



ADVENTIST REVIEW

WEEKLY NEWS AND INSPIRATION FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

SEPTEMBER 30, 1993

India— 100 Years of Adventism

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Dinos and Other Saur

In "Dinosaurs" (Aug. 12) James L. Hayward states that "the Bible does not specifically mention dinosaurs." But take a careful look at Job 40:15-17: "Look at the behemoth, which I made along with you. . . . His tail sways like a cedar" (NIV). Some claim that this animal is an elephant but I have yet to see an elephant with a tail like a cedar tree, and notice that the verse indicates that the behemoth was created at the same time as man.

Then look at what the Lord said to Job about leviathan, whom some say is a crocodile: "His snorting throws out flashes of light. . . . Firebrands stream from his mouth; sparks of fire shoot out. Smoke pours from his nostrils. . . . Nothing on earth is his equal. . . . He looks down on all that are haughty" (Job 41:18-34, NIV).

It seems from a casual reading of these chapters that there had been created creatures [dinosaurs] that are now extinct.

Paul Ekdahl
Bangor, California

I have been fascinated with dinosaurs for many years and was thrilled to see a presentation of the subject from an Adventist viewpoint. It was especially valuable in its demonstration that a range of opinions are present within Adventism.

In recent years scientists from engineering, biology, genetics, and other disciplines have been applying their own insights in studying the dinosaurs. The results have proved fascinating as the stupid, clumsy, plodding dinosaurs of yesterday's perceptions are revealed to have been powerful, intelligent, agile, and fast. The best evidence shows that they were a separate class of animals that, for unknown reasons, are now extinct.

I also commend Dr. Hayward for his conclusion that it is important to be honest and candid in teaching about dinosaurs and not to base our instruction on conjecture. It is bad enough to endure ridicule because one takes a creationist position after review of scien-

tific evidence. But to be ridiculed for believing theories that are taught without reference to known science makes one ashamed and eventually tempted to discard the good teachings along with the foolish ones.

Dennis Murphy
Morgantown, West Virginia

India—100 Years

This year marks the centenary of the work of Seventh-day Adventists in Southern Asia. As part of the 100-year commemoration, the Annual Council of the world church will convene in Bangalore, south India, October 5-11.

The *Adventist Review* rejoices with our brothers and sisters everywhere at the growth of the church in this area, long considered one of the most difficult for the gospel. We thank J. John Wycliffe and Bert Haloviak for their help in researching the cluster of articles on Southern Asia beginning on page 6.

Boomers and Leadership (cont.)

I'm a fourth-generation SDA born during the baby boomer years. I graduated from SDA schools and have been a church employee; I've also served as a member of conference and union committees. I'm concerned about the focus of the recent BB articles and letters.

All members, regardless of age, should be included in the church's planning-leading process. But the veiled infighting between generations for leadership positions is wrongheaded. It is a misuse of God's gifts, devaluing what we all can offer. Worst yet, it misfocuses the church's mission. Some appear to yearn to be the designated "keepers of the sleepers" (see Matt. 25). They apparently desire this over actively inviting the masses to the Lamb's marriage supper.

The BB articles and letters hardly mentioned Christ's commission to go make disciples! Is this important to these boomers? Has leading within the "four walls" become the Great Commission to some? Do we posture (among the "sleeping") for positions while potential disciples go to Christless graves?

Yes, there are matters that need to be more equitable in God's church. This is one of them. We can trust God to set them all right, however. He will guide us, if we are willing. But our primary task must be to stay busy personally telling others about Jesus. Let's keep focused!

Adults, children, prisoners, the hungry, naked, and impaired are "outside the walls" looking for Jesus. Born-again boomers (BAB) have been "given the right" to share His love. Let's quit whining and get busy making disciples!

J. Philip Williams
New Orleans, Louisiana

Bring Home the Big Guns

According to "The News Is Good!" (Aug. 5), the body of Adventists in North America now forms only 10 percent of the total world membership. Our faithful believers have supported the home base, and also activities of many kinds all over the world. We should praise the Lord for their loyalty, ability, and willingness to go the second mile.

But wouldn't it now be wise to invite some of the North American evangelists (the big guns) who are roaming all over the world to come home and evangelize the large metropolises of North America, and thus build up the strength of the home base?

Jeremia Florea
Retired Pastor

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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Cover photo by
Harvey Lloyd/The Stock Market

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When the Pope Came to Town—3

Last in a series by Myron Widmer, who was vacationing in Denver when the pope visited in August.

As I said in part 1, I am not a follower or admirer of the Roman Catholic pope. I am a Protestant who comes from a family whose heritage of protesting against Catholicism runs deep—clear to the early 1500s and Martin Luther himself in Germany.

But the pope is in town—and excitement's in the air! It seems the whole world is wondering after him. Well, at least 375,000 excited "pilgrims" who spent the night at Cherry Creek State Park or got up as early as I did this morning to make the trek there to watch the 9:30 papal mass.

As the mass began, I watched and listened with the certain wariness that comes with my Protestant heritage and biblical study. As expected, I found much to differ with—particularly since the 3½-hour mass was celebrating the virgin Mary's supposed bodily assumption into heaven.

However, I kept my "protesting" inside—which I felt to be the most prudent choice at the moment, since my nearly front-row seat had landed me right in the midst of a swarm of Secret Service agents and about 2,000 white-robed priests, and right behind the worldwide president of the Knights of Columbus.

As I kept listening, though, I also found much to agree with. I found myself humming along with the 700-voice choir as they sang two Protestant songs, "Amazing Grace" and one proclaiming the second coming of Christ! And when I heard Pope John Paul II unabashedly defend traditional biblical values as the basis for building one's life and preserving society, I couldn't help agreeing.

In the words of a Denver columnist, "The pope's message was for American youth to consider the moral mess of the world and then reconsider the principles of Scripture, the life of Christ, and the teachings of the church that they might not walk down the same alley and be morally mugged."¹

His message and forthrightness was surprising, almost ironic in the context of Revelation 13. Here is a *pope* who is unafraid to raise a loud voice on behalf of traditional biblical values—particularly at a time when the voices of many mainline Protestant churches should be heard but remain silent.

Listen to a few excerpts from Pope John Paul II:²

✓ **On Values.** "To educate without a value system based on truth is to abandon young people to moral confusion, personal insecurity, and easy manipulation. No country, not even the most powerful, can endure if it deprives its own children of this essential good."

"In a culture which holds that no universally valid truths are possible, nothing is absolute. Therefore, in the end—they say—objective goodness and evil no longer really matter. Good comes to mean what is pleasing or useful at a particular moment. Evil means what contradicts our subjective wishes. Each person can build a private system of values. Young people, do not give in to this widespread false morality. Do not stifle your conscience! Conscience is the most secret core and sanctuary of a person, where we are alone with God."

"A society that doubts that moral truths exist is courting disaster, especially in the lives of young people."

✓ **On the Sanctity of Life.** "The culture of life means thanking God every day for His gift of life, for our worth and dignity as human beings, and for

the friendship and fellowship He offers us as we make our pilgrimage toward our eternal destiny."

"The family is especially under attack. And the sacred character of human life denied. Naturally, the weakest members of society are the most at risk: the unborn children, the sick, the handicapped, the old, the poor and the unemployed, the immigrant and refugee."

✓ **On Urban Violence.** "Violence in any form is a denial of human dignity. . . . The whole of society must work to change the structural conditions which lead people, especially the young, to the lack of vision, the loss of esteem for themselves and for others, which lead to violence. But since the root of violence is in the human heart, society will be condemned to go on housing it, feeding it, and even, to an extent, glorifying it, unless it reaffirms the moral and religious truths which alone are an effective barrier to lawlessness and violence, because these truths alone are capable of enlightening and strengthening conscience."

✓ **On Dissension.** "So many problems arise when people think of the church as 'theirs,' when in fact she belongs to Christ. Polarization and destructive criticism have no place among those who are of the household of faith."

After all that I have heard these past four days, I still know that God is in charge; but I can only wonder if in these last days He is using some very unexpected sources to encourage many individuals (especially Catholics) in their search for truth.

¹ Cal Thomas, *Denver Post*, Aug. 22, 1993.

² Quoted by Terry Mattingly, *Rocky Mountain News*, Aug. 21, 1993.

MYRON WIDMER



Lessons From My Lab

Some couples pray for children; we prayed for a dog. One month after getting married, my husband and I got a 90-pound black Labrador from the animal shelter.

Jake, as his previous owners had named him, was not our first choice, however. A couple months prior to getting Jake, we had submitted a request to the shelter for a black Lab or a golden retriever. The shelter had offered us an older golden retriever. We weren't excited, but had prayed about it and were prepared to take it—until we found out we couldn't: someone else was ahead of us on their list.

But we kept praying for the right dog—a dog that would fit our needs, and one that needed love. A second time the shelter called, offering us a black Lab. But before we got in to look at it, they called and said the dog was not available. Sorry, but there was a mix-up in their paperwork.

Believing that God works even through mix-ups, we felt that the third time, when Jake—a 10-month-old housebroken puppy—was offered to us, our prayers were answered. Little did I know then what praying for a dog—and having that prayer answered—would mean. God would not stop with our original request, but would continue to use Jake as a reminder of His provision for us as well as our responsibility to care for the creatures He has entrusted to us.

