment. The fruit of her re-

We need to remind ourselves, a century after the 1888 Minneapolis conference, that Ellen White helped lead this denomination back to the crucified Jesus against considerable opposition from influential leaders.

A Light in the Night

Ellen White said that if we had studied God's Word for ourselves, we would not have needed her testimonies (see *Testi-*

*During my period of "mourning" I couldn't bear
to open any of Ellen White's books.*

search and writing has been a blessing to all who have read her writings with an open mind.

Natural or Supernatural Visions

Some say Ellen White had a health problem that made her a visionary. If it takes that sort of condition to produce a theme such as "the great controversy between Christ and Satan" as well as guiding our denomination safely through many a crisis, then it's a pity a few more people didn't have it!

On the other hand, it's a put-down to suggest that God cannot use a person with a physical problem. That many people with such conditions have accomplished so much is an indictment of those of us who are healthy but have produced only a fraction of their output.

The Testimony of Jesus

The second test of a true prophet is that he or she bears the testimony of Jesus, for "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of [all] prophecy" (Rev. 19:10). Such a test rules out Nostradamus, Jeane Dixon, and many others as true prophets, for they do not bear the testimony of Jesus.

Does Ellen White measure up? Her books, *The Desire of Ages*, *Christ's Object Lessons*, *Steps to Christ*, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, *The Story of Redemption*, etc., all bear the testimony from Jesus and to Jesus. She loved Jesus; He was central to her life. The older she got, the more Christ-centered she became.

monies, vol. 5, p. 665). God spoke to us through Ellen White because we are living in the shadow of night instead of in the light of the Sun of Righteousness. In her testimonies the Lord gave us a light in the night until we come into the full light of day.

On many occasions Mrs. White counseled people to hold her writings in the proper perspective: "The testimonies of Sister White should not be carried to the front. God's Word is the unerring standard" (*Evangelism*, p. 256). And again: "I exalt the precious Word before you today. Do not repeat what I have said, saying, 'Sister White said this,' and, 'Sister White said that.' Find out what the Lord God of Israel says, and then do what He commands" (manuscript 43, 1901).

Ellen White knew that her success would be measured not in the number of people she drew to herself, but in the number of people she led to Christ and His service. Similarly, our duty is not to exalt *ourselves* because of this precious gift to our church, but to join her in uplifting *Jesus* so that all might be drawn to Him.

*The SDA Encyclopedia, "Open and Shut Door," pp.

Ritchie Way pastors the Avondale church in Australia.

MEXICO

THE NORTH: FROM CHIHUAHUA TO CAMPOS 77

BY MYRON WIDMER

Chihuahua, Mexico. My 18-day trip throughout this fascinating country is fast coming to a close. This morning my host Ismael Ramirez and I arrived in this state made famous by Pancho Villa, a Mexican revolutionary hero, and the tiny dogs—named Chihuahuas, of course—that used to run wild in the mountains.

Today, in this land of cattle and mining, the membership of the North Mexican Mission is growing rapidly—nearly 23 percent in the year and a half since the mission was formed. Membership now stands at 6,500.

President Eduardo Chacon Rios attributes growth (nearly 15 percent annually) to the dedicated spiritual work of pastors and laypersons. They follow a six-month evangelistic strategy created by the union that includes one month for spiritual preparation of members, one month for lay training, and three months for Bible studies and lay evangelistic campaigns, followed by a month for pastors' campaigns and baptisms. Then the churches happily begin the six-month cycle all over again!

Yes, *happily*, for to be an Adventist here is to be a *soul winner*.

Why? I ask president Chacon, and after a few moments for reflection, he suggests that possibly the members' enthusiasm rises from three factors (besides their great love for God): poverty, joy, and time. *Poverty*, because heaven represents an unknown, comfortable life that only the elite enjoy. *Joy*, because Mexicans "get so much joy from taking a soul to Jesus that they just keep on doing it." And *time*, because most wives here work



the Northwest Mexican Conference.

This conference stretches 960 miles south from Arizona through two highly productive agricultural states: Sonora—"the mill of Mexico" with its vast fields of beans and wheat; and Sinaloa—known for its production of vegetables for export. The Northwest Mexican Conference is also home to more than 9,000 Adventists. Gregorio Dzul Treja is its president.

Our arrival at Hermosillo's airport coincides, as planned, with the arrival of Don Noble, executive director of Maranatha Volunteers International, and his father, in Maranatha's four-place Cessna 182 airplane. When Don had heard of my plans to tour Mexico, he volunteered to fly down from Sacramento, California, and fly Ismael and me around this particularly large conference. What a blessing!