Mind you, Jake is not without fault. He sheds hair, attracts fleas, tramps mud through the house, and barks ruthlessly at old ladies walking down the street. He is no respecter of age, gender, race, or money, and would as easily leave his mark on the lawn of a rich person as he would that of a poor one.

But in spite of his idiosyncrasies,

Jake has been my teacher. And what have I learned?

Loyalty. This is something to be reserved for the one who provides for your needs. It grows by spending time with the master.

Contentment. There's no need to run away if all your needs are met. Don't go out searching for tomorrow's needs if food was there today. Whoever provided it today will provide it tomorrow.

Friendliness. Any friend of the master's is a friend of yours. And by sharing your bone with strangers, you can make them your friends.

Helpfulness. If someone needs help or is hurting, go and be with the person and quietly listen. Helpfulness sometimes consists of just sitting there and doing nothing.

Happiness. This is not dependent upon circumstances. You can be happy in the middle of the night, first thing in the morning, or when put out in the cold.

Respect. If people aren't interested in playing with you, lie down and mind your own business. Respect others' time, especially that of the master.

Temperance. Care for your body. Don't eat more than is good for you. Drink plenty of water; get plenty of rest. Run every chance you get, but don't turn down walks. Clean your body regularly. Lick your wounds, and forget them.

Forgiveness. Be quick to forgive when someone forgets to feed you, scolds you, or accidentally steps on your tail.

Love. Sit at someone's feet to show the person you love him. Dare to let him pat your head, scratch your tummy, or rumple your coat.

Acceptance. Welcome anyone to the master's house, no matter who the per-

son is, where he's been, or how long he's been away. Wag your tail, rub up against him, and surround him with unconditional love.

The Teacher

Sometimes I wonder who's training whom? The lower form of life teaching the higher? The lesser teaching the greater? "Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!" (Prov. 6:6, NIV).

"The intelligence displayed by many dumb animals approaches so closely to human intelligence that it is a mystery. The animals see and hear and love and fear and suffer. They use their organs far more faithfully than many human beings use theirs. They manifest sympathy and tenderness toward their companions in suffering. Many animals show an affection for those who have charge of them, far superior to the affection shown by some of the human race. They form attachments for man which are not broken without great suffering to them" (*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 315, 316).

When I look at Jake now, I think of God and me. Do I measure up in God's eyes as well as Jake does in mine? Am I spending time with my Master and happily going where He leads me? Do I trust Him daily for my needs? Or readily forgive when someone offends me?

Nature speaks volumes on God's character.

But in spite of my shortcomings, the Master loves me as I am. And because of Christ's righteousness, in His eyes I'm perfect. No matter where I've strayed or how long I've been away, He welcomes me home, and longs to shower me with His love.

JACKIE ORDELHEIDE SMITH

Planting the Seed

How Adventist work began in Southern Asia

BY J. JOHN WYCLIFFE

The story of Adventists in India is a story of vision, courage, and sacrifice—even unto death. In the face of opposition and prejudice, missionaries and converts planted seed that is bearing a bountiful harvest today.

Stephen N. Haskell and Percy T. Magan were the first Seventh-day Adventists to visit India. From Agra, known for the Taj Mahal, Haskell wrote in 1890: "We also found individuals who had received quantities of our publications sent from America. Our experience in Calcutta and those places where we have spent a little time has given me great confidence to believe that there might be Sabbatharians raised up as soon as they were raised up in Australia or New Zealand."

Haskell and Magan traveled to other cities, including Delhi, Banares, Jaipur, and Bombay, visiting missionaries of other denominations, looking for the best methods to begin Adventist work in India.

"Now it seems to me," wrote Haskell to General Conference president O. A. Olsen, "that at least three methods of labor, none of which we are entirely ignorant of as a people, should be entered upon at once here in India. . . . First, there should be health missionaries. . . . Second, it is the zenana work. That is visiting from house to house among the females who are excluded from the world by their custom. Third, teaching the natives Bible. . . . Now

there is one more point of method which should be adopted. And that is the selling of books."

Meanwhile, Anna P. Gordon learned about the Sabbath truth in New York. On her way to England on a steamship she met Miss Peck, an Adventist teacher going to South Africa who also told her about the Sabbath. Miss Gordon attended several Adventist meetings in Liverpool and became fully persuaded about the Sabbath, keeping the last two there before leaving for India. She became the first Sabbathkeeping self-supporting missionary to India in 1892, laboring in Bombay, where she died the next year.

The General Conference session of 1893 authorized the opening of Adventist work in India. By unanimous vote it was decided to give the Sabbath school offering—\$113.78—to the new work. The Foreign Mission Board voted on June 8 of that year to send William Lenker to India to sell books, "with the understanding that he shall become self-supporting there." Lenker and A. T. Stroup, both literature evangelists from America, arrived in Madras on November 23, 1893, marking the beginning of Adventist literature work in India. Lenker worked in Madras, Bangalore, Bombay, Hyderabad, and finally Calcutta. A later Indian convert from the Church of London Mission, my father, pioneered literature work in the unentered parts of Northeast India.

The local people helped them sell their books. During his first year in India, Lenker's sales amounted to \$4,000. At the same time Captain Masters, a retired English Army officer who had accepted the Sabbath truth in New Zealand, returned to India and sold literature in Calcutta. During the latter half of 1895, Lenker pioneered literature work in Karachi (now in Pakistan) and in Burma (now Myanmar) among the English-speaking people in spite of many difficulties and hardships.

In 1894 the Foreign Mission Board "requested of sister Georgia Burrus of England to go to India . . . and labor for the first year free . . . and we will pay her fare to that field." January 1895 found Miss Burrus, a lone self-supporting missionary nurse, arriving in Calcutta, where she was received by Captain Masters and his wife. "It was not the first, nor the last time, in our work," wrote W. A. Spicer, "that a woman with the open Bible was to lead the way in the new field."

While Burrus was staying at the YWCA in Calcutta for a month, the superintendent informed her that since she ate less than half of what others did and ate no meat, "I am going to reduce your board 10 rupees a month." Later Burrus observed, "Our vegetarian principles prove a most effective key in gaining an entrance to Hindu hearts and homes." When she had no more money



This photograph of nearly all the early workers associated in Calcutta was supplied by L. G. Mookerjee. It was taken in front of the first mission house, 154 Bow Bazar Street. Front row, left to right: Mrs. O. G. Place; S. E. Whiteis; May Taylor (Mrs. Quantock), with Dorothy Spicer at her feet and Ethel Robinson (Mrs. Chilson) beside Dorothy; Mrs. D. A. Robinson, with Mary, an adopted Indian girl, on her lap; Mrs. W. A. Spicer, with Willie Spicer at her feet; Mrs. Ellery Robinson, with the two Edwards children by her side. Middle row: Ellery Robinson, Kheroda Bose, Dr. O. G. Place, Margaret Green (Mrs. I. D. Richardson), Georgia Burrus (Mrs. L. J. Burgess), G. P. Edwards, Mrs. Edwards. Back row: the Indian durwan (general house servant), D. A. Robinson, Mona Mitter, Kripananda Biswas, W. A. Spicer, Noyan Mitter.

and was about to discontinue her Bengali classes, her Bengali tutor offered to teach her without pay. The next day she received a letter containing 25 pounds from a man she did not know. Recently converted to the Adventist message in Africa, he sold his billiard table for 100 pounds and sent the money in quarterly installments to Miss Burrus. This enabled her to pay for her language studies.

In 1894 the Foreign Mission Board voted to implement Haskell's plans of making the work in India self-supporting through medical and literature work. The next year the board

appointed D. A. Robinson, then working in England, to take charge of the new work. Elder and Mrs. Robinson, their child, and Martha May Taylor arrived in Calcutta in 1895. One week later Robinson wrote to Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, "If a man takes care of his health here, he can live. . . . Some people are afraid they will die in India, but if I am to die, I would just as soon die here as anywhere else."

In 1896 Robinson opened the first Bengali school for girls on the first floor of his home, the first mission headquarters in Calcutta. This school paved the way for Burrus to do zenana work. As

the girls' school in Calcutta grew, it became necessary to add another teacher.

The First Convert

Kheroda Bose became a Baptist Christian at the age of 16. She had just finished her teachers' training course and was recommended by the Baptists to teach Bengali. But despite warnings from her missionary friends to beware of Adventist teachings and subsequent reproach and separation from former Christian friends, she threw in her lot with Seventh-day Adventists. Kheroda became our first Indian convert, in

1896, and the first national SDA teacher.

As time permitted, Kheroda carried on zenana work, visiting shut-in women. "Anywhere with Jesus I can safely go" was her answer to a Hindu man's query about her safety while walking or riding in the streetcar, for Indian women never did this. Elder Spicer observed, "India's women were leading the way in our work."

Georgia Burrus' zenana work bore fruit in the life of Nanibala Biswas, a widow who became the first convert from Hinduism. Her relatives constantly threatened to make her leave the mission school. "*Memsahib, ami jabo na; ami jabo na* [*Madam, I won't go; I won't go*]", she replied in Bengali.

Nanibala studied nursing at our first sanitarium in India, which was opened in Calcutta in 1896 by Dr. O. G. Place. This institution had the honor of serving the representative of the king of England, the viceroy of India, Lord Curzon, and his family. Nanibala went to America with Dr. Place to continue her studies. As a sign of devotion and honor to Georgia Burrus, who brought her the Advent message, Nanibala Biswas changed her last name to Burrus.

Sunday night meetings conducted by D. A. Robinson at the mission house in Calcutta became a regular feature until several earthquakes rendered the building unusable. Our pioneers relocated in the Corinthian theater, until it too was damaged by an earthquake; then they secured the chapels of other denominations for meetings.

Soon Elder Robinson was asked to preach on Sundays whenever the regular pastor was on vacation. Attendance and the interest of the people continued to grow. Babu N. Nitter and family accepted the truth, and he was appointed a teacher in our orphanage in Calcutta, the Home for Destitute Indian Children.

L. G. Mookerjee, aided by Nitter and B. M. Chakkravorti, translated literature into Bengali and edited the first vernacular magazine, *Yuga Lakshan* (*Signs of the Times*).

At the request of the Indians in the area, Robinson started the second school in 1897. Soon, he wrote, "Ten people had begun the observance of Sabbath," and "a Sabbath school was being started for the older students who are interested."

By 1898 a third school, with 50 students, opened about 20 miles from Calcutta, where Burrus led out with two Indian teachers. Not long afterward, "four families of Europeans and four or five Bengali families had accepted the truth, besides some others." During 1899 a school for the European and English-speaking people began at mission headquarters in Calcutta.

*"If I am to die, I would
just as soon die here as
anywhere else."*

The first outstation opened in 1898 at Karmatar, about 168 miles northwest of Calcutta, with Elder and Mrs. F. W. Brown in charge. Soon a dispensary, a boarding school, and an orphanage were added, and some years later the printing press moved to Karmatar from Calcutta.

W. A. Spicer came to Calcutta in 1898 to edit the *Oriental Watchman*. This magazine circulated in all parts of India, along with tracts in English, Bengali, and Santali.

Our early leaders also used newspapers to spread the Advent message. "About one page of the *Darjeeling Standard*," wrote D. A. Robinson, "has been devoted each week for my sermon, the largest audience I have." Harry E. Armstrong pioneered the work in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and each week contributed an article to the *Ceylon Independent*. George F. Enoch wrote to Spicer, "We are also having the Sunday evening sermons printed in

the morning and evening paper," the *Times of India*.

The Ultimate Sacrifice

During the last two days of December 1899, pioneers F. W. Brown and D. A. Robinson died of smallpox. "As he [Robinson] lay dying at just over 52 years," wrote Elder Spicer, "I felt that he was thinking of his short service. I remarked, 'Brother Robinson, it may be that this laying down of your life here may be turned of God to draw the attention of our people to India's need, as your life could not do.' 'Perhaps, perhaps,' he whispered; 'I hope so.'"

With Robinson's death, Elder Spicer was appointed to supervise the work in India. But in 1901 he was made secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, and the mantle of leadership in India passed to J. L. Shaw. In spite of declining health, he supervised the work in India through 1912. In 1913 Homer R. Salisbury was appointed the president. Salisbury went to a watery grave at the age of 45 while returning to India from the Annual Council in Loma Linda, California. In 1915 the S.S. *Persia*, on which he was traveling, was torpedoed near the island of Crete in the Mediterranean.

As the nineteenth century closed, Lal Chand Mookerjee, son of the first Brahmin convert of William Carey; his son, A. M. Mookerjee; and grandson Lal Gopal Mookerjee accepted the three angels' messages. "He [L. C. Mookerjee] came into the message," wrote Elder Spicer, "largely by reading our books; for from 1896 Ellery Robinson had arrived in India to push the book work among those multitudes who read English. This man's grandson became in turn our first Indian minister," Lal Gopal Mookerjee.

Lal Chand Mookerjee's first assignment was to manage the Sanitarium Health Food Company in Calcutta, opened by Elder Robinson. In Mookerjee's home, J. L. Shaw organized the first national church in India.

A. M. Mookerjee had a press on which he printed much of our literature, which he distributed free. L. G. Mookerjee helped D. A. Robinson and Dr. O. G. Place in their work. Mookerjee joined the sanitarium, completed nurse's training, and worked there.

Elder L. G. Mookerjee appears to have been the first Indian to correspond with Mrs. White. He never wanted to do anything that was not approved by the Lord. In 1905-1906 Mookerjee and his first wife, Grace Kellogg, pioneered the work in East Bengal, establishing a mission station.

Mr. and Mrs. L. J. Burgess pioneered work in north India, aided by the first Black missionary nurse, Anna Knight. J. L. Shaw and J. S. James began the work in south India among the Tamil Sabbathkeepers in Tinnevely. E. D. Thomas, a helper of J. S. James, became an Adventist and was appointed as a worker in 1917.

Stephen N. Haskell observed: "God is at work in India. It means more to embrace Christianity there than it ever has in America to commence to keep the Sabbath. . . . When I think of India and China, after hearing the people tell these

stories . . . old as I am (58), I feel that I would gladly go to India to labor there until I laid down my life."



J. John Wycliffe is a third-generation Seventh-day Adventist from Kerala, India. His grandmother Mrs. D. Mary was the first teacher when work started in Kerala. Now he works in the General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland.

A Century of Growth

Slow at first, SDA work in Southern Asia eventually placed it among the three fastest-growing divisions in the world.

BY DAVID SUKUMARAN

During the past 100 years, the number of Adventist churches in India has grown from zero to 920, while membership today is almost 200,000. Many men and women labored hard to lay the foundation for this development.

In 1895 D. A. Robinson took charge of Adventist work in India. The famine that struck in 1897 created an opportunity for him to clothe and educate the people, thus widening the horizon of evangelism.

W. A. Spicer, who landed in Calcutta in 1898, took charge of the *Oriental Watchman* magazine. Literature evangelists in those days sold *Daniel and the Revelation*, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *The Great Controversy*, *Man the Masterpiece*, and *Ladies' Guide*, and

also took subscriptions for the *Oriental Watchman*.

Medical and educational work soon followed in Calcutta. These new institutions produced a steady, if slow, stream of baptisms.

When W. A. Spicer took over leadership of our work in India in 1900, subscriptions for the *Oriental Watchman* had reached 4,700. He declared, "I do not know of any more interesting place in this world to work in than India."

J. L. Shaw, who took charge of the work in 1901, moved the printing office from Calcutta to Karmatar, which became an important place in the beginning of our work in India. By 1913 Sabbathkeepers numbered 450.

When H. R. Salisbury was elected president in 1913, Adventists could

report seven English churches: in Calcutta, Rangoon, Bombay, Lucknow, Simla, Mussoorie, and Lonavla.

The Southern Asia Division

In 1919 J. E. Fulton became the first president of the newly formed Southern Asia Division, which included India, Burma, Ceylon, and Afghanistan. With E. B. Jones as manager, the publishing house increased its output of literature in Bengali, Burmese, English, Gujarati, Gurmukhi, Hindi, Kannada, Karen, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Santali, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu.

At the end of 1921 the division had 1,436 baptized members. That same year its headquarters moved from Lucknow to Poona, where it remained for 68 years.

By the early 1920s the church had a working force of 490. This was comprised of 41 ordained ministers (six of whom were sons of India), 53 licensed ministers, 105 licensed missionaries, 26 colporteurs, 126 school workers, and 139 other workers.

These were years of slow growth as the Adventist Church gradually took root. By 1925 the membership reached 2,120 (an increase of 684 in four years) in 66 churches; we had 16 boarding schools. The Publishing Department produced literature in 16 languages besides English. We had three hospitals in operation—Nuzvid and Narsapur in south India, and Karmatar in the north-east.

During 1934-1941, the presidency of N. C. Wilson, father of former General Conference president Neal C. Wilson, saw dramatic changes. Whereas the 1935 church membership stood at 4,943, the following year saw 27 new churches added, while Sabbath school membership increased 50 percent. Wilson declared, "We have only one watchword—evangelism! Lay evangelism, literature evangelism, institutional evangelism, and most of all, public evangelism."

By the early 1940s—after nearly 50 years—division membership passed the 7,000 mark. A half century of labor and sacrifice had produced steady but slow growth.

As part of the British Empire, Southern Asia was drawn into the great war (1939-1945). Under the stress of the times, division president G. G. Lowry died in office in 1942. One union, Burma, was cut off from headquarters for four years, and the number of workers in the whole division was greatly reduced.

A New Nation

India achieved political freedom in 1947 and in 1950 proclaimed itself a republic, adopting a constitution that recognized the principles of civil and religious liberty. Although Pakistan separated from India, this change did not

affect the growth of our work.

By 1949 the working force had changed significantly: 707 nationals, 171 overseas workers. National members predominated on most committees and boards. More than 4,000 people were baptized that year.

Robert H. Pierson, later General Conference president, led the work in Southern Asia from 1950 to 1954. Our 103 schools and 31 boarding schools saw enrollment double during this period. Spicer Memorial College experienced a 200 percent increase. Our new Karachi SDA Hospital, with 65 beds, was the most modern institution in Pakistan. More than 1,000 evangelistic efforts added 6,359 persons to church ranks.