We hop aboard his plane and 50 minutes later (versus four hours of driving) we landed in Ciudad Obregon in time for supper and my speaking appointment at the Central church. With only a few cars outside the church, I wonder, for a moment, if anyone is inside. But then I remember what I learned in south Mexico, that one should not prejudice attendance by the number of cars outside. Many members walk or take buses.

Inside, more than 200 people pack the church. Warm and vibrant, they repeatedly raise their arms in welcome and appreciation. Few Mexicans would ever think of *clapping* in a church. But they certainly show their warmth and appreciation collectively through the lifting of hands and waving. It is quite an experi-

at home, providing them with "more time to listen to the Word of God."

Yet amid successes, challenges face this mission: to reach the high class, including those who go to the U.S. to work for part of the year and become wealthy



Don Noble, pilot

by Mexican standards; to reach the primitive Tarahumara Indians in the Sierra Madres, where there are only 10 Adventists among the 800,000 Indians; and to reach a settlement of 100,000 German Mennonites, where only four families have accepted Adventism.

And the needs prevalent throughout Mexico are evident here too: more schools, clinics, pastors, pesos. Needs for which the foreseeable future holds no solution, except for a miracle. Nevertheless, dynamic soul winning keeps moving forward!

Ciudad Obregon, Mexico. An hour's flight to the west this Friday morning brings us to Hermosillo, headquarters of

ence to be introduced to a waving crowd, and to wave back—as is expected.

Colegio del Pacifico

Sabbath morning finds us flying south to Pacific Academy for worship services, with 350 young adults. They're here for the weekend to learn how to give Bible studies and conduct crusades.

Before I speak, I ask how many have helped conduct a crusade. Hundreds of hands go up! Then I ask how many will be the *speakers* for a coming crusade. About 70 hands go up! Mexico's young people are on fire for the Lord! Dedicated to telling the gospel!

After lunch we tour the school's campus and then attempt to fly east into the mountains to a self-supporting school at Tesopaco, but rain and low clouds prevent us, so we head back to Ciudad Obregón. By car, we travel 25 miles northwest over narrow roads to a little town of probably no more than 400 people called Campo 77.

When we arrive, in a caravan of cars with pastors, conference officers, and others, the members are already at the church to greet us. But what a church building they have. Only cement block walls rise skyward, and a ripped canvas overhead covers the few benches toward the front. No roof, no windows, no doors, only a dirt floor.

The 20-plus members tell us that for years this has been their meeting place. They have been unable to finish it for lack of money. They have saved \$800 in the past several years, about a fifth of the amount needed.

As I speak to the members on church happenings around the world, it



Ishmael Ramirez (left)

begins to rain, soon streams of water are coming through the openings above. But the members don't mind; they're used to it. Then Don Noble speaks and

promises the members that if they will pray every day for help, he will try to find a group of Adventists to adopt the church as their Maranatha project *this spring*. (By printing time, the Carmichael, California, church youth adopted the

project and planned to complete it by March 23! And what a blessing!)

By the close of our meeting Sabbath ends, and so does my 18-day journey through Mexico to view the growth of Adventism here. As I review these days, impressions and incidents come to mind.

Impressions

The Adventist Church in Mexico is vibrant, young, growing, and it will con-



Campo 77 church waiting to be completed

tinue to grow rapidly, *despite* its great lack of financial resources to provide the materials and facilities needed, because of the attitude of its members: soul winning is their responsibility and joy.

In many respects, the church here seems much like the church in North America about 40 years ago. That is *not* to say the church is backward, but that it still holds certain values prevalent earlier: tremendous respect for its ministers, for witnessing, for traditional church standards, for following the guidance of church leaders, for colporteurs and teachers, for paying their tithe and offerings into regular channels, for not openly challenging church beliefs or practices.

Mexico's church, like that of other developing nations, is still in its infancy period. Only time will tell how fast it will "mature" and become like Westernized nations, possibly losing its "first-love" character in the process.

Mexico's church is one of courage amid poverty, pollution, and religious persecution. It is one in need of vast numbers of church buildings, schools, hospitals, clinics. And one in need of communication tools. Few publications now exist for the membership at large.

Such needs will continue. No solution is on the horizon. Success itself has al-

most become Mexico's greatest challenge. For the thousands of newly baptized members cannot, with their own resources, fulfill all their own local church needs, let alone those of the infrastructure needed to ensure the stability of the larger church, such as schools to produce leaders, teachers, pastors.