By now the leaders in 12 of the 16 local missions were nationals. Local committees had 116 national members and only 29 from overseas.

New boarding academies in Tanjore and Falakata completed their construction work. R. E. Streeter, division building engineer, built hospital wards, dispensaries, mission offices, school industrial buildings, hostels, and other edifices in addition to the new Karachi SDA Hospital and Voice of Prophecy building. Every one of these was 100 percent paid for upon completion.

O. O. Mattison (1954-1962) led a division divided into seven unions: Burma, Pakistan, Ceylon, Northwestern, Northeast, Western, and South. At the end of 1957 membership totaled 20,000. Our 165 schools reported 500 baptisms. The Voice of Prophecy conducted 18 schools in 15 languages. Dr. Stanley Sturges opened up medical work in Nepal, and Dr. I. R. Bazziel began a mobile medical unit in Simla in the mountains of India.

In 1962 R. S. Lowry, son of former division president G. G. Lowry, was elected Southern Asia president. During his first four years of office, laypeople assisted 1,700 national workers and 140 missionaries in bringing 10,057 people to baptism. And the growth continued to accelerate. In 1969 accessions reached

7,681, placing Southern Asia among the three fastest-growing divisions in the world.

What a change from the early years! Adventists added in that one year more than the total membership after 50 years of work!

During the Lowry presidency, M. D. Moses became the first national union president, serving the Western India Union, while G. J. Christo became the first national secretary of the division. Between 1975 and 1980, church membership reached 100,000, and its roster of employees, 4,000. Spicer Memorial College enrollment had climbed to approximately 1,000. Our 11 hospitals and 14 clinics included five hospitals that offered nurse's training approved by the government.

The General Conference session of 1980 marked another milestone, as G. J. Christo assumed the presidency—the first national to do so. Now 24 weekly radio programs broadcast in 12 languages from stations in three countries. The Education Department reported 338 elementary schools, 32 secondary schools, three junior colleges, and two senior colleges, with a total enrollment of 70,000. Five publishing houses and 12 school printing plants kept the presses rolling.

With Elder Christo's retirement in 1990, Dr. M. E. Cherian was elected president of Southern Asia Division. Division membership today stands at 191,963. And the division's first self-supporting conference was inaugurated on February 17, 1993, the year of the centenary celebrations.

Thus, the seed planted in toil and tears 100 years ago has sprung up. In God's good time it is bearing a bountiful harvest.



David Sukumaran, Ph.D., a former principal of Lowry Memorial Junior College, Bangalore, India, now lives in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Heavenward by His Grace

BY M. E. CHERIAN



Dr. M. E. Cherian was elected president of the Southern Asia Division at the 1990 General Conference session. A scholar, writer, and educator, he served as president of Spicer Memorial College from 1963 to 1990. Cherian is widely known throughout India as a Christian leader. The following excerpts from his pen come from issues of the Southern Asia Tidings, 1991-1993.

On 1993, the Centenary Year

The year 1993 is our centenary year. The good Lord has watched over His church. It has grown and developed by His mercies. It is a wider family we belong to, God's family. It has brought us the light and has taught us the truth. We met our God collectively from Sabbath to Sabbath and fellowshiped with our brothers and sisters in Christ. It has provided fellowship and comfort. It opened avenues of service and inspired us to move heavenward. What a blessing the church has been.

This year we shall reflect on the goodness of the Lord and ascribe praise, glory, and honor to Him for His goodness to us, His children. We shall resolve to move heavenward by His grace. We shall further the frontiers of His kingdom of grace as a preparation for the establishment of His kingdom of glory. We shall seek unity in faith and service. We shall seek His face and meditate upon His Word. We shall pray for the outpouring of His Spirit and a commitment for His cause.

Thousands have sacrificed and spent themselves for the church in Southern Asia. From many lands they came and

joined with our own to carry the gospel message of a crucified, risen, and soon coming Saviour. They lived and labored so that we may be blessed with a well-established church. Let us not forget the blessings they gave so lavishly. There are many who carry the burden of the work with dedication today. May God bless them.

On the Chief Thrust of His Administration (shortly after assuming leadership of the Southern Asia Division)

First, I am very much concerned about the evangelistic thrust of the church. I want to make it the main concern, with the whole church being involved.

Next, I am very anxious to consolidate the local churches, nurturing church members, shepherding them with care so that we will not lose them.

I am also concerned about refurbishing the credibility of the church. I am not saying that it has lost its credibility. I am anxious that such charges, often made against church leadership, rightly or wrongly, as corruption and nepotism are tackled, and that there is greater appreciation of the role of the leadership and of the way the church is functioning.

I have great concern for the welfare of the laymen, many of whom live in very poor conditions. This leads me naturally to the question of the church becoming more mature, developing a dynamic leadership. A by-product of such development will be such achievements as conferencehood (of sections), financial self-sufficiency, etc.

Last, one need that I feel is most important is the need for a spiritual

revival in the church, a corollary of which will be unity.

On the Raising and Care of Resources

I do not have much fear about our ability to raise resources. If we unselfishly and with integrity operate the very projects we have in this division, we will get enough resources both from inside and outside the country.

I very strongly feel that the proper, faithful, and absolutely honest use of our resources is imperative. Not only must we do the right thing but we must also appear to do the right thing. A culture of honesty, integrity, sacrifice, and openness must be created in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We must establish a system where it becomes difficult for one to be dishonest. There should be checks and balances, and when dishonesty is discovered it must be dealt with firmly.

On the Role of Young People

It is vital that we see the tremendous potential of our young people, recognize and develop the talents they possess, channel their energies and enthusiasm in the right course, and nurture the ideals and ideologies they cherish. It is imperative that we provide opportunities and avenues for them to use and develop their talents.

On the Greatest Need of the Church in India

The greatest need of the church is to follow Jesus Christ both in our personal lives and in our ministry. Christ must become the center of our lives, of our plans, and of our programs.

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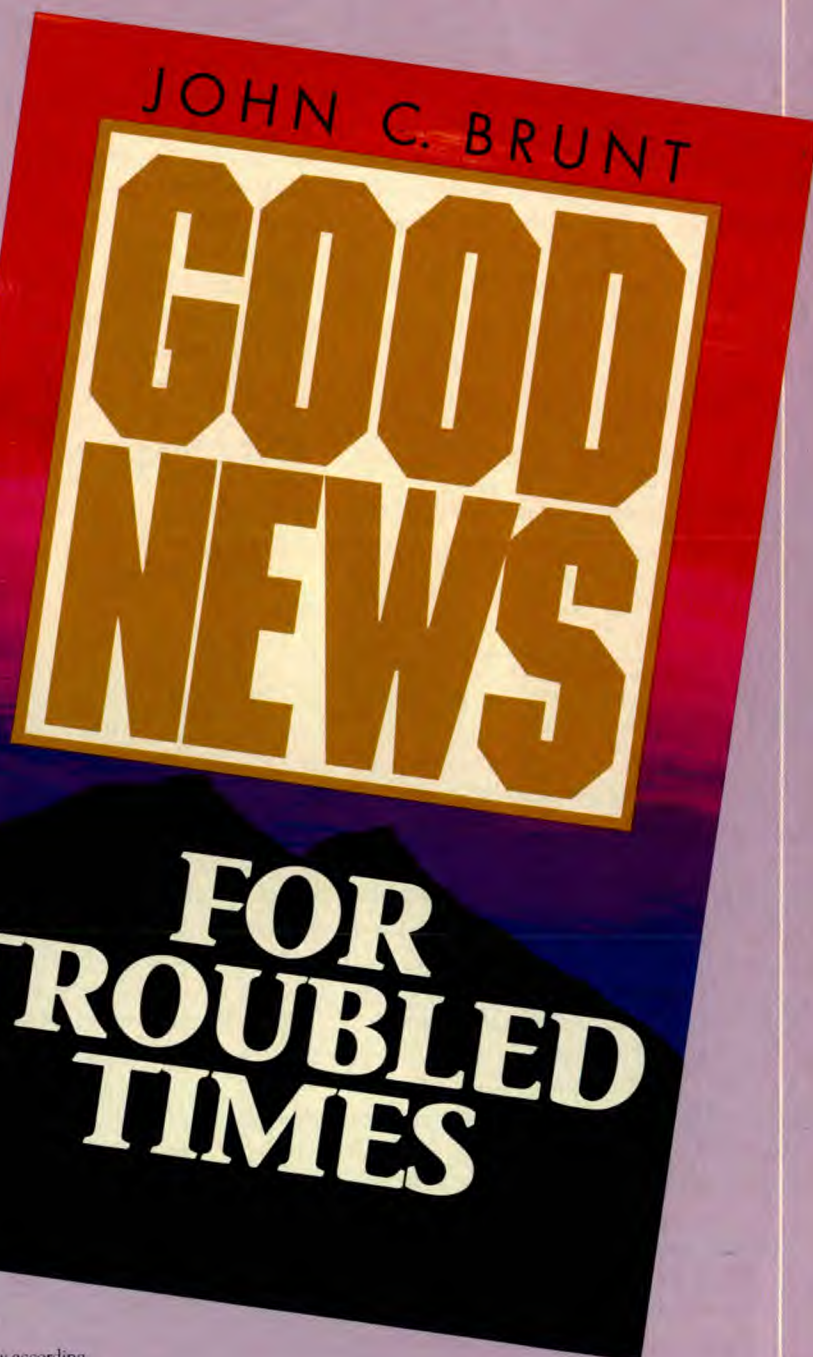
John C. Brunt is a college administrator and religion teacher at Walla Walla College in College Place, Washington.