If the needs will every be fulfilled, they will need help from outside, from those of us in the wealthy countries of the world. That's why Thirteenth Sabbath offerings are so important to the developing countries. In fact, this quarter's proceeds will help build a cafeteria at Linda Vista Academy in Chiapas, and chapels throughout south Mexico.

And that's why Maranatha Volunteers International groups are so valuable in providing money and labor to build churches, schools, clinics, and other buildings here. They have completed nearly 100 projects

here. And they are overwhelmed each year with requests to take on more projects.

Mexico's church is one facing large cities without *any* Adventists. In the north alone, 175 cities of 50,000 residents do not have *one* Adventist in their midst. And the hundreds of isolated, primitive Indian groups, with their own languages or Spanish dialects, present quite a challenge, especially in a land where there is an average of only one pastor for more than 1,000 members. And where burros, boats, and one's own feet are sometimes the only methods of transportation for members and pastors alike.

Nevertheless, God is working mightily here. I have seen His Spirit at work. I have seen it in the church's growth. But more than that, I have seen it in the faces of the members here. They're happy, joyous, loving Christians. I know now that the future of the Adventist Church in Mexico is in good hands, under God's richest blessings.



Myron Widmer is associate editor of the Adventist Review.



Is Acceptance Unacceptable?

By Julie Jacobs

We are as a speck of dirt in God's great universe, yet God accepts us in spite of what we are—unacceptable. He loves each of us as if you or I were the only person alive. If we are His people, shouldn't we act the same way?

Recently I visited a church far away from my home. I was alone and felt out of place. Since I had driven to church on a moped, I was not dressed as nicely as

wonder if people go to church only to obtain juicy gossip to serve for Sabbath dinner.

Not long ago I was invited to a friend's house for Sabbath dinner. Instead of getting satisfaction from the pleasant meal, I was getting indigestion from the dinner talk. The conversation centered on some of the people in the church.

It seemed that Sister M was wearing

cheating tax collector Zacchaeus, Christ showed His acceptance by eating dinner with him.

Shock Treatment

The youth of the church need to feel accepted too. After all, they are the future of the church. But sometimes the older members are traumatized by the appearance of some of the young people entering the church. Maybe a hairstyle isn't short enough or long enough; maybe an outfit isn't pleasing to the eye.

In any case, young people need to be greeted with open arms and warm, friendly smiles. They need to be accepted for the persons they are instead of the misleading physical images they may portray. They need to be accepted by the church just as Christ accepts us individually.

Christ loves and accepts us in spite of our appearance. He looks at our hearts. Wouldn't it be nice if we could see the merits in other people and accept them just the same?

Julie Jacobs is a junior public relations major at Southern College.

My Church is a column written by young adults for young adults. If you wish to contribute to this column, send your submissions to: My Church, Adventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904-6600. Submissions should be approximately 850 words.

By looking at outward appearances it is easy

to think we are better than others.

Fortunately, Christ looks at our hearts.

I could have been.

Immediately upon entering the church, I was greeted with warm welcomes and smiles. The worshipers looked at me approvingly, in spite of my disheveled appearance. I was made to feel at home by their friendliness. By the time the service was over, I had made quite a few friends and had received several invitations for dinner.

The Main Course

However, I find that the concept of acceptance is not always practiced in our churches. Instead, I have observed persons gossiping about a member's expensive new car or a visitor's offensive clothing. I have begun to

a miniskirt that was short enough to pass as a belt. And Brother D was wearing jeans and had hair that was much too long. Sister S was recently heard expressing interest in teaching a children's Sabbath school class. But didn't the poor dear know her wedding ring was leading the youngsters astray?

When we look at outward appearances, it is easy to think we are better than others. Fortunately, Christ looks at our hearts. Our church would do well to do the same.

Jesus, by example, portrayed the concept of acceptance. He associated with sinners and prostitutes in light of scorn from the scribes and Pharisees. Although the whole village termed Mary Magdalene unacceptable, Christ accepted her as she was. And to the

■ Inter-American Division

March 31 Offering to Build Chapels, Cafeteria

Inter-America needs facilities to match growth.

The Inter-American Division (IAD) in 1987 passed the million-member mark, the first division to do so. During the first half of 1989, the IAD baptized more than 75,000 converts, which accounts for 29 percent of the church's world baptisms (260,471) during that period. And members are not only *coming* in, but *staying* in, since the attrition rate is only 7 percent.

The division operates 9 hospitals, more than 70 colleges and secondary schools, and 444 elementary schools. Its 11 unions list about 10,000 church companies and countless branch Sabbath schools. The latter are difficult to tabulate because new ones form every Sabbath.

This phenomenal growth calls for another 75 churches every month to house the new members. In Haiti, a recipient of this quarter's special offering, at least 40 new chapels are under construction at any one time. When funds run out, work stops until more are raised.

Southern Mexico also desperately needs worship places. There and in Haiti, members meet in their new location, when all they have are four walls and a baptismal tank. The baptismal tank seems more urgent than the roof.

I saw one of these baptismal tanks in Mexico, surrounded by four cement block walls, heated by direct "solar en-

ergy," and the water still had gray cement powder floating on it. "We've already baptized 16 people in there!" the pastor beamed.

Mountaintop Experience

Visiting the Bailler Geau church under construction on a mountain in Haiti, I climbed a long and fairly steep, rocky slope. Church members had hand-carried all the water for the cement up the mountain over that trail. The rocky land had been leveled just

enough for the foundation. Inside the four walls remained a huge mound of solid rock that they would hack and pick away at later.

In Haiti, Adventist members meet al-

most every day to have the Sabbath school lesson read to them. Estimates of the literacy rate in Haiti run as low as 20 percent.

The membership explosion in Inter-America also demands more schools in which to train our young people. Linda Vista Academy in Chiapas, Mexico, annually receives more than 900 applications, but has the capacity for less than half that many. This means they must turn away more than 450 young people each year.

This quarter's special offering will not provide another academy in Mexico, but it will provide a new dining room for the beautiful Linda Vista campus nestled in pine woods high in the mountains.

The Inter-American Division is growing so fast that its members cannot provide churches and schools quickly enough.

They look to the world field for help on March 31 in the form of a generous Thirteenth Sabbath offering.



These church members study building plans with great anticipation.



A new church building goes a long way to bring joy and solidarity to a local congregation.

By Janet Leigh Kangas, Mission editor.

■ Madagascar

Members See Marvels in South Malagasy Mission

SDAs gain favor with influential leaders.

When Alphonse Emiliarison, church ministries director of the South Malagasy Mission in Madagascar, and a local pastor came to a town during Holy Week to begin a one-month evangelistic campaign, they could find no place to stay. That first night they slept in the car. Early the next morning they prayed for God's direction, then went out asking



Pastor Alphonse Emiliarison

people where they could rent a place to hold meetings. One person told them of a man who could solve their problem.

"But today is Holy Friday, so you'll have to wait two or three hours till the Protestant church service ends, since he is one of their leaders," they were told.

Just then they saw a man coming out of the church—the very one they needed to talk to, an old man and one of the richest in town. As the pastors hurried to meet him, he greeted them: "Are you the men who are looking for me?"

"How did you know?" Pastor Emiliarison asked.

"God has just been bothering me about that," he replied.

"God has *what*?" asked the astonished pastor.

"A few minutes ago," the old man said, "I heard a voice urging me to leave the church. 'Two men are looking for you,' the voice explained. So, why are you looking for me? How may I help

you?" he offered. Then, without waiting for an answer, he continued: "Aren't you the men who are going to hold an evangelistic campaign in this town? If I'm not mistaken, God bothered me because you need a house to live in during your campaign, right? And a large room in which to hold your meetings."

The pastors were dumbfounded, in spite of just having prayed for this very need.

"I can't refuse, since you are sent by God Himself," the old gentleman said. "Here is the house you need," he added, pointing to a nearby place. "I have there two rooms, one for each of you, and a very large room for your meetings."

Inside the house, the district pastor and Pastor Emiliarison were speechless. It was more than they could have asked for. The rooms were freshly painted and redecorated, perfect for their needs.

Their new friend invited the pastors home to dinner, "happy to have God's messengers eat with me," as he put it. In Pastor Emiliarison's car they drove outside the town to a huge house.

"Sit down, gentlemen. I'm sure you want to know how much you'll have to pay, right?" he said when they were inside.

"Well, you can stay as long as you want. There will be no charge!"

The evangelistic campaign resulted in the establishing of a new church group in that town.

Swimming Pool Providence

In the South Malagasy Mission both pastors and laymen held evangelistic campaigns in 25 locations in the town of Fianarantsoa. They wanted to finish the campaigns with a combined mass meeting that everybody could attend. For the

first time in the mission's history, such a huge campaign would culminate in an open-air baptism.