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The Challenge of Unentered Areas

BY CHARLES R. TAYLOR

India, at its present growth rate, promises to outstrip China to become the most populous nation on earth. Its 900 million population in 1993 already poses an almost incomprehensible challenge to Adventist Global Mission, especially the Ganges plain and the Northern India Union territory with its 483 million people.

For help to meet this challenge, Adventist Frontier Service (AFS) was launched at Spicer Memorial College, where 20 students attended an orientation program in April 1991. This group has now expanded to more than 200 volunteers from schools and local con-



Two thousand have been baptized in the past two years in unentered territory in India.

gregations. The division and union Global Mission coordinators conducted a dozen training sessions throughout the division.

After training, AFS volunteers went two by two throughout the division territory, 100 to Northern India, 40 to South India Union, 30 to Central India, 20 to Northeast India, and 10 to the newly formed Himalayan Region (Nepal and Bhutan). These teams, sometimes husband and wife, use health care, radio correspondence school enrollments, Vacation Bible Schools, and witnessing on a part-time basis, and devote the rest of their time to literature min-



Lay evangelists use donated bicycles to cover their territory in the various districts of India.

istry. Each volunteer receives a monthly stipend of 500 rupees (about US\$25) and a house rent allowance of 250 rupees. Church administration selects the territory to be worked and sends leaders to visit the teams, coordinate their efforts, and lead out in evangelistic meetings to reap the interests and establish new congregations.

Unusual Experiences

Dr. K. J. Moses, division coordinator for Global Mission, tells of experiences these teams had or are having:

"Mr. and Mrs. Basumatary in Arunachal Pradesh, bordering China, have been beaten by terrorists and prohibited by the security forces from entering the couple's target area. Mr. and Mrs. Sushil Indwar, of Balurghat in West Bengal, often have had to wade through floodwaters to meet people. Mr. and Mrs. Sushil Lall, of Rampur in Uttar Pradesh, were threatened with death by religious fundamentalists and had to stand before a magistrate.

"Akhel and Franklin had to journey for six days through jungles to reach Thongsongyo in Nagaland, bordering Burma, at an altitude of 12,000 feet. It took a daily walk of nearly 50 kilometers [31 miles] to reach people groups in Hissary, Haryana, for Rajendra Masih and Lakwinder Masih. Lalfukzuali and Lalbiakzuari, two young women from Mizo Section traveled for three days through jungles to reach Chawngte in Mizoram, a border state to the east of Bangladesh.

"These volunteers use interesting techniques to reach people with gospel truth. For example, Mr. and Mrs. Mauankima Colney have been operating a small clinic where Mrs.



Adventist doctors teach workers how to use simple treatments to open doors for the gospel.

Mauankima, a trained nurse, treats patients and brings them to the Master Physician. Benjamin Zominglana and C. Lalchhanhima entered a cholera epidemic area and began to treat people,

Benjamin earned the title of "King" from government officials and thus won several people.

saving many from death. Benjamin earned the title 'King' from government officials and thus won several people.

"When Johnson and Shankar prayed for a devil-possessed mother and her sick daughter, God delivered both of them, and today they are our new believers at Gangavathi, Karnataka. Mr. and Mrs. Vinod Singh of Buduan in Uttar Pradesh have been singing in

many churches and thus making contacts for Bible studies. Virendra Singh, a medical practitioner, has been using his profession to attract people to Bible studies."

Fifty-eight New Congregations

The division reports that the past two years 2,000 believers have joined the Adventist Church and that 58 new congregations have been established where there was no Adventist presence. Church-building construction has begun in 31 target areas. A singular feature of the Global Mission thrust in India is that funding from the General Conference for union and section targets in unentered areas close to existing

churches is available for church building after the new congregations have been raised up.

P. K. Gayen, Sr., a 72-year-old retiree, has baptized more than 80 people and raised up three new congregations near Calcutta with funding provided by an Adventist industrial entrepreneur. R. I. Matthew, another retired worker, has raised up three new congregations near Gudivada in south Andhra Pradesh.

Surely the pioneers who labored so hard to start our work in India would be astounded if they could see what is happening today.



Dr. K. J. Moses



Charles R. Taylor works with research and statistics at the General Conference Office of Global Mission.

Matchless Redeemer!

Why He's infinitely larger than life

BY JOE ENGELKEMIER

Tennis player Chris Evert, who played 1,144 matches during her career, once said that the thrill of victory lasted about an hour. What about Christianity—does our enthusiasm for Jesus also have to fade quickly?

No. Not only can we retain the thrill of knowing our Lord, but it may grow stronger and brighter each day. The secret lies in keeping our gaze on Christ, in contemplating His matchless excellencies (see 2 Cor. 3:18).

"Think of the kindest, strongest, most generous, and appealing person you have ever known," Norval Pease once wrote. "Then in your imagination magnify, purify, and enrich that individual a thousand times. Even so, you have not even begun to imagine what Jesus is like."¹ Ellen White sounded the same theme: "Were thousands of the most gifted men to devote their whole time to setting forth Jesus always before us, studying how they might portray His matchless charms, they would never exhaust the subject."²

Said the prophet Isaiah, "His name shall be called Wonderful" (Isa. 9:6, KJV).^{*} In Bible times, a person's name

was intended to reveal something about the character. We find at least 134 different names and titles for Christ—from Adam and Advocate to Word of God and Worthy. Almost every one reveals an additional attraction.

The title of Captain (Heb. 2:10, KJV), for example, suggests competence, leadership. King of kings (Rev. 19:16) indicates dignity, sovereignty. Servant (Isa. 42:1) points to His humility, His willingness to help, His devotion. Living Water (see John 4:10, 14) suggests Christ as a source of refreshment, invigoration, purification. Morning Star (Rev. 22:16) points to hope, encouragement, optimism.

Son of Man

Jesus' favorite title for Himself, however, was Son of man. He chose to become one with us, to know us as a brother and friend.

But He is more than just a man. The Bible presents Him as Co-Creator, Co-Ruler, of the universe. "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made" (John 1:3). His "goings forth," wrote Micah, had been "from the days of eternity"

(Micah 5:2, NASB). He knows the name of every star and galaxy. Said Isaiah, He "brings out the starry host . . . , and calls them each by name" (Isa. 40:26).

Ruler of a Trillion Worlds

With the naked eye we can see about 3,000 stars in the evening sky. We can also observe the merged light of millions of stars within our Milky Way, a band of light the ancient Greeks likened to a river of milk. (The word *galaxy*, in fact, comes from the Greek word for milk.)

The 200 billion suns that make up our Milky Way appear in a disklike spiral with a bulge at the center—a spiral that is about 100,000 light-years across and 10,000 light-years thick. Our sun is located about 30,000 light-years out from the center.

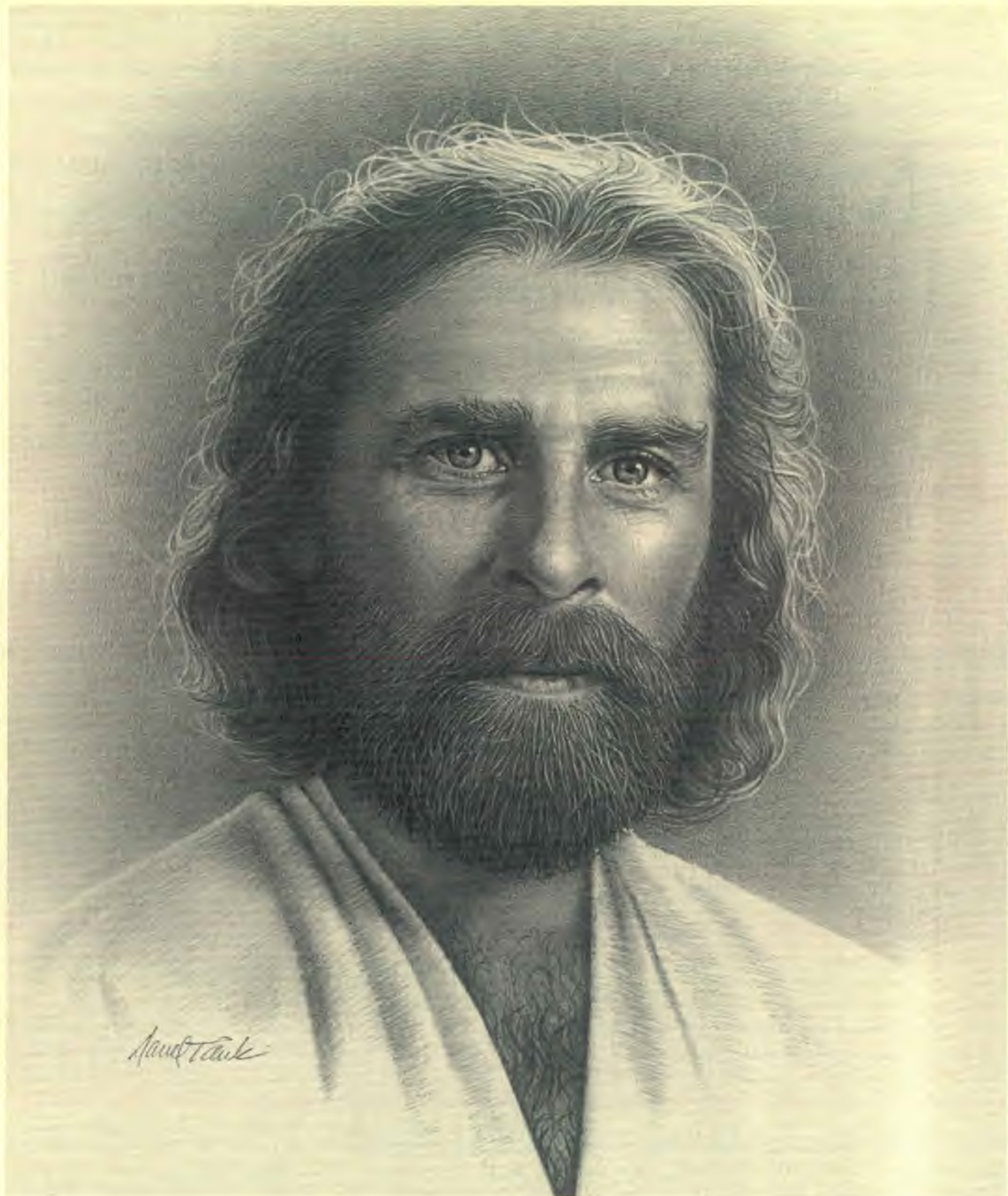
When we look out from the plane of this disklike spiral, we see individual stars. When people in the Northern Hemisphere look toward the center (as they do in the summer), or toward the rim (during the winter), the light of millions of suns merges to produce the milky effect.

These stars are not crowded together, however. The distance between them is so great that entire galaxies sometimes pass through each other—but in such precision that the chances of a collision between suns is no greater than that between two gnats over the Grand Canyon.

We cannot even imagine how long it would take to cross our galaxy from rim to rim. One authority suggests that if we were traveling at the speed of light—11 million miles a minute—it would take 100,000 years to span the distance. If we were to make the trip in a Boeing 747 at 600 miles an hour, it would take us more than 115 billion years.³

The next time you look up at the Big Dipper, consider this: If you could see the bowl of that Dipper the way a large telescope views and photographs it, you would find a million galaxies in the space just beyond the bowl.⁴

How many galaxies are there within known space? According to a recent source, the Milky Way "is only one among uncounted hundreds of billions



of other galaxies, each a prodigious star system in its own right.”⁵

Surely we must conclude that Jesus Christ, the Creator of all these things, is awesomely great and wonderful!

More Attractions

While the heavens testify eloquently to the majestic power and splendor of Christ, every page in the book of nature reveals something about His attractions.

The flowers remind us that He is a lover of beauty and simplicity. The mountains speak of His grandeur and strength. The fruitfulness of garden and orchard tells of His goodness. Mountain streams

illustrate His ability to refresh and inspire. The sparrow tells of His care for the most common of His creatures.

The richest revelations of the attractions of Christ, however, are the four Gospels. Every incident, every word He spoke, tells something about Him.

Consider for a moment His cleansing of the Temple—a seemingly unlikely story to show the charms of Christ (Matt. 21:12-16). Jesus overturns the tables of the money changers, commanding those crooks, “Get out!” In terror they run from the Temple.

But then the lame and blind crowd around Him to be healed, and we hear children singing. “The children were foremost in the rejoicing. Jesus had healed their maladies; He had clasped them in His arms, received their kisses of grateful affection, and some of them had fallen asleep upon His breast as He was teaching the people.”⁶

Think about the scene.

That’s the Co-Creator of the million galaxies within the bowl of the Big Dipper who is hugging the children, and who is being kissed by them. He who had traveled from star to star and from galaxy to galaxy, superintending the affairs of His vast creation, has now become one with us, with children asleep in His arms!

His Compassion

Wearied during their ministry at Capernaum, Jesus and His disciples attempted a retreat on the other side of the lake. But the people followed. Others, somehow getting word of their whereabouts, were waiting on the other side.

Tired as could be, Jesus might have brushed aside the crowd. But instead, “he had compassion on them and healed their sick” (Matt. 14:14).

As the crowd grew to thousands, Jesus attempted to teach them, amidst frequent interruptions from the delirious ravings of some fever-stricken sufferers, or the piercing shrieks of the insane. But there were also shouts of triumph as the victims of disease were instantly restored to health.

By late afternoon Christ had become pale with weariness and hunger. The disciples urged Him to rest, but people

were still pressing forward, and He refused to stop. Late that afternoon He fed them all, multiplying the loaves and fishes. Then they attempted to seize Him and crown Him king, but He commanded the disciples to get into the boat and head back to Capernaum, while He firmly dismissed the crowd.

Then Jesus went alone up the mountain and spent many hours in prayer for the people. Can you see Him as He knelt there in the hills at the edge of the lake? Thirty-four years earlier He was

*The Creator of
hundreds of billions of
galaxies lies
unconscious on the
dusty road.*

guiding the galaxies in their circuits. Now He was on His knees. His body shook with deep feeling as He prayed for a race that, for the most part, was rejecting His offer of restoration to the galactic family.

He must have been exceedingly tired that late evening. But He prayed on and on and on—so great was His compassion for us!

One Percent Matters

The parable of the one lost sheep shows that 1 percent matters to Christ. He would have gone to Calvary for a single person!

Think again of His galactic empire. Then go watch on Good Friday as He attempts to carry His cross to the place of execution. Bloodied and exhausted by two scourgings, He drags it a few rods, then faints. When He regains consciousness, the cross is again placed upon His bleeding shoulders. He staggers on for a few steps, then falls to the ground like one dead.

In your imagination gaze at that fallen form. Then in your thoughts see again the bowl of the Big Dipper and the million galaxies that lie out beyond that bowl. It is the Creator of those galaxies, and hundreds of billions more, lying unconscious on that dusty road to Calvary. He’s there out of love *for you!* He would have endured all that pain and disgrace for you alone!

“As the life of Christ and the character of His mission are dwelt upon, rays of light will shine forth more distinctly at every attempt to discover truth. Each fresh search will reveal something more deeply interesting than has yet been unfolded. The subject is inexhaustible.”⁷

As we contemplate Jesus, indifference melts. As we dwell upon His life, especially its closing scenes, our hearts well up with enthusiasm. That’s a thrill that can never die!

* Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations in this article are from the New International Version.

¹ Norval Pease, “What Jesus Can Do for You,” *These Times*, Aug. 1981, p. 16.

² *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 403.

³ Paul W. Hodge, *Galaxies* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 2. Mr. Hodge states that to make a round-trip at 600 miles an hour to the center of our galaxy and back, a total distance round-trip of 60,000 light-years, would take 70 billion years. Thus, it would take more than 115 billion years to traverse 100,000 light-years at 600 miles an hour.

⁴ “Constellation,” *Collier’s Encyclopedia* (New York: Macmillan Education Co., 1987), vol. 7, p. 226. The statement reads: “With the Hale telescope, probably a million galaxies or more could be photographed in the bowl of the Dipper.”

⁵ Editors of Time-Life Books, *Galaxies* (Alexandria, Va.: Time-Life, 1988), p. 14.

⁶ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 592.

⁷ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 134.



Joe Engelkemier, author of many books and articles, currently is pastor of the Coloma, Michigan, Seventh-day Adventist Church.

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Hungry Students

BY ALYCE PICKETT

A drought in the land of Gilgal caused the people much hardship. The students at the school of the prophets there suffered from hunger along with the others. The vegetables they tried to grow died for lack of rain.

Finally, after much prayer, the rains came. The students planted their fields again, and now the grain was growing. People rejoiced, full of hope for a good harvest. "A few more weeks and we shall have food, plenty of it," they said to one another. They were thankful, but for now they were still hungry.

At this time a farmer from Baal-shalishah came to Gilgal searching for Elisha. The godly man knew the first-fruits of his field belonged to those engaged in the Lord's work, and he wanted Elisha to have the first of his little harvest. His offering was small—he hadn't planted a big field—but Elisha welcomed the gift of 20 small barley cakes and a few heads of grain.

The prophet knew his students were hungry. He called his servant at once and told him, "Give this food to the boys so they may eat."

The servant looked at his master in disbelief. "What?" he asked. "Should I set this small amount before 100 hungry students? It's hardly enough for 10 of them."

"It will be enough," Elisha assured him, "for the Lord has shown me they will all eat and that food will be left on the platter when they have finished."

At Elisha's word the servant obeyed, and 100 hungry students came to the table.