The government swimming pool seemed the right place for the baptism, but it had been closed for 10 years. Church members fasted and prayed one day for God to open a way to use the pool and to give them a large hall in which to hold a meeting with all the churches in town to close the evangelistic campaign. They hoped for the town hall, but a government ruling forbade all religious ceremonies there.

The following day Pastor Emiliarison went to meet the government leaders responsible for the town hall and pool. A stern man asked what he wanted.

The pastor told him about his need of the town hall. After pointing out all the difficulties involved, the man asked what else he needed. "The swimming pool," answered Emiliarison, wondering if he were asking too much.

"Let me think about it tonight. Come back tomorrow," the official told him. The following morning, after much



Dr. Mamy Lalatiana Andriamanarivo and his family thank God for helping him become a physician.

By Ellen Mayr, coordinator for Shepherdess International, Indian Ocean Union Mission.

prayer, the pastor returned. "Right after you left, I called a meeting, and here is the result," he was told. "You can use both the town hall and the swimming pool. God is really with you and your program. We closed the pool 10 years ago for some very expensive repairs. The work was finished only yesterday. Though the pool isn't officially opened, you can use it for your baptism."

The mission held the meeting with all the churches in the town hall and also the baptism in the newly opened pool, in which 96 people were baptized.

The Sabbath Exam

In his second year of medical studies, Mamy Lalatiana Andriamanarivo faced an examination to determine which 35 out of 1,200 students would be accepted as hospital interns. Since the exam was to be held on Saturday, he explained to his teacher that he could not participate. The teacher insisted that Lalatiana must take the Sabbath exam with the rest. Getting nowhere, he sent him to another teacher who angrily warned Lalatiana that he could never become an intern unless he took the exam.

The next day, Sabbath, the young man went to church, where he found encouragement and enjoyed worshipping with the members. He told them of his problem and asked that they pray for him.

Monday, when he arrived at the university, the other students asked why he had not come on Saturday. They reported that he was the only one absent, and that the highest score on the exam had been 12 out of a possible 20.

On Tuesday his teacher, still angry, told Lalatiana that he and two fifth-year students would have to take an oral exam that very day. Though fearful, he left everything in God's hands.

When the first student came out of the examination room, Lalatiana asked him about the questions he had answered. The student explained that they dealt with vertebral tuberculosis, a subject studied only in the fifth year. Lalatiana knew only the name of this disease, nothing more. He prayed that God would help him.

When he entered the office the teacher asked him exactly the same question about vertebral tuberculosis. Lalatiana talked for so long on the subject that the teacher finally had to stop him. He does not remember what he talked about, but when he received his grade, it was a 14, the highest mark among all the students in his class and even higher than the two fifth-year students!

Since then, his teacher has become very friendly, and they have had opportunity to talk about the Bible. Lalatiana serves as one of the elders at the French church in Tananarive. A fine Christian, he works hard for the Lord. He is also an inspiration to the young people, with whom he shares his university experiences.

The young doctor is now serving his medical residency. He hopes to work in the Adventist hospital in the north of Madagascar.



Elder Emiliarison (center) and mission president Bien Aime Bary Simon (rear) conduct baptism in renovated government pool.

■ Zaire

Virginia Members Build School in Africa

Amid cheers of students and parents, Derris Krause of ADRA-International cut the ribbon to open the Faye Hicks Memorial School in Mwilambwe, Zaire, during an October visit.

The school, with elementary and secondary divisions, is supported by REACH-International and REACH-Italy, in cooperation with ADRA-Zaire. It represents the first permanent school building in this village of 5,000 population. With funding from REACH-International, the first classroom building was started in September 1988.

When the influx of children called for more than one building, a Fredericksburg, Virginia, church group headed by Peter and Dianne Watts raised funds to build a complete school complex named in memory of a former member of their congregation.

Two buildings are completed, and a third almost so.

All six elementary grades plus the first two of secondary are presently being offered, with an enrollment of more than 400. More secondary grades will be added next year.

An agricultural project operated in conjunction with the schools provides training for all the children. Approximately half of them are in the REACH child-sponsorship program, receiving tuition and school supplies through the aid provided by European and American sponsors.

The REACH organizations support nine other Zairian schools, with more than 1,100 families having children on the sponsorship lists.

By Corrine Vanderwerff, REACH representative for Zaire.

To New Posts

Regular Missionary Service

Dennis Charles Blum, to serve as public health teacher, Montemorelos University, Montemorelos, Nuevo Leon, Mexico, and **Dorothy Carol (Reed) Blum**, of Posey, California, left January 1.

Wilma Louise (Coy) Boulrieris, returning to serve as optometrist, Guam Seventh-day Adventist Clinic, Tamuning, Guam, left January 14.