Nothing to eat again, some thought when they saw the small amount of food set out for them. *How long can we go on like this?*

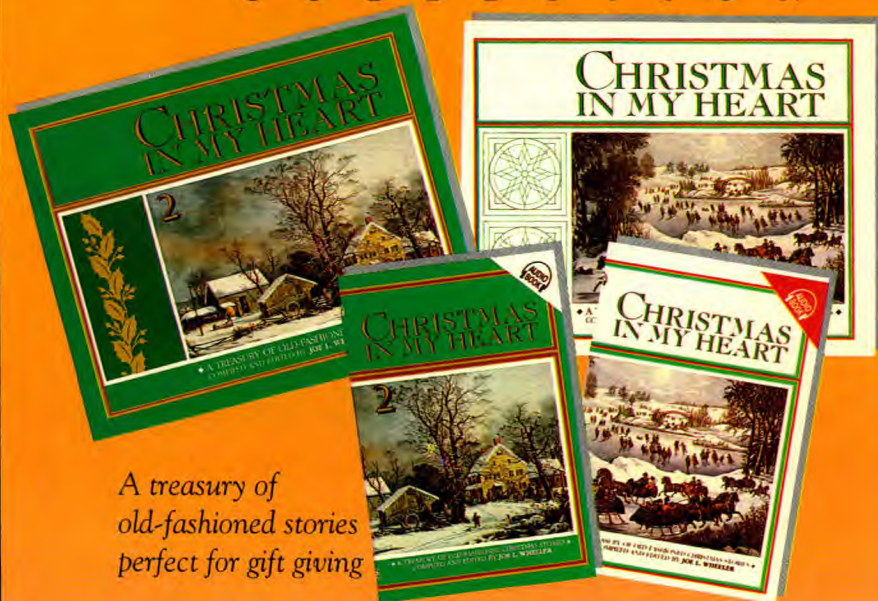
The servant thanked God for the food and began passing it to the boys. Hungry as they were, they could hardly eat for watching the food platter. As the servant helped each student, the food on

the platter stayed the same. No matter how many barley cakes were served, 20 cakes remained on the dish.

The happy young men ate all the food they wanted, and when they could eat no more, the platters still had food left. They thanked God for the miracle, and for sending Elisha, the prophet, to them.

Story reference: 2 Kings 4:42-44.

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Yangon, Myanmar. The brown waters of the Irrawaddy, swollen by monsoon showers, stretched wide on either side as we chugged south toward the delta. That we were even on a boat and making this trip to our remote destination seemed something wonderful.

Yesterday, Monday, we landed in Yangon (formerly called Rangoon), capital of Myanmar (previously known as Burma). For 30 years, access to this country has been limited. Although Noelene and I worked for more than 15 years in the Southern Asia Division, of which Burma was then part, I had not been able to make a visit. So arriving in Myanmar as part of the official ADRA delegation meant realization of a dream.

And what a welcome we received! Pastors Ba Hla Thein and Ba Khin, who are officers of the ADRA board for Myanmar and leaders of our work, met us at the airport and expedited our entry. Airport personnel moved us quickly through immigration and customs, even though we arrived with large cases of equipment for the video shooting. After a short stop at our hotel for check-in and cleanup, it was off to the Yangon Adventist Church, where several hundreds of our people had been waiting for us for three hours.

Festooned with garlands, we filed toward the church under large welcoming banners along a route lined with children in blue and white, singing a song of greeting. Here and there people broke out from the crowd to shake my hand—former students from our teaching days at Spicer Memorial College in India. I had not seen some of them since 1963, soon after the generals assumed control of the government of Burma.

As we came to the rostrum, following the lead of our hosts, we all removed



Asian Odyssey—4

Journey to the End of the World

The story of a poor rich school

BY WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

our shoes. We looked out over a sea of faces crowded into this church—this center of so many years of struggle and labor and devotion, this headquarters church of our work in Burma. We looked out on faces hungry for the Word, eager faces, excited, expectant.

For the first time in many years they would hear a message from the president of the General Conference. Only six months ago the government lifted the ban on speaking by foreigners, so Elder Folkenberg could ascend the rostrum tonight and preach without interdiction. For the first time these people also would meet their division president, Elder P. D. Chun (Myanmar is now part of the Far Eastern Division), and others of us from the world headquarters.

What love, what devotion, what eager

longing, flowed from the people that night! They reveled in the occasion. No one moved, no mind wandered through the speeches of greeting, the singing, and then the message from the General Conference president. Elder Folkenberg followed the pattern we had noticed throughout this trip: he presented the gospel. Everywhere when he had but one opportunity to speak to the people, he first gave a short report of the progress of the church worldwide, but reserved most of the time to uplifting Jesus as Saviour and Lord.

So our visit to Myanmar started out on a high note. But already one uncertainty had arisen, and it involved Elder Al McClure, North American Division president, and me. Our nine-member party had kept together throughout Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, but in Myanmar our paths would diverge, with some returning to the United States after a couple days and others staying longer. Elder McClure and I had planned to leave Yangon Tuesday evening to visit our seminary at Myaungmya in the south of the country and accessible only by boat.

On the way from the airport Monday, however, we realized we had a problem. Ken Suanzanang, the energetic young ADRA director for Myanmar, was enthusiastically telling us how he had obtained the necessary permission and boat tickets for our trip. When he mentioned Wednesday as the departure day, we said, "But our plans call for us to leave on Tuesday and return by Thursday morning—we fly out of Yangon Thursday afternoon."

Ken's face fell. There had been a mix-up in communication; he saw no way we could be cleared to travel on Tuesday, let alone get a place on one of the boats.

The next morning we met with His

Excellency Col. Than Zin, deputy minister for health in the central government. "The doors are open to ADRA," he told us. "Pick any province in Myanmar for your work." The cordial visit concluded with the signing of an official protocol recognizing ADRA as an approved aid agency for Myanmar. This marks a significant step for ADRA and the Seventh-day Adventist Church: ADRA may now secure official visas, open a foreign-currency bank account, and import equipment and supplies.

But the high-level meeting produced an additional benefit. As we were leaving, John Sipkins, ADRA director for the Far East, made a request of Col. Than Zin. "Sir," he said, "two of our party had planned to leave for Myaungmya today, but there was a mix-up and their papers have been arranged for tomorrow. Could you help us?"

Col. Than Zin turned to an assistant and gave him an order in Burmese. We left for other appointments.

At 2:00 p.m. that afternoon we were seated at a lunch hosted by our church leaders when Ken hurried in. Turning to Elder McClure and me, he said, "I have good news and bad news. The good news is you have been cleared to go to Myaungmya today. The bad news is that the boat leaves at 3 o'clock!"

So we rushed back to our hotel, checked out, packed a small bag, and hur-

ried to the boat. At 3:00 p.m. the gangplank lifted and we were on our way.

I cannot tell you the name of our boat because it was written in Burmese, but I can tell you it was very crowded. Probably 400 to 500 people packed the lower and upper decks; they had rushed aboard to stake out a few square feet of

*Instead of sweets, a
once-in-a-month egg
provided a treat
for the students.*

floor space on which to spread a cloth for themselves and their possessions. Al McClure and I were among the few fortunate passengers: we had one of the eight tiny cabins (about five feet wide and seven feet long) with two narrow bunks. Later we learned that two members of parliament had been "bumped" to provide us a place.

Still, it was anything but luxury class. Our ticket cost the equivalent of 84 cents (U.S.) for the overnight trip; fare for the upper deck was 32 cents, and 25 cents for the lower deck.

The weather was hot and muggy, but we located two chairs and found a spot, by the railing, that caught a slight breeze. Our presence on the boat attracted considerable interest—it seemed obvious that foreigners had not made this journey in a long time. Monks, children, men, and women stared hard and long at us; everyone treated us kindly, however.

We stayed outside for hours, enjoying the evening air and the passing sights: houses on stilts along the margin of the river; a rain squall, with four people in an open boat pulling hard against the waves; vendors in small boats coming out from the few towns we passed; barges; monks in boats.

At last we went into the cabin. When we turned on the light we saw that various forms of "lowlife" also planned to sleep with us. All night we tossed and swatted in the hot, humid air.

Just when we seemed to fall asleep, we wakened in a ball of sweat to banging on the door. It was 5:00 a.m.; the 150-mile trip had taken 14 hours.

We gathered our things and hurried off the boat. Wet with sweat, unwashed, hair standing on end, we came down the gangplank to find a welcoming party from the Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary—and they wanted to take pictures!

They had hired a small pickup (the



The school is at the end of the world, but the people are out of this world: Al McClure and the editor with staff members (from left) Kyaw Tun, Khin Zaw, Rosetine Zaw, and Tin Tun. Right: Ralph Watts, Jr., president of ADRA International meets with His Excellency Col. Zan Thin, deputy minister for health in Myanmar.



school has no vehicle), and we drove over roads that grew progressively worse. About the moment my body was shouting out that it couldn't take one more mile of torture, we arrived at the school. (Why did our early missionaries seek out the most remote locations to establish mission stations?)

That was a night Al McClure and I will not soon forget. We felt we had journeyed to the end of the world.

But the day that followed was unforgettable also—only in a pleasant sense. Neither of us has ever had a day that overflowed with so much love, appreciation, and eagerness. The hunger of the faculty and students for contact with church leaders, for news of the church and old friends, for fellowship and spiritual food, made all the rigors of the past night more than worthwhile.