Lynn Alan Boyd, to serve as business teacher, Helderberg College, Somerset West, Cape, South Africa, **Evelyn Barbara (Grellman) Boyd**, and two children, of Sandy, Utah, left November 30, 1989.

Johan Rudolf Haakmat, to serve as assistant professor in theology and religion department, West Indies College, Mandeville, Jamaica, **Olga Patricia (Hosin) Haakmat**, and two children, of Bowmanville, Ontario, Canada, left December 19, 1989.

Robert Gordon Peck, returning to serve as president, Rwanda Union, Kigali, Rwanda, and **Alice Marie (Clayton) Peck**, left December 31, 1989.

William Lamar Phillips, Jr., returning to serve as director, ADRA-Bolivia, La Paz, Bolivia, **Felicia Jean (Le Vere) Phillips**, and three children left January 17.

Randy Gale Purviance, returning to serve as ADRA director, South-East Africa Union Mission, Blantyre, Malawi, **Joella (Moore) Purviance**, and one child left December 5, 1989.

Rita I. (Dykes) Schroeder, returning to serve as director of nursing, Adventist Hospital of Haiti, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, left January 3.

Neal Talbert Scott, to serve as manager, Tanzania Adventist Press, Morogoro, Tanzania, of Pittsburg, Kansas, left November 14, 1989, **Matilda Amelia (Brubaker) Scott**, and one child left January 2.

James Eugene Tiffany, to serve as director, ADRA/Mali, Mali Mission Station, Bamako, Mali, West Africa, and **Lucia Ann (Gilles) Tiffany**, of Silver Spring, Maryland, left January 7.

Werner Konrad Vyhmeister, returning to serve as dean/president, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Manila, Philippines, and **Nancy Jean (Weber) Vyhmeister** left January 10.

Nationals Returning

Kebebe Daka, to serve as theology teacher, University of Eastern Africa, Eldoret, Kenya, **Yerusalem Naph-talem (Lencha) Daka**, and two children left January 9.

Roger Po Wen Lee, to serve as departmental director, Hong Kong-Macao Conference, and **Anna Shum-Tsuen Lee**, to serve as principal, Hong Kong Sam Yuk Secondary School, Hong Kong, left November 5, 1989.

Fred Sosa, to serve as English teacher, Metropolitan Adventist Academy, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, left October 25, to join his wife, **Edna (Ortiz) Sosa**, and two children, who are already in Puerto Rico.

Adventist Volunteer Service

Robert Henry Babcock, to serve as chaplain/pastor, Korea Servicemen's Center, Seoul, Korea, and **Ota Lee (Selby) Babcock**, of Cathedral City, California, left November 29.

Robert Boysen Beckett, to serve as maintenance worker, Saipan Seventh-day Adventist Clinic, Saipan, Mariana Islands, and **June Lenore (Allen) Beckett**, of Deer Lodge, Tennessee, left September 3.

Robert Wesley Carter, to serve as relief dentist, St. Vincent Dental Clinic, Kingstown, St. Vincent, and **Palma Nadyne (Lockert) Carter**, of Burleson, Texas, left October 25.

Christian Peter Christianson, to serve as architect, Gimbie Hospital, Gimbie, Wollega, Ethiopia, of Loma Linda, California, left December 20, 1989.

Stephen Harris Fowler, to serve as science teacher, Pohnpei Seventh-day Adventist School, Kolonia, Pohnpei, of Wenatchee, Washington, left December 3.

Herbert Norman Giebel, to serve as relief physician, Gimbie Hospital, Gimbie, Wollega, Ethiopia, and **Gail (Muir) Giebel**, of Loma Linda, California, left June 4, 1989.

Rita Dorothea Giebel, to serve as volunteer laboratory assistant, Gimbie Hospital, Gimbie, Wollega, Ethiopia, of Loma Linda, California, left June 4, 1989.

Kathryn Eileen Hagle, to serve as computer programmer, Seventh-day Adventist Health Centre, Blantyre, Malawi, of Nevada City, California, left August 15, 1989.

William Lee Hopkins, to serve as relief dentist, Taiwan Adventist Hospital, Taipei, Taiwan, and **Cheryl Virginia (Wagner) Hopkins**, of Sun Lakes, Arizona, left November 20.

Wilburn Orvis Ingham, to serve as relief dentist, Adventist Dental Clinic, Dhaka, Bangladesh, and **Norma (Phillips) Ingham**, of Sacramento, California, left October 11.