Twelve hours—that's all. We were at the school just 12 hours, but they made the most of every minute: banners, welcome parade, songs composed for the

occasion, meetings, visits to ADRA projects, meal with faculty and their families, cultural program. The students had been practicing songs and national dances for weeks for the latter, and they filled the large room (which also serves as cafeteria and church) for the performance. Little girls in blue and white sat on benches behind us, leaning forward, squirming with excitement like jumping beans.

Lest anyone get the wrong idea, this is a poor rich school. Many buildings are decrepit; the "roads" are mud tracks. Students eat only twice a day—8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.—and the menu of rice and dahl (a lentil curry) never varies.

But it is a rich school. Rich in healthy, beautiful students. Rich in hardworking leaders and faculty. Rich in devotion. Rich in love. Rich in spirit.

Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary, located at the "end of the world," is one of the richest institutions of our worldwide fellowship.

The seminary has more than 250 students and has recently moved to a full four-year-degree curriculum. And the lower grades—what we would call elementary and secondary but that they call the junior seminary—have as many pupils.

Garlands, speeches, visits, food, photo opportunities (scores of students lined up to have their picture taken with us)—the day sped away. We wanted to do something for the students, leave some tangible gesture of our love. "Would \$20 provide a small treat?" we asked Herbert Sein, the school principal.

He thought it would. After a while he came back to us. "Instead of giving them sweets, what would you think of providing them with an egg each for the evening meal?" he asked. "They hardly ever see an egg—not even once a month."

So each student got an egg for supper, and we got the larger blessing.

Then the day was over. Teary farewells, more songs, rattling over potholed roads, and on the boat again.

We were dead tired, and I turned in early. Stretched flat-out, feet poking beyond the bunk and hitting the cabin wall, oblivious to whatever wanted to crawl or chew on me, I slept all night. Al McClure wrapped himself in a blanket to keep the bugs off, and had a free sauna.

The trip back took longer because we

were going against the current. Thursday morning at 10:30 a.m., 15 and a half hours later, we docked at Yangon.

Leaders from the mission were waiting for us. "Quick," they said, "you need to be at the airport by 2 o'clock, and we have prepared a program for you." So without time to shower, change (we both were wearing shirts from our arrival in Myaungmya the morning before), or even brush our teeth, we were whisked from appointment to appointment. Fortunately, Al had a battery-operated shaver along, so at least we had been able to trim our whiskers.

The publishing house: On old, old presses, Adventists print Sabbath school lessons, tracts, and even books. Every item carries a number granting government approval of the contents.

The Yangon school: An incredible 12-grade junior seminary is formed by partitioning up one large room. Facilities are minimal, but teachers and students are first-rate in intelligence and appearance.

Fellowship lunch: Former Spicer students hosted a wonderful meal for us at the home of Kyaw Sein Pe, pastor of the Yangon church.

Meeting in the Yangon church: There we experienced speeches, parting messages, gifts, farewells.

We were late—more than an hour late—when we arrived at the airport. But again we received red-carpet treatment and completed exit formalities with few delays.

Thai Air Flight 306 lifted off the ground. It seemed surrealistic: were we awake or asleep? Where were we? Just two days before we had embarked on a journey to the end of the world.

We got to our hotel in Bangkok some time after 7:00 p.m. We peeled off grubby shirts, brushed our teeth for the first time in two days, and took a long, long shower.

Series concluded.



William G. Johnsson is editor of the Adventist Review.

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The Rubbish King

At a potluck one Sabbath I met 6-year-old Benjamin. He had blue eyes, a shining face, a blond crew cut—and a puppet with a paper crown. Benjamin and I had a conversation that made me think.

It all started with the puppet. "What's his name?" I asked.

"He's called the Rubbish King. Really, he's an empty plastic bottle. My mum stuck some material on to make a face, and then we made some hair out of old cloth. I made his cloak. That's made of rubbish too."

Corduroy Hair

Benjamin obviously had a clever mum. She'd cut and pasted some flesh-colored cloth so that the neck of the bottle had become the king's head. She'd made long navy-blue locks out of a piece of corduroy.

None of the grown-ups except me were talking to Benjamin. And the other children weren't taking notice most of the time. But Benjamin didn't mind. He was living in his own world—the world of the Rubbish King.

Benjamin had very clear ideas about how a puppet king should behave. When the other children came anywhere near, the king kept shouting and bossing them around. Every now and then he would hide and jump out at someone. Sometimes his crown would fall off.

People who don't believe in God often say that those of us who *do* are a bit like Benjamin. They think we've made God out of inherited rubbish and dressed Him up in childish ideas. They say that we're living in a world of our own making. They say that those of us who believe in God can't face being part of the grown-up world where we have to look after ourselves and take responsibility for our own choices.

So, say the unbelievers, in our fear we invent a powerful God—a king or father figure—who'll look after us. They suggest that we're a bit like Benjamin with his puppet. They think that a lot of our preaching about



Unbelievers say

we've invented

God from

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and dressed Him

up in childish

ideas.

goodness and evil, guilt and judgment, is just a way of having power over other people. That we're using our self-made God to frighten others and convince them that our way of living is the best. Stories about guilt and judgment and what happens when we die are just our way of being in control in our world. That's what the unbelievers say.

Whom Do You Really Trust?

As a believer I've got my own story to tell about rubbish kings. I think some unbelievers make rubbish kings too. They can't face the idea that if you want to find the meaning of life, you need to learn about trust. I think many unbelievers find the whole business of trusting anyone but themselves a very threatening idea. They're afraid to trust God, and who else is there to rely on? Just themselves. So they try to make their own security—they put their faith in all kinds of rubbish. Things that appear lasting but aren't—like popularity, prestige, and property.

I'd like to think that, as a believer, I know whom and what to trust. Every now and then, though, I have the feeling that as a believer I get a bit muddled.

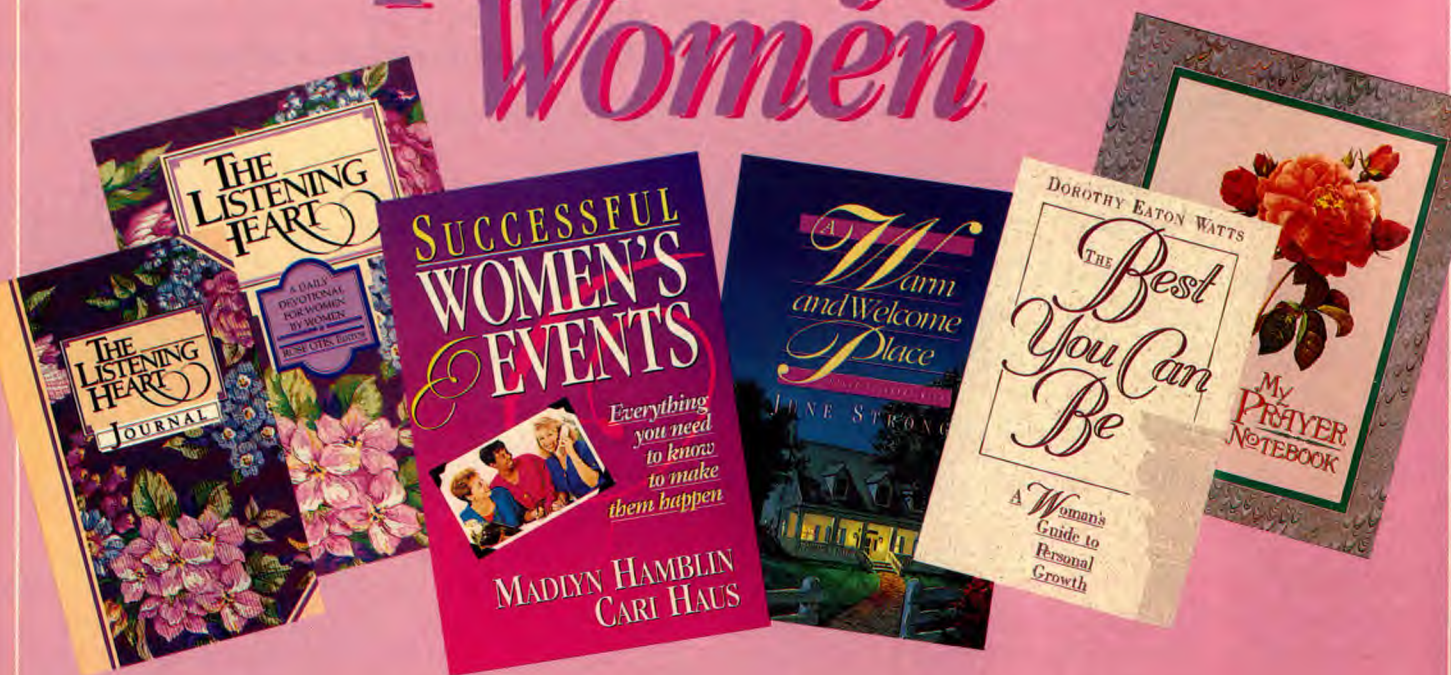
Meeting Benjamin made me ask myself a few questions. As I make the various decisions that I face, whom or what do I trust most? Who speaks with the most powerful voice in my life? Even though I claim to be a believer, do I really trust God, or am I sometimes quietly creating my own rubbish king, just in case?



Helen Pearson is a journalist and freelance writer living in Wokingham, England.

BY HELEN PEARSON

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