Ray Lester Jacobs, to serve as supervisor, Department of Education, Bay Islands Mission of Seventh-day Adventist Churches, Roatan, Bay Islands, Honduras, and **Alberta Mabel (Beardsley) Jacobs**, of Collegedale, Tennessee, left January 24.

Karen Elizabeth Keaton, to serve as elementary teacher, Guam Adventist Academy, Talofofo, Guam, of Ooltewah, Tennessee, left November 20.

Lois Amy Ritchie, to serve as physician/family practice, Kanye Hospital, Kanye, Botswana, of Deming, New Mexico, left June 25, 1989.

William Milton Lee, to serve as speaker, School of Evangelism, Taiwan Mission, Taichung, Taiwan, and **Helen Virginia (Warren) Lee**, of Angwin, California, left August 8.

William Lewis Pascoe, to serve as author, *Treasurer's Manual*, Far Eastern Division, Singapore, and **Mona (O'Connor) Pascoe**, of Clarksville, Maryland, left November 26.

Sherry Karon (Read) Shrestha, to serve as family practice physician, Scheer Memorial Hospital, Kathmandu, Nepal, **Prakash Taujale Shrestha**, and three children, of Oconto, Nebraska, left January 2.

Warren Dexter Pierce, to serve as construction director, South-East Africa Union Mission, Blantyre, Malawi, and **Rachel May (Anderton) Pierce**, of Yakima, Washington, left October 24, 1989.

Harold Glenn Stevens, to serve as relief physician/internal medicine, Seventh-day Adventist Health Centre, Blantyre, Malawi, and **Joycelyn Echo (Cossentine) Stevens**, of Pollock Pines, California, left June 6, 1989.

Leo Ray Van Dolson, to serve as revival speaker, Far Eastern Division, for meetings in Southeast Asia Union Mission, West Indonesia Union Mission, and East Indonesia Union Mission, and **Bobbie Jane (Wood) Van Dolson**, of Kennebunkport, Maine, left November 17, 1989.

Faye JoAnne Whiting, to serve as medical assistant, medical elective service, Malamulo Hospital, Makwasa, Malawi, of Loma Linda, California, left July 4, 1989.

Adventist Youth Service

Charles Yoo-Shin Ahn (Hartland Institute), of La Crescenta, California, to serve as English teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left January 8.

Julie Ahn (LLU), of Berrien Springs, Michigan, to serve as English teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left January 1.

Eric David Anderson, of Dodge Center, Minnesota, to serve as conversation teacher, Seventh-day Adventist English Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left September 27.

Sylvia Ann Chin, of Oakland, California, to serve as teacher, Taiwan San Yu English Bible Center, Taipei, Taiwan, left September 1.

Shawn Bryant Collins (SC), of East Kingston, New Hampshire, to serve as English teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left January 8.

William Cundiff (SC), of Louisville, Kentucky, to serve as English teacher, Hong Kong Adventist College, Kowloon, Hong Kong, left January 8.

Sabina Perus (SC), of Wildwood, Georgia, to serve as nurse, Central Amazon Mission, Manaus, Amazonas, Brazil, left January 22.

Betty Lou Gibson (AU), of Berrien Springs, Michigan, to serve as science/computer teacher, Hong Kong Sam

Yuk Secondary School, Hong Kong, left November 8.

Peter Haviland, of Loma Linda, California, to serve as physical education teacher, Bella Vista School, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, left September 7.

Dennis Jeffrey Mahoney (CaUC), of Kelowna, British Columbia, to serve as elementary teacher, Namu Seventh-day Adventist School, Namu, Marshall Islands, left September 27.

Jeffrey Robert Wayne Skaggs (SC), of Talking Rock, Georgia, to serve as English teacher, Hong Kong Adventist College, Kowloon, Hong Kong, left January 8.

Shelley Susan Solazzo (PUC), of Sparks, Nevada, to serve as nurse, ADRA Clinic, La Paz, Bolivia, left October 27.

Frederick K. Song (LLU), of Riverside, California, to serve as English teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left January 1.

Charlene Waddington (WWC), of Hagerstown, Maryland, to serve as teacher, Overseas School, Tanzania Mission, Arusha, Tanzania, left December 12, 1989.

Marc Waggoner (WWC), of Bend, Oregon, to serve as conversation teacher, Taiwan San Yu English Bible Center, Taipei, Taiwan, left October 2.

Laura West (LLU), of Corona, California, to serve as English teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, Seoul, Korea, left January 1.

Kelli Lynn Wright, of Morgantown, West Virginia, to serve as nurse, Sepik Mission, Wewak, Papua New Guinea, left September 26.

Legal Notices

General Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists: Notice is hereby given that the next regular meeting of the members of the General Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists will be held in the Hoosier Dome, 100 South Capitol Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana, U.S.A., at 10:00 a.m. on July 10, 1990, for the transaction of any business that may come before the meeting. The members of this corporation are the delegates to the fifty-fifth session of the General Conference.
Neal C. Wilson, President
Donald E. Robinson, Secretary

North American Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists: Notice is hereby given that the next meeting of the members of the North American Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists will be held in the Hoosier Dome, 100 South Capitol Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana, U.S.A., at 10:00 a.m. on July 10, 1990, for the transaction of any business that may come before the meeting. The members of this corporation are the delegates to the fifty-fifth session of the General Conference.
Neal C. Wilson, President
Donald E. Robinson, Secretary

Announcement

The Iowa-Missouri Conference in conjunction with Yuchi Pines Institute will be conducting a field school of evangelism June 3-Nov. 18, 1990, in Fort Dodge, Iowa. The course will include instruction on how to give Bible studies and how to engage in personal evangelism. For more information, write: Coordinator, Field Schools of Evangelism, Route 1, Box 422, Seale, AL 36875 or phone (205) 855-3558.

Prayer Requests

Every Thursday at 8:00 a.m. the *Adventist Review* staff meets together to pray for corporate and personal needs and concerns in the church. If you have a personal request you wish us to pray for, please send it to Prayer Requests, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600.

"It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 525).

Pillars or Pillows?

I read the short, handwritten message on a card: "You are such pillars in the church. Actually, I like the word *pillows* better because you are such a sweet comfort to everyone."

Earlier, the writer of the message had confided her sorrow to me and we had prayed together. When we parted she had smiled, "I need your prayers. It gives me strength to know you are praying."

"Don't worry, I will be praying for you," I promised, thinking of the advice in James 5:16 to "pray one for another."

Now the card with its handwritten message triggered my thoughts. In addition to their incidental beginning with *p* and ending with *s*, it seemed to me that *pillars* and *pillows* may have quite a few characteristics in common; there are many ways in which they are synonymous.

True Support

Structures depend on pillars' strength to hold the building upright. Pillars support buildings in all weather conditions, and no one is concerned that they might topple tomorrow. Time has proved them sound.

Those who are "pillars of the church" may also be thought of as pillows, since they support the church at all times and in all circumstances. In a Satan-controlled world, the majority of a congregation is hurting. Some of the hurts are obvious: a broken leg, a needed wheelchair, a less-than-successful surgery, death. But other hurts are not obvious. The Sabbath-to-Sabbath smile of those regularly attending services does not reveal the hurt the individual may be suffering:

A son disappears for four months, leaving no clues.

A divorce in one's immediate family is imminent.

An unwed daughter becomes pregnant.

An alcoholic husband loses his job and returns to booze.

A daughter, dismissed from academy, quits school.

A job is lost because a hospital is sold.

A mother suffers a debilitating stroke.



*"Pillows" of
the church help
us cushion
life's blows
by listening,
loving, and
praying.*

A father is unjustly imprisoned.

No one can see these hurts, but the pillows of the church have a way of becoming aware of others' suffering. Following Jesus' example in Luke 22:32 when He told His weak friend Peter that He had prayed for him, the pillows encourage their fellow members by praying for them, and telling them so. Just as Jesus' words encouraged and consoled Peter, our promise to pray for others encourages them.

Blessed Assurance

Loving friends cushion life's blows by listening, and by praying with and for those buffeted by Satan. They assure their friends that God loves, hears, and understands their frustration and sorrow. They are angels of God clad in human skin who show the suffering one that God has an eternal interest in him.

The momentarily less stalwart gain strength from the pillows of the church. Often, those who sympathize best have also suffered. They have discovered again and again that God does support them (even though God sometimes seems to be distant or hidden by a cloud. They perceive Him as Jesus did at Calvary).

Pillows of the church share not only their friends' sorrow or frustration, but their anger. They continue praying, knowing that the Lord has promised that the earnest prayer of a righteous person has great effect (see James 5:16).

My friend was right. Pillows and pillars are synonymous. They support, they lend strength to the whole building, they uphold in all conditions. Through trials and sorrow they share their own testimony—that God always writes the final chapter in their lives. As promised, "all things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. 8:28).



Connie Wells Nowlan writes from Boulder, Colorado.

By Connie Wells Nowlan

